mnV 7#2,3

MINNESOTA ENGLISH JOURNAL

University of Minnesota
MAY 22 1972
Duluth Library

FOCUS

PRE-WRITING: INSIGHTS FROM PSYCHOLOGY

FORUM

TERRITORIALITY: WHAT SHALL THE "ENGLISH" TEACHER TEACH?

First Issue of Academic Year 1970-71
Volume VII, No. 1

PER
4255.0000
GEN

MCTE
minnesota council of teachers of english

NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN MINNEAPOLIS IN 1972

THE MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

PRESIDENT
Sister André Marthaler, O.S.B., Bemidji State College
PRESIDENT ELECT
Arthur Elfring, Robbinsdale Area Schools, Minneapolis
VICE PRESIDENT
Bernard Raphael, Normandale State Junior College, Bloomington
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Tom Bacig, University of Minnesota, Duluth
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Betty High, Morgan Park High School, Duluth
TREASURER
Mark Twomey, St. John's Preparatory School, Collegeville
CHAIRMAN OF EDITORIAL BOARD
Edna Downing, Sanford Junior High School, Minneapolis
BUSINESS MANAGER
James Koehler, Northfield High School

Annual membership of $5.00 for teachers, $ .50 for students, includes publications. MCTE is an affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English, open to elementary, secondary, and college teachers and others interested in improving the teaching of English. Membership is available from Tom Bacig, MCTE Executive Secretary, University of Minnesota, Duluth, Minnesota 55812. Annual subscription rate to the *Minnesota English Journal*, published two or three times a year, is $3.00; single copies are $1.50. Manuscripts and other correspondence concerning the MEJ should be sent to Harriet W. Sheridan, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota 55057.

Member of the NCTE Affiliate Information Exchange Agreement

minnesota english journal

Published by the Minnesota Council of Teachers of English

VOLUME VII, No. 1 Fall, 1971

Editor: Harriet W. Sheridan, Carleton College, Northfield
Associate Editors: Sister André Marthaler, O.S.B., Bemidji State College
Seymour Yesner, Consultant in Secondary School English, Minneapolis Public Schools
Editorial Assistants: Nicki Mainerich, Lucy Lefren Steiner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

preamblings

We begin with an apology that is anything but routine. It is in fact with profound abjection that we apologize for the absent MBJ's of last year. The reasons are numerous, and include postal strikes, missing MSS., and missing editors, but, reasons to the side, we still owe you all an apology – and someting more. We hope you will accept as partial compensation the larger than usual issue that you now have in hand, and our statement of intent to publish an extra issue this year. We are planning an O.E. Rolvaag issue for winter publication, and a special issue focused on statements by our state's NCTE Achievement Award winners about what was good and bad in their experiences in theEnglish classroom.

A year abroad has given us the kind of perspective on educational concerns that sabaatical years are designed to give. Long live sabaaticals, and may teachers on all levels come to enjoy the benefits of such rest and restoration! We spent part of our time observing in an Italian public Montessori school directed by a friend and associate of Maria Montessori, and part of our time in the waiting room of an Italian language school at which our daughter was learning to extend her command of Italian to other moods than the imperative. Our own halting conversation with the mothers who were waiting for their children to finish English lessons had chiefly to do with the state of education in Italy. "Terrible, the children are worked too hard," most of the mothers said. "How is it in your country?" "Terrible, they aren't worked hard enough," we should have said to complete the symmetry, but too many qualifications for this indictment tied our tongue. As well as linguistic incapacity. We think our educational problems stem not from too much or too little work, but from work that often seems without direction and is therefore without motivation.

It is with enthusiasm, consequently, that we see what after our year's absence appear to be new trends in the progress of educational reform. One of these is the growing concern for developing early in our students an interest in a choice of careers, not in order to produce the Alphas and Epsilons of **Brave New World**, but rather to give students a sense of purposefulness and to emphasize the need to correlate and focus the subject matters of instruction. We are finding now on the college level large numbers of students who are appalled at their own vocational uselessness. Their once limitless world has suddenly discovered that it does not need them, and they have not yet developed the courage to take this world by the throat. On the verge of "commencement" they worry about the uncertainties ahead. How can they commence when they don't feel finished? Some of them are even willing to join a committee to talk about why they do or don't want to be janitors. And, knowing how scarce jobs are, we can't urge them, as we have for years, to choose to be teachers. But we do.

We want to know more about the successes and failures of the "open classroom." We hope that some of our readers who have moved towards a relaxed class structure,

who have placed more responsibility on students for the conduct of instruction, and who have expanded the range of curricular choices, will write to us about their experience. We are interested also in the techniques that have been adapted and developed in the teaching of English (reading, speaking, writing, spelling) by teachers of students with specific learning disabilities. There are bound to be some useful ideas for all English teachers coming out of these special techniques.

Daniel Fader's new book **The Naked Children** makes a powerful case for teaching reading by means of any book, magazine, or newspaper that will start a student's interest. Sy Yesner's article in this issue, from a somewhat different vantage point, also argues for an electric choice. The central achievement of the English teacher is simply this: that his students read with understanding, with critical discrimination, and with pleasure. McLuhan notwithstanding. Minnesota's newly launched "Right to Read" program is lodged at this center.

The annual meeting of the Minnesota Conference on English Education will take place on January 22 at White Bear Lake Senior High School. The main concern of the meeting will be to determine some competencies that the English teacher should have. We plan to publish a report from this Conference and to invite suggestions about competencies (which or whether?) from **MEJ**'s readers. For almost two decades we have been accumulating statements from our English Teaching Methods students about their objectives for their chosen profession. We would like additions to our collection from Methods teachers at other teacher preparing institutions so that we can print a representative selection.

Donald W. Larmouth's "Models in Remedial English: An Interim Report" (**MEJ**, Spring 1970) has been designated by NCTE/ERIC "a substantive contribution to to education" and will be made available on a national basis. Another, general tribute to **MEJ** authors has arrived from Myriam B. Ivers, 9th grade English teacher at Willmar Junior High School:

Absorbed in the
MEJ
Tonight
I burned the
parsnips.

Kind words may not butter parsnips, but they get printed by grateful editors.

Lectureships in the Teaching of Writing

In March of 1972 the Department of English of the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis campus, will probably again award two lectureships in the teaching of writing. To be eligible for these awards candidates must be teaching English in a Minnesota secondary school and present evidence of their excellence or unusual promise as teachers of writing. During their tenure the lecturers will teach some of these courses: Freshman English, Advanced Writing, lower-division creative writing courses, and The Writing Experience, a workshop course intended for students likely to be called upon to teach creative writing at the secondary or junior-college level. Courses will be assigned only after consultation with the lecturers and will be fitted as well as possible to each person's interests and talents. 1972-73 stipend: $11,000.

Letters of application should be sent to William A. Madden, Chairman, Department of English, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 55455. Two examples of the applicant's own writing, either published or in a finished manuscript, should accompany the application. Candidates should also seek letters of recommendation from three referees, both teaching colleagues and students. Deadline for 1972-73 is February 15, 1972.

focus

Perceiving, Thinking, and Composing: A Structured Approach to Pre-Writing

by **JOSPEH J. COMPRONE**, University of Minnesota, Morris

I

Most teachers of writing, if they are at all sensitive to the enormous complexity of their job, demonstrate easily recognizable evidence of psychosis. We are confused, perplexed and enormously overworked; we are commissioned to teach a skill (or is it an art?) that artists ranging from Sam Johnson to John Hawkes have told us takes a lifetime to learn. And most of us, in our less euphoric moments, would agree. I suggest, however, that it may be just this terrible impossibility that makes composition worth teaching. Our psychotic behavior, usually shared at intervals by our students, might indicate a healthy perspective on contemporary experience.

Certainly the general public and academicians alike have throughout history suspected the sanity of writers and artists. When Norman Mailer tells us that "the shits are killing us" we, the public, respond in a variety of ways. Most responses seem to applaud the statement in one way or another. Those in agreement with Mr. Mailer suggest that the subject of his sentence represents a stunning use of metaphor; others, obviously in disagreement with Mailer, find his verbal extremism terribly satisfying precisely because they believe the sentence demonstrates the insanity of Mailer and his supporters. "The shits are killing us," whatever our reaction, represents a general truth about all language. Words and sentences are always the result of a complex process. That process is far more subtle, far more difficult to analyze, than are words themselves. We have to be at least partially psychotic to understand, both emotionally and intellectually, the basic interrelationship between words and context, especially when we admit that much of the value of words develops through a process that includes perception, the organization of thought and writing.

To clarify I shall refer to a remark by Benjamin Demott. He argues that a "...good writer is a...wide and various man: a character nicely conscious of the elements of personhood excluded by this or that act of writing and ever in a half-rage to allude to them: to hint at characterological riches even where these can't be spent."[1] To be "nicely conscious of elements of personhood excluded by...writing," to be in a "half-rage" to refer to these excluded elements, is to be, at least to a degree, psychotic. Norman Mailer is, as one of my students aptly put it, "crazier than hell." He expects us to know that he is partly playing a

role, partly serious, partly alluding to an entire area of linguistic behavior not usually represented in our everyday talk. He wants us to respond to his statement while acknowledging an enormous context, including the verbal battles of Gore Vidal and William Buckley, street rhetoric, revolutionary diatribes, etc. Certainly the wholly rational man, even the wholly "sane" man, would not be capable of such a wide range of allusion. Only a healthy neurotic, a neurotic able to transfer the results of his neurosis into the voice he projects on a written page can understand and achieve Demott's "half-rage."

Language, Demott suggests, involves dramatic as well as cognitive interaction. In every case, meaning depends upon complex interrelationships among words, context and pre-existing psychological phenomena.

There are two ways of developing writer's "half-rage." Traditionally, we have analyzed the final product of the writing process. We analyze the intricate symbolic patterns of literature, discursive prose and poetry. Then we ask students to imitate that complexity; we ask them to transfer the techniques they find in their reading into their writing. Certainly such analysis and imitation does serve a function. It helps students to realize that written communication is complex, that, in effective communication, explicit symbolic patterns and semantic structures must be controlled.

But such analysis of explicit structure needs to be combined with analysis and practice in those mental activities which occur before a writer puts words on paper. In other words, we must develop activities and exercises that help students to control pre-writing behavior. A writer who understands the complexities in his own perceptual and cognitive processes might be better prepared to allude to those complexities in his writing.

II

I shall borrow directly from two related fields of psychological research. Both areas relate directly to the definition of symbolic processes found in varying levels of consciousness.

First, I shall work from a transactional theory of perception. Transactionalism is, at least partially, a response to the earlier, oversimplified theories of perception, theories which argued that the perceiver's mind was composed of "conscious elements" received directly from the outside world. Traditionally, these conscious elements were fused into overall perceptual orientations wholly dependent upon externally-based stimuli.[2] Transactionalism argues that the perceptual process is exceedingly more complex than indicated by such a one-to-one relationship. The human mind, according to transactional theory, is a patterning entity. Perception itself becomes a creative activity, an activity in which the mind is actively reformulating sensory information as that information is received. Mental "reformulation" is influenced by objective sensory information and, perhaps more important to our purposes, by a complex set of pre-established

mental patterns--we might call these patterns perceptual "mind-sets."

Perceptual "mind-sets" are created by an individual over a long period of time. They are often combinations of many past perceptual situations. In other words, the individual creates perceptual overlays which continue to influence perceptual data in the future. Allport, however, argues that the Gestalt or pattern theory, as complex as it is, still oversimplifies the perceptual process. "Configurationism [Gestalt theory]," Allport argues, "had achieved its successes at the cost of practically ignoring the motor side of the organism."[3] Most recent theories combine the approaches of Gestalt and structural psychology into more complex hypotheses. Allport describes the results of several such attempts.

> ...it has been claimed on the basis of experimental evidence that conditions internal to the organism, such as drive, value, or need, can affect the way in which the physical world appears, even in its supposedly stable quantitative properties. Phenomena appeared that seemed to suggest...the presence of a functionalistic preperceiver who selected the sensory data that were to be permitted the right to organize as perceptions.[4]

The central proposition in this theory was that a subconscious property, perhaps only partially rational, acted as a perceptual clearing-house, that the perceived environment was subjected first to a subconscious selective process and subsequently to conscious, rational control. Still another psychologist, Franklin Kilpatrick, argues the following definition of perception.

> ...perception cannot be 'due to' the physiological stimulus pattern; some physiological stimulus probably is necessary, but it is not sufficient. There must be...some basis for the organism's 'choosing' one from among the infinity of external conditions to which the pattern might be related... any notion concerning a unique correspondence between percept and object must be abandoned and a discovery of the factors involved in the 'choosing' activity of the organism becomes the key problem in perceptual theory.[5]

Transactional psychology, then, views perception as process, an intricate process in which the perceived object, the surrounding perceptual field, and perceptual "mind-sets" are constantly interacting.

Now we can turn to a second field of psychological research. A pre-writing approach based upon perception, and the transfer of perceptual stimuli into the symbolic patterns of the mind, must be supplemented by some analysis of how mentalistic patterns themselves are structured.[6]

We can begin by providing a broad theoretical construct for our analysis of mental behavior. Eric Klinger, in a soon-to-be-published work on the structure of fantasy, divides articulated--either subconsciously or consciously "articulated"--ideational streams into two general divisions. Operant segments represent prosaic, rationally-organized, explicit symbolic streams--streams which for matters of definition we might compare to the symbolic structures of written language, especially written language organized according to rational or grammatical principles. Operant language, in its most obvious form, represents consciously formulated patterns of thought. But ideational streams (patterns of thought, if you will) are usually interconnected; operant streams are associated, sometimes in haphazard fashion, with symbolic segments which are progressively more implicit and metaphorical. These segments of articulated consciousness Klinger calls respondent segments. He differentiates between operant and respondent segments of thought as follows.

> Segments of activity may be classified into broad groups which are here called 'operant' and 'respondent.' Whereas operant segments are initiated...volitionally, controlled by consequences, guided by feedback, and therefore proactive, respondent segments are initiated non-volitionally, are not inherently dependent on feedback, are elicited by antecedent events, and are therefore reactive.[7]

III

Most composition texts cover only the later, explicit phases of pre-writing--the phases represented in outlines and preliminary sketches. The outline, however, represents the operant organization of an enormously complex group of sensory and cognitive activities. As writers, we are usually only partially conscious of these early complex phases of pre-writing. The scribal acts recorded in an outline are in themselves the product of perception and thought; if we wish to include analysis of perception and thought organization as process, we must discover strategies through which we can bring that process into the conscious, operant language of the classroom.[8] Let us begin with an exercise in observation.

> Ask a class to observe an experience of a public nature--a guest speaker, etc. Discuss, with the class, their expectations concerning the speaker and the situation. The discussion should produce general insight into the mind-sets or perceptual orientations an individual carries with him into any experience.

Each writer, after preliminary discussions, should develop a loosely-organized list of imagery. The list should include both operant and respondent patterns.

Some imagery should be arrived at through free association,

other imagery by conscious referral to previous situations which the writer perceived as similar to the immediate situation. The freely-associated imagery would generally be parallel to respondent thought segments, the consciously-derived list to operant segments.

Let us turn now to another phase in this exercise.

> After formulating rough lists, each student should compose a rough sketch. The sketch would organize the imagery lists into what we previously called perceptual "mind-sets." In psychological terms, each student would be describing himself as a "functional preperceiver." The sketch would transfer operant and respondent imagery into values, attitudes and perspectives.

In this exercise, a writer would develop relationships between different respondent images. Suppose one student had for some unknown reason associated a black automobile and a man with dark glasses with the guest speaker. He would then find ways of rationally relating these respondent images to the immediate situation. This sketch would also encourage the fusing of respondent and operant thought segments. The black automobile and man with dark glasses might be combined with rationally organized attitudes and values. The result is usually an interesting, although somewhat disturbing, blend of affective and cognitive language. For example, our writer might develop a verbal sequence in which the public speaker is metaphorically associated with destruction (black), mystery (dark glasses), etc. If the speaker happens to be radical--say in politics--parallels between the black automobile and man with dark glasses can produce several playful comparisons. Such experiments often are strikingly similar to Fellini and Antonioni scenarios. They make interesting subjects for short films. In this sketch, the writer should develop a good deal of insight into his perceptual orientation--without worrying very much about stylistic, mechanical or organizational problems.

A final pre-writing activity related to perception. After perceiving the hypothetical speech, our pre-writer might compose an analysis of alterations motivated by the immediate perceptual field. He might ask himself how his preperceiving orientation balances with his immediate opinion. What details within the context of the presentation caused a re-interpretation or re-organization of pre-existing attitudes and values? What, in his pre-existing mind-set, caused him to ignore or overemphasize certain aspects of the presentation? Finally, he might describe to the class how writing about these attitudinal changes influenced his original perception of the situation. This exercise would develop in our writer an understanding of what Jerome Bruner calls the third step in the perceptual process: the "checking or confirmation procedure."[9] This step describes the perceiver's attempt to align the content of perception with those hypotheses or mind-sets he carried into the perceptual situation. Bruner points out that the checking and confirmation

procedure itself may alter our perception of a certain experiential field.

There is, of course, an obvious difficulty in such exercises. We are asking our student to become his own psychoanalyst; we are asking him to scrutinize his own perceptual and conceptual behavior. There will be obvious distortions in such self-induced psychoanalyzing. We should be able to improve upon these exercises by class discussion of pre-writing behavior and by discussion of articles generally related to pre-writing psychology. In any case, the purpose of these pre-writing exercises is to produce writers who are conscious of the complex process by which experience is received and organized. The purpose is not intended to be therapeutic, though it may be indirectly contributing to a healthy recognition of what some of us would call "existential realities."

IV

We can now turn from perception to thinking, especially the relationship between thinking and writing. All our efforts in this area should disabuse our students of any ideas they might have concerning a direct relationship between thoughts (or mental patterns in general) and written language. The organizational principles of the mind are decidedly different from the patterns of imagery, the ideational stream, in the mind. Our previous resumé of current associationist theory and cognitive psychology should help here.

We can begin by referring to the pattern of ideation. Thoughts, the psychologists tell us, occur in segments which are connected sequentially. Let us briefly review operant and respondent thought structures. Operant and respondent segments of thought are joined by related imagery at jointures. Operant segments are "initiated volitionally"; they are composed of conscious imagery and sensations directly related to immediate external feedback. They are usually logically organized and logically controlled. Most students attack writing problems with the idea the only their operant thought patterns are transferrable to the written page. They believe, usually incorrectly, that articulated thoughts are similar in structure to written sentences. We must at least begin to convince them that operant mental behavior can be combined with what we previously called "respondent" mental behavior--those segments of thought which are "initiated non-volitionally, are not inherently dependent on feedback, are elicited by antecedent events, and are therefore reactive."

In one sense, when we ask students to use both operant and respondent mental behavior in their pre-writing activity, we are asking them to use what would traditionally be called "reason and imagination." Psychologists have lately come to subdivide human behavior and language into affective and cognitive: affective behavior and language is motivated and organized by emotional, non-rational stimuli (when a love poem

makes us cry); cognitive behavior by the intellect, by the "knowing" and structuring, the rational patterns of the human mind (when we think by cause and effect). Affective and cognitive provide us with more scientific and accurate methods of discussing and analyzing the traditional concepts of reason and imagination.

Most writers, at least those not as perceptive about writing problems as Mr. Demott, assume that dreams, reverie, fantasy and day-dreaming are activities which do not contribute to the composing process. I have had students tell me that they spent six or seven hours on a paper because their minds, as they put it, "constantly wandered from the subject." As if mind-wandering were an evil. Actually, such mental activity can sometimes offer the writer his most creative solutions to a particular writing problem. The "half-rage" alluded to by Demott, the psychosis I have associated with artists, seems to me to be no more than the psychotic rage to express several meanings simultaneously, a desire to write prose that demonstrates what the critics of metaphysical poetry call intellectual "conceit"--the writer's ability to demonstrate striking associations where no one thought they existed or differences where others expected only similarities. A writer capable of using respondent behavior creatively and effectively will reflect the writer's half rage. When discussing pre-writing activity, this means that our writer will want very much to express in his writing the subtleties, complexities and diverse associations of perception and thought.

V

Let us return, with the affective-cognitive distinction in mind, to the second phase of pre-writing activity--the phase in which the symbolic product of perception is transferred into the symbolic patterns of the mind. Our hypothetical writer recognizes, through his initial pre-writing exercises, that he has to a degree already re-organized and re-interpreted his experience in the act of perceiving. Robert Zoellner, in his much discussed monograph on the relationships between talking and writing, points out an important distinction in our use of the term "metaphor." He argues that "the English teacher's intense literary awareness of the metaphor-as-artifact results in a peculiar professional blind spot: he often appears only minimally aware of the mediative aspect of metaphor, which we may call metaphor-as-instrument. Yet there is obviously a vast difference between the metaphor the English professor teaches--say in Hopkins or Donne--and the metaphor he teaches by."[10] Artifactual metaphors--those metaphorical structures we find in a lyric poem as we read and analyze the poem--do not in any way parallel the instrumental metaphors the poet might have used in transferring the experience of that poem from perceived object to thought and finally to the written page. Our discussion of operant and respondent mental streams should suggest methods of dealing with instrumental

metaphors as they operate in the mind of the writer.

Let us return to our hypothetical writer. He has begun to formulate methods of analyzing his perceptual orientation. He has begun to organize "meaning-complexes"--pre-existing complexes of ideas, attitudes and perceptions which he understands will influence the composing process. Now he can begin his search for instrumental metaphors, metaphors that will expedite the transfer from implicit, respondent thought to more explicit, operant thought. The following is a list of general activities . They can be carried out by an entire class, by a student and teacher in conference, or by the student himself.

1. After composing, discussing and analyzing a perceptual sketch, the writer should begin to search for objects, ideas and emotions which compress the language of the sketch. This exercise should encourage both affective and cognitive responses. Our writer might begin by freely associating those emotions, ideas and objects. He might also try a cognitive experiment by attempting, after using free association., to impose a rational, discursive sequence on those ideas, objects and emotions.

2. Ideally, our writer has organized a large group of images which are directly or indirectly related to his perception of a radical guest speaker. He might select one or two images he believes are particularly striking--perhaps for some reason he associated one of the speaker's gestures with a gesture usually found in a totally different context. These examples of aberrant imagery can become excellent ways of combining operant and respondent behavior.

A class discussion I once conducted should provide an example of how this second exercise might work. The students had written some poetry and we began discussing the metaphors in their poems. One girl had compared a politician's face, projected on a television screen, to a large, bladder-like organism. First, we approached the metaphor-as-artifact, much in the way we would have analyzed metaphor in a poetry anthology. The student's poem, as a self-contained unit, had attempt to express what she felt was the mindless mediocrity of American politics:

puffing, blowing squid
a pulping bladder on screen.

Now, analyzing the metaphor purely as artifact, we argued that the squid-bladder image, as applied to a description of

the politician's face on television, reinforced the reader's understanding of American politics as mindless and bureaucratic.

Then we changed our perspective and discussed the origin of the metaphor in the thought-patterns of the poet. In other words, we took an instrumental approach to the metaphor. After extended discussion, the class developed the following explanation: the poet had recently seen a political figure on television, a figure who had a thoroughly negative effect on her. In writing, they decided that she had fused the politician's television image with a respondent image--an image of a squid in a glass enclosure which she had carried away from a visit to an aquarium. The comparison of these two seemingly unrelated (respondent) pieces of mental imagery were forced together by her negative reaction to the politician. The metaphor, then, became an instrument supporting the operant meaning of the poem--the depiction of American politics as mindless and bureaucratic. This method of analysis can become a useful aid to composing; it allows other writers to see the fusion of idea and object, of separate areas of respondent imagery, in action. The inexperienced writer is encouraged to fuse disparate ideas, to find meaning and form in what might otherwise remain totally unrelated sensations, emotions, and ideas. They are challenged to make mind-wandering productive.

I am not proposing that, as teachers of poetry, we decide to propose hypothetical trains of thought for every poem--as interesting as that may be. But as teachers of composition such an instrumental approach to metaphor (and all instances of symbolic transfer for that matter) can be a useful approach. It expands the student's consciousness of complexity by revealing subtle relationships between different contexts, by encouraging a playful, creative attitude toward the entire process of organizing perceptions and thoughts.

These exercises merely suggest the kind of affective and cognitive interplay which should, I suggest, become an important part of the composition process, especially the pre-writing process. They are based on the assumption that the traditional composition course concentrated to an exaggerated degree on what Zoellner calls metaphor-as-artifact, or metaphor as it is represented in the symbolic patterns of a written page. We need to devote more time to metaphor-as-instrument, or metaphor as it is used by a writer to transfer symbolic patterns produced by our senses (perception) into the cognitive-affective mental patterns which occur before writing.

Some teachers will argue, I am sure, that students who are self-conscious about their own affective and cognitive pre-writing habits will sacrifice creativity. I believe differently. Students who recognize, even to a slight degree, the complex interrelationships among the processes of perception, thought and writing might better demonstrate the "characterological riches" described by Benjamin Demott. They might even, in truly existential fashion, demonstrate a healthy psychotic rage; a rage to express at least a few of those complex interrelationships in their writing. We might decide not to apply any of the terms of

this discussion to the students we teach, but in teaching them to write we must be familiar with the way perception, thought and writing are related. Only then can we improve the pre-writing habits of our students.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Demott made this remark while participating in the 1966 Dartmouth Seminar on the teaching of English. It has been recorded by John Dixon in Growth Through English (Reading, England, 1967), p. 39.

[2]F.H. Allport, Theories of Perception and the Concept of Structure (New York, 1955), p. 438. Allport's book provides an excellent survey of early perceptual theory. I am, of course, greatly oversimplifying Allport's account of structuralism in early perceptual theory. Morse Peckham (Man's Rage for Chaos, Philadelphia, 1965) seems to support my summary of perceptual theory when he argues that "two main traditions"--"transactionalism" and "directive-state" theory--have controlled perceptual theory for the past thirty years.

[3]Ibid., p. 439.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Explorations in Transactional Psychology (New York, 1961), p. 2. Kilpatrick argues that "the acute contrast between the theoretical possibility and the practical impossibility of leaving values and purposes out of scientific observation...has pointed up the necessity of re-examining the basic formulations from which these problems stem."

[6]The following terminology and theory will be at least partly based upon the work of Eric Klinger, a psychologist at the University of Minnesota, Morris. For the past several years, Dr. Klinger has conducted a "fantasy project." The project has attempted to define the organizational principles behind dreams, reverie, and fantasy symbolism. The results of his research will be published sometime in the immediate future. I have taken a great deal of liberty in interpreting Dr. Klinger's theories and in applying those theories to the composition process. Readers of this paper will, I hope, reserve their opinions of Klinger's study until it is published in entirety.

[7]We can list other properties of operant and respondent segments as follows:

Operant Streaming

1. Operant streams are organized discursively, according to rational modes of sequencing. Operant streams represent mental symbols organized according to the pre-existing logic of language and reality.
2. Operant symbolism is influenced to a larger degree than respondent symbolism by external feedback. Environment exerts a direct controlling influence on operant behavior.
3. Unlike the ideational streams of dreams and fantasy, operant streams are seldom disrupted by images and symbols drawn from other contexts.

Respondent Streaming

1. Respondent streams are organized by association of imagery and symbolism drawn from antecedent meaning complexes, rather than from direct feedback.
2. Respondent streams are often disrupted by what we might call aberrant imagery and symbolism, imagery and symbolism drawn from contexts other than the dominating context of a particular segment of mental behavior.
3. Respondent streams are characterized by the phenomena Freud defined as displacement and condensation and the quality defined as pluri-significance by many current psychologists. In respondent streams, the symbolic weight of an antecedent image is often "displaced" on to another image; at other times the symbolic weight of many images is "condensed" into one image; finally, many symbols and symbol-segments in respondent streams are "pluri-significant" in that they represent the symbolic weight of many other ideational contexts.

Again, I should emphasize that these lists represent my condensation of Eric Klinger's analysis of operant and respondent mental behavior.

[8]I should supplement our resumé of current perceptual psychology by referring to the work of Jerome S. Bruner, the social psychologist. Bruner argues that personality plays a large role in perception. He proposes a three-step cycle of perception.

> Analytically, we may say that perceiving begins with an expectancy or hypothesis...We not only see, but we look for, not only hear but listen to...In short, perceiving takes place in a 'tuned organism.' The assumption is that we are never randomly set...but that...we are always to some extent prepared for seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting some particular thing or class of things...Any given hypothesis results from the arousal of central cognitive and motivational processes by preceding environmental states of affairs.
> The second analytic step in the perceiving process is the input of information from the environment...
> The third step is a checking or confirmation procedure. Input information is confirmatory to or congruent with the operative hypothesis. If confirmation does not occur, the hypothesis shifts in a direction partly determined by internal or personological or experimental factors and partly on the basis of feedback from the learning which occurred in the immediately

preceding, partly unsuccessful information--checking cycle ("Personality Dymamics and the Process of Perceiving," found in Perception--An Approach to Personality, ed. by Robert R. Blake and Glenn V. Ramsey [New York, 1951], pp. 123-124 Bruner's theories, offered from the perspective of personality, arrive at a perceptual structure decidedly similar to the structure outlined by the transactionalists.

[9] Ibid.

[10] "Talk-Write: A Behavioral Pedagogy for Composition," College English, XXX (January 1969), pp 267-268. Zoellner applies the distinction between "metaphor-as-instrument" and "metaphor-as-artifact" to the composition process. Thinking is not characterized by the same application of metaphor as is writing. The instrumental metaphors of thinking, speaking and writing applied in the process using language, cannot be understood by either teacher or student through an analysis of artifactual metaphor (p.268). As a result, Zoellner suggests what we shift "our attention from thought process to operative utterance [the spoken word]"; in other words, he suggests we relate the symbolic and metaphorical structures of talking to the operant structures and patterns of writing.(p. 274).

Joseph Comprone coordinates composition at The University of Minnesota, Morris. He has published articles on Yeats, Frost, film and composition, and has a composition text in progress.

"Answer me"

by ED MAKO
Lakeville High School

Answer me this, you men who make man a chemical process . . . . What is gone when the corpse is left? Where is man? The body is present.

And this,you who would have us high grade apes. . . .Why do men suffer loneliness in the midst of the world's billions?

This too I ask, you of the survival of the fittest. . . .Why do men die for one another?

One last answer I ask. . . .Of what use is love?

forum

Territoriality: What Shall the "English" Teacher Teach?

The Great Terminological War

by SEYMOUR YESNER
Consultant in Secondary School English, Minneapolis

As the experiential value of "English" becomes the dominating concern of the English teacher, conflict with social studies (and with other subjects) increases. The conflict is more apparent than real, perpetuated by teachers who need well delineated categories for comfort and little compartments to control. The repeated cry is "hands off"; the constant wariness is fear; the warning sign reads "trespassers beware." Eventually the cries and the fears harmonize into a kind of battle hymn that pits one teacher against the other, each struggling for a private preserve of notes, throw-away gags, assignments, tests, and bulletin board paraphernalia. In this way, issues of immediate concern to students, like civil rights, campus disturbances, student rights, the Vietnam war, are casualties of a kind of cold war that constructs its own iron curtain, well posted with "off-limits" and "no hunting" signs.

The usual image of an English teacher projects him as a person removed from reality, preoccupied with books, a habit considered worthwhile though essentially useless, and rabid about the vagaries of grammar and other language imponderables, all of which produce few tangible results other than keeping kids busy in harmless ways. This English teacher threatens no one. He is safe. Let him tread upon current "fact," and suddenly he emerges packing pistols and a submachine gun.

Should the English teacher wish to cease anaesthetizing his students by an intellectual foray into the problems that the students want to talk, write, and read about, he is often confronted by angry colleagues who accuse him of usurpation of the rights of others. Social studies teachers, probably because of interchangeable materials and unclear ideational boundaries, seem most inclined to adopt a protectionist attitude.

In this, they are often supported by principals. Typical of principal responses is this one that I overheard: "I go into an English class and there's my English teacher discussing Vietnam. Now I don't want him discussing Vietnam. What does he know about Vietnam, anyway? If anyone is going to discuss it, it's going to be my social studies teachers. They should know more about Viet-

nam than the English teacher, and I trust them more...."

Of course, what social studies teachers should know, and what they actually know are entirely different things; and the essential point is still being missed if anyone, in particular principals and social studies teachers, assumes that English teachers are any less (or more) concerned, or any less (or more) informed, than social studies teachers. They certainly, however, may be as informed. Considering that some English teachers read a lot, watch television and movies a lot, and may have strong convictions for or against the war, means they may even be better informed than some social studies teachers, in particular those who are cloistered and uncommunicative except in regard to sports, cars, and the stock market. Must English teachers, because of some ill-defined notion of the function of English on the part of teachers in other disciplines, hide their knowledge? Moreover, what if the purpose of the discussion is twofold: 1) to learn about discussion, i.e. how to discuss; 2) to learn about Vietnam utilizing the process of discussion? Clearly, to discuss, it is desirable to have something important to discuss, and of considerable interest. As a means to learn about the problems of Vietnam, discussion is appropriate. As a way to practice the use of language for the purpose of shaping and altering ideas, discussion is appropriate. From these two points of view alone, a discussion about Vietnam may make sense; reifying the idea that what is discussed may not be as important as the process of discussing. The good English teacher will accordingly line up his sights on any issue that produces the discussion, or the writing, or the reading he considers necessary for language growth.

Having revealed the paranoid side of the controversy, let me reveal a schizoid one, too, by observing that people in other disciplines have no hesitation about splitting themselves into the English teacher's "domain" when it suits their purposes. Erik Erickson and Jerome Bruner are prime examples. For instance, Bruner in his book On Knowing (pp. 43-47, Harvard University Press, 1962) devotes an entire chapter to "Identity and the Modern Novel."

Not surprisingly, thinkers like Bruner have deduced that for purposes of coping with our human curiosity about ourselves, our morality, our concepts of reality, spirituality, and all the other ramifications of being alive, demarcations into artificial subject areas are, if not ridiculous, at least ludicrous. And that literature and other arts should be tapped if they offer up useful syrup.

So, reducing the problem to the practical, what should an English teacher do when he teaches the newspaper? Should he pretend that college campuses are sedate and undisturbed by student protests? Or should he engage his students in talking, writing, and reading--i.e. thinking--about these protests, their causes and effects, and the possible solutions?

Reverse the circumstances: should a social studies teacher dealing with urban problems avoid using books like The Cool World, Manchild in the Promised Land, and Down These Mean Streets?

A significant fact for social studies teachers to consider is that the Advanced Placement Examination of May 1970 in American History contains a question like the following:

> Choose any two of the following works and explain how each illuminates the period in which it was written:
>
> The Sun Also Rises
> Leaves of Grass
> Autobiography of Malcolm X
> The Grapes of Wrath
> Looking Backward
> The Confessions of Nat Turner
> Civil Disobedience
> Up From Slavery
> "Birth of a Nation"

This question relying upon literature and a film intimates that it is an exercise in stupidity to hear one side of a coin objecting to the other side's right to share the same metal.

I might add with some chagrin that, within the realm of English itself, teachers are always seeking to stake out claims. Great Expectations shouldn't be taught in the ninth grade because it kills the book for the eleventh grade; Huckleberry Finn belongs to the ninth grade; the complex sentence is reserved for tenth grade; the film "Loneliness of a Long Distance Runner" can be shown only to members of the track team.

Great Expectations should be used at any grade with any student who can read and comprehend it. First, it is not the only linear novel dealing with loss of innocence and a discovery of the need for a personal integrity. A little mining would expose much gold of the same weight and worth. For example, The Yearling. Catcher in the Rye, A Separate Peace. Second, the constant refrain of readiness--the child must be ready; the child must be sophisticated enough; the child must bring experiences to the

encounter--dupes students and teachers into believing that some ideal moment exists when child and book can be mated.

I read War and Peace for the first time when I was about twelve and found myself not ready for it; I read it again at sixteen and found myself not ready for it; I read it once again in college and found myself still not ready for it; and two years ago I read it again, and lo and behold, I was not ready for it. I expect to be always not ready for War and Peace just as each time I listen to Don Giovanni I am not ready. The experience of reading War and Peace is one of continually being readied, of discovering, of remaining always innocent and unsophisticated. And each reading experience is a part of being and of becoming, preparing and renewing me for other experiences, including the rereading of the book Each time I read, or listen, I am sure I am changed and perhaps more ready for next time, but never truly ready.... This, of course, comprises the essence of experiences that behavioral objectives can never measure.

I'm saying that neither English teachers nor social studies teachers are actullly deprived of bread nnd butter items if one book or topic is used by other teachers, no matter in which subject field. Social studies is in no way diminished in English teachers discover in their examination of literature and mass media that wars occur, divorce exists, love produces unreason, and men in general do strange things. If English teachers choose to approach these human problems in an effort to show the "truth" through literature, or through language encounters, I don't think the problems will be exhausted, stranding social studies teachers on a deserted atoll.

At least let's recognize that problems like war, racism unreason, and stupidity, plus the varieties of analytical ways of approaching these problems, are not intellectually exhausted by any teacher, or group of teachers, be they English or social studies teachers.

I am not very impressed by the argument (remember that principal!) that social problems are better left in the exclusive charge of teachers who have been trained in the social sciences. This assumes than any worldly, experienced English teacher would be less cognizant of social problems than any teacher, experienced, inexperinced, worldly, or unworldly, teaching under the classification of a "major" in social studies. There are undealing with issues of our time simply because a narrow and uninformed social studies teacher feels invaded? Intelligence, skill, talents, insights, and knowledge should be contained by no bounds other than the recognizable limits that intelligence offers to its possessor. To be honest, the trouble with most modern problems courses taught by social studies teachers is that they are neither modern, nor do they deal with problems. Ask how many consider in depth venereal disease, sex, pop art, urban decay, the host of problems the students really want to explore? In all probability, the trouble with "modern problems" emanates from the

confined vision that refuses to see relationships among subject matters and lurks in foxholes behind traditional territorial boundaries.

I recommend for both social studies and English teachers a freeing of the mind so that the mainstream of life is allowed into these subjects and a holistic conception for pedagogical purposes assimilates all subjects through a process of specialized complementation. This mental freeing produces a vision of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness, as the way to proceed. It does not divide into "realms" the cognitive and the affective. The teachers who understand specialized complementation are true beings of our time. They are specialists who can generalize, specialists who know their limitations because they communicate with, and teach with, other specialists and constantly seek to know other resources outside their specialities. They sense the connections among things even if not immediately apparent nor explainable in identical terms. This kind of specialist has an Einsteinian perception of relatedness and interaction.

Who is this specialist? He is a teacher who considers himself well qualified in some area or areas, like poetry, writing, reading, the novel, proletarian literature, vocabulary building, the great ideas of the western world, economic theory, or anything else. He is the teacher who realizes that the world and everything in it is his laboratory to explore, rearrange, think about. Because of this, his job impinges upon, and enriches, all other aspects of his life and vice versa. The complementation emerges from what the teacher sees as the cross-currents that need to flow over, through, and under his own specialized emphasis. Thus, in teaching poetry, he may bring in poets; or he may seek through a social studies teacher to find readings collateral to a poet's work, like historical and social documents that might elucidate, for example, Blake's view of the England of his time; or he may collaborate with a music teacher and music students in putting Blake's songs to music. The basic determination is to cover all generalizations, or particularizations, with permeable membranes so that ideas can flow back and forth.

To show how confined our perspectives still are, we need only consider that the history of the English language is the prerogative of English teachers (history, mind you!) but that society which gives vent to language, and in turn is influenced by language, is not. Logically, if perversely, the efforts of English teachers should be directed at excluding language from social studies, allowing these teachers the privilege of incorporating the history of language into their syllabi, if they wish, but insisting that all discourse take place in silence.

Absurdities exist in life but not as deliberate exercises. To remove aspects of culture, anthropology, history, science, art from literature or from courses relying upon an experiential base would be to court a kind of intellectual vacuity that can only end in classroom disasters and absurd situations. In spite of the fact that eminent advocates like G. Robert Carlson say our

concern in English is with what literature "does to us," we must realize that sometimes it does very little unless we know other things--like facts about the author, the cultural context in which the work was created, attitudes of other people toward it. The polemic over primacies in esteeming literature or in determining its redeeming values need not trouble us here. What needs to be clarified is the fact that anything that contributes to the rapport between a literary work and its reader does something to that reader. If to expand the reader's capacity for rapport a teacher needs to use Freud, Marx, Lorenz, or any other provocative thinker, he should use them. If this teacher knows his specialized limits, as he should, then he will provide as a complement to his course,a liaison with colleagues from other specialties (subjects).

Another case of the absurd is to reduce Hamlet to nothing but its action which would relegate the play to total fantasy without any real regard for flesh and blood concerns. Unfortunately, all too often, English literature courses become "arty," playing with nebulous behavior and affairs, designed to elicit laughter, or a few pretty tears. The sordidness and the acts of violence are never transposed onto a real world stage. This is why parents so readily accept "the classics" but repudiate, as dangerous, contemporary works.

Too willingly and too often, people are either "fooled" by romance and unreal experience, the Emma Bovaries of our world, or they are relieved of their responsibilities through the illusion of "feeling," through the temporary sense of being one with all men, of suffering with and for all creatures, of therefore being a better person, a sensitive person, who has, without the need for any further action, purged himself through an experience with the illusion of art. This is what occurs when we deify the affective realm as the primal source of all humane concerns and act as if opera singers or artists or art lovers are automatically less inclined to butchery than mathematicians and philosophers. The charitable act takes place in the theater or while reading a book; no other is necessary. If you have wept for Robert Jordan, why weep for the Vietnamese and American dead; if you sympathize and applaud Doctor Stockmann, your ecological good deed has been done, and you can smog on forever. Such illusions, John Wayne twirling a six shooter, creep out of the archetypal mists to destroy us because they ultimately become delusions similar to those that cause us to speak of "never losing a war," or "helping to save Vietnam." English teachers can contimue to compare Holden Caulfield with Pip just as social studies teachers can teach economic theory. But if neither touches on the realities of poverty, or on the conditions that alienate youth, it is a wasted exercise.

Having made my point that the process of teaching a subject demands a grounding in the solidity of pertinent matter that supersedes subject departments, that the process also demands abilities to transcend one's speciality by complementation with other

specialities, let me proceed to an operational construct that derives from the theoretical similarities and dissimilarities between English and social studies, recognizing that the most fundamental difference inheres in the original impulse that attracted one person to English and the other to something else. This impulse, in and of itself, will generally assure, even when using identical materials, substantive differences in assignments, in expectations, in techniques, and in overall objectives. No artificially constructed liaison will change the fact that by and large English teachers are not social studies teachers.

One other point should be made before going on. Teachers of any subject, as long as their primary focus in on the mere mastery of skills encompassing a delimited specialty, become little different from mechanics, production line workers, or, at best, artisans. The extension of this narrowness to something like a remedial reading course results in a mechanical stress on skills which often actually prevent kids from ever "reading" a story. To move teaching to the level of art teachers themselves must be deepened. In this respect, the teacher-artist creates his classroom ambience, as a dramatist does, from all the materials at his disposal, subordinating them to his purpose, producing a design and order that is uniquely his, non-duplicable under most circumstances by anybody whether in his subject field or out of it. Rarely is this sort of person threatened by other teachers.

So, in reality, formalistic distinctions of the type I am assying here provide nothing more than an interesting divertissment of no relevance to the teacher-artist who defines his own role, chops his own path, and knocks down arbitrary, and often foolish, barriers. The relevance of what is said here applies only to those bureaucratic minds that see order in compartments, labels, divisions, subjects, disciplines, the endless terms that stress separation and compliance rather than amalgamation and originality.

To deal with this phenomemon of petty minds, let me return to my two antagonists, the English teacher and his "foe", the social studies teacher; and let me make a rudimentary distinction between them that could make sense regardless of what materials are used: namely, that for English teachers the literary quality of a work, and the language utterances, meanings and forces, would take primacy over social-historical information.

Staying, for the purposes of this paper, with literature, I would agree with Carlsen that its importance in the classroom is "to help young people undergo the experiences considered significant by the most sensitive people that the world has produced." Carlsen says more: "What a student learns about the social period in which the work is produced is completely secondary and peripheral. What he learns about the writer and his life is secondary. Even what he may deduce about the structure that produces the sensation is of secondary importance. (I quote from a reprint of an

article entitled "Literature: Dead or Alive?" I do not know its published source.) For Carlsen, the experience is all.

One important idea has been extruded here: that literature in the high school classroom should not be treated as "art", or as "art history"; at least not as a first concern.

Immediately, the differential focus between English and social studies becomes clear, revealing the possibility for beneficial collaboration between the subjects, without loss to either.

In literature (and probably language, especially if we consider language as the whole and literature a part), the incontrovertible concerns of English teachers have as their wellspring the gush of experiences. The relation of literary beings to these experiences depands on their special symbolical qualities which, as they are expanded to the generic, levitate only then as "symbols" of human behavior. It is by extension--a conscious intellectual (and often strained) extension --that these "symbols" become societal reflections.

Let's take an example from the reality of literature and the world; let's take war. Men in wars behave in interesting and sometimes unusual ways. Thus, writers who seek to depict men's behavior must come to grips with the way men in war behave: bravely, cowardly, fearfully, antagonistically, cooperatively, gloriously, horribly.

Social studies usually does not start from this point. It is the phenomenon of war itself and the phenomena that "cause" a particular war, or wars, that engage the social scientist. One aspect of this engagement may be the psychology of men at war, or men about to go to war. It is fascinating and important to analyze mass fear, mass hysteria, mass hate, and usually this is done by isolating a case history, a specific war or a specific man.

English through literature would deal with specific men (characters) in a specific war (that often could be any war). By elevation to symbol the characters could become clusters of men, or any man. The "truth" of literature resides in this experiential power of generalization.

Social studies starts with the mass, the prevision of societal action or behavior--or the history, the past vision--and proceeds to generalize about individuals, saying that under certain conditions men behave in definable ways and it can be anticipated that under comparable conditions men will once again behave in the same way.

Social studies might consciously investigate the causes of particular wars, generalizing from these to the causes of war. Literature, if it looks at causes at all, would see the causes as part of the human condition, looking at human behavior

(through fictional beings) under duress. (At this point, Carlsen's stress on what literature does to us loses its distinctness since history or sociology may do things to us too. Oscar Lewis's Five Families and La Vida certainly did something to me.)

For ease of comparison, let's assume that a social studies class wants to investigate World War I. Coincidentally and concurrently, an English class becomes preoccupied with the theme of war. Here is a partial list of the readings in the English class:

Paths of Glory
Farewell to Arms
The Good Soldier Schweik
The Case of Sergeant Grischa
All Quiet on the Western Front
The Fable
The Guns of August

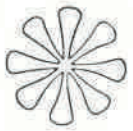
The book that might raise an eyebrow is the Guns of August which could be the starting point for a social studies course. Why is it on the English list? First, it is dubious if the English teacher would use the book as the core of the course. Instead, it would be recommended as ancillary reading to lend a kind of enlightenment to the novels. The book woulc supplement conclusions about World War I and war in general that arise from reading the novels: that men, especially leaders, are often callous and stupid; that our fictional heroes are justified in abandoning their commitment to the folly of war, that war is brutal and brutalizes; that sympathy exists for the individual who refuses to become systematized by the military, or by the bureaucracy, by those parts of society (the government, the military, the schools, the businesses) that social studies is always studying. Standing the procedure on its head (on its feet from a social studies point of view) allows the social studies teacher to use the novels as adjuncts to Tuchman's book. The novels now reinforce specific allegations about the blunders of the military bureaucracy, blunders which cause innocent men and women to participate in mutual slaughter and to lose lives, limbs, innocence and idealism. From the stand point of desirable effect, the vicarious involvement with literary beings and their experiences should produce in the reader powerful sensations which might complement the more cerebral (possibly factual) social studies

Each discipline can survive alone. By doing so, the range for imaginative probing into reality is cut down. Artificial, and arbitrary, barriers ot learning are erected by teachers, the very peo le who should be struggling to eradicate these barriers. Without any question, the lure of seeing experiences merge into a self-perpetuating, conscious holism is minimized and drudgery is maximized.

I think the confession in my presence of a well-known university history teacher that any good history teacher is a humanities teacher because he will use information from any field is a point applicable to all good teachers. He embellished this remark by revealing somewhat shame-facedly that over sixty percent of the books on his list of suggested readings were from literature.

I don't know if my point has been made: it is that terminological distinctions are basically meaningless and often confusing, if not downright defeating. To insist that the label English includes certain specifics while excluding others because those others belong under another label is to see life as piecemeal, a collection of intellectual odds and ends. The danger of this view consists in the organizational role it forces upon the teacher who ends up spending most of his time selecting and rejecting things according to unreliable definitions and labels instead of according to what is teachable and important.

Seymour Yesner has resumed his role as Consultant in English for the secondary schools of Minneapolis after a year "abroad" in New York at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.



On the Teaching of English as Social Studies

by RONALD MAURICE
Winona State College

For the purpose of background, let us entertain some rather loose and unstartling premises or observations. First, judging from available evidence, students are not learning as much about their native tongue as they are about other areas of the curriculum. Second, we were as eager to pursue social studies in the late sixties as we were to pursue science in the late fifties. And third, for some time it has been thought pedagogically wise to merge the teaching of social studies with English. (Unfortunately, after the junior high school level this has meant that the English teacher sacrificed a good deal of English time for an attempt at teaching social studies, while the social studies teacher, for his part, occasionally corrected some spelling errors.)

All this seems to add up to the fact that we are often sacrificing English for social studies. The well-meaning rationale seems to be based on the desire for or the fact that Social Studies is the new religion (as Science had become our religion by the late fifties).

Social studies as a motivational device is easy to understand. Possibly the class just can't settle down until everyone has discussed the latest events--they didn't get a chance in social studies class or the teacher didn't let everyone say his piece--or maybe the English class can't write unless black power is the subject of the essay. These reasons may be both harmless and natural if they are kept in proper perspective. But what is the proper perspective? For instance, do the students get, in English class, a total of thirty minutes of social studies, and then at best a weak finale of twenty-five minutes of English (or whatever the time requirements should happen to be)?

And incidentally, how do most of us English teachers fare as social studies teachers? Some, to be sure, are equally or more qualified in social studies. Others may be rather unqualified. For those who are unqualified, the problem--if it be considered one--might exist only from an accrediting point of view, but then certainly those who just don't happen to have the actual credits for the purpose of accreditation should be able to go ahead and teach some social studies in English class since these teachers are teaching the right and important ideas anyway. But doesn't this boil down to more of a need for liberalism than facts or knowledge? Possibly one doesn't have to be certified to teach the right things: if one is liberal enough about race and poverty he has certification, de jure. And incidentally, if we take this short cut, is it homage or insult to the

area that has fought so hard to become known as social science?

It appears that we may not always be giving English its fair share of the time, and in our eagerness to set aright the social environment, we may be ultimately substituting too much good intention for too little knowledge.

Some of us might really be wise to teach just English--especially if the standard tests throughout the school show that this subject is lagging behind.

Ronald Maurice is a member of the English department at Winona State College.

Jump Up, Shake Around

by **WILLIAM FISHER**
Blake School, Hopkins

But no honey-tongued persuasion,
No smooth words of artful charming,
No stout threats shall loose my tongue,
Till he loose these bonds of insult,
And himself make just atonement
For injustice done to me.
-Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound (450 B.C.)

The best work of three major American playwrights--Tennessee Williams, William Inge, Arthur Miller--was first produced while I was in high school. It was, therefore, too recent to be included in those midcentury English classes.

Ionesco, Beckett, Pinter, Albee were produced after I had completed college. If I were not an English teacher I would probably never choose to read their plays nor would I see them performed on stage.

Most adults do not buy plays to read nor do they frequent the community theaters, if there are any. They do not read plays because they were never convinced that a drama script deals directly with the condition of their lives. They do not attend plays, in part for the same readon, but also because they never had adequate opportunity to appreciate the dramatic appeal of the live performance.

The high school generation we are now teaching will likewise be culturally deprived in relation to such playwrights of their time as Sam Shepard, John Guare, Terrence McNally, Jean-Claude van Itallie, Arthur Kopit, Robert Montgomery, Paul Zindel, C.J. Burton, Charles Gordone, Lonne Elder III. Our students will escape exposure to the works of these men, and any knowledge of their plays will be via the filmed version or the television special in the next decade (i.e., The Price, The Andersonville Trial).

One can test the validity of this assumption by asking any friend, young or old, what he has seen or read by any of the first five playwrights in the preceding paragraph. All wrote plays which received critical acclaim and have either been performed in Minnesota or are available in paperback. To continue the experiment, one can ask his older friends the same questions about Albee or Pinter. The rule of thumb seems to be: If not in high school, then probably never.

We need to remind ourselves of the purpose and power of drama as a performing art of special relevancy to the here and now.

No portion of literature is connected by closer or more numerous ties with the present condition of society than the drama. (Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America [New York: Vintage Books, 1954], p. 84.)

The human condition, Heidegger says, is to be there. Probably it is the theatre, more than any other mode of representing reality, which reproduces this situation most naturally. The drmaatic character is on stage, that is his primary quality: he is there . . . . (Alain Robbe-Grillet, For a New Novel [New York: Grove Press, 1966], p. 111.)

The theater has much in common with other media. What is peculiar to it is the flesh and blood encounter of flesh and blood human beings. (Eric Bentley, The New York Times, August 30, 1970.)

. . .the need to confront man with the reality of his situation is greater than ever. For the dignity of man lies in his his ability to face reality in all its senselessness; to accept it freely, without fear, without illusions-- and to laugh at it. That is the cause to which, in their various individual, modest, and quixotic ways, the dramatists of the Absurd are dedicated. (Martin Esslin, The Theatre of the Absurd [New York: Anchor Books, 1961], p. 316.)

We are not free and the sky can still fall on our heads. And the theater has been created to teach us that first of all. (Antonin Artaud, quoted by Robert Brustein, The New York Times, March 28, 1971.)

We need to make some judgements and take some risks to bring more contemporary drama into our courses. And we need to reexamine our method of studying drama. We want students to read novels and short stories and poetry on their own initiative outside of class, and to continue to read all their lives. We want to involve them in drama in the same way, and it is obvious we seldom succeed in this objective. If one asks young people where they went on the weekend, the answer may be a rock concert or a movie, but rarely is it to the theater. True, there is tremendous competition from the electronic media. But if the human experience revealed through the dramatic moment on stage is as vital as we believe it to be, then surely this moment has an attraction for our young in an age of public passion and instant react.

Part of the dramatic power lies in words, But the total impact depends on several other factors. the artistic unity provided by the director, the skill of the players, the set and lighting --each contributes to an appreciation of the whole.

"The theater is an exciting place to be," says Paul Hecht, 29-year-old actor who left a starring role on Broadway to play Cyrano at the Guthrie theater. "The theater shouldn't be intimidating. You shouldn't go thinking it is your cultural evening out." (Barbara Flanagan in the Minneapolis Star, June 3, 1971.)

There are obvious alternatives to beginning a study of drama by reading from a text. The NCTE research report completed by James Hoetker on classroom study versus theater attendance is a timely one. (Language Arts Newsletter, Minneapolis Public Schools, March-April, 1971, pp. 6-7.) Granted, one study may not be conclusive, and limitations exist in any given school situation, but the results certainly indicate the need for a wider exploration by other teachers.

In the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area we have a theater garden in which few of us stroll with our students. This opportunity is apparently part of a healthy nationwide trend. In U.S. News & World Report (May 4, 1970) it was pointed out that "original plays are premiered in communities where professional performances were rare a decade ago." Certainly the development in the mid-60s of the Guthrie Theater with its classical repertory program and the Firehouse Theater with the avante garde reflect the growing opportunities outside of New York.

During the 1970-71 season in our metropolitan area we had from six to twelve different productions on any weekend. One could have experienced Sophocles, Moliere, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Brecht, O'Neill, Cocteau, Genet, Beckett, Pinter, Albee, Jean-Claude von Itallie, Elder, Kopit--and some of our local playwrights (Ball, Gaines, Lehr, Nasanow, Nc , Priest).

The Guthrie Theater is a familiar place to many teachers and, happily, to a significant number of students. It has a special office to help high schools utilize not only its performances of the classic plays but also its professional staff. The lesser-known offshoot of the Guthrie, The Other Place, has had some operating problems, but does attempt to bring some of the newer plays, including those by local playwrights, to the community.

Minneapolis' Theater in the Round and St. Paul's Chimera Theater both offer a variety of experiences--comedy, musicals, serious drama. The Children's Theater under the direction of John Donahue has earned a national reputation, with productions that appeal to youngsters of all ages. Frequently they work with adaptation of American classics such as Huckleberry Finn or Little Women. Their summer workshop for young people has extended its influence into the schools, and the staff has been especially cooperative.

The University of Minnesota Theater, now in its 40th season, has the staff to produce a continuing program of quality drama. The techniques at the University theaters are likely to appeal to the young people. And the University is likely to come up with with something like Charles Nolte's A Night at the Black Pig Inn, an original based on the events surrounding the 44th birthday of August Strindberg. Or David Monasch's staging of The Eagle With

Two Heads, with the audience shifting rooms for the two acts. Or a group of former San Quentin prison inmates, The Barbwire Company, touring with their message. These experiences do much to serve as a springboard for discussion.

Hamline University has two theaters, Edyth Bush and Drew, where last November one could choose between the Williams classic, The Glass Menagerie, or Stoppard's recent experimental work, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. Last February Macalester College was host to the American College Theater Festival for the Minnesota-Dakota area, bringing six quality productions to their fine stage. Of particular interest for discussion was the University of South Dakota entry, Arthur Kopit's Indians, which critic John Lahr ranks as one of the finest American plays of the last two decades.

The "new" theater of the 60s, the efforts to form ensemble groups and to create a freer, improvisational form of drama that often brings the actors into the audience or the audience onto the stage, was represented originally in St. Paul's Fire House Theater. The Minneapolis Ensemble Theater now offers this type of avante garde drama. Because of its style and the immediacy of its social commentary it has special appeal to young people, but its candid representation of life will raise questions about its suitability.

George Kaufman, one of Broadway's most famous comic writers, told us, "Satire is what closes Saturday night." (John Lahr, Up Against the Fourth Wall [New York: Grove Press, 1970], p. 78.) Not so for Brave New Workshop. Its lighthearted view of the current scene in a series of dramatic sketches might be contrasted with the heavier approach of Jules Feiffer's The White House Murder Case, presented last year by the Theater of Involvement. One tends to think of Feiffer as primarily a cartoonist, but Lahr states, "Already blessed with a buffoon's resilience and the ability to take risks with his vision, Feiffer has all the assets to become one of American theater's major craftsmen." (Ibid., p. 94.)

Comedy seems to be the forte of the commercial theaters such as the Old Log, and the Chanhassen Frontier, and the Friars Dinner Theater. These theaters usually offer special matinees at reduced prices for student groups.

One can find drama which appeals to young people at the community theaters: the North Suburban Community Theater, the Lakeshore Players at White Bear Lake, the Jewish Community Center, Theater 1900 at the Plymouth Congregational Church. And perhaps the energy and original purpose of the play as communciator to the people is captured in the occasional efforts of such groups as the Shoestring Playhouse, the Potpourri Players, or the People's Playhouse.

Teachers in schools outside the metropolitan area will need to explore first what theater might be available near their communities. But if one accepts the value of the direct involvement through attendance, it should be no great problem to schedule a long weekend in the Twin Cities for students in advanced classes. By leaving Thursday noon and returning Sunday, they would find it possible to attend three different performances. If one objective of our English courses is a greater awareness and understanding of others, it would seem logical to work out arrangements for visiting classes to be guests of various metropolitan classes. This would eliminate some of the expense, and, hopefully, be an educational experience for both host and guest.

Instead of a text, the guide to current drama becomes the Entertainment and Arts Section of the Sunday Minneapolis Tribune. The reviews of Mike Steele, Peter Altman, and Ed Bolton provide some guidelines. A general reference available in paperback might be The Third Theater by Robert Brustein, Dean of the Yale School of Drama.

Direct involvement with our theaters and their personnel should become a vital part of our study of dramatic literature. At the same time we should consider our classroom approach. To appreciate the dramatic whole, we can suggest that the student attempt the actor's task, without grading or demanding perfection. This would involve the reading of lines, a technique which is being utilized. But the emphasis in comtemporary theater is frequently on motion as well as sound. It is on improvisation as well as the prepared script. This is the New York influence of the Living Theater's work, and its offshoot, the Open Theater, and the excellent productions of Jerzy Grotowski's Polish Lab Theater. Such acting crafts lend themselves to simplifies classroom participation. Sound-motion exercises and improvisations can be developed at any level if they are properly introduced.

An effective approach to the study of drama, therefore, would begin with the performance aspect. There would be immediate involvement through sound-motion exercises and improvisations; attendance at the professional, university and amateur theaters; and visits at school with theater personnel. Then the group would turn to the literary aspect and read and discuss whatever plays the teacher believes important. Hopefully, the students would be able to see the play come alive as they read.

This would move the secondary schools in the direction that many colleges and universities have taken in the past decade. Recognizing the incongruity of study which separates the performing and literary aspects of drama, they have formed theater departments and achieved educational respectability for this discipline. Edwin Pettet, Chairman of the School of Dramatic Art at Brandeis University, states, "Presently more than four hundred colleges and universities confer the baccalaureate degree upon students with a concentration in the theater arts, and one hundred eighty-five offer the advanced degree of master of arts or doctor of philosophy

in theater." (Alan S. Downer, The American Theater Today [New York: Basic Books, 1967], p. 184.)

The establishment of term or quarterly electives and the flexibility of modular scheduling lend themselves to this approach. There would be additional opportunity for independent study or playwriting after introductory courses. Some excellent dramatic dialog can be developed from articles such as those in the New York Times Magazine, and the step beyond dialog is full script.

Edward Albee, in an interview in the New York Times (April 18, 1971), suggests, "Serious theater is meant to change people, to change their perception of themselves." If we accept that as one legitimate objective of our study of drama with our students, we first need to change our method of experiencing drama so that it becomes a dynamic portrayal of the human condition.

I know how the caged bird feels.
I look out,
from behind the bars,
into the grinning faces of my masters,
feel their cooing whistles,
teaching me their songs, their pretty melodies,
but I don't learn them.

(from The New Chautauqua written by Fred Baines for use by the Any Place Theater in the streets of the Twin Cities, 1968)

SUGGESTED READING LIST

Bentley, Eric	What Is Theatre?
Blau, Herbert	The Impossible Theater
Brustein, Robert	The Third Theatre
Downer, Alan	The American Theater Today
Esslin, Martin	The Theatre of the Absurd
Gilman, Richard	Common and Uncommon Masks
Kernan, Alvin	Modern American Theatre
Kerr, Walter	Thirty Plays Hath November
Lahr, John	Up Against the Fourth Wall
Lewis, Allan	American Plays and Playwrights of the Contemporary Theatre

William Fisher teaches at Blake School, Hopkins. He has done some acting with community theatres, and he has written articles for the Minneapolis Tribune, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the Minnesota Council of Social Studies Bulletin, *et al.*

Poets in the Schools: Report of a Conference

by RAYMOND BINGEA
North Senior High School, North St. Paul

It was a grand night for poetry reading. On the misty-rainy night in October when the leaves were just taking a notion to turn, participants of a two-day Poets in the Schools workshop were gathering in the bright commons area of the Christian Brothers' Retreat House at Dunrovin near Marine-on-the-St. Croix.

In their informal attire poets and teachers were not readily distinguished. Such a confusion of roles is part of the rationale of the program. The teacher is "normally perceived in the role of 'teacher-as-examiner', " says a blue mimeographed pamphlet in the portfolio issued participants upon registering. "For the success of this creative writing workshop he must be seen in an unusual role, that of 'teacher-as-fellow-writer'." The teacher's poetry writing was not expected to stop with the workshop. The sixteen-page monograph concludes with the enticement/intimidation: "Write with your students."

This mimeographed pamphlet proved to be a compilation of the exercises Brian Meeson of the Toronto Language Study Center was to put everyone through the next day.and an explanation of his program. Inspecting the portfolio further, those attending the workshop found many other good things; including A Handbook for Teachers, a pamphlet meant to be a supplement to Kenneth Koch's Wishes, Lies, and Dreams, a book central to the purposes of the program.

In another pocket of the portfolio was to be found another result of the program, an attractively illustrated booklet of verse entitled, Sighs with the Optic Nerve. It is the product of the St. Paul Writing Center in the Arts and Science Center attended once a week by St. Paul high school students for sessions conducted by John Caddy, poet in residence. Rod Gingrich, an editor and contributor to the publication, has recently been appointed to the advisory board of the national student poetry magazine, Typog.

Teachers also learned of the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines by means of an up-to-date listing, included in the packet, of its member "little mags." They learned of six seminars with poets that had been planned for them, to be held in the comfortable setting of the Members' Lounge of the Arts and Science Center in St. Paul.

gambling machines with their oranges, lemons, and pears. John Caddy also read, as did John Rezmerski, author of Held for Questioning, who teaches at Gustavus Adolphus College. Tired of love poetry, Richard Shaw, author of Without a Clever Title, read some hate poetry. Stanley Kiesel, poet in residence in Minneapolis schools, was a lively and appreciative emcee whose complaint against summer school and the movies in the manner of Mayakovsky-Yevtuschenko was an energetic conclusion to the evening's reading.

Once the reading was concluded, conversation between poets and teachers turned to, among other things, practical considerations of how the specific poet could be involved in the teacher's program. One value of the place chosen for the conference became especially apparent at this point. The prospect of a private room and a warm bed just down the hall was a welcome convenience.

Breakfast and dinner offered another valuable reinforcement of the comradery the conference inspired. How often do sixty poetry enthusiasts dine together? In place of the campfire song the rustic setting seemed to invite, the mess was presented with an original poem after dinner--a satirical John Rezmerski-Tarzan-poem, complete with ear-splitting Tarzan-yell. There was something very correct about it all, following as it did three hours of sensing and writing. Perhaps stressing the writing over talking about writing, Brian Meeson, who directed the session, didn't ask teachers to read the products of the various exercises. The effect was somewhat like constantly pouring ingredients into a percolator.

Participants became conscious of themselves first and then the world as they perceived it. "Cover as much space as possible in the room" they were told, "Meet as many people as you can. No talking." Then they were urged to move faster and faster, diagonally, sideways, and backwards, as well as forwards; faces and bodies flitted by at a frenzied pace. In another exercise, with their eyes closed they were led by a fellow participant to things strange to the touch. They wrote about their sensations. Midway in the morning they emerged form the retreat house into the open air. They were told to find something with an especially interesting feel to it. The sun had just come out from the mist and rain. The dripping world around the diminutive lake offered a rich supply--stones, coarse weed-spears, moss. After the break, these objects were passed blind from hand to hand until, somewhat as in musical chairs, the object held became the writer's property. He was told to examine it closely, to empathize with it, and then to put down as much information about it as he could in ten minutes.

Many exercises involved pairing off or working in groups. Pairs employed "word triggers" for example. One gives a word; the second repeats the word and adds the word it brings to his mind; the initiator repeats his partner's addition adding his own word to that:

In a recent interview in the Minneapolis Tribune, Randolph especially praised the program as it has developed in Minnesota schools. "Minneapolis-St. Paul is the No. 1 project in the country, and has been for four years." The director added that the reason for the success of the program in this area is the hard work of Mrs. Molly La Berge, co-ordinator of the program.

Five years ago in cooperation with the Minneapolis Schools and the University of Minnesota Extension Division the program had its start in our area as an in-service training for Minneapolis teachers. Each Saturday during a morning session with teachers, poets were given the opportunity to share what they thought schools should be doing with poetry. Then in the evening there was a reading for the general public. The list of poets involved was a who's who of modern poetry: May Swenson, W.D. Snodgrass, John Berryman, Galway Kinnell, Denise Levertov, Robert Bly, Louis Simpson and Allen Tate. The programs made it easy for teachers to distinguish these poets and to make their espective intentions more obvious, their poetry more available as living art.

The program of events for this year's workshop revealed that besides Mr. Meeson's writing and "sensing" sessions there were to be two poetry readings--one by poets who would be working in Minnesota schools and one by students brought to the conference by Wallace Kennedy of the Urban Arts Program of Minneapolis.

In the brightly lit commons area sociability had risen to a pitch between a warm hum and a restrained roar by the time the evening's reading in the chapel area upstairs was announced. By this time many of the dramatis personae had been identified. Probably most dynamic of all was not a poet but a blizzard of a German shepherd understandably called Snow Dog by his master, Michael Dennis Brown, poet in residence at the University of Minnesota and author of "The Wife of Winter." Once unleashed the dog moved constantly, exploring space in a way that anticipated one of the exercises Brian Meeson put workshop participants through the next day.

Even though it happened on a Friday night when fatigue from the week's work has teachers sleeping through the finest movies, no one nodded at the poetry reading. Talents of the poets ranged from those in the folk-vein of a traveling duo from Denver, guitarist-song writer Dan M'Crimmon and poet Doug Anderson, to those somewhat more formal--Englishman Michael Dennis Browne and Australian Keith Harrison of the Arts Program of Carleton College. Harrison concentrates his efforts on the Northfield area. Another poet who read, Stephen Dunn of the Creative Writing Program of Southwest State College and author of Five Impersonations, will work in the area of Marshall, Minnesota. As he manipulated the rhythmic jig board for his wooden dance-man, Keith Gunderson, professor of philosophy at the University of Minnesota, accompanied himself on the harmonica a sort of extra, as he warmed up to his poetry. Then the author of A Continual Interest in the Sun and the Sea rendered his quantitative metrical verse

about Minneapolis's Mississippi River Boulevard and Las Vegas

initiator: fry
second: fry---my
first: my---your
second: your---why
first: why---because
second: because---across

Sound rhythm, and meaning associations were thus loosened up.

After struggling with what Kenneth Koch would call their "rusty inner language," some commented that they felt drained. During a discussion period after lunch the session was in for closer scrutiny. There were those who felt that some very good poets might not care to go around with eyes closed or to touch people: "Someone like Eliot or Auden might go 'Don't touch me!'" Keith Gunderson demonstrated with a shriek. Others felt that there should have been sharing of the writing produced. Meeson, who has had much experience in other such sessions with the material, argued that the time was limited and more things could be attempted if time was not taken to read products of the exercises to one another and comment on them. His interest was in producing writing.

Wallace Kennedy then called a truce, suggesting that students he had brought and who had shared in the day's activities be given their opportunity to read. During these student readings each takes a turn when he or she feels he has something to offer. There was an eagerness to try out poems that demonstrated that poetry is fun. The motivational value of student verse in literature programs was apparent.

The emphasis in these meetings and in the seminars which have been scheduled is upon the teacher. It has been proved that these poets are able to bring the fun of poetry into the classrooms, but what happens when they leave? The Poets in the Schools program currently is concerned with helping the teacher as much as possible, giving him ideas and making the latest materials known to him so that he is capable of carrying on when the poet leaves.

If the choice of setting for this conference, Dunrovin, with its lake, trees, and open sky sounds ideal, it's because it really was. If there is an especial fitness in the seminars' setting of the luxurious Member's Lounge in the Arts and Sciences Center with its panoramic view of St. Paul's Capitol approach, the person to credit it Mrs. Molly La Berge.

A few years ago the title poet-in-residence was unusual--unheard of at the secondary and elementary level, but not any more. Many residencies have been set up through this program and the program of the Minnesota State Arts Council. This year

since Mrs. La Berge is on the State Arts Council besides directing the Poets in the Schools Program, the related programs are being unified. Although funds are allotted for the present year, Mrs. La Berge is anxious to discuss the wishes any teacher in Minnesota might have to set up a residency so that he might have a poet in his classroom.

Raymond Bingea teaches English at North Senior High School in St. Paul. He has written free lance articles for local newspapers and magazines.

Cinquain

by DORTHINE BLASCH
Hubert Olson Junior High School, Bloomington

Do we
Know happiness
At the very moment?
Or do we, only looking back,
Perceive?

Discussion, A Contempory Method

by MARGUERITE JENSEN
Southwest Minnesota State College, Marshall

Discussion has become a very popular method of instruction in the classroom, probably because both students and teachers desire a more active learning situation. In contrast to the read-and-recite method and the lecture-notebook routine, the discussion gives everyone the opportunity to express himself on subjects about which he is vitally concerned. Most importantly, it provides the opportunity to correct misrepresentations at the time they occur. However, some instructors can be disillusioned by the results, so far from their expectations. Part of the problem might be due to the fact that there are many formats from which to choose, the techniques vary from format to format, and the particular format chosen must be in accordance with the subject matter under consideration, which, in turn, will have its own unique outcomes. Since discussion is used frequently as a teaching technique in the first quarter of the American Language Skills course at Southwest Minnesota State College, I have found it helpful to assess its values and to define its various forms.

Definition of Successful Discussion

There is, of course, no surefire formula for predicting or insuring a successful discussion, but one of the keys seems to lie in the structuring of the situation, in how tightly the reins are held, or, to put it another way, in how narrowly or widely relevancy is interpreted. At one extreme, anything goes: free association, sudden changes of subject, personal reminiscence and other permissive practices. At the other end, there is a strong attempt to guide the students toward objectives already predetermined by the instructor. Neither extreme can be called a true discussion. The first is like the dormitory "bull session"; the second is nothing more than a lecture or class recitation in disguise. By contrast, good discussion is purposeful, calling for much student initiative and interaction, and a sharing of the responsibility to exchange ideas. This mode of instruction suggests itself whenever the aims of a single lesson, or even of an entire course, can best be obtained through common deliberation following from, and leading to, individual reading and study.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Discussion results in more student involvement and activity during the learning process, but it is also valuable from other standpoints. Examination of the values and limitations of collaborative behavior in discussion brings into focus four major advantages: (1) groups are generally superior to individuals in problem solving; (2) groups are more likely to carry out a group decision or solution; (3) group activity provides an effective means of modifying individual attitudes and behavior; and (4) individuals gain personally from group participation.

Discussion as a method is often attacked on the grounds that it is chiefly a verbal activity, not experience itself. For the most part, the school is charged with the responsibility of providing as many experiences as possible for the student. However, this does not resolve the problem of preparing him for experiences yet to come. Discussion is one tool with which various experiences can be handled.

Some other complaints against the discussion method are that it (1) consumes time; (2) diffuses responsibility for quality contribution; (3) may be impeded by diverse and conflicting value systems of the discussants; (4) is poorly suited for emergency decisions; (5) may be unable to cope with effects of status differences within the group; and (6) is sometimes subject to distortion from majority pressures, prior commitments of the participants, or lack of understanding of and skill in the process.

But in view of its advantages these factors should not inhibit the use of discussion as a worthwhile activity for handling a variety of topics. Able instructors can minimize the disadvantages. A discussion on discussion, for instance, might be helpful to inform the participants about the process. Also, before the discussion groups can organize with any degree of genuineness, members must be led to recognize that they, collectively, have a problem; must become aware or perplexed about the way in which their difficulties can be solved or modified; and must be willing to work with others in a search for the best way of solving or modifying the problem. These initial conditions are necessary.

Kinds of Questions

Another key to the success or failure of discussion lies in the quality of the questions that are raised: first, the basic question and its facets; second, those questions that give the process direction; and third, those questions that are asked at the conclusion to indicate the degree of achievement.

Questions should be worded so that they promote deliberations seeking factual information, assessment of value, or determination of policy. Discussion questions can thus be classified according to fact, value, or policy. Answering the first type of question involves drawing out information of various kinds, such as present conditions, historical facts, definitions and requirements. The second type is best answered by judgments about whether an idea or a course of action is good, beneficial, or effective. Ideally, this kind of question arises

during the discussion, originating from the students. Policy, the third type of question, is the most commonly used. In this type, a suitable strategy is worked out to solve the problem at hand.

Some precise examples of provocative questions facilitating the flow of discussion are:

Clarification: Would you explain what you mean by multiple use?

Validity of facts: How do you know that the amount was 72%?

Validity of authorities: Could you tell us something about Dr. Harold Livingston's qualifications?

Unsupported assertions: You just said that experts agree. Would you name a few of these experts?

Practicability: How would this work? How much would this cost?

Logic: How did you arrive at this conclusion?

And, finally, there are questions that evaluate the discussion in terms of the desired ends, the real test of instructional discussion:

Through this discussion, what have students learned that they would not otherwise have learned?

How has this learning advanced them toward mastery of the subject?

In the time spent, was maximum use made of opportunities to learn?

Could learning have been better effected through different instructional means?

Types of Formats

I. The Round Table

Since the two major functions of group discussion are learning and problem solving, the questions are designed to aid in these processes. The particular format to be used is also chosen with these two functions in mind. If an informal pattern of discussion is indicated, the round table is perhaps the most informal type of all. The participants exchange views around a table under the leadership of a chairman and most often without an audience. As in a committee meeting, the members of the group, usually numbering less than a dozen, speak without rising and need

not be recognized by the chair. In this kind of discussion, everyone feels equal. It is most successful, when the discussants not only feel equal, but are equally able and informed. The strict round table discussion is a waning type of device since it seldom functions spontaneously and artificial stimulation has to be supplied, and is thus a misnomer. To remedy the deficiencies of the round table, the panel came into existence to give everyone a feeling of active participation in a free and open interchange of opinion.

One intermediary step between the round table and the panel is the formation of several groups, all functioning at the same time in different parts of the room, with enough time allowed so that groups can break up and a summary of findings be given by one person from each group to the class as a whole.

II. The Panel

The panel is really a small-group discussion guided by a chairman. It may consist of four to eight selected members who remain seated facing the audience while talking back and forth, spontaneously, flexibly and informally. There are usually no set speeches, but the panelists are sometimes asked to give brief preliminary statements in which they set forth their different viewpoints. The chairman keeps the discussion moving forward, and at some interesting point, may ask the audience to participate. The discussion then spills over to include the listeners. Or the audience may be asked to join in at the conclusion, when the chairman sums up. The chairman also ends the discussion by thanking the audience and the panel. If the purpose of the panel is achieved, important facts and conflicting opinions should have come out into the open, audience thinking should have been stimulated and a common basis for participation by all should have been established.

III. The Panel Forum

The panel forum is similar to the variation on the round table. However, it is somewhat more structured than the panel group discussion and there is no reporting back to all the groups as a whole, as in the variation. The groups are self-contained units; each works independently. About four groups, with five or six members each, meet separately in different parts of the room. A chairman is elected and a discussion topic chosen from those which have been previously suggested and studied. The topic may be subdivided and each of these sub topics assigned by the chairman to a participant who gives a brief one-minute summarization of his phase of the topic. Then the group launches into a give-and-take discussion of the subject.

IV. The Colloquium

The colloquy or colloquium is an arrangement for reporting and questioning by experts or scholars. The chairman and the panel begin their discussion by providing expert analysis of the problem, raising significant questions and presenting pertinent facts and opinions. If at any point the chairman or member of the panel feels a significant solution is neglected, a point of disagreement revealed but not explored, or an obscurity allowed to stand, he invites comments and questions from the audience. Forum discussion ensues for a brief time until the point at issue has been disposed of, after which, the panel resumes its discussion. The colloquy requires greater expertise on the part of its chairman and panel members than any other form of public discussion. It combines the virtues of the forum, the hearing and the panel. Like the forum, it encourages questions from the audience; like the hearing, it seeks to bring out evidence bearing on the questions raised; and, like the panel, it draws an audience into discussion in order to weigh evidence.

V. Dialog

The dialog, a modification of the forum, can be very useful when there are only two knowledgeable individuals available or when the expert is known to be an ineffective lecturer. One of the two participants should act as the leader, guiding the conversation, summarizing and providing transitions. One of the participants must also open the discussion and conduct the audience participation, if any. It is not necessary, however, that the same person carry out all these functions throughout the dialog. A moderator could be used to introduce the subject, make the transitions and conclude. This method of discussion is best used by dynamic, witty and learned individuals who explore a vital problem. If these characteristics are not present, the dialog may become horribly dull, since the audience does not get the built-in variety provided by a number of speakers.

VI. The Lecture Forum

The same thing could happen to the lecture forum, where only one person speaks, with questions raised by the audience. The lecture forum is sometimes called the open forum, but actually any type of speaking program followed by audience participation is an open forum. The lecture forum uses two distinct types of presentation depending on the kind of audience participation permitted:

1. The lecture-questions type, in which the audience is limited to asking questions from the floor after recognition from the chairman. In some cases, the questions must be written, and in others, both written and oral may be allowed.

2. The lecture-contribution type, in which members of the audience may either question the speaker or make brief statements.

The single speaker is invited to explore a topic, present information, crystallize opinion and argue for a point of view. The audience benefits from a more expanded or deeper treatment of the subject than is possible with the symposium forum.

VII. Symposium

The term symposium is applied today as it refers to a set program of prepared speeches--persuasive, argumentative, informative or evocative, followed by audience participation. The procedure is the same as for the straight lecture forum, except that several speeches, usually from three to five, averaging five to twenty minutes in length, are presented. The subject chosen will suggest different ways in which the responsibility for its exploration can be divided; however, the objectives are the same as for the panel. Taken separately, each speech may be said to represent a point of view toward the single-subject problem; together, they present a broad consideration of it. The potential narrowness of the lecture forum is therefore avoided, since the basis for possible discussion is increased by diversifying the presentation, group interests are represented by different members of the symposium, and more members of the audience are stimulated to join in the discussion. The most satisfactory subjects are usually those with several, fairly distinct, controversial approaches.

Discussant Qualities

Although the choice of topic is crucial to successful discussion, selection of the techniques for organization must also be carefully done. In addition, the responsibilities of the chairman must be clearly understood and preparations made for the mechanics of the procedure. Most important to the dynamics of the discussion are the attitudes, abilities, and behaviors that participants bring to it. If students are provided with the information needed to understand the processes of discussion, given some guidance by the instructor, and allowed to practice, they will be able to engage in the activity with success and satisfaction. Both the diversity and similarity of students may present problems, but it is these same qualities that make discussion so valuable as a learning technique.

Mrs. Marguerite Jensen is an instructor at Southwest Minnesota State College.

BOOKS

For the Elementary School

A Wealth of Good Feeling

by TOM WALTON
John F. Kennedy School, Ely

There has been a time in my life when I was greater in girth than huge in height, richer in ridicule than secure in self, and more lost in loneliness than motivated into motion. In William Pene Du Bois' Porko Von Popbutton (Harper & Row, 1968-1969), I feel with Pat, better known as Porko, when he is uptight; I know the scourge of obesity - receipt without reciprocation. And, too, I re-experience the unexpected transformation from squat to statuesque under the influence of athletic involvement.

In a state where winter sports play an important part in our day-to-day lives in some manner or other, the story of ice hockey as experienced by Porko is a hilarious involvement for the children in my room. For those who do not know hockey, the author neatly explains the terminology; for those who do know the game, Porko is so perverse in his approach that he offers the game a whole new slant. I find, also, that the children are intrigued by the beautiful control of words from the first sentence to the very last as Mr. Du Bois casts a spell in the music of language.

Mr. Du Bois frosts his story, if you will pardon a Porkian view, with delightful illustrations that enhance an already compelling story.

What is a friend? With variables acknowledged, a friend is someone who shares your likes and dislikes, who has something in his nature that you seem to lack in your own, who bosses and is bossed in return, who joins the exciting moments in your life and adds to them, and who also irritates you at times. Meet Elizabeth, who in turn will give you a picture of Jennifer and of a beautiful friendship (Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth by E. L. Konigsburg; Atheneum, New York, 1967). Jennifer is a witch; she is a witch because she says she is and goes on her mysterious way proving it to Elizabeth, a vibrant fifth grader, who is subtly gnawed by sporadic skepticism. Elizabeth is an only child; nevertheless, acquaintances and parents are caught up in the ripples of her apprenticeship and advancement to journeyman witch under the strict regulation of Jennifer.

This is no Hallowe'en story. This is a ten year old speaking the words of a curious mind and the explicit nature, at times, of ten year olds. The story appeals to the boys as well as the girls; it covers several months; it underlines Jennifer's statement, "I'm a witch all the time and not just on Hallowe'en," because its theme is not confined to time or age.

And, just in case it is important, Jennifer is a Negro and Elizabeth is white; it is mentioned once, on page fifty-six. There is something about friendship ....

Come home. Elizabeth Witheridge brings us home, to Minnesota, in her study of the world of the blind, Dead End Bluff (Atheneum, 1966). A review of this book brings the impact of the many facets of the title into an interesting exploration: the dead ends of the blind, the meaning of bluff in relation to the Mississippi River or in relation to the extent at which one being psychologically approaches another, and the author's skillful strengthening of many meanings into one solid child-appealing story.

Quig is almost fourteen. I found it unimportant; he fit in well with my fifth graders. His younger brother, Tommy, is totally reminiscent of Little Arliss in Old Yeller (by Fred Gipson; Harper & Row, 1956). Peers and adults encourage or obstruct in a sympathetic manner. Unite the compelling story of a blind boy struggling with self and world into the appeal of a mystery surrounding the disappearance of a dog he so desperately wants, and there should be few children who resist this work.

There is happiness in this book: a tail-wagging excitement of competition, success over handicap, and warm puppy tongues--a pleasant relief in an often high-charged world.

Tom Walton, reviews books regularly for MEJ. He is now looking into evidences of "sexism" in elementary school texts for a future review article.

Papa Hemingway and His Heroes

A Review of Delbert E. Wylder's Hemingway's Heroes
(University of New Mexico Press, 1969)

by K. E. HENRIQUES
Bemidji State College

A vital book for all high school and college teachers of American literature.

When on July 2, 1961, Ernest Hemingway blew out his brains with a shotgun blast at Ketchum, Idaho, there were many who thought that the 20th Century's leading literary light had been extinguished. And this may well be. But one does not have to attach that much literary significance to Ernest Hemingway to read Dr. Delbert E. Wylder's Hemingway's Heroes with both profit and satisfaction. And, one may well add, "enjoyment." For Hemingway's Heroes is considerably more than an expanded doctoral dissertation revised to meet the publication needs of a university press in search of publishable material. It is a provocative book that has much to recommend it.

Prof. Wylder's thesis is this: Hemingway's protagonists are much more than mere personifications or extensions of the man their author was or wished to be. Or, as Granville Hicks put it as far back as 1935: "The autobiographical hero . . . and the hero that Hemingway is not but thinks he would like to be." Practically all criticism of Hemingway's heroes has, Dr. Wylder points out, fallen into one of these two categories. What has resulted, Wylder points out, is a relatively shallow view of Hemingway's most important character creations and a superficial understanding of Hemingway's artistic ability.

A most practical feature about this volume is the method of treatment. Wylder has devoted a chapter to each of Hemingway's principal novels and develops "a picture of Hemingway gradually changing his artistic concepts as he sees the role of the hero changing as the world becomes more complex." What emerges, Wylder insists, "is an Ernest Hemingway who continues to mature as an artist."

He begins with The Torrents of Spring which Hemingway wrote as a satire on two Sherwood Anderson novels, Many Marriages and Dark Laughter, and depicts its protagonists Yogi Johnson and Scripps O'Neil as anti-heroes, the antitheses of Anderson's sentimental heroes who are based on the "concept that romanticized sex will provide the answers to the meaning of life."

In Chapter II Wylder studies Jake Barnes, the principal character of The Sun Also Rises, as a typical example of the wounded anti-hero. In Chapter III he analyzes Frederic Henry of A Farewell to Arms as a guilt-ridden anti-hero and, in Chapter IV, Harry Morgan of To Have and Have Not as the self-destructive anti-hero.

It is only in Chapter V with Robert Jordan of For Whom the Bell Tolls, that Wylder insists Hemingway set out to create a true hero, in this case the mythic hero in the contemporary world. Finally, in Chapters VI and VII, Wylder analyzes Col. Cantwell of Across the River and into the Trees as a tyrant hero, and Santiago of The Old Man and The Sea as a sinful but saintly hero.

An outline of the book's contents, however, does not begin to describe the quality of Prof. Wylder's work--a critical document that such better known Hemingway specialists as Carlos Baker, John Killinger, Robert Lewis, Earl Rovit and Philip Young will not be able to ignore. But one does not have to be a Hemingway expert to enjoy Hemingway's Heroes, for it is the kind of work teachers of English are always looking for--even high school teachers who make use of individual Hemingway novels with their junior and senior classes. Each chapter carefully summarizes the most important critical comment on a particular novel's hero, and then proceeds to point out its deficiencies in the light of Hemingway's total development. And Professor Wylder does this with persuasive arguments in a delightfully clear, crisp, and concise style not at all unlike that of Hemingway himself. Even more important, from the English teacher's point of view at least, is Dr. Wylder's use of symbolical, archetypal, and psychological (especially Freudian and Jungian) critical principles in driving home points that continually provide new and enlightening insights that the traditional historico-biographical literary critical techniques have failed to even reveal, much less bring into sharp focus.

In Chapter VI, for example, Wylder characterizes Col. Cantwell as "like both the lobsters and the bonito he sees in the market: he is not, as most men are, like the sole." Wylder then quotes the appropriate Hemingway passage in full:

> . . . the heavy gray-green lobsters with their magenta overtones that presaged their death in boiling water. They have all been captured by treachery, the Colonel thought, and their claws are pegged.
>
> There were the small soles, and there were a few albacore and bonito. These last, the Colonel

thought, looked like boat-tailed bullets, dignified in death, and with the huge eye of the pelagic fish.

They were not made to be caught except for their voraciousness. The poor sole exists, in shallow water, to feed men. But these roving bullets, in their great bands, live in blue water and travel through all oceans and all seas.

Dr. Wylder then proceeds to establish the validity of identifying Cantwell with the lobster and bonito:

"The Colonel does not, like most men, travel in the shallow water, but in the deep water of experience. He dies and finds his own immortality in death, too, by becoming part of the soil in the great continuum, just as the prawns find their own immortality by having "their shucked carcasses float out easily on an ebb tide on the Grand Canal." But in his life he has been the deep-sea fish, and the only thing that has "captured" him has been the treachery of life, which has not destroyed him but only made him fight more strongly to maintain his individuality."

"Treachery is constantly under examination in the novel. Life is treacherous, and so is the relationship between man and woman. Like the deep-sea fish, the Colonel is caught by his own voraciousness and vitality, and like the lobster, he has been trapped often by the treachery of life. He has been trapped by fate, by decisions that have been made for him to follow, and by his own weaknesses, including the treachery of his own heart. And he does admit them as weaknesses. He made three wrong decisions, all three when he was tired, but that was no excuse and he does not ask to be excused. He has the hand to symbolize his human failures, a pegged claw that has not totally healed. But as Renata knows, it is a real hand, his human hand. And it is Renata, of course, who orders the lobster in tribute on the evening of their first night together."

This is the kind of criticism that tells us something about Hemingway as a literary craftsman. And there are dozens of such critical insights in Hemingway's Heroes.

If Hemingway's protagonists are only ersatz heroes it would be because their creator was little better than a limited talent--a thought abhorrent to any Hemingway lover. And Professor Wylder's work goes a long way toward making believers out of many a Hemingway skeptic who has wondered whether or not Papa really had within him the stuff of great literature.

Ken Henriques is chairman of the English department at Bemidji State College.

LANGUAGE

SCHIZOPHRENIA

that arbitrary impulse to divide the written from the spoken word!
that horrible urge to "write off" composition as words on a page!
that memory lapse when asked to use "familiar" composition skills!

The cure? Ginn's exciting new program **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPOSITION: A UNIT-LESSON APPROACH** (Lavin et al.) for basic use in grades 7-8 or for special oral emphasis in other grades. To inter-relate speaking and writing, concrete language skills are taught inductively one at a time, and outstanding selections by successful writers, speakers, and artists are featured. Available in two levels, average and superior.

A XEROX COMPANY ▢ 450 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005

For more information, send for circular #345-010.

minnesota council of teachers of english

1400 South Division St. Northfield, Minn. 55057

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 132
NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA