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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Announcement of MCTE Annual Spring Convention ii
Call for Papers..... iii
Some Old Answers to Some Current Questions About English Teaching
Ken Donelson 1
University Students' Knowledge of General Humanities
John Hibbard 7
Teaching the Art of Autobiography
Thomas Becknell 13
Correlations of Sound Symbolism with other Connotative Mechanisms: Some Preliminary Speculations
Don L. F. Nilsen 23
Coulee Country Roots
J. H. Foegen 29
St. Paul's Writing in the Content Areas
Jean Borax, Greta Michaels, and Carole Pressley 33
Adapt
A Process for Developing Writing Activities for Content Area Classes
Greta Michaels..... 37
Reading Readiness and the Learner
Marlow Ediger..... 43
A Wonderful Place To Be
Carol Hanson Sibley 51
Canadian and American Literary Landscapes: Contrasts and Identities
William D. Elliott 59
A Multilevel Writing for Discovery Approach
Michael Segedy 63
Notes on Contributors 68
Announcements 69

ANNOUNCEMENT

MCTE ANNUAL SPRING CONVENTION

PLACE: FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA, AT THE HOLIDAY INN

DATES: APRIL 23 THROUGH 25, 1987

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

WILL WEAVER, author of *RED EARTH, WHITE EARTH,* Friday, April 23
KEN MACRORIE, author of *UPTAUGHT* and many other books on teaching English
MARY KAY HEALY of the Bay Area Writing Project

SPECIAL INTEREST SESSIONS

We will offer 40 or more special interest sessions for elementary, secondary, college, and university teachers. Here are some samples:

1. Teaching Composition — several sections
2. Third World Literature
3. Teaching Literature
4. English in the Secondary Schools — several sections
5. English in Elementary Schools — several sections
6. College Literature — several sections
7. Midwestern Women Writers

JOINT SPONSORSHIP OF MCTE AND NDCTE

This conference is jointly sponsored by the Minnesota Council of Teachers of English and the North Dakota Council of Teachers of English. We have also invited members of the English profession from South Dakota and Manitoba to attend.

Call for Papers for the Minnesota English Journal

For the Winter-Spring 1986-87 issue — Open Topics

We encourage articles on a wide variety of topics of interest to the English profession in Minnesota. Here are some suggested topics —

1. Teaching strategies/classroom activities
2. Rhetoric/teaching composition
3. Language issues
4. Literary theory
5. Children's literature
6. Literature for young adults
7. Composition research
8. Literary criticism/analysis with an awareness of teaching
9. Censorship issues
10. Teaching critical thinking
11. Discussions of unique courses or programs in English/language arts
12. Reading—research and pedagogy
13. Non-fiction literature
14. Professional issues
15. Writing-across-the curriculum (particularly descriptions of programs)
16. Canadian literature for American students
17. Bibliographies relating to the previous topics
18. Reviews of current books
19. American literature
20. British literature
21. World literature

We encourage teachers of English/language arts at all levels to submit their work to the *Minnesota English Journal* for possible publication. See the editorial statement for further information.

Send manuscripts to — Richard Dillman, Editor
English Department
St. Cloud State University
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Some Old Answers to Some Current Questions About Teaching English

by
Ken Donelson

Given the screaming headlines about the state of English teaching, English teachers currently are doing nothing right. If "Johnny Can't Read" or "Jenny Can't Write," doesn't depress us, headlines like "English Teachers Badly Prepared" and "S.A.T. Scores Reflect on English Teachers" will. The furor might lead a number of us to wonder why we ever got into the field or why we bother to stay in it. A bit of historical perspective helps. If we take the time to look at old articles on English teaching, we may discover that the same battles we fight today have been fought before and the attacks that seem so modern are not at all modern.

Below I've listed several questions that are going around along with an old response. The old words may not solve our modern problems, but they just might give us some reason to keep on going. Teachers in the past apparently survived their onslaughts. Possibly we might, also.

WASN'T ENGLISH TEACHING FAR BETTER IN THE OLD DAYS?

"English is probably both the least-taught and the worst-taught subject in the whole educational field. It is bad in the grade schools, worse in the high schools, worst in the college, while the university reaps the full benefit of this evil *crescendo*. The 'English' of the modern curriculum varies from a silly combination of 'Mother Goose' and the jargon of science or the shibboleths of religions to a disingenuous synthesis of antique philology and emasculated literature. No wonder some of the men and women who speak and write their language well would extend to prose the judgment passed upon poetry: English untaught is taught best. A teacher of English is so often a spoiler of English."

(Alexander F. Chamberlain, "The Teaching of English," *Pedagogical Seminary*, June 1902, p. 4)

WHAT'S BACK OF THE "BASICS" IDEA?

"Certain influences are at work in public education today which indirectly affect to a considerable degree the problems of teaching English. One is the program of financial retrenchment and the three R's for national defense. Another is the current organized attack upon the left wing of progressive education by a group of men who disapprove of its social, economic, and educational views and are at the same time committed to a program of reduction of costs in the public schools. Still another is the effort on the part

of certain leaders in education to reduce the time and recognition given to English in the schools because of their conviction that, as it is now taught in many places, it makes little contribution to the fundamental objectives of secondary education today. A fourth is the lively dispute in progress throughout the country over a return to the old emphasis upon mental discipline through a program of the critical and analytical reading of the 'great books.' "

(Dora V. Smith, "Today's Challenge to Teachers of English," *English Journal*, February 1941, pp. 101-102)

HOW CAN WE TEACH ENGLISH IN THIS SKEPTICAL, SCIENTIFIC AGE?

"This is a skeptical age. But it is also an age, as I see it, in which the search for truth, by the people as a whole, is more earnest and intent than it has ever been in any previous age. It is a hard-boiled age, an age in which youth is not accepting dogma from its elders without checking up for itself. There is a new generation just now coming along which did not experience the war disillusionment. How that generation will react to life is still a mystery. I think, sometimes, that I see signs that it will not take quite such a hard-boiled view of everything. But I can sympathize most heartily with the generation, now in the thirties, which saw all of the old standards, everything that it had been taught was right, thrown overboard and smashed by the war. Everything it had been taught as truthful — or so these poor youngsters believed — turned out to be a lie.

All the old standards of honor and conduct seemed to crumble before its eyes. It came through the war utterly disillusioned and skeptical, but with an intense desire for new standards, for standards that it could prove and cling to, a yearning for the bald, naked truth such as has seldom been felt by any such considerable number of people at one time. And the books which it has read most eagerly, accepted most heartily, have been the books which purported to interpret the world of today in terms of life as these disillusioned young people believed it to be, and not in terms of an antiquated code, which had failed them and the rest of mankind when it was most needed.

I think I can discern signs that the literature of disillusionment is beginning to be replaced by a more constructive literature, that creeds which will work better than the old ones are beginning to be set up and accepted, and that the books which will win the greatest popularity in the decade to come will be those which exalt the new standards — standards and ideals compatible with what youth of today knows to be the truth about life, or believes to be the truth, which amounts, after all, to the same thing."

(Frank Parker Stockbridge, "What Are the 'Popular' Books — And Why?" *English Journal*, June 1931, pp. 448-449)

"We are living in an age of science. Our atmosphere is surcharged with the problems of chemical affinity, of electrodynamics, of biological evolution, and of the solar universe in general. Those of us whose studies lie in another direction, who deal with the phenomenon of human character in its historic continuity, know well — without especial reminder — that it yearly becomes harder to get a hearing from this onrushing materialistic generation."

(J. M. Hart, "The Scientific Method in English Literature Teaching," *The Academy*, April 1892, p. 125)

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE GOOD OLD-FASHIONED STANDARDS WE USED TO HAVE IN ENGLISH?

"Why, in spite of the increasing emphasis upon English, and the improvement both in the editing of English classics and in textbooks on rhetoric, do high school graduates continue to fall so far short of the eminently reasonable requirements of the normal schools? Why are they not only slipshod in expression and indifferent as to spelling and punctuation, but also sometimes glaringly ungrammatical in speech and writing? Why are their ideas so vague concerning the fundamental qualities of good composition and the obvious characteristics of the novel, the drama, the lyric? Why do they remember so little of the literature they have studied? Above all, why are they so unaccustomed to thinking for themselves and to asking questions about what they do not understand? They are earnest in spirit, and their interest in things of the mind, if not always a vital motive force, is at least easily aroused; but when it comes to ability to stick to a point, to exclude irrelevant matter, to follow logical order, to find the right word to clinch an important conception — to say nothing of knowledge of ordinary means of securing emphasis —- in these acquirements they are often deplorably wanting."

(Sarah J. McNary, "A Few Reasons Why," *English Journal*, June 1912, p. 351)

". . . ask a group of business men in any city and they will tell you that they are driven to distraction by stenographers who cannot spell and by clerks who cannot add, much less compute fractions; yet these persons have been educated in our public-school systems at great public expense. Having had some experience in teaching classes of adult business women in the essentials of English usage, I know that they clamor for commas and rules governing them, for vocabulary, spelling, and for rules governing the use of 'who' and 'whom.' They say if they had been taught the rules, they would not now grope for the right expression. They are spending money for something which it is their right to have learned as graduates of our public high schools in recent years. Have we not swung to the left far enough, and is it not time to steer our course toward a saner middle ground?"

(Myriam Page, "The Other Side," *English Journal*, June 1937, pp. 443-444)

" 'I find that the greatest lack in our Freshman is in grammar,' ran one comment, and it continues: 'My experience is that a very few come to us particularly well trained in grammar. But the overwhelming majority of students evince practically no knowledge of the subject. They often do not know even the parts of speech. I believe that grammar is suffering the most in college preparation.' Another teacher declared that 'the chief difficulty, beyond the crudest of errors, is perhaps in general organization.' From still

another college comes the complaint that 'students are not so much at fault grammatically as they are empty of ideas. My struggle has been against a sleepy and easy rhetoric.' A fourth professor declared, 'We should like to have our incoming Freshmen able to read and write. Some possess only third-grade reading ability; many only sixth. Too many cannot spell, put periods at ends of sentences, or avoid gross grammatical errors.,"

(J. W. Beattie, "Does the High School Prepare for College English?" *English Journal*, November 1939, p. 714)

SHOULDN'T ENGLISH TEACHERS TEACH GRAMMAR?

"A great many people seem to think that the study of grammar is a very dry subject indeed, but that it is extremely useful, assisting the pupils in writing and in speaking the language in question. Now I hold the exactly opposite view. I think that the study of grammar is really more or less useless, but that it is extremely fascinating. I don't think that the study of grammar,at least in the way in which grammar has been studied hitherto, has been of very material assistance to any one of the masters of English prose or poetry, but I think that there are a great many things in grammar that are interesting and that can be made interesting to any normal schoolboy or schoolgirl.

The chief thing is not to approach grammar from the side of logic or abstract definitions. What is wanted is to show that language is a living thing and what that means. When children begin to learn about cats and dogs they don't start with the definition of what a cat is or what a dog is, but they learn that this animal, which is very interesting to them, is a cat, and this other animal which is perhaps even more interesting to them, is a dog, and then perhaps after many years they will advance so far in their study of zoology that they would be asked in an examination the question, 'How would you define a cat?' or 'How would you define a dog?' — though I don't believe that even in the case of zoology you would think of asking that sort of question. Now, then, why should we start with definitions of nouns, adjectives, and verbs, and all these things? I don't see that there is any reason in that.

(Otto Jespersen, "Modern English Grammar," *School Review*, Oct. 1910, p. 530)

"It is now almost universally conceded that the time spent below the high schools in teaching technical grammar, is time absolutely wasted. This learning of definitions, this parsing and analyzing, have no result commensurate with the time and pains expended. Many of our best teachers have seen this for years; have put it in print; have proved it at Teachers' institutes. Why, then, do we keep on in the same ruts? Why not teach our pupils to speak by speaking; to write by writing? Why not apply that common-sense axiom, that the way to do a thing is to go ahead and do it?"

(*The Pacific Home and School Journal* quoted in *Journal of Education*, September 22, 1881, p. 183)

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION?

"Every practiced inspector of schools knows what dreary reading the average school essay is. Some accomplished men of letters have recently given us the benefit of their half-humorous but still valuable and forcible criticism on this subject. Now one who looks into the matter closely will find two reasons for the unreadableness of that remarkable production, the school composition:

1. The pupil has no first-hand knowledge of things, and hence puts no real freshness, or thought, or observation into his sentences.

2. His formal instruction has given him no adequate command of his implements, and he, therefore, lacks that ready and forcible use of English words and idioms which is so essential to all strong and valuable composition."

(E. S. Cox, "English in American Schools," *Addresses and Proceedings of the NEA Session of the Year* 1885, NY: NEA, 1886, p. 182)

"There is a spirit of unrest, a feeling of dissatisfaction in educational circles over the poor work done by students in English composition. It seems to be generally admitted that the present requirements are not fulfilling the desires or realizing the hopes of educators. The complaint is heard year after year that boys and girls are coming to college more and more poorly prepared in this subject.

"(C. S. Duncan, "A Rebellious Word on English Composition," *English Journal*, March 1914, p. 154)

WHY DON'T YOUNG PEOPLE WRITE BETTER?

"At the risk of invoking the wrath of those twin departments of education and psychology, I might venture the suggestion that the almost universal use of the 'objective' type of examination question, from grade school through college, has done nothing to further the cause of literacy. The very obvious labor-saving convenience of presenting the student with a mimeographed, predigested set of answers, on which he places a check mark after 'true' or 'false,' selects one out of a multiple set, or writes a single word to complete a sentence, so that the whole may be graded by any assistant janitor who has the key — this, together with the comforting assurance that he is either right or wrong, that no element of individual judgment can enter into the final grade, and there can be no unfairness and no argument about it afterward — has thrust far into the background the much more difficult method of requiring the man to tell you what he knows."

(William L. Prosser, "English As She Is Wrote," *English Journal*, January 1939, p. 44)

"The defective preparation of college freshmen in elementary English is owing to the fact that most of the high schools have undertaken the work of 'fitting boys for the active duties of life.' "

(Francis D. Winston, "English and the High School," *Nation*, December 17, 1896, p. 455)

SHOULDN'T YOUNG PEOPLE READ THE CLASSICS AND IGNORE MODERN LITERATURE?

"The teaching of literature is sterile unless an understanding of modern as well as the older literature is taught. Current literature is a large part of the reading of most high-school and many college graduates. To teach only books of by-gone years because they have stood the test of time is to pretend that today does not exist, that only what is old is good. Modern people won't believe that, and if they are not taught to read current literature intelligently, they will read it unintelligently. Most college graduates preparing for teaching have not received instructions in modern literature as a part of their liberal arts course."

(Ernest R. Caverly, "The Professional Training of High-School Teachers of English," *Educational Administration and Supervision*, January 1940, p. 38)

"There is a peculiarly persistent Victorian affectation that there are some books that 'every child should know.' This notion has its roots in the renaissance, but it needs to have its branches pruned. Every child should know the world in which he lives as thoroughly as it lies in him to know it. This world includes traditional lore and characters, 'classic' tales and long-enduring, if not eternal, verities. It is well to assimilate a great deal of this intellectual background. But it is more urgent to learn the present world and the world in which he is going to live. Some children are inclined to organize their ideas on a basis of historical retrospect — they ask, What came before that, and before that? Others, however, no less intelligent and no less valuable as social assets, seem to be quite indifferent to what went before; they are the pragmatists who ask, What of it? — and look to see what can be done here and now. Moreover, while the classics should be accessible to all, it is worse than useless to cultivate an affectation of appreciation for 'the best' — and it is desirable to cultivate the realization that classics are always and everywhere in the process of making."

(Sidonie Matzner Gruenberg, "Reading for Children," *The Dial*, December 6, 1917, p. 576)

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF GENERAL HUMANITIES

by
John Hibbard

For a long time we have known the value of the kind of knowledge that exists in the humanities and the wisdom that knowledge can bring. We have known the loss to individuals incapable of leading an examined life, and we've known the danger a culture faces when it loses the value of its past from which to examine its present and plan its future. But a survey conducted this year at St. Cloud State University is another of a growing number of indicators that current students have an extremely limited intellectual context from which to understand themselves and their culture. To use E. D. Hirsch's phrase, our students possess a dangerous cultural illiteracy.

At SCSU we prepared a list of ninety-eight representative names and phrases from *history* (Julius Caesar, the Spanish Armada, Bunker Hill, etc.), *literature* (Keats, Emily Dickinson, Hemingway, etc.), *philosophy* (Aristotle, Francis Bacon, Sartre, etc.), *religion* (Islam, Ezekiel, Martin Luther, etc.), *science* (Euclid, Newton, Einstein, etc.), *art* (Van Gogh, da Vinci, Picasso, etc.), and *geography* (Bolivia, the Nile, Thailand, etc.). We gave the list to 492 students in English composition courses and asked them to identify each term as fully as possible in a short phrase. (A copy of our list of names together with the number and percentage of students who correctly identified each term follows this paper.)

In evaluating the results we asked only that the students give a *faint* indication that they recognized terms: our normal requirement for a correct answer was to have the term placed within a category (i.e. to say that Bolivia is a country, Eisenhower was a president or general, and Hemingway was a writer) and then to add one feature that differentiated the term from others in the category (i.e. with Eisenhower to mention World War II, or Normandy, or the decade of his presidency, or Richard Nixon as Vice President; with Bolivia to place it in South America, or even Central America; with Hemingway to mention the titles of any of his works, or the general period in which he wrote, or any significant themes or elements of style.) With some figures even this seemed too demanding, and we reduced the requirement to, for instance, saying Dante was a writer or poet, Bach a musician or composer, Picasso an artist or painter, and Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria were English queens.

The students did well on some of the terms. The term most recognized was Hitler (84%) followed by Freud (75%), Martin Luther King, Jr. (74%), Bach (68%), and Richard Nixon (67%); 60% knew Zeus was some sort of ancient God; 59% knew the Nile was a river; 53% recognized Auschwitz, and 50% knew of Mark Twain. But such results were an exception; on other terms students didn't do nearly so well: only 8% could identify William Faulkner, Hippocrates, J. Edgar Hoover, Keats or Nat Turner; 7% knew William Sherman; 6% identified Lewis Carroll, Emily Dickinson, Euclid,

Zen, or the Reformation; 5% knew of Francis Bacon or Immanuel Kant; 4% knew Dante was a writer; 3% knew of Brahma, T. S. Eliot, John Milton or Richard Wagner; 2% knew Thomas More, Nietzsche, Rousseau, Bertrand Russell, Sartre or Virginia Woolf; and 1% identified Cervantes, Cicero and Virgil. Of the 492 students in the survey, two identified John Henry Newman (There *is* a Newman Center at SCSU.) and one identified John Bunyan and Plutarch. (The one student who identified Newman, Bunyan and Plutarch is an international student from India who scored 97% correct. No student educated in the American school system did nearly so well.)

As a whole, our group of current university students correctly identified 23.9% of the terms which means that they failed to identify 76.1% of a sample of some of the most signigicant people, places and events in our heritage.

The results may be argued with. Ninety-eight terms cannot represent all of our potential heritage; it can merely attempt to be a representative sample. Furthermore, the ability to identify a term may not mean that one can use the concepts the term implies actively in thought or judgement. But at the very least these results are a clear symptom. Few physicans would hesitate to begin treatment on a patient with symptoms this clear of a physical illness as dangerous as this intellectual illness is.

A difficulty, however, is that before we can solve a problem we need to know its cause or causes, and in this case we will disagree about what the causes are. It is possible to blame the media and its inane content, or to point to a general fragmentation of American culture and blame a culture that is willing to accept the hour after hour and day after day of mindless recreation that the media provides without demanding any genuine content. But since knowledge has always been the role of the educational establishment and since creating a desire for genuine learning is one of education's goals, education is a logical culprit to consider.

Within education, a possible cause rests in the curricular reforms of ten to twenty years ago that replaced a substantial core curriculum with an elective system that all too often allowed teachers to offer, and students to accept, courses that were topically interesting and themes that were popular rather than significant so that Marvel comics replaced Milton and science fiction replaced Shakespeare. Or a possible cause is the educational philosophy that has said that above all else students must be happy to learn, and the educational value of material became confused with its entertainment value. Another possible cause lies in the "isms" of the last two decades which confuse education with indoctrination and believe that teaching students to have the proper attitudes was our primary goal, rather than believing that broadly-educated students would make the most intelligent and humane social decisions for themselves if allowed to. Another possible culprit could be the humanists themselves who often disagree on what material is significant enough to be studied, who often place their own private agenda or interests above a more general good, who have secretly lost faith in the material they teach, or who have failed to show in the ways they have led their lives that there is any value in the humanism they have taught and have instead shown students that someone who has spent years and years studying literature or history or philosophy can be as petty and mean and greedy as anyone else.

We may well need to debate the causes, but it is time for the debate to begin in earnest. There is far too much that is being lost. The ultimate value of the humanities is intangible, but we generally share a sense of what those values are: a more significant understanding of human beings and human nature; a recognition of the richness available in the human experience; an ability to place ourselves, our current thought, and our problems in a large, rich context of shared human experience and an ability to evaluate and judge from within that context; a life more fully and wisely lived. William Bennett describes some of the values in the report by the National Endowment for the Humanities, *To Reclaim a Legacy: A Report on the Humanities in Higher Education:*

> The humanities tell us how men and women of our own or other civilizations have grappled with life's enduring, fundamental questions: What is justice? What should be loved? What deserves to be defended? What is courage? What is noble? What is base? Why do civilizations flourish? Why do they decay?

The humanities are sometimes rejected or ignored as being antiquated. It is argued they speak of human thought and experiences in a world where experience has changed dramatically. Or it is argued they represent only the experience of the male sex or the white race in a world that recognizes two sexes and many races. But in fact beneath limited surface features that can be bound to a period or race or sex, the humanities contain a reservoir of that which is of greatest value gathered from thousands of years of human experience, something no current experience can attempt to replace without great loss.

The danger is to our students and our future. As the world grows rapidly more complex, as change and even the rate of change move faster and faster, and as humans hold more and more power in their hands, our students will face problems, decisions and promises beyond what we, or they, can now imagine. Without the balanced context they should have to be able to think and judge within, they will have only topical ideas and opinions to judge and act from, and the possibility for ghastly errors is greater and greater.

We desire excellence in education. Sometimes we even claim it. But it is dishonest and dangerous to claim excellence (or even competence) in an education that ignores the humanities to the extent ours does. There is even something Orwellian about our making such a claim, for Orwell knew that one way to hide any weakness was to loudly proclaim strength. An irony is that it is hard to discuss such an Orwellian claim with current students, for too few of them know what "Orwellian" means.

The Survey

Please identify each of the following as fully as possible in a short phrase:

	(*)		(*)
Dante Alighieri	(19 - 4%)	John Keats	(40 - 8%)
Thomas Aquinas	(47 - 10%)	Martin Luther King	(365 - 74%)
Aristotle	(179 - 36%)	Vladimir Lenin	(237 - 48%)
Louie Armstrong	(156 - 32%)	Martin Luther	(152 - 31%)
Attila the Hun	(34 - 7%)	Machiavelli	(33 - 7%)
Auschwitz	(261 - 53%)	Magna Carta	(53 - 11%)
Johann Sebastian Bach	(334 - 68%)	Chairman Mao	(109 - 22%)
Francis Bacon	(24 - 5%)	Mediterranean	(175 - 36%)
Bolivia	(142 - 29%)	John Milton	(14 - 3%)
Brahma	(15 - 3%)	Thomas More	(8 - 2%)
Johannes Brahms	(49 - 10%)	Napolean	(189 - 38%)
Elizabeth Barret Browning	(97 - 20%)	New Delhi	(124 - 25%)
Bunker Hill	(117 - 24%)	John Henry Newman	(2 - 0%)
John Bunyan	(1 - 0%)	Issac Newton	(238 - 48%)
Julius Caesar	(285 - 58%)	Friedrich Nietzsche	(10 - 2%)
Lewis Carroll	(29 - 6%)	Nile	(290 - 59%)
Cervantes	(6 - 1%)	Richard Nixon	(329 - 67%)
Goeffrey Chaucer	(65 - 13%)	Pablo Picasso	(353 - 72%)
Winston Churchill	(246 - 50%)	Paul of Tarsus	(19 - 4%)
Cicero	(6 - 1%)	Plato	(103 - 21%)
Confucius	(267 - 54%)	Plutarch	(1 - 0%)
Charles Darwin	(292 - 59%)	Reformation	(29 - 6%)
Leonardo da Vinci	(216 - 44%)	Relativity	(49 - 10%)
Jefferson Davis	(87 - 18%)	Renaissance	(64 - 13%)
Charles de Gaulle	(60 - 12%)	Franklin Delano Roosevelt	(171 - 35%)
Dialectic	(11 - 2%)	Jean Jacques Rousseau	(11 - 2%)
Emily Dickinson	(29 - 6%)	Bertrand Russell	(8 - 2%)
Albert Einstein	(160 - 33%)	Carl Sandburg	(52 - 11%)
Dwight D. Eisenhower	(116 - 24%)	Jean Paul Sartre	(11 - 2%)
T. S. Eliot	(13 - 3%)	William Tecumseh Sherman	(36 - 7%)
Elizabeth I	(274 - 56%)	B. F. Skinner	(169 - 34%)
Ralph Waldo Emerson	(14 - 3%)	Socrates	(117 - 24%)
Euclid	(28 - 6%)	Spanish Armada	(49 - 10%)
Exodus	(196 - 40%)	Joseph Stalin	(216 - 65%)
Ezekiel	(181 - 37%)	Tecumseh	(68 - 14%)
William Faulkner	(38 - 8%)	Thailand	(151 - 31%)
Francis of Assisi	(110 - 22%)	Henry David Thoreau	(70 - 14%)
Sigmund Freud	(367 - 75%)	Nat Turner	(40 - 8%)

Ernest Hemingway	(88 - 18%)	Mark Twain	(272 - 55%)
Hippocrates	(38 - 8%)	Valkyrie	(6 - 1%)
Adolph Hitler	(414 - 84%)	Vincent Van Gogh	(210 - 43%)
Homer	(109 - 22%)	Queen Victoria	(188 - 38%)
J. Edgar Hoover	(41 - 8%)	Virgil	(7 - 1%)
Industrial Revolution	(147 - 30%)	Richard Wagner	(14 - 3%)
Islam	(97 - 20%)	Waterloo	(102 - 21%)
Istanbul	(99 - 20%)	Virginia Woolf	(9 - 2%)
Thomas Jefferson	(198 - 40%)	Wounded Knee	(163 - 33%)
Carl Jung	(77 - 16%)	Zen	(28 - 6%)
Immanuel Kant	(27 - 5%)	Zeus	(295 - 60%)

*The first number indicates the number of students who answered correctly and the second number indicates the percentage who were correct.

Teaching the Art of Autobiography

by
Thomas Becknell

To judge from the swelling number of autobiographical "best sellers," it would seem that Americans have an insatiable interest in the lives of the famous, the successful and the notorious. While there may be many explanations for this hunger, I suspect one of them has to do with the perceived "ordinariness" of our own lives.

All of us are somewhat autobiographical by nature. We enjoy telling about our lives, selecting certain details, editing others. Students especially welcome the opportunity to narrate events from their personal experience. But, curiously, if asked to "write your autobiography," most students resist (as would most teachers), believing they have "nothing to say." Indeed, such undirected autobiographies usually *don't* have much to say. They begin flatly, "I was born in . . . ," and mark off a chronology of events which may reveal exactly what the writer fears (a boring life) and what the reader dreads (lifeless prose).

Why, then, write an autobiography? Even more to the point, why offer a *course* in autobiography, especially for students just entering adulthood? Millions of Americans, we know, keep diaries and journals (Mallon). But an autobiography requires more than a record if one's experience; its challenge is to make private experience public. Autobiography provides a way of composing one's life. For students, instruction in the art of autobiography can contribute significantly to their personal development and self-definition, and to discovering an *extra*-ordinary dimension to their individual lives.

To understand the apparent paradox between a student's natural desire to write about personal experience, and the equally natural assumption that he or she has "nothing to say," it might be helpful to note how persistently "self-identity" is associated with vocational or idealogical commitments (Erikson). Young people who have not yet made commitments to a profession or to a certain way of living, *do* seem to lack a language with which to define themselves. Even those who project themselves as "athlete," or "mother," or "Lutheran," or "student," know that those terms do not really define the "me myself." Autobiography, however, can be useful for exploring other ways of defining oneself than the vocational or idealogical. Autobiography represents life "not as something established," Roy Pascal reminds us, "but as a process; it is not simply the narrative of the voyage, but also the voyage itself. There must be in it a sense of discovery" (182). A *course* which is concerned with autobiography should be designed in a way which nurtures a sense of discovery and encourages a process of development.

William G. Perry, the developmental psychologist, shows that development of college-age students progresses through three pronounced stages. Students in their mid-teens are largely "dualistic," he claims; that is, they tend to divide experience into two exclusive realms: good/bad, right/wrong, we/they, success/failure, etc. Students develop (a) as they move away from "dualism," (b) as they discover "relativism," recog-

nizing the validity of a diversity of opinions, values and judgments, and (c) as they affirm their own "commitments" to particular positions, choices and values in light of the relativism they have encountered. How might we order a course in autobiography which would promote this process of development?

The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin provides a useful key for translating Perry's scheme of development into a course of study in autobiography. Franklin, of course, was no "student" when he composed the story of his life. What is particularly instructive, however, is that he composed it in three separate stages. In 1771, at the age of 65, Franklin set down his recollections of his "unlikely beginnings" for his son and for posterity. When he was 78, he added an account of his project for arriving at moral perfection; and at age 82, he wrote a third installment describing his commitment to public life and responsibilities. These three stages of his composition actually represent three major components of any reflective autobiography: (1) recollection, or memory, (2) the search for some unifying pattern or model, and (3) the affirmation of certain commitments. These stages of composition complement Perry's stages of development and quite naturally suggest a developmental plan for ordering a course in autobiography.

In my course, designed primarily for freshmen, I assign a sequence of various autobiographical sketches throughout the semester. From these separate writings, students produce a "final" autobiography near the end of the term. The number of individual assignments may vary from course to course—and even the course itself may change. But I suggest that any course in autobiography—whether it concentrates upon literature or upon composition, whether it emphasizes "women's lives" or "American lives"—should be informed by three distinct stages.

Stage 1 - Growing Up

All autobiography is rooted in memory and recollection; usually it originates in one's memory of childhood. Nothing else contributes so much to a sense of shared experience as considering what it was like to grow up. To read another's account of growing up, regardless of the time, place or situation, always seems familiar in some way. Such works as Russell Baker's *Growing Up*, Richard Wright's *Black Boy*, Mary McCarthy's *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood*, or Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* all provide bright backgrounds for reflecting upon one's own experience. Their questions reflect ours. Baker, for example, may lead us to outline the historical events which "frame" our own beginnings, or to wonder whether children growing up now encounter the same sorts of expectations to "make something" of themselves. McCarthy may invite us to describe the religious tradition or milieu in which we were brought up, identifying one single event or image which seems to represent that environment. Or, Angelou may cause us to remember an encounter with a "grown up" which made an indelible impression. In short, reading assignments which call up one's own past, and writing assignments which affirm those associations, serve both to validate and to enlarge a student's experience.

I like to begin my sequence of writing assignments with this sort of exercise:

> *Autobiographical Sketch #1.* Consider this claim from Russell Baker's autobiography: *"We all come from the past, and children ought to know what it was that went into their making, to know that life is a braided cord of humanity stretching up from time long gone, and that it cannot be defined by the span of a single journey from diaper to shroud."*
>
> All of us have grown up hearing stories handed down from our family history: how mom and dad met and fell in love, how Aunt Mable wrecked Uncle Herbie's new Studebaker, how great-grandpapa Karl came from the "old country" with 27 dollars in his pocket and started his own business....
>
> You get the idea—the kinds of stories Russell Baker tells about his family.
>
> I'd like you to re-create, in writing, one of the stories *you* have grown up with. It need not be an especially dramatic one; perhaps it is a very quiet tale. But whatever it is, it is something from those old days of the past that is important to *you*, something you carry with you in your memory.
>
> As you think about this story, try to recall all the details that, for you, make it such a vivid part of your heritage. Who told the story? What happened? How do you picture these people—what they did, how they dressed, where they lived, etc. Don't be afraid to use your imagination to fill in details you are not clear on. Re-create the story *in such a way* that we, too, hearing the story from you, can share in the joy, or the sadness, or the exhilaration, or the simple quietness of that part of your past.

Such a beginning assignment minimizes the initial "risk" of writing about oneself—which is essential if student writings are to be "workshopped" in class. Rhetorically, it requires what James Moffett would call a low level of abstraction; that is, the writer merely re-tells an experience which has already been ordered and transmitted to him or to her. But the most salient feature of such an assignment is that it encourages students to recognize the many strands of their own beginnings, thus challenging any initial tendency toward dualistic thinking (e.g. of one's life as "the span of a single journey").

Students should write frequently about growing up, for it is what they know best. But it is no mean task. Richard N. Coe, in a somewhat scholarly book, *When the Grass Was Taller*, examines some of the difficulties of re-constructing childhood experience. The child, he reminds us, sees the world much differently than his or her adult self—so much of childhood is filled with magic and play and delight in trivia. To reflect upon one's growing up, then, is to begin to recognize the subjectivity of one's "adult" perspective.

Stage 2 - Searching for a Pattern

Autobiography, like any other literary art, communicates most effectively through metaphor. "What is my life like?" it asks. Benjamin Franklin, for example, reviewed his life as a book, with all the *errata* corrected. John Woolman recorded his life as a journey. The events of Sylvia Plath's life seemed to her as a "bell jar," descending and distorting. And Richard Selzer, the surgeon, presented himself as a "priest" in order to portray the spiritual nature of his work.

To see one's life metaphorically is really to see it within a context— that is, to see not merely the strands of one's beginnings, but the very fabric of places, people, events and traditions from which the pattern of one's life is cut. This sort of vision is acquired through recognizing a multiplicity of perspectives (or, through what Perry would call "encountering relativism"). Combining *both* the reading and the writing of autobiography can contribute substantially to this second level of a student's development.

In his autobiographical novel, *Black Boy*, Richard Wright said, "I hungered for books, new ways of looking and seeing. It was not a matter of believing or disbelieving what I read, but of feeling something new, of being affected by something that made the look of the world different." Observing some of my literature students, I sometimes lament their frequent lack of hunger for books and for new ways of seeing. Often they claim that they just cannot "relate" to a particular novel or poem. Autobiographies, however, demand that the reader "relate" in ways which inevitably *do* make the look of the world different. Autobiography, by its very nature, invites a *responsive* approach, which is often neglected in traditional classrooms.

Consider Thoreau's *Walden*, for example. If the goal of the course (in which *Walden* is read) asks the student to produce his or her own autobiography, then Thoreau's request for "a simple and sincere account" of the *reader's* life will be primary; that is, Thoreau's autobiography will evoke the reader's:

1. Of what, in your culture, do you find yourself most critical? Are your criticisms similar to, or different from Thoreau's?
2. How does Thoreau's basic economic philosophy compare with yours?
3. What does Thoreau most value about his college experience? What do you most value, and least value, about yours?
4. Do you need to "simplify" your own life in any way? Explain what *you* would mean by the word, "simplify."
5. Describe, as specifically as you can, your attitude toward the great technological advances our civilization has made.
6. What need do you, as a college student, have for solitude, and where do you find it?

Posing these sorts of questions slights traditional literary analysis, of course; but it leads to a keener self-awareness.

In her article on "Teaching Women's Autobiographies," Estelle Jelinek observes that "changing the main focus from an analysis of the works as literature to an analysis of them as models of the various ways available for writing one's own autobiography probably resulted in more learning about form and the genre of autobiography than a purely structural approach would have achieved" (32). Jelinek supports her observation with many useful examples of this sort of responsive analysis, including specific lists of questions which engage the reader-as-writer more than the reader-as-critic. Such an approach urges not the primacy of the text, but the response of the reader. It may see more value in a student's re-writing Ben Franklin's thirteen virtues than in an analysis of his prose style. It may ask students to show how *their* outlook on life has been shaped by another's suffering (Cf. Richard Wright), or to outline their ways of categorizing people sexually (Cf. Sylvia Plath's Esther Greenwood), or to contrast their "spiritual" concerns with Black Elk's. Such a shift in focus results not only in "learning about form and the genre of autobiography," but also in acquiring a (metaphorical) language for speaking about one's own "waldens" and "bell jars" of experience.

To *create* an original metaphor of the self is the essential *art* of autobiography. As James Olney has shown, "One cannot . . . hope to capture with a straight-on look, or expect to transmit directly to another, one's own sense of self; at most one may be able to discover a similitude, a metaphor, for the feeling of selfhood" (226-7). One work especially instructive for seeing metaphorically is Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *A Gift from the Sea*. "What is the shape of my life?" she asks, and finds the answer reflected in the various seashells along the beach: in the inward spiraling of the moon-shell, in the symmetry of the double-sunrise, in the irregularity of the oyster shell, etc. The variety of shells speak of her ever-changing need for patterns of living.

Other examples of such informing metaphors abound: Emily Dickinson's "My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun", or Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken," or Adrienne Rich's "Diving into the Wreck" are conspicuous examples of object lessons in metaphors of the self. Given the challenge, students will readily find their own curious metaphors: my life is like an inter-state highway, a finely-tuned engine, a camera, a balsam fir, etc.

Most autobiographies seem to define a self primarily in terms of a particular place (e.g. Thoreau, Dillard), of other people (e.g. Franklin, Angelou), of a series of events (e.g. Bradford, Plath), or of a particular activity (e.g. Twain, Selzer). Students need to explore these various contexts for defining themselves. Richard Lyon's *Autobiography: A Reader for Writers* is especially helpful for doing just that. His selections are ordered by these contexts (people, places, events), and his suggestions for writing are provocative. Through a series of such written exercises, students can be encouraged to see themselves relative to the environment and milieu in which they are located, to understand the truth of Emerson's claim, that "it is the eye which makes the horizon."

Stage 3 - Commitment: Running Order Through Chaos

Autobiography, finally, requires what Roy Pascal once called "the acquisition of an outlook: "The distinction of great autobiography is not so much the truth of knowing as the truth of being, an integration and reunion of different aspects of the person, a coherence . . . in the particularity of circumstances" (98). How is this third stage of

development—acquiring an outlook, a sense of commitment—to be nurtured?

Having accumulated a substantial amount of writing, students are now ready to "put it all together." Striving to order these disparate writings is finally nothing less than an effort to "order" one's life. To prepare for this "final" integrative task, I like to assign one concluding autobiographical exercise:

> *Autobiographical Sketch #9.* One quality which characterizes all the autobiographies we have read in this course is that they all are written out of some deep, cherished convictions. (What are some of those convictions you recall—convictions about relationships between people, stealing, love, the secret of success, the virtue of good appearances, virginity, solitude, deliberate living, etc.)
>
> James Harvey Robinson, an American historian, claimed: *"Few of us take the pains to study the origins of our cherished convictions; indeed, we have a natural repugnance to so doing. We like to continue to believe what we have been accustomed to accept as true, and the resentment aroused when doubt is cast upon any of our assumptions leads us to seek every manner of excuse for clinging to them. The result is that most of our so-called reasoning consists in finding arguments for going on believing as we already have."*
>
> In this last "assigned" writing, I'd like you to talk about one of your "cherished convictions"—something that is part of who you are, how you act and how you look at the world. What led you to such a belief? Why is it still true for you now? Is it ever tested or challenged? If so, how do you respond?
>
> Now if Robinson is right about us, I would imagine that it might be easy in this writing to slip back into familiar, stock answers and cliches—"excuses," in other words. Instead, I'm asking that you honestly "take the pains" to present the origins of this particular conviction—to SHOW us, in whatever style of writing seems most appropriate—how you came to hold such a belief.

This exercise, like the first, seeks to unite past and present; to connect what *is* with what *was*. But it also anticipates the goal of the autobiography itself, which is to discover the origins of what one is becoming.

To produce an autobiography at this stage requires *selecting, editing, revising* and *developing* this "raw material" into some coherent whole. In short, it involves making choices and commitments from what already has been produced. Freed from the major task of "invention," the student need not wonder, "What shall I say?" but rather must ask:

> —What shall I *affirm*? What shall I choose to omit?
> —Where do I begin? Where do I end?
> —For whom do I most want to compose this autobiography?
> —What *themes* seem to be running through all my writings?
> —Does my writing seem to be *asking*, "Who am I?" (like Richard Wright's)? Or, is it *telling*, "This is who I am" (like Ben Franklin's)?
> —How will I *order* my sequence of writings?
> —What sort of *tone* colors my writings? Does it *express* confidence, indifference, humility, pride, tolerance, warmth, passion, anxiety, hope, determination, fervor, intimacy . . . .

Such questions serve not merely as rhetorical guides for ordering one's prose, but also provide strategies for composing one's "self."

This process leads to "re-vision" in the truest sense of that word. One student (who was also a musician) discovered in her writings a persistent awareness of "putting on a show," whether on stage or off. Her final composition, then, became a sort of "performance" in itself—a series of "variations" upon the "theme" of performing—affirming what she saw as a pervasive habit and need in her life.

Some students need more direction than others with this process of "re-vision," though all seem to find some way of running order through chaos. I find most students are helped by a few judicious guidelines:

1. This is YOUR autobiography! Develop a manuscript which first pleases you!
2. Form the body of the autobiography as it seems most appropriate to your purpose: perhaps as one extended piece of prose, or perhaps through several chapters or vignettes. SELECT portions from your autobiographical sketches—do not simply include everything. DEVELOP new material where the design of the project calls for it. ORGANIZE the whole in a meaningful and pleasing way.
3. Provide a one-page *preface* or *introduction*, addressed specifically to the AUDIENCE for whom you are writing your autobiography. This might be an imaginary audience, or your classmates, a parent, a special friend, etc. In this *preface*, provide as clear and as succinct a statement as you can concerning the PURPOSE and UNITY of the autobiography. That is, *why* it is written, and *how* it is unified or held together. (This *preface* is especially helpful to me, too, as an aid in evaluating the overall integrity and coherence of the manuscript.)
4. The manuscript must bear an engaging TITLE (not "My Autobiography," or some such generic label).

While other guidelines may be suggested, their basic intention is to ask, "How shall I make this life public?" Commitment, I believe, can best be understood (both rhetorically and developmentally) through preparing to "give over" one's life to a perceived audience. To "publish" one's life (for however small an audience) is ultimately an act of commitment—it demands that one take up a position with respect to an audience.

The autobiography of Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger of Memory*, serves as a brilliant model of this process of composing one's life. What he modestly refers to as "six chapters of sad, fuguelike repetition," were written separately, as individual essays. Through the resonances set up among these *collected* essays, each answering the others, we can understand *his* commitment: "I remember what was so grievously lost to define what was necessarily gained" (6). What anyone "gains" through the art of autobiography will depend precisely upon that—discovering a language for what one has "lost."

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Correlations of Sound Symbolism with other Connotative Mechanisms: Some Preliminary Speculations

by
Don L. F. Nilsen

I have long been fascinated by the fact that so many English words somehow sound exactly right in terms of what these words mean and how they are used. Is it by accident that "butterfly" is merely a reording of the sounds of "flutterby?" I'm reminded of a bilingual joke. An American, a Frenchman, a Mexican, and a German were talking about sound symbolism. The American pointed out that "butterfly" is a very soft word, very reminiscent of what an actual butterfly looks and sounds like. The Frenchman agrees with the American, but feels that the French word "papillon" is equally appropriate. The Mexican points out that "mariposa," although it sounds very different from either "butterfly" or "papillon" is nevertheless a very appropriate name for describing something that is both delicate and pleasant. The German, after hearing all of this bragging about the appropriate names for butterfly in these various languages, becomes a bit disgruntled, and asks, "Und so was ist wrong mit 'schmeterlung.'" The answer, of course, is that there is nothing wrong with "schmeterlung," except for the fact that this word should be used to describe a German tank, and not a butterfly. Mark Twain felt that the German language had no really powerful words. He said, "...observe the strongest of the several German equivalents for explosion, —"Ausbruch." Our word "toothbrush" is more powerful than that" (260).

Twain was very concerned with sound symbolism as can be seen in this quote from "Eve's Diary:"

> The minute I set eyes on an animal I know what it is. I don't have to reflect a moment; the right name comes out instantly.... I seem to know just by the shape of the creature and the way it acts what animal it is. When the dodo came along he [Adam] thought it was a wildcat.... But I saved him.... I just spoke up in a quite natural way...and said "Well, I do declare if there isn't the dodo!" (Fromkin 5)

Many words are onomatopoetic. Rice Krispies in English goes "Snap! Crackle! and Pop!" In German it goes "Schnapp! Krackle! und Popp!" The sound that a cat makes is "meow" in English, "miauler" in French, "murlykat" in Russian, "maullar" in Spanish, "miauen" in German, and "neaw" in Japanese. In advertising, there is the "Ah-h bra," and "Psssssst Shampoo," and Northern Tissue has "cush."

"Staccato," "lulling," "murmur," and "lullaby" are words which sound very much like what they refer to. Words can be very euphonious, as when Maidenform names their

bras "Beautiful Dreamers," and describes them as "frothy, light as foam...just a wisp of sheer." Or words can be cacophonous, as in the "Cruex" ad which tells us how to get rid of "itching, chafing, rash, excessive perspiration, [and] irritation in the groin area." Dwight Bolinger has suggested that there is a relationship between the size of the oral cavity when a word is spoken and the size of the concept being referred to. There is a very small resonating cavity for such words as "wee," and "bit," and "itsy bitsy," "teensy weensy," "mini," "peep," "cheep," and "chirp," and in such pairs as "chip/chop," "slip/slap," "nib/knob," and "teeny/tiny" the first word of each pair is felt to be smaller than the second, which correlates again to the size of the mouth during the utterance of the respective words. The smallness can in fact be emphasized by prolonging the pronunciation of the vowels, as in "leeeeeetle," or "teeeeensy" (309).

Bolinger has also seen a correlation of "-olt" words with a sudden jarring motion, as in "bolt," "colt," "jolt," and "volt;" and a correlation of "-irl" words with a circular motion, as in "twirl," "swirl," "whirl," "furl," and "gnarl." Bolinger feels that "gl-" words are related to flickering light, as in "glitter," "glimmer," "gleam," "glisten," "glow," and "glare." Finally, he says that "-ump" words correlate strongly with heavy blunt objects, as in "stump," "rump," "dump," "chump," "grump," "lump," "bump," "hump," "clump," and "thump" (309). Bolinger even feels that there is a difference between "burned" and "burnt." Because 'burned' takes longer to say, he feels that it sounds like something going on, while "burnt" is a short staccato word indicating something already finished.

Walter Brasch points out that the names of many cartoon characters have had and will continue to have *g* or *k* sounds in one-syllable names. He asked one executive "Why," and received the answer, "It feels it should be" (xii). Allen Klein lists his occupation as "gelotologist." His grandmother didn't know what this term meant. She thought that her son had a job going around sampling Italian desserts, but actually a "gelotologist" is a person who has made a serious study of laughter. George Carlin contrasts the sound symbolism of baseball with that of football. Baseball, he says, is played in a pastoral setting, a park. There is no time limit. You bunt, sacrifice, and finally go home. Football, on the other hand, is technological. It's played in a stadium, is rigidly timed, and if there is a tie at the end they have a "sudden death." You try to get into the enemy territory. You block, clip, kick, blitz, throw bombs, and finally reach the end zone.

Carlin is very aware of the sound symbolism of words. He doesn't like the term "stomach noise," for example. He would much prefer the Latin expression, "borbarhythmia;" it is much more sound symbolic. Reinhold Aman says that some but not all of a word's sound symbolism carries from one language and culture to another. He uses the name of a French soft drink as an example. The name is "Pshitt," and in French it is merely an onomatopoetic rendering of the sounds produced when opening a bottle of this carbonated beverage. In English, however, both the connotations, and the denotations are very different. A similar problem is the Chevrolet "Nova." In Spanish, this means, "It doesn't run."

Words are very suggestive. Unless people want to elicit a kind of nervous laughter, they must avoid such words as "social intercourse," "uvula," "sexagenarian," "phonographic magazine," "mastication," "castigation," "public area," "cunning linguist," "conundrum," and "homogeneous." This suggestive power of words also results in malapropisms, so that children talk about playing "chest" instead of "chess," pledge allegience to "one national invisible," or "one naked individual" rather than "one nation indivisible," and sing "for amber waves of grey" instead of "for amber waves of grain." Amsel Green collected such malapropisms and published a book about them called Pullet Surprises. The title comes from a high school boy who wrote, "In 1957, Eugene O'Neill won a Pullet Surprise."

If a little bit of sound symbolism is good, then more symbolism must be better. That's one reason that echoic patterns are so common for sound symbolic words. Children say "mama," and "daddy;" they play with such toys as "yoyos," "seesaws," and "teetertotters," and they read such stories as "Amelia Bedelia." The characters in children's stories frequently have names like "Henny Penny," "Chicken Licken," "Goosey Loosey," "Foxy Loxy," "Ducky Lucky," and "Turkey Lurkey." In Beatrix Potter's story about Peter Rabbit, the hero's name stands out precisely because it does not contain an echoic element. The children are named, "Flopsy," "Mopsy," "Cottontail," and then breaking the pattern, there is "Peter." Adults also have echoic names that are sound symbolic, names like "Fifi," "Mimi," "ZsaZsa," which connote sexiness, and then there is "Evel Knievel." For adults, the h...p... pattern is most prolific. Consider "hanky panky," "hodgepodge," "hocus-pocus," and "higglety pigglety." The "blanketyblank" pattern is also productive, as in "clickety clack," "yakity yak," "hippity hop," "bumpety bump," and even "gobbledygook."

Up to this point I've attempted to give some indication of the nature and extent of sound symbolism in English, and give some clues as to how its contribution to connotative meaning gives sound-symbolic words a sort of double punch. I've also suggested that sound-symbolic words are highly suggestive in nature. At this point, I'm going to attempt to give some indication as to just how suggestive sound-symbolic words actually are. In fact, I feel that there are thirteen different parameters which relate in some way to sound symbolism, as follows:

NUMBER:	PARAMETER:	ASSOCIATION WITH HIGH FRONT SOUNDS:	ASSOCIATION WITH LOW BACK SOUNDS:
1	Pitch	High	Low
2	Edges	Angular	Curvular
3	Size	Small	Large
4	Evaluation	Good	Bad
5	Shade	White	Grey etc.
6	Distance	Short	Long
7	Time	Short	Long
8	Sound	Short Wave Length	Long Wave Length

9	Brightness	Light	Dark
10	Temperature	Hot	Cold
11	Color	Hot Colors	Cold Colors
12	Sex	Female	Male
13	Complexity	Simple	Complex

There are, of course, reasons for these various correlations. Female larynxes are smaller than are male larynxes; it therefore follows that they are associated with high-pitched sounds. The shortness of the wave length of the high pitched sounds is somehow equivalent to shortness in time or distance, and in fact distance is frequently measured in time. We very often don't even see the metaphors involved when we talk of bright colors or bright sounds (high front sounds), as opposed to dark colors or dark sounds (low back sounds), and we also have hot and cold colors relating to the shorter vs the longer wave lengths and thus these terms are relevant to temperatures, to colors, and to sounds.

What is exciting is that these connotative correlations are universal in scope. In fact, this list of thirteen correlations occured to me while I was listening to a paper on phonetic symbolism in native speakers of English and Urdu (O'Boyle et. al.). The authors worked with six geometric shapes, a very angular shape, which they termed "takete," an overlapping of three ellipses called "uloomu," and then four other shapes—an "isosceles triangle," a "right triangle," a "circle," and an "ellipse." What they discovered is that for both English and Urdu speakers, the round figures (circles and ellipses) were assigned significantly lower frequencies than the other stimuli. They also found that complex figures and dense figures received significantly higher frequency settings than those stimuli not possessing these dimensions.

Obviously, this research is only in the very beginning stages. In fact this article is being written not so much to answer questions, as to raise questions. I feel that research in linguistic aesthetics is sorely needed, and I feel that a detailed and thorough study of sound symbolism would be a good approach to this important topic. Mark Twain stated it very well when he said, "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is like the difference between the lightening and the lightning bug (Holland 108).

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Coulee Country Roots

by

J. H. Foegen

According to a scholar long familiar with "Coulee Country," the meanings of residents' surnames, and of commonly-used phrases, are fascinating when time is taken to "dig out" and consider them. Here are a few, in no particular order.

The word "coulee" itself is French for a small, narrow valley, having no permanent stream or creek; it is dry in mid-summer. Often of rather spectacular beauty, these valleys are part of the "Driftless Area," unscoured by the glaciers that moved through the general area eons ago, still rugged and laying essentially as originally formed. Located between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago, with the Mississippi River on the "West and Interstate 90/94 on the East, this part of western Wisconsin has seen little population change between early settlement and today. (An interesting booklet, "Upper Coulee Country," is available from: Trimbelle Publishing, P.O. Box 836, Prescott, Wisconsin 54021. It concerns the area roughly bounded by Prescott/Hastings on the North, La Crosse on the South, the Mississippi on the West and the Eau Claire area on the East.)

Trempealeau. Though "stealing" land from, and often having little respect for, the native Indians, we kept many of their place names, sometimes translated through the French as here, "The mountain that soaks with its feet in the water."

Dugway. A short, winding, steep grade, for example Highway 95 from Fountain City, Wisconsin to about five miles west of Arcadia. Around the 1870's or perhaps even before, a crude way or road had been dug into and around the hills, to permit wheat to be hauled by ox teams from farms around Arcadia to Fountain City for shipment to market by riverboat. The road's remains can still be seen if one knows where to look.

Beef Slough. A backwater of the Mississippi located at the delta of the tributary Chippewa River, north of Alma, Wisconsin. A barge loaded with cattle enroute from New Orleans to the Sioux Indian Reservation near New Ulm, Minnesota ran aground here. The cattle had to be off-loaded, and walked to "where the river was more deep," then re-loaded to continue the trip. Ever since, the location has been known as "Beef Slough."

River Rats. According to some observers, people who did not milk cows or go to church, and who were faintly rapscallion—-though they'd have been astonished to hear this. (Landlocked "slaves to butter making" privately envied them!) Such "lotus eaters" lived on the river itself, or along it in towns like Alma, Fountain City or Winona. Typically, they didn't stay in one place, but traveled up and down the Mississippi, some as far, it was said, as Prairie du Chien!

In addition to such place names and people labels, commonly-used phrases are also distinctive to the area. You know you're in Wisconsin, for example, when people say—-

though they write it correctly—-"They're just going *acrosst* the street to the store." The speech is similar in its way, to people down South who tote bags and carry women, as in, "Hey Joe, y'all hep me tote these cee-ment bags, hear?", and "Ah'm fixin' to carry Louella May to the movie come Friday night."

Also in the deep South, a 300-pound, 65-year-old man commonly talks about his "Daddy." In Coulee Country, people talk about "cricks," as in "Nort Crick," meaning of course, "North Creek."

In Hamlin Garland Country, men wear bib overhauls (overalls) and thrash (thresh) grain.

When the flag passes in parades, respectful watchers "take their hats off of their heads." Critics feel that just taking off one's hat would be sufficient. From where *else*, after all, would they be removed? Similarly, when summer peaks, it gets so hot that "tires melt off of the rims." Again, where else would they be?

And when, during a noisy party, someone wants to talk more privately in an adjoining room, he or she will ask another person to "bring the door to," meaning it should be neither fully closed nor latched, but only that the door is to be pushed "to" direct contact with the frame. In German, "Bitte, Machen die tuer zu."

Most interesting of all perhaps, because they relate to people, are surnames. Many of the following are still borne by those living in the area.

Ziegeweid. The name is very regional, peculiar to the so-called "Saurland" of North Rhine Westphalia, Germany. Zieg is a goat, ziege is the female, and weid or weidt is a pasture, more accurately a bald, naturally treeless meadow, usually circular, such as occurs on low, well-worn mountains such as the Smokies or Ozarks in the United States. Hence, Ziegeweid becomes "goats' meadow."

Foegen. No direct German derivation has been found, although some have said it originally meant "street sweeper." In Dickens' English, a villainous type—-though spelled "Fagin." In this case, pronunciation was the same.

Rebhahn. Reb, pronounced "rabe" as rhymes with "babe," is grape or grape arbor; hahn is chicken. Two distinct words are involved. Hence, chicken of the grape arbor literally, or partridge.

Hoevel. An umlaut was probably used over the letter "o" originally, as in Höfel, "servant of the hof," or house. This name is not to be confused with "Hofmeister," or "master of the house." The diminuitive, that "el" at the end, makes the difference, connoting familiar, small, or not greatly respected.

Schmidtknecht. Blacksmith's helper. Schmidt is Smith of course, knecht another of the "untermenschen" or working classes.

Glencoe. Referring to the Scots, this was originally Glen Coe, a place still found in Argyllshire, Scotland. In and around Arcadia, is pronounced with a hard, ringing "g," as in "Glenk-koh," like a wrench dropped on a cement floor. The earliest white settlers, with New England pinery and logging connections, allegedly retailed their purchased acreage to later, land-hungry Continentals. Cannily, these early Scots rejected the too steep hills and wet narrow valleys of the area, choosing instead better, more level land

nearer the Trempealeau River. (Galesville, Wisconsin is a fine example of a New England town.) Excellent animal husbandrymen, they owned good farms and blooded livestock, but apparently did not breed enough Scots, so one finds the Muirs, Ashtons and Comstocks living mostly in memory, land records, and on tombstones. "Schottische" remains, however, meaning in German, "As the Scots dance."

Putz. To ornament, trim or polish.

Reuter. One who clears the land. Probably derived from "to root," or "to rout out."

Buchholz. Mans "book wood." Before the printing press or lithography, images were transferred using wood cuts. Prepared in mirror image, they were then inked and pressed to paper. The best wood for this job was beech. Hence, both the means used to print, and the product derived, became in the accepted German sense, "buch." Interestingly enough, "Buchenwald," for all its horrible current meaning, is literally, "beech woods."

Haines. Of the sylvan grove, the bosky glen.

Krautwurm. Literally, cabbage worm.

Knaub. A knob, pommel as on a saddle, hilt of a sword.

Wunderlich. Wonderful. Knaub and Wunderlich were early grocers in Fountain City.

Schultz. Village mayor, local-government official.

Rotering. "Of the red ring."

Schlesser. "The locksmith." From German to English, a "stepped" derivation would move from chlosas (castle or keep) through Schhussel (key to some) to Schlesser (locksmith.) The inference is "protected," or "under lock and key."

Weber. Weaver.

Fernholz. "Far woods."

Kastner. Box or chest maker. A casket is a little box!

Krumholz. "Crooked wood." This "crooked" sense remains to us in Grimm's Fairy Tales; see for example, in "The House That Jack Built," the phrase, "This is the dog, so old and worn, who was tossed by the cow with the *crumpled* horn."

Angst. Anxious, anxiety, worry.

Amman. In the Swiss-German dialect, a magistrate, bailiff, minor court official. (Orientation is legal, not royal.)

Grotjahn. "Big John."

Bremer. Probably "man of/from Bremen," a major German seaport city.

Thies. Diminuitive for St. Matthew, hence loving. Like saying "little Bobby," instead of "Robert." St. Mattieus is a favorite patron saint in the Catholic, Southern Rhinisch Palatinate.

Sendlebach. Probably, "the quiet brook."

Wittenberg. "Of the White Mountains".

Krause. "Frill, ruffle." To encircle, go around one's waist. A certain sense of a closed loop, as with a cuff, armband, even rosary.

Schank. Sale of liquor or beer; hence, those licensed to do so.

Dorn. "Thorn." In going from German to English, a sound shift often occurs, as when Teutsch became Deutsche, Pfeffer Pepper, and Dorn Thorn.

Koenig. "The King." From the German, meaning "he who can." More properly spelled with an umlaut over the "o", as "König."

Engle. "Angel."

Rumple. Rubbish, junk, carpenter's scraps, also bits and pieces rummaged from attics.

Runkel. Small lump or chunk, as with coal or wood fuel, a chunk of wood for a stove or furnace.

Fertig. Ready, as in "Are you ready?" The German reply might be, "Ja, ben ich schone fertig."

This is only a sample of the thousands of similar surnames peculiar to even *this* relatively small area. Upon reflection, it is equally apparent that everybody's name began in some way or other. If you don't yet know your own "roots" in this respect, and are willing to risk finding out (!), maybe now is a good time to start. If you live in Coulee Country, or have ties to the region, one way to begin is to write the co-author who has available a wealth of such information: Joseph E. Ziegeweid, 6419 84th Court North, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota 55455.

St. Paul's Writing in the Content Areas

by
Jean Borax, Greta Michaels, and Carole Pressley

As teachers on special assignment for Writing in Content Areas in St. Paul's junior high schools, we *can* help our fellow teachers use writing activities in their classrooms. Before we try to do so, however, we always find out if we *may* help: our concern is to help teachers who *want* us to assist them in ways they believe would make them more effective. Teacher input is vital.

Writing in Content Areas, a cost-effective, innovative project, began in St. Paul in 1982-83 with funding from the Minnesota Council on Quality Education. The extension of this project from its original site at Central High School to the junior high schools in ISD 625 was made possible by Board of Education funding to pay our salaries and to provide release time so teachers could attend workshops.

Our aim is to implement the recommendations of Arthur Applebee in *Writing in the Secondary School* (NCTE: Urbana, IL, 1982). Applebee recommends that teachers use writing as a tool for learning and that they learn to use the composing process. The theoretical basis for our work is the research of James Britton, who described student writing on the basis of its function as transactional, expressive, or poetic, the research of persons like Linda Flower and Janet Emig, and the practice advocated by the National Writing Project.

First, and always, we help teachers develop writing activities for their classes, activities designed to help students learn content material, to require them to think critically, and to involve them in generating language about what they are learning. Many such writing strategies have been collected and published in the two project manuals, *Learning and Writing I and II*, and some of those strategies are presented in our accompanying article, "ADAPT"

Second, we have developed and implemented an inservice program. Implementing any educational innovation has two aspects: getting underway and sustaining the motion. Because of recent emphasis on basic skills and because writing is a current concern, the first aspect of implementation has been relatively easy, though not without problems. Sustaining the program is the challenge now facing us.

Getting Underway— Solving Scheduling Difficulties

Like many inservice programs, the staff development component in this project has had to overcome scheduling difficulties and teacher resistance. Scheduling involves costs for substitutes necessary to hold workshops during the school day. After-school sessions are cheap, but they create problems: teachers are tired or have competing obligations, and bad weather or activites like parent conferences can force rescheduling. In 1983, an after-school schedule did work for us at Central when the school had a

staff development grant from an outside foundation. The principal invited anyone to attend and requested that each department 'elect' one participant. Over half of the staff participated. Teachers could choose inservice credit through a local college or a $100 stipend and re-certification units.

Although some teachers resent being taken out of class, inservice sessions conducted during regular contract time are advantageous. We have tried two school-day schedules. In 1984-85, we presented workshops at three different schools using rotating substitutes to cover teachers for two hour blocs during the school day. This model required the workshop leader to present each workshop three times during the day, but it allowed for small workshop groups. It is easier for teachers to write and to share their writing in such small groups. Small groups also foster conversation as teachers share their experiences about the activities they have tried. Although the sub schedule presented problems, some teachers felt their students stayed on task when they knew their regular teachers were in the building. In one school where the principal required all staff to participate, a happy side effect was that teachers who seldom talked with one another had a chance to do so. The major problem with this two hour, in-school schedule was that it did not allow for enough interaction among the teachers. Time pressures were intense: teachers tended to come in, grab goodies and coffee, and take notes madly while presenters "laid it on. "

In the fall of 1985, we implemented the most successful schedule for workshop sessions. Having all day sessions at two week intervals enabled us to overcome many difficulties. Teachers who participated called it "The teacher as adult" model. Sharing our writings and experiences was meaningful for all of us. Since the teachers came from five schools but all taught the same subjects, they could talk about common professional concerns such as textbook selection, learner outcomes, and the District's Effective Schools program. Many of the assistant directors for curriculum and instruction attended sessions and became better acquainted with their teachers.

Getting Underway— Overcoming Teacher Hostility

During 1984-85, some building principals ' required ' teachers to attend the two hour workshops in their building. Frankly, this caused many difficulties for us, and we had to spend much time defusing teacher anger. We have always asked that teachers participate in workshops and in this project voluntarily. We have found that more people want to experience and use writing in their classes than we three can help and we can ignore the 'reluctant dragons.'

Please don't think that this is all the resistance we've encountered. Many who have appeared at workshops have come reluctantly. The classroom is a teacher's domain. Teachers naturally resist any interference with their classroom activities. The concept of writing in a content area class may be perceived by teachers as an intrusion or as an attempt to manipulate them into doing the English teacher's job. Teachers may question the relevance of writing to learning in their content area and will almost certainly foresee an increase in the already heavy paperwork burden.

Our challenge was to persuade experienced teachers that writing is relevant to their subjects and will indeed help their students learn. Evidence for its value is found in a California study, *Writing in High School Science*, which showed that frequent, short, content-centered writings do enhance long term retention of material taught. Our own project's evaluation showed that such writing activities have a positive effect on the fluency with which students write, on their competency in communicating learned concepts, and on their retention of subject material, both short term and long term.

Teachers will most often see the relevance of writing to learning if they experience it themselves. Our workshops have two essential requirements: each teacher must experience the kinds of writing we advocate for students, and each teacher must develop and use writing activities with a class currently being taught. Most teachers, however have done little, or no, writing since they left college. The prospect of writing makes many acutely uncomfortable. We work to establish a nonthreatening atmosphere in the workshops by writing and sharing writing with the participants, by reminding them that we are classroom teachers, and by listening sensitively to their concerns.

Most of all, we try very hard to make the workshops as useful to the teacher participants and as relevant to their daily professional concerns as we possibly can. That's the best way to overcome hostility or reluctance. We want the teachers to leave and to use what they've experienced the next day in their own classrooms. We want them to feel a part of an ongoing, sharing, caring group. And we want the workshops to be fun: if the experience is unpleasant, no matter how professionally relevant, the participants will be reluctant and hostile.

Throughout each of the four workshop days, teachers use many of the strategies we suggest in our manuals and the accompanying article. Briefly, the workshop days involve these kinds of activities.

Day 1: *Experiencing the Writing Process*
Teachers are led through a series of four writing experiences including a visual and verbal representation of the day. Much of this activity is based on material in *The Writing Project*, (Heinemann, 1985) a recommended book.

Day 2: *Developing Writing Activities*
Using subject specific materials, teachers first experience and then develop short, content-centered writing activities in their subject area. With help of the presenters, they develop activities to use with their own classes during the next two weeks.

Day 3: *Exploring the Connections between Writing and Thinking*
After reporting on their teaching experiences, teachers try writing activities that are relevant to their subject area and are intended to foster identified critical thinking skills. Then again, they develop activities for their own classes, this time focusing on critical thinking skills.

Day 4: *Responding to Student Writing*
After reporting on their second experiences using writing, teachers discuss ways to ' handle ' all that writing; they use holistic/primary trait scoring with a guide based on criteria for evaluating an assignment with actual student papers. For this activity, we leaned on *Teaching and Assessing Writing* by E.M. White (Josey Bass, 1985)

Sustaining the Motion - Providing Support

The willingness of the St. Paul Board of Education to pay for substitutes so that we can hold workshop sessions during the school day is crucial to teacher acceptance and participation. This funding is equally crucial in enhancing the long term effect of the teacher training because it provides for our work as resource teachers.

One of the problems with workshops is that once the workshop is over, so is the impact. All of us have gone to workshops that were exciting and returned to our classrooms with great intentions. Then other responsibilities intervene and we set the materials aside. The district has tried to increase the long term effects of this project by assigning us to work in junior high schools as resource teachers. Our jobs are to be on the spot to make suggestions, to nag and to provide special assistance to individual teachers. We try to provide content area teachers with meaningful help with both large, formal projects, and small, informal, content-centered writing. We also work with small groups of students on special projects and publish student writing. We have learned that we must get acquainted with each staff member and be able to convey an attitude of concern and helpfulness.

James Moffett has recommended that teachers "post-print-publish" student writings. No matter how we do it, displaying students' writings creates excitement that both motivates students and convinces teachers who still question the relevance of writing. For junior high schools, newspapers published every six to eight weeks featuring student writing have been very effective. Writing for the newspaper gives students a real writing task for a real audience. For reluctant writers, who are often very concrete thinkers, this is a rewarding activity. It is, however, very demanding for the resource teacher involved. Computer software and volunteer parental help can ease the burden.

Helping You

Our project is now in the replication phase: this means that our jobs have expanded to provide assistance where possible, when asked. We hope that this description of our activities is helpful to those of you who are thinking of developing a program for writing to learn in your school. If you would like further assistance, or to order materials we have prepared, please contact us c/o Minnesota Council on Quality Education, Capitol Square Building, St. Paul, MN 55101, or c/o The Department of Curriculum and Instruction, ISD 625, 360 Colborne Street, St. Paul, MN 55102.

ADAPT

A Process for Developing Writing Activities for Content Area Classes

by
Greta Michaels

Teachers are inveterate borrowers. We all pick up ideas, activities, exercises, and texts which we enounter elsewhere and adapt for our own classrooms. ADAPT is the name of the process which we who work with Writing in Content Areas, an innovative, cost-effective project first funded by the Minnesota Council on Quality Education and now funded by ISD 625, St. Paul, recommend to content area teachers who ask us for help. For it is, after all, to English teachers that administrators and content area teachers look for help when they anticipate writing in content areas. Such writing may be both writing to learn and writing to communicate what has been learned.

Our acronym ADAPT both names and describes the process which we suggest:

Assess your students
Delve into your subject
Articulate your objectives
Ponder the possibilities
Turn one into an assignment.

The acronym also serves as a useful framework for a description of just what we do when we help content area teachers develop writing activities for their classes. The discussion is followed by an example of writing activities "adapted" for junior high school students.

ASSESS YOUR STUDENTS

Every writing activity should be situation specific, tailored to the needs and abilities of the students who will be writing. How these students think is our first concern.

An equally crucial question is how do these students write? Chittenden, an experienced teacher with the Bay Area Project, places student writing behaviors on a continuum of fluency-coherence-correctness. The student who is struggling to attain fluency has trouble getting anything down on paper. This student needs practice writing "I learned" statements, responses, restatements of subject material. The student who has attained fluency needs next to work on coherence. Is his/her writing logical? rational? understandable? This student needs to develop a sense of audience and purpose through sharing writing with others. In a content area class such sharing serves another purpose as well— it is yet another way to run the subject material by the students who are learning it. When students are sharing their writing, they begin to

worry about correctness. At the level of correctness a student writes fluently, coherently, and correctly most of the time. This student, however, needs much writing practice, particularly using higher order thinking skills. (10-19)

A word about correctness is appropriate. We do not recommend that teachers ignore error; we are mindful that too much emphasis on errors can bring on writer's block, and we recommend that teachers focus on just one type of error at a time, a type which students have been taught to correct. Many content area teachers, are first concerned that students learn to spell terms correctly. Of course, a ground rule for all writing in content areas is that the content communicated be factually correct!

DELVE INTO YOUR SUBJECT

A further consideration when developing writing activities is what the specific subject area requires. Each content area makes special demands: in math, teachers are concerned with process and problem solving; in science, the concept load is heavy and students must learn to complete lab procedures; in social studies, students must learn to find what is significant in a mass of facts; in home economics and industrial arts, students must learn to read, follow, and give directions to complete a project; in health, the factual information must be related to the individual student's life.

The kind of thinking which a subject and a proposed writing activity will require is, then, a special concern. We agree with Glatthorn that good writing requires good thinking, but no one knows just how the two are connected (70). It is our belief that thinking and writing and subject material can, and must be, taught together. As we "adapt" and develop writing activites, we must consider which thinking skills need to be encouraged and build practice of those skills into the activity.

ARTICULATE YOUR OBJECTIVES

Practice of the thinking skill we have thus identified is certainly one possible objective for a writing activity. Usually teachers have additional objectives for using writing such as providing writing practice, rehearsing a process which has been explained, or repeating content material.

Teaching the conventions of standard written English is not usually a primary objective for the content area teacher as it is for the English teacher. He or she does, however, have to teach students writing and thinking strategies such as the REAP reading procedure for making notes, the use of ladder notes for comparisons, or RECAP for writing summaries of a lab activity.

Hillocks identifies successful writing teachers as "environmental" teachers, teachers who develop activities which involve students in processes of basic inquiry crucial to prewriting, writing, and editing. He identifies observation, description, and comparison/contrast as strategies which lead to generalizations which enumerate and hypothesize. Such teachers turn possible writing assignments into activities which give students experience in these basic strategies of inquiry (667-673). Certainly, if we define

"writing" as composing, as asking and answering questions, as solving problems, we will make provision of such experience one of our objectives for using a writing activity (667-673).

PONDER THE POSSIBILITIES

In Writing in Content Areas, we distinguish between "formal" and "informal" writings: formal activities are those writings which students revise and which we teachers grade; informal writing activities are short, subject-centered, and responded to, but not graded, by the teacher. Informal writing activities are less intimidating for students struggling to attain fluency and coherence; since they do not require large blocs of time, such short, focused writing are useful for content area teachers who have long agendas of material to be taught. These writings can take the place of worksheets or the questions at the end of the chapter which merely require copying answers from the book; we are always concerned to get students to process the material they are learning and to write in their own words.

Another thing to consider when developing a writing activity is the variety of writings which students regularly do in a given class. Science classes may focus on making notes and writing lab reports while social studies classes require summaries or math classes demand explanations of problem solving procedures. We recommend that teachers try several writing strategies and/or modes and then use interchangeably the few which seem to work best for them, their subject material, and their students.

A given writing assignment can be presented either as a prompt for writing done in notebooks (or on pages handed in) or as a supplement to a worksheet on which questions focus the students' thoughts (as do prewriting activities) before asking them to complete a writing. We call the many common forms or modes of writing which can be so adapted and presented to students "generic" forms of writing. An example of such a form is the "name" poem described by Gere. The familiar acrostic poem which students usually write about themselves or some person they know becomes a way of getting students to summarize what they know about a scientific object, historical figure, food etc.

A useful model which relates thinking to forms of writing which they do is Bazerman's consideration of student writing as "on-going written conversation." Since this model focuses on the relationship between the reading students do and their writing, it is particularly useful for content area teachers. Bazerman sees students reading and then writing in several stages or levels. The first is accurate understanding of prior comments. This involves students in writings like paraphrases or summaries, the kinds of writings our students regularly do in learning logs and class notebooks. The second level is reacting to reading. Here students are writing responses, including their own views with their restatements of the contents of a text. Our students do this when they write side by side notes, responses in their reading journals, and informal reaction essays. Bazerman's final stage is evaluating the reading done, defining issues and developing informed views. Here, of course, students are engaging in critical thinking

at the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students who are writing coherently and correctly do this when they develop formal writings, particularly writings based on research (656-661).

TURN ONE INTO AN ASSIGNMENT

As English teachers we are all aware of the three things every writer needs to know— audience, purpose for writing, and mode— and we build these into every assignment. To these Shifsky and Huffman make a vital addition: a route through the assignment. If students are to complete a writing successfully, especially if they are inexperienced writers, it is vital that they know how to move through a writing. Sometimes the route through the assignment is part of the inquiry strategy or the writing/thinking strategy we are teaching; on other occasions, it may be as simple as a set of directions.

A second element which we like to add to content area writing activities is criteria for evaluation. White demonstrates convincingly the value of criteria for evaluation as a teaching tool. If we engage students in a discussion of what a given writing should include and how the writing should be graded, they will be aware of what a given writing needs. The teacher also will have a set of criteria on which to base a guide for primary trait-holistic scoring, a quick and effective response to sets of informal writings.

To illustrate how ADAPT works, let's imagine that we are English teachers who have been asked to help a seventh grade American History teacher develop a writing activity for a class learning about Roger Williams. A text book section entitled "Historymaker" about Roger Williams has been read and discussed in class; following the discussion students wrote "I learned" statements, some of which demonstrate that students missed the crucial ideas in the reading.

This class is not ability grouped. Most of the students are concrete in their thinking; a few write coherently, but many are still struggling to attain fluency. They all need writing practice with material with which they have some familiarity. All are overwhelmed by the mass of information in their textbook. The teacher is particularly concerned that these students understand the concept of religious freedom and tolerance for differing beliefs. She also wants to make clear to the students the important role which individuals with the courage of their convictions have played in our history. Previous experience has shown that assignments must be constructed so that they require recasting, putting the information into new structures, as well as restating of facts and ideas; the assignment must be such that the students will have to write in their own words instead of copying from the textbook as they are wont to do. These students have done both oral and written role playing in class. They are also familiar with diary entries and letters as modes for writing. Since this writing will be shared in class and then published by posting in the hallway, it is presented as a prompt for writing to be done on separate pages.

Here's the writing activity as "adapted."

Imagine that you are the son or daughter of Roger Williams. Before you begin one of the writings suggested below, make some notes in your notebook about these things:

- How old are you? Where do you live? What is your life like? List 5 facts about your life.
- What is your father like? Is he able to explain his beliefs to you? What concerns him? List 10 words which describe your father as a person.
- What does your father believe? List the beliefs you can recall. After you write down what you remember, check back in the textbook to be sure that you have noted all the principles stated there. Be sure to make your notes in your own words.

Now, you are ready to write. Choose one of the forms of writing suggested below. Use your lists and notes to write at least a page. These writings will be shared in class.

* Write a diary entry in which you describe a conversation you overheard between your father and Governor Winthrop. Be sure to include the feelings you had about what you heard, some description of how your father seems to you, and statements of his beliefs and those of the governor.

OR

* Write a letter to your cousin back in England explaining why your family is moving to Rhode Island. Be sure to include how you feel about the move, your father's beliefs and his differences with the governor, and some description of your father as a person.

ADAPT is a useful process: it can help the English teacher who is asked to assist his/her peers with the development of writing activities for content area classes; it can provide a guide for any teacher who wants to involve students in writing to learn and in writing about what they are learning. Using this process allows us to take generic forms of writing, identified thinking skills, and text materials from many sources and transmute them into successful classroom activities. In the end, as always, it is the individual classroom teacher who makes the difference— it is he or she who must "adapt" for the specific learning situations in which students write.

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READING READINESS AND THE LEARNER

by
Marlow Ediger

A quality reading readiness program needs to be in the offing for each student beginning initial experiences in reading.

A reading readiness program for young learners needs to be sequential to blend into more formalized means of reading instruction. A quality reading readiness curriculum will emphasize the following:

1. securing the interests of learners.
2. achieving meaning in learning on the part of students.
3. providing for diverse levels of achievement among pupils.
4. attaining purpose from the involved student's own unique perception.
5. developing appropriate attitudes within students for learning.
6. utilizing a variety of materials and methods to optimize student achievement.

Securing Interests of Learners

What can be done to obtain the attention of students in order that they may achieve as much as possible in reading? A variety of learning activities certainly should assist in securing interests of students. Thus, selected slides, filmstrips, pictures, study prints, films, and transparencies can provide background information for learners in a reading readiness program. The act of reading in a more formalized program of instruction becomes easier if learners understand the related subject matter. If students struggle over both word recognition and ideas in reading a given selection, the skill of reading becomes complex indeed. However, with background information provided by quality audio-visual materials, properly introduced by the teacher, reading as a skill can be more readily developed, as compared to not knowing the meaning of the inherent subject matter. It becomes quite obvious that more than background information on the part of the learner is needed to acquire abilities in learning to read.

Achieving Meaning in Learning

Young learners in a reading readiness program need to understand the meaning or meanings of abstract symbols. Thus, even in getting learners ready to read, students may already receive practice in understanding content which contains graphemes (symbols) arranged in sequential words, phrases, sentences, and even paragraphs. The experience chart concept may well provide this practice.

To implement the experience chart concept, involved learners need background experiences. The previously discussed audio-visual materials can provide the frame-

work for these background experiences. Also, excursions in the school building, on the playground area, and near to the school grounds may be taken by students with teacher guidance. The excursion experiences may be given orally by involved learners to the teacher in the classroom. The teacher prints neat, large manuscript letters pertaining to content provided by students. The content may be printed on the chalkboard, on a chart, or on a transparency using an overhead projector.

Next, after the completion of the experience chart in which students can see talk written down, the teacher guides students to read the related subject matter. As the teacher points to words, phrases, and sentences, students are developing a basic sight vocabulary.

Meaningful learning accrues in developing an experience chart due to students having done the following:

1. experienced content contained in the chart.
2. observed their orally expressed ideas being encoded using related graphemes.
3. provided the content which is within their very own speaking vocabularies.
4. experienced reading of content which they provided for the resulting chart.

Pertaining to the utilization of experience charts, Lee and Allen[1] wrote:

> Communication skills, commonly called the language arts, occupies a larger part in the curriculum during the first twelve or thirteen years of basic education than any other curriculum element. In fact, development of communication skills begins very early in the home as the child learns to use his native language with some degree of effectiveness. Our society recognizes, however, that skillful use of the language in all its aspects requires years of instruction and practice. Ability to use language well is closely linked with success in most prestige occupations in our society. It is imperative, then, that we effectively and efficiently teach the communication skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Providing for Diverse Levels of Achievement

It is always important to provide for varied levels of accomplishment on the part of a given set of learners. Pupils differ from each other in many ways, such as interest, motivation, abilities, and needs. How can the teacher provide for these differences in a quality reading readiness program?

The teacher might utilize a flannel board with related cutouts to tell a sequential story. An experience such as this should assist learners to attain background knowledge, as well as think of order of content stated. Each story that pupils will read later in a formalized reading curriculum should contain recommended sequence. Human beings tend to think sequentially as to facts, concepts, and generalizations. A quality story told to young learners with visuals should assist in providing learning emphasizing sequence in reading readiness.

Pupils may also tell stories without or with the use of a flannel board. The story should be on the present achievement and understanding level of the involved learner.

A second approach in providing for diverse progress levels could involve oral reading of stimulating stories to students. The content needs to be carefully selected to capture the interests of involved pupils. Illustrations contained in the context may be shown to learners as the oral reading activity progresses. The teacher needs to observe listeners to notice attentiveness. Reading orally with enthusiasm and intonation is important.

Using commercially prepared reading readiness materials may also assist in providing for individual differences. Selected learners may proceed more rapidly than others in the classroom due to abilities and motivation possessed. Thus, on a reading readiness page, learners may draw a line to match upper and lower manuscript letters. Visual discrimination is then being emphasized. Learners notice likenesses and differences in letters. Each upper case letter has a different configuration. Upper case letters, of course, have a different appearance, one from the other, as compared to lower case manuscript letters. Thus, the upper case letter "A" is quite different in appearance from the lower case "a." The upper case "C" is taller than the lower case letter "c." Otherwise the upper case and lower case "c" appear quite similar in appearance. In utilizing commercially prepared reading readiness materials, the teacher needs to make definite provisions for individual differences among learners.

Individual differences also can receive adequate attention in teacher prepared readiness materials. Thus, a teacher may have learners engage in activities, such as the following to proceed at their own rate of achievement:

1. Cross out a word that looks different from two other words, e. g. dog, room, dog. From the simple to the complex in sequence should be the guide in developing the visual discrimination experiences for students in marking the word in print that is different from two other words.
2. Choose the picture that looks different from two other illustrations, e. g. pictures of two identical dogs and a picture of a boy.
3. Pick the letter that is different, e.g. a b b.

In providing for individual differences, each learner needs to be permitted to attain as rapidly as abilities permit. No learner should be held back to where others are achieving. Nor should students be hurried along to a point to which meaningful learning is not possible.

Purpose in Learning

What can be done to assist students to attach reasons for participating in ongoing experiences? Learners achieve at a higher rate if a reason or reasons are involved in learning subject matter, skills, and attitudes. In a quality reading readiness program, pupils may engage in learning to read words attached to relevant concrete objects in the

classroom. Thus, the word "chair" should be printed in neat manuscript letters and attached to a real chair and the word "table" placed on a real table. Other vital words need also to be printed and placed on concrete objects. It is recommended that words in manuscript need selecting (and placed on objects) which will aid students later on in reading significant words in a more formal program. Each pupil needs to read at an increasingly proficient level.

Explaining to students how in learning to read the labeled words will aid them in reading more complex materials is significant.

The Dolch[2] list of 220 basic sight words remain relevant for students today. Here are the 220 words:

a	bring	find	hold	me	put	tell	want
about	brown	first	hot	much	ran	ten	warm
after	but	five	how	must	read	thank	was
again	by	fly	hurt	my	red	that	wash
all	call	for	I	myself	ride	the	we
always	came	found	if	never	right	their	well
am	can	from	in	new	round	them	went
an	carry	full	into	no	run	then	were
and	clean	funny	is	not	say	there	what
any	cold	gave	it	now	saw	these	when
are	come	give	its	of	say	they	where
around	could	go	jump	off	see	this	which
as	cut	goes	just	old	seven	those	white
ask	did	going	keep	on	shall	three	who
at	do	good	kind	once	she	to	why
ate	does	got	know	one	show	today	will
away	done	green	laugh	only	sing	together	wish
be	don't	grow	let	open	sit	too	with
because	down	had	like	or	six	try	work
been	draw	has	little	our	sleep	two	would
before	drink	have	live	out	small	under	write
best	eat	he	long	over	so	up	yes
better	eight	help	look	own	some	upon	you
big	every	her	made	pick	soon	us	your
black	fall	here	make	play	start	use	
blue	far	him	many	please	stop	very	
both	fast	his	may	pretty	take	walk	

The teacher may desire to select a few of the words at chosen intervals to guide learners in achieving word recognition skills. The teacher may challenge students to master the words using a flashcard approach. Inexpensive prizes or certificates may be given for mastery learning. The number of words selected for students to master should not be excessive. Rather, the number selected is reasonable and can become a part of the basic sight vocabulary of each learner. Success in learning and positive attitudes developed by each student are vital. If learners develop negative side effects from ongoing activities, harmful end results in learning to read will be in the offing. Continuous progress from each learner is recommended. To attain continuously, each student needs to be successful in learning.

Developing Appropriate Attitudes

If learners are to achieve appropriately, quality feelings toward learning need adequate emphasis. Playing games which aid students in achieving vital goals may emphasize affective ends. In a quality auditory discrimination program, pupils may provide words which rhyme with a given word provided by the teacher. Appropriate words need to be selected for this activity. How many words can students then give which rhyme with "hat." The word lends itself to learners giving numerous rhyming words such as bat, cat, fat, mat, vat, and rat. Other words which the teacher might use in a game situation in determining how many rhyming words pupils can provide include: can, ball, and run.

When students suggest words that rhyme, not only do auditory discrimination goals become relevant in the reading curriculum, but also enjoyment of learning as an attitude is relevant.

Pupils can also be challenged to provide words which have the same beginning sound as a word provided by the teacher. Thus, when ready, pupils may give words which have the same beginning sound as each of the following: bay, cake, role, and do.

There are students who cannot hear sounds and may need to depend upon the sight method more so than the sound approach to identify unknown words in a sequential reading program.

Pictures may also be used in a quality auditory discrimination lesson or unit. For example, the involved learner may cross out which picture of an animal does not begin in sound like the other two illustrations: Baby, fox, and boy.

Bush and Huebner[3] wrote:

1. Auditory and visual discrimination must be blended. From words that the child recognizes when he hears them , he is taught to recognize them when he sees them. Thus he blends the auditory and the visual processes.

2. The teacher should illustrate a particular sound with as many words as possible. Words and pictures should be used together for reinforcement and association. With the use of pictures, children can furnish additional words illustrating the particular sound.

3. Reliance upon only one method of word analysis is wrong. All the clues should be brought into play.

4. Teachers should direct to the individual child questions that will help him or her analyze the letter-sound relationships. Children vary in this ability and in the ability to generalize from specifics.

5. All elementary teachers should be familiar with the entire phonics program. No matter what grade or level is taught, there must be teaching, practice, reteaching, and review of certain phonic skills, at least with some of the children.

6. Some children need little phonics instruction. Substituting sounds in familiar words or adding sound to familiar words may suffice for them. Examples of substitution are ban for the known can, or bat for known cat. Examples of adding a sound are farm where arm is known, or rant when ran is known.

7. By diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses of the class, the teacher determines how much time to spend on phonics and with which children phonic instruction and practice is needed. It is usually a waste of time to teach the whole class or group that which only a few need.

Utilizing Varied Media

Quality reading readiness curriculum must emphasize a variety of materials and methods of teaching and learning. Each learner differs from others in many ways. Since multiple differences exist among students, each learner needs to be adequately provided for to achieve in an optimal manner.

Objectives need to be carefully chosen for students to attain on an individual basis. The types of objectives emphasized should reflect the concept of balance in the reading curriculum. Thus, understandings, skills, and attitudinal ends should be emphasized in teaching-learning situations. To attain understandings goals, vital facts, concepts, and generalizations should be stressed for learner attainment. Skills ends emphasize a learning by doing approach. A student then achieves abilities in using visual discrimination skills (developing a basis sight vocabulary), auditory discrimination methods (phonetic analysis), and picture clues (illustrations utilized to identify unknown words). Attitudinal ends are equally significant to achieve as compared to understandings and skill goals. Quality attitudes emphasize positive feelings toward reading as a curriculum area. With improved attitudes, students achieve at a more optimal rate in reading.

In Conclusion

Teachers and supervisors need to follow selected standards in a quality reading readiness program. Thus, an exemplary curriculum in securing a student's abilities to be ready to read includes:

1. getting learners' interests (attention) in desiring to achieve skills in reading.
2. attaching meaning (understanding) to content being studied in a reading readiness program.
3. providing for each student's present level of achievement with emphasis being placed upon sequential progress in reading for pupils.
4. guiding pupils to perceive purpose or reasons for wanting to learn to read.
5. assisting learners to develop positive attitudes toward the curriculum area of reading.
6. using diverse kinds of learning activities in guiding learners to achieve optimally.

[1]Doris M. Lee and R. V. Allen, *Learning to Read Through Experience*, Second edition. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963, p. 1.

[2]Listed in Diane Lapp and James Flood. *Teaching Reading to Every Child*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1978, p. 246.

[3]Clifford Bush and Margaret Huebner, *Strategies for Reading in the Elementary School*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1979, p. 83.

A WONDERFUL PLACE TO BE

by

Carol Hanson Sibley

As children immerse themselves in books, they discover intriguing places to be and have the opportunity to explore these places along with the heroes of the stories. In some recently published children's books, the authors and/or illustrators have used place or setting as a central element or the driving force behind the story itself. The following is a discussion of some of these books which are recommended because they create "a wonderful place to be" for the child reader.

As many children know, a wonderful place to visit in the summer is grandmother's house. In *One Summer at Grandmother's House,* the French author, Poupa Montaufier, shares her memories of summer days spent in Alsace during the 1950's. The text and primitive colored paintings detail this special time spent with grandmother, who lives in a beautiful old house surrounded by trees and flowers. The author shares with readers many of her grandmother's customs and habits, such as wearing three or four aprons at the same time for doing the housework, disconnecting the refrigerator several times a day to save electricity, or losing her spectacles in a huge pot of vegetable soup! For Poupa the end of this vacation spent with grandmother comes all too soon, with the last minutes used to gather up treasures to take home with her to remind her of this special time. For Austin in Mavis Jukes' story entitled *Blackberries in the Dark* a visit to his grandmother's is not at first the same wonderful time that it had been in past summers. Since his last visit, his grandfather had died and Austin and his grandmother must build a relationship for just the two of them. It is difficult for both of them as memories of grandfather surround them and neither knows how to react to the emptiness around them. Austin thinks back to the summer before when he and his grandfather had picked blackberries in the dark and when his grandfather had promised to teach him to fly fish on his next visit. Grandmother reaches out to Austin with grandfather's fishing equipment, and they decide that between the two of them they can learn to fly fish. In fact, they do succeed when grandmother manages to catch a beautiful brook trout, and Austin, following his grandfather's ways, throws back the fish. " 'It's good luck to throw back the first fish of the season. Grandpa said.' " Austin and his grandmother share blackberries in the dark and find the link needed for them to communicate without grandfather. The black and white drawings by Thomas B. Allen capture the emotional scenes in the text and help the reader identify even more with Austin and his grandmother as they discover that being together without grandfather can be wonderful in its own way.

Not since Miroslav Sasek's *This Is New York* has an author/illustrator so successfully looked at this city from a child's point of view as does Roxie Munro in *The Inside-Outside Book of New York City.* She takes her readers on an inside-outside trip around the city with full-page scenes of familiar sites. For example, the full page spread of the

Statue of Liberty lets the reader have an outside view close-up of the crown with two children shown looking out and then when the page is turned the reader switches viewpoints and is suddenly inside the Statue's head with the two children looking out. Another double page spread shows Madison Square Garden from the outside with school buses lined up along the street. When the page is turned, readers find themselves inside enjoying a magnificent circus. The last page of the book gives facts about each site. Did you know that the Empire State Building has seven miles of elevator shafts and that on a clear day you can see eighty miles from the 102nd floor observatories? This imaginative look at New York City would encourage children to take a closer inside-outside look at their own surroundings.

Stories set in other countries allow readers to travel with their minds and hearts to wonderful places. The reader can join Trina Schart Hyman in her interpretation of Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales.* It's a beautiful snowy world where children could hear bells ringing inside them. As the poet describes his "useful" presents received for Christmas, child readers recognize that place and time make little difference. There were "engulfing mufflers," "mittens made for giant sloths," and "zebra scarfs." One can't help but laugh to see the central character standing among the Christmas wrappings bundled in all his new winter gear. "Padding through the still streets" to the seaward hill with the narrator and his three friends gives the reader a panoramic view of the beach, the sea, and the town in the distance, all seen through the gentle snowfall. Readers leave the Wales of Dylan Thomas and Trina Schart Hyman with a longing to return for another Christmas. Bells ring inside children not only in Dylan Thomas' Wales but also in Chris Van Allsburg's world of *The Polar Express.* The magical train, the Polar Express, takes the narrator and the reader to the very best place to be on Christmas Eve, to the North Pole to visit Santa Claus. Santa Claus chooses the main character to receive the first gift of Christmas, and the young boy selects a bell from a reindeer's harness. Back home the narrator discovers the magical qualities of the bell; only those who truly believe can hear it ring. The reader realizes that for the boy this was a once-in-a-lifetime journey, to which he can return only through memory, symbolized by the bell. Inge in *Tikhon* by Ilse-Margaret Vogel finds that her homeland of Germany after World War I is a wonderful place to live, even if it is a country that has been devastated by war. Inge, an only child who often feels lonely, finds herself with a friend when her father brings home Tikhon, a young Russian soldier who is trapped in Germany after the war without identification papers. Even though Tikhon knows only a few words of German and Inge knows no Russian, they both find that friendship does not depend on language alone. One of the wonderful things they have in common is their love for the nearby Zobten Mountain. Inge loves to watch the mountain as the sun rises from behind it and to record the colors of the mountain during various times of day. For Tikhon the Zobten reminds him of his home in Russia. Ironically, it is their love for the Zobten Mountain that causes Tikhon to be captured by the German authorities and taken away from Inge. Fortunately, Inge sees Tikhon once more before he attempts to make his way back to Russia. When Inge looks at her Zobten, she is reminded of her friend Tikhon and when a gift arrives from him she realizes that "neither miles nor years" could ever separate them.

For a small boy in *All Wet! All Wet!* by James Skofield, the meadow and woods on a rainy summer day are wonderful places to be. As he explores the woods, he discovers how various animals spend a rainy day. Cutaways show foxes and rabbits huddled in their underground burrows. As the rainy day continues, other animals retreat. The skunk crawls inside his log and the fish in the swelling creek "lurk silently deep in the pools." The rain finally stops and the boy makes his way home, passing the new mushrooms and spiders mending their webs. The rain-soaked meadow and woods have been a wonderful place for the perceptive child to explore.

One does not have to go out in the rain to enjoy the sensations of being wet. As most children know, the bathtub can be a wonderful place to be. King Bidgood in *King Bidgood's in the Bathtub* by Audrey Wood has discovered the joys of the tub. In fact, no matter how much the various members of his court try to entice him from the tub, they fail miserably and much to their amazement find themselves joining the King in his wet surroundings. Even the Queen finds herself in the tub when she orders her husband to get out for lunch. There she is served an elaborate meal and finally emerges as elegantly as she can in her dripping wet state. The detailed paintings by Don Wood and patterned text add up to a very funny picture book. Max, the rabbit, in *Max's Bath* by Rosemary Wells offers his sister Ruby a challenge. Ruby decides that Max is such a mess after trying to eat his strawberry and lettuce sandwich that a bath is in order. Max innocently takes his orange sherbert into the tub, only to turn the bath water all orange. Ruby runs him another bath, but this time it's his grape juice that sinks to the bottom leaving Max and the water a deep purple. Finally, Ruby decides it's a shower Max needs. Max is clean after his shower, but as Max quickly points out, it's Ruby who's dirty, with juice and orange sherbert! This book would even withstand being grabbed by damp hands that have just emerged from the tub as it's a sturdy board book with pages that can be wiped dry.

The beach becomes a wonderful place to explore for readers of *When the Tide is Low* by Sheila Cole. It's a warm summer day and a young girl begs her mother to take her to the beach. Her mother replies "when the tide is low, we will go." As the child swings, the mother and daughter compare the high and low tide to the up and down movement of the swing and discuss the animals they will see when the tide is low. Illustrator, Virginia Wright-Frierson has created fascinating watercolor scenes of the sea life. The mother and daughter discuss "clams that close up with a squirt," "fiddler crabs with their claws held up like violins," as well as ten other sea creatures. A glossary at the end of the book again illustrates each animal and describes it in a short paragraph. The blue endsheets done in watercolor look like an empty ocean ready to be filled with all these intriguing sea creatures. For children who wish to further explore the edge of the sea, Anota Malnig's book entitled *Where the Waves Break: Life at the Edge of the Sea* provides them with color photographs and more detailed descriptions of the animals discussed in Sheila Cole's book. Even a child who has never had an opportunity to explore the ocean beach will be fascinated by the variety of sea life a perceptive person can find.

An empty room that is for rent can be a wonderful place because it holds memories of those who once lived there, as it does in *The Room* by Mordicai Gerstein. The first occupants were the young couple who loved to play music together, she the cello and he the tuba. As the years go by for the couple, the reader notices through the view offered by the room's two windows that the seasons are changing. Finally the couple, now old, move out and in through an open window flies a sparrow family, who make its home in the light fixture. Eventually, more people move in and out, including a mysterious stranger who plants a pear tree right outside one of the windows, a family of acrobats, a dentist who loves being surrounded by his pet ducks, and a band of noisy Irish musicians. Finally, the room is for rent again and the reader can't help but wonder what characters in the future will make it their home. It's certain that those who like pears and sunlight will find it a wonderful place to live.

The First Thanksgiving Feast by Joan Anderson and *The Pilgrims of Plimoth* by Marcia Sewall both portray life for the pilgrims in New Plimoth. Children learn of the harsh life for these new Americans which in contrast made the celebrating of the first Thanksgiving all the more joyful. While readers will not be tempted to exchange places with the harsh life that the pilgrims faced, they may feel that the first Thanksgiving feast would have been a wonderful place to be. On the day of the feast, the pilgrims were joined by Massasoit and ninety other Indians. Readers will be intrigued to learn that according to Joan Anderson the first feast "included turkey with 'puddings in the belly,' venison, stuffed cod, goose pudding, fruit tarts, corn pasties, soup, trifle, stewed pumpkin, and salad herbs." The celebration lasted for three days with the eating followed by a time for recreation. There was a tug of war, a jigging match, and the chants and dance of Massasoit and the other Indians. Photographs by George Ancona in *The First Thanksgiving* were taken at Plimoth Plantation, the living history museum near Plymouth, Massachusetts. They make the life of the early pilgrims very real for child readers. Likewise, Marcia Sewall's paintings in *The Pilgrims of Plimoth* vividly capture life in the colony. The text of both books reflect the language of these early settlers. To further celebrate Thanksgiving, readers may turn to *Thanksgiving Poems* selected by Myra Cohn Livingston with illustrations by Stephen Gammell. The last stanza of Barbara Juster Esbensen's poem entitled "The First Thanksgiving" captures the joy of a bountiful harvest: "Now summer has come and gone, and we have survived. We give thanks. The wind and the sea are cold again but fire blazes on the hearth and the harvest is golden in our hands."

For young children both the park and the zoo are wonderful places to be. A visit to the park for the young girl in *When We Went to the Park* by Shirley Hughes is made all the more enjoyable because she shares it with her grandfather. Colored illustrations depict the walk through the park on a crisp autumn day with the surrounding trees in shades of gold and red. The walk with grandfather is even more fun because they count the things they see, beginning with "one black cat sitting on a wall, two big girls licking ice-creams" and ending with "nine ducks swimming on the pond, ten birds swooping in the sky, and so many leaves I couldn't count them all." The counting game is brought full circle on the way back home when grandfather and granddaughter again meet the

one black cat. The book's endsheets give the child a chance to review all of the people and animals met in the park by counting them once again. *A Children's Zoo* by Tana Hoban allows young children to identify and describe zoo animals. Tana Hoban's superb color photographs appear on each right hand page and are outlined in white against a black background. On the left hand page the name of the animal depicted appears in large capital letters with three descriptive words in lower case letters. For example, the giraffe is described as "tall, spotted, silent" while the descriptive words for seal are "sleek, black, swims." The last page of the book answers questions about each animal. "Where do they come from? Where do they live? What do they eat?"

Joey is a book about a little kangaroo who has a mother who tends to be over-protective and wants to keep her son in her pocket where she knows he will be safe. Joey decides that if he has to stay in his mother's pocket he may as well make it a wonderful place to be. In the pocket he is joined by his friends Billy, Betty, and Bob who decide that they need to be entertained, first by television and then by a stereo so that they can listen to music and dance, all inside Joey's mother's pouch. Next they decide to form a band and more and more instruments are added to the pouch. Mother kangaroo's pouch is so stretched out that she can't even move. Finally, Joey wins his independence when his mother can no longer take all this craziness. Jack Kent's cartoon style illustrations add to the humor of mother kangaroo's predicament.

Children who think that it would be wonderful to be aboard a train will enjoy joining Noah in *A Regular Rolling Noah* by George Ella Lyon. Noah has been hired by the Creech family who are moving their whole farm by train from Kentucky to Canada. Noah's job on the train is to tend the stock. Noah loads the boxcar with the chickens, guineas, cow, calf, mare and enough hay and feed for the trip. Stephen Gammel's full-color watercolor paintings show the train as it winds through the mountains with Noah attempting to milk Rosie the cow while the train clatters along. The next morning Noah slowly realizes what the night journey has meant as he looks out from the open boxcar. Noah describes the flat plains with poetic language: "We've run out of mountains. Sky right down to your ankles. Big wind might blow you away." Upon arriving in Canada to "land flat as a griddle," Noah receives a return ticket for his pay. It's another train ride to look forward to but this time he's moved from a boxcar to riding in style "on a fine horsehair seat." The last spread of the book shows the train heading back for Kentucky taking home a regular rolling Noah, who's enjoyed every minute of his journey via train.

Being in bed may be the perfect place to be if the circumstances are just right. Preschoolers will identify with Max, the rabbit, in *Max's Bedtime* by Rosemary Wells. Max cannot sleep without his red rubber elephant. In the book's first spread, Max is pictured lying rigidly on top of his blankets with eyes wide open. The reader will notice the trunk of the rubber elephant sticking out from under Max's bed. Max's sister, Ruby, tries to help by tossing her stuffed animals one after another into her brother's bed. By the time Ruby gives Max her last animal, she can barely keep her eyes open. Finally, Max falls out of bed and discovers his beloved red rubber elephant. At the end of the story, Max, with eyes still wide open, tucks his sleeping sister into his own bed. Ruby

discovers that after such a struggle bed is the best place to be, even if the bed happens to be her brother's and even if a lumpy stuffed pink pig happens to serve as her pillow. Whether Max himself ever goes to bed is left to the reader's imagination. The narrator of *Watch the Stars Come Out* by Riki Levinson has no such struggles with going to bed. Her bed is a cozy place where she leans against her grandmother and listens to a story about her Grandma's Mama. This special story is about the journey by ship of Grandma's Mama and her brother to America when they were children. The illustrator, Diane Goode, portrays the crowded conditions on the ship and the joy of the people who, after twenty-three days, are greeted by the "lady with a crown." The last page of the book brings the reader full circle, as the narrator is shown again in her Grandma's arms listening to the end of the story. The narrator realizes that she is bound to her great grandmother by a common interest—like her great grandmother she loves to go to bed early to watch the stars come out. Being in a new grown-up bed with a new quilt becomes a magical experience for the narrator of *The Quilt* by Ann Jonas. As she and her stuffed dog Sally go to bed, she notices quilt patches from some of her old things, such as her crib sheet and baby pajamas. As she crawls under the quilt to go to sleep, she thinks it "looks like a little town," and so it is. Sally falls on the bedroom floor and the narrator explores the quilt town looking for her. First there are the quilt pieces that have turned into a circus, then the homes near the circus, a beautiful garden, a scary tunnel, a lake with sailboats, and finally a dark forest, where Sally has fallen over a cliff. When the narrator wakes up, she too has fallen off the cliff, as she finds herself lying on the floor wrapped in her quilt. The magical journey has been worthwhile because Sally is found and because the quilt town was an exciting place to be. The reader wonders if it will come alive every night! It's bedtime and mischievous William in *William, Where Are You?* by Mordicai Gerstein finds bed the perfect place to hide because his parents would never think of looking for him there. As William hides under his blankets, his parents are searching for him everywhere—in the yard, under the table, in the hall closet. Readers can help William's parents look for him by turning the flaps to find out what's outside or what's in the closet. For example, one page shows William's mother about to open the closet door. When the flap is turned, the reader and the mother are met by four guinea pigs who declare that William is "not in here." The simple predictable text invites young children to participate. Finally, the parents, the baby sister, and all the household pets are pictured in William's room still searching for the lost child. When the last flap is turned, William is shown jumping out from the covers shouting " 'I'M IN BED!...I knew you'd *never* look for me here.' "

From foreign countries, to bathtubs, to parks and zoos, these authors and illustrators have created stories where children will find "wonderful places to be," some familiar, some unfamiliar, but all of which stretch the imaginations of their readers.

Books Reviewed

Anderson, Joan, *The First Thanksgiving Feast. George Ancona. Clarion, 1984. (Ages 8-11)*

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Hoban, Tana. *A Children's Zoo.* Greenwillow, 1985. (Age 3-6)

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Kent, Jack. *Joey.* Prentice-Hall, 1984. (Ages 4-7)

Levinson, Riki. *Watch the Stars Come Out.* Illus. Diane Goode. Dutton, 1985. (Ages 5-7)

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Lyon, George Ella. *A Regular Rolling Noah.* Illus. Stephen Gammell. Bradbury, 1986. (Ages 5-8)

Malnig, Antia. *Where the Waves Break: Life at the Edge of the Sea.* Illus. Jeff Rotman, Alex Kerstitch, and Franklin H. Barnwell. Carolrhoda, 1985. (Ages 7-10)

Montaufier, Poupa. *One Summer at Grandmother's House.* Trans. Tobi Tobias. Carolrhoda, 1985. (Ages 7-10)

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Sewall, Marcia. *The Pilgrims of Plimoth.* Atheneum, 1986. (Ages 8-11)

Skofield, James. *All Wet All Wet!* Illus. Diane Stanley. Harper, 1984. (Ages 4-7)

Thomas, Dylan. *A Child's Christmas in Wales.* Illus. Trina Schart Hyman. Holiday, 1985. (Ages 9 & up)

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Wells, Rosemary. *Max's Bath.* Dial, 1985. (Ages 1-2)

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Canadian and American Literary Landscapes: Contrasts and Identities

by
William D. Elliott

Informing landscapes in the literature of Canada and the United States may - but not always - begin with the physical emigration of its writers. We might ask: does the immigration to Canada and the United States - as opposed to other immigrant experiences - make a fledgling writer more concerned with, and therefore more troubled with, the dividing line between the writer's life and his or her fictional, poetic or dramatic works?

We can answer this question with a resounding "yes." We can supply examples from poets and novelists. The American poet William Carlos Williams unwittingly made mistakes from slips of memory in his autobiography, but had no intention to mislead his readers. He simply saw his life framed in a narrative impulse. He wanted, like any good writer, to unify and rephrase discordant and loose ends.

Others mistook him, as they did Frederick Phillip Grove, for an insistent liar. Grove "rewrote" his autobiography to establish himself as the son of wealthy Swedish parents, culturally acute, sophisticated, and wronged in Canada. He consciously and subconsciously wrote nonfiction that was fiction. He was inspired to see himself as a person superior culturally to the country and its people. He saw himself as a writer with an appropriately artistic past. It induced him to, in fact, feel and consequently act superior to the countrymen he came across. These ranged from fellow teachers to fellow villagers, to supporters and intellectually equal admirers. Arthur Phelps, a professor of his at United College, said Grove wouldn't stand to be contradicted about his past. Grove steadfastly maintained that he was telling the facts. The most casual reader of his autobiography would have to say otherwise, yet it took almost thirty years to find out who he really was. The landscape of Williams and Grove was certainly literary; much of it rested in the shadows of desire, not deadly fact.

Similarly, the Ontario immigrant Susanna Moodie, in writing *Roughing it in the Bush,* emphasized the horrors of settling in eastern Canada. She wanted to prove her point that England was far more comfortable, more cultured, more life-giving. She did not like the immigrant experience; the Canadian landscape terrorized her. She made up an idyllic England to console herself, and finally went back there. Much of Henry James' fiction and nonfiction attests to a similar infatuation with England and Continental Europe. *The Golden Bowl* for Millie is the jewel of Europe; the United States couldn't compare; *Washington Square* was a landfill of confusion and conceit.

But there is a difference between Canadian and American writers. It is their understanding of the promise of the landscape itself. Canadian writers see it, as in Sharon

Pollack's western drama, *Walsh*, as the extension of the crown - good government, law and order, protection and preservation. In spite of what the American James says, North America is Europe transplanted! Americans see it differently. Writers like Twain and Guthrie see the landscape as future promise, rugged individualism, manifest destiny, the pursuit of happiness. Americans and Canadians are quite different in their mindscapes of landscapes. Canadians see the terrifying wilderness; Americans see the promised land, money, success. They are aware that the Garden is fallen; but the potential for happiness is worth a little corruption. Crevecoeur found in American daily life the dream of Rousseau, an idyl, "the humble rudiments and embryos of society speading everywhere."

In Letter II, he says, "We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself...We have no princes, for whom we toil, starve, and bleed; we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. Here man is free as he ought to be;.... a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this....breed, that race now called Americans have arisen" (Crevecouer, 41-2).

As Louis Hemon's novel, *Maria Chapdelaine*, ends, Maria searches her soul and comes up with quite a different picture of the new land of French Canada. Notice how she makes the very distinctions that separate the Canadian mindscape from the American.

"....between the two wan expanses the ranks of the forest darkly stretched their long battle-front.

"Maria shuddered;....once again she said to herself: 'And yet it is a harsh land, this land of ours...Why should I linger here?'

"[But].,..there was in it all that makes the soul of the Province: the loved solemnities of the ancestral faith; the lilt of that old speech guarded with jealous care;....We bore overseas our prayers and our songs; they are ever the same. We carried in our bosoms the hearts of the men of our fatherland, brave and merry,....nor have they changed. We have traced the boundaries of a new continent, from Gaspe to Montreal,....saying as we did it: Within these limits all we brought with us, our faith, our tongue, our virtues, our very weaknesses are henceforth hallowed things which no hand may touch, which shall endure to the end (Hemon,159-60).

The conclusion of John Richardson's *Wacousta* illustrates the symbolic garrison of the English in Canada. The garrison, attacked by the Indian nations, is in danger of being destroyed. Symbolically, it was also attacked by Hemon's French. As the Ottawa Indians demand a council and prepare for peace, the English [are miserable men] "seen once more issuing from their fort. ....Still they were grateful to Providence for their final perservation from a doom that had fallen, without exception, on every fortress on the line of frontier in which they lay." The terrifying wilderness in the form of nature's Indians has subdued them; yet the garrison has preserved them. They see no virtue in the Canadian landscape; they survive only by adhering to European ideals, however

inadequate, *against* the landscape. How different this is from Crevecoeur's exclamations! Americans embraced, Canadians fended off the landscape. Each had quite different mindscapes about the land (Richardson 298).

Nowhere in Grove's *A Search for America* is this more evident. He sees his work days in the United States as finger exercises in a raw, corrupt materialistic culture. Only when he becomes a hobo and a threshing crew worker in North Dakota does he feel this country's virtues. He used a personae, Phil Branden; he never claimed definately that this was nonfiction. Readers deduced it autobiographical, and he didn't deny it or suppress the idea, but his preface to the fourth edition suggests he warned them it might be fiction. In *Over Prairie Trails* he was merely a landscape reporter; this was not a literary landscape; it was a journey in survival - another motif central to Canada and its landscape but not the United States. Guthrie's *The Big Sky*, suggests that the frontiersman was the American Adam; with more people, the land was spoiled. Yet the promise was still there, only to be taken. Boone Caudill's landscape disappears, but his literary landscape is limitless. Huck Finn lights out for the territory because civilization is always less, the frontier more. The painter in *As For Me and My House* returns to Saskatoon because he finds the landscape of frontier Horizon, Saskatchewan limited, but the city protecting. Controls on the environment are fenced around the literary and real landscapes of Canada; in the fledgling United States, Crevecoeur prays, ..."I bless God for all the good he has given me; I envy no man's prosperity, and with no other portion of happiness than that I may live to teach the same philosophy to my children; and give each of them a farm, show them how to cultivate it, and be like their father, good substantial independent Amerian farmers....[!]" (Crevecoeur, 260). Susanna Moodie says [in *Roughing it in the Bush*], "....The [farmer] works hard, puts up with coarse, scanty fare, and submits, with good grace, to hardships that would kill a domestic animal at home. Thus he becomes independent, inasmuch as the land that he has cleared finds him in the common necessaries of life; but it seldom, if ever, in remote situations, accomplishes more than this.....If these sketches should prove the means of deterring one family from sinking their property, and shipwrecking all their hopes, by going to reside in the backwoods of Canada, I shall consider myself amply repaid for revealing the secrets of the prison-house, and feel I have not toiled and suffered in the wilderness in vain" (Moodie, 236-7).

May the two mindscapes of landscapes rest in peace!

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A Multilevel Writing for Discovery Approach

by
Michael Segedy

Teaching students to read below the surface or literal level entails the development and refinement of higher level thinking. We could say it simply requires teaching them how to "read between the lines." The simple recall of facts or events (even when the recall involves sequencing), apart from skills of interpretation, inference, analysis or synthesis, is at best only skimming the surface of meaning. The question isn't really so much what constitutes higher level thinking, but rather, viewed from the perspective of English teachers, how do we teach it through reading and writing about literature. The key is to engage students in a process of discovery where these higher level faculties are developed and refined. An effective strategy for exploring literature for "meaning" is a multilevel writing for discovery approach. This technique requires students to utilize three modes of discourse: the Socratic dialogue, the interior monologue, and expository essay.

A multilevel writing for discovery approach provides the students with the heuristic means for making unique discoveries about the rhetorical relationship between speaker, audience, and purpose. Higher level thinking will not occur if the student doesn't shift from the reporting stage to a higher level of abstraction required in forming generalizations about characters and events that eventually lead to a discovery of theme. This, of course, requires invention. His observation of facts may be stunningly precise and colorful, yet unless he reflects on his fact-gathering and constructs some theoretical meaning for his facts, he risks becoming a veritable copying machine, accurate, precise, and valuable, but still a copying machine. This is not to suggest that the factual recording state is insignificant in the discovery process. Yet writing in various modes of discourse requires the student to undertake an imaginative expansion within and at the same time beyond the contextual limits of a particular story. It involves a creative adventure along the road to discovery.

To demonstrate the application of the multilevel writing for discovery approach, Gina Berriault's short story, "The Stone Boy" was chosen.[1] This story is anthologized in many secondary literature textbooks, and more recently was the subject of a Hollywood production.[2]

The multilevel writing process begins with the Socratic dialogue. In the Socratic dialogue the student takes a position on thematic interpretation and defends it by appealing to textual evidence, logic, rhetoric, related experiences, and common sense. Once he chooses his position, he writes out, on a sheet of paper, his first supporting argument and passes it to his opponent-partner who responds to it, supporting his response by directing his attention to passages in the text. While his partner is searching the text of the story for textual support, he is brainstorming for ideas to bolster his own position. At the conclusion of the Socratic dialogue, each student is required to write up a transcript of the dialogue, revising areas to enhance clarity and sharpen rhetoric.

As a writing activity it encourages students to produce as many ideas about a subject as possible without feeling compelled to build up a single case that escapes opposition. At this stage students are playing with ideas that they believe could support the general view they have taken. However, through interacting with another student, a number of points will be taken and many earlier, myopic views will be discarded. Because it allows for an exploration and defense of a full range of possible interpretations, it is perhaps the most appropriate mode of discourse with which to begin.

After the initial reading of "The Stone Boy," a brainstorming session could be conducted to generate possible topics as a framework for the Socratic dialogue. An adequate pivot for debate might be A: Arnold is indifferent to his brother's death. b: Arnold is bothered by his brother's death. Included as an integral part of the Socratic dialogue is the student's search for concrete, textual evidence.

The brainstorming session might be omitted. This would require students to generate the issues independently. With this method of topic discovery, students begin with textual details and draw two opposing generalizations. Since this approach entails student-directed discovery, the teacher is left at the sidelines, assisting more in questions of format than anything else. It is not uncommon for some redefining of the issues to occur as the process unfolds. While debating a particular point, a student may wish to modify his position some. This should be encouraged since the Socratic dialogue is a major tool in concept formation. It should be viewed as a means and not an end. Some evaluative questions useful for in-class discussions of papers, or as criteria for peer evaluation sessions, are:

1. Has each student avoided repeating his arguments unnecessarily?
2. Has the dialogue prevented dominance by one student?
3. Have prejudices and preconceptions marred the balance of opposing viewpoints?
4. Is there a smooth flow of thought from one idea to the next or does the paper wander randomly over unrelated thoughts?

As a follow up, the teacher may wish to reproduce a couple of Socratic dialogues for the overhead projector and use them as a basis for class discussion.

In a multilevel writing approach, the movement from a Socratic dialogue to an interior monologue focuses student attention on formulating in-depth analyses of characters' personalities. An interior monologue records the inner, private thoughts of a character as he is caught in a reverie that may last only minutes yet cover months or years of his life. The thoughts revealed in the interior monologue are only as authentic as the language used to reflect them. Whether the character the student portrays is a country gentlemen or a city slick, the language that he uses to describe his character's ideas must demonstrate this. Writing an interior monologue about a fictive character requires the student to see things from the character's limited (first person) viewpoint. He is given the freedom to explore facets of the character's personality only partially glimpsed in the narrative. The interior monologue provides the student with an

instrument to speculate on character within the realm of the plausible. He is not permitted to ignore or distort the details of the story the author uses to develop his characters. It also offers the teacher an instrument for assessing the student's understanding of characterization.

A critical factor is the way in which the student works the interior monologue into the story. The teacher may wish to make the student responsible for this decision as part of the discovery process. However, it's possible that he runs the risk of students making an inappropriate choice of placement. It could be unfortunate, for instance, to write an interior monologue right after Arnold, the nine-year-old protagonist, accidentally kills his brother Eugie. The teacher might receive papers with, "Oh, my God! I just killed my brother. What am I going to do now? I guess I'll just pick some peas. Gee I'm confused." The paper with this choice of interior monologue placement will most likely lack insightful analysis of Arnold's feelings since, at this juncture in the narrative, they have not yet evolved. If the student wishes to make the placement, it would be reasonable to ask for a rationale first. It could be pointed out that because Arnold, as a child, looks to the opinions of others in formulating a concept of himself, it is perhaps wiser to place the monologue near the end of the story to illustrate Arnold's internalizations of various opinions-the sheriff's, Sullivan's, Uncle Andy's, and his parents. Two other places where interior monologues would be effective are: when Arnold stands naked in the hallway immediately after his mother has refused to console him; and when he sits frozen in his chair listening to the relatives and friends of his family discuss him and Eugie.

Since understanding the complexity of Arnold entails in part an understanding of characters around him and their reaction to his withdrawal, ideally the students should write a number of short interior monologues on important characters in the story. This will inevitably result in a heightened understanding of Arnold's enigmatic behavior.

The sheriff is a great subject for an interior monologue since he typifies the narrow view taken of Arnold by so many other characters in the story. The student can address a number of telling remarks the sheriff makes while interviewing Arnold at the police station. An in-depth interior monologue requires the student to form generalizations about the sheriff by speculating on what his thoughts would be at this monent. There are only a few facts given, leaving a large domain for "reading between the lines." What was going through the sheriff's mind when he said that Arnold was either a "reasonable person" or a "moron"? A couple of comments the sheriff makes reveals his prejudice and his tendency to race to hasty conclusions in judging Arnold's puzzlingly calm deportment. An effective interior monologue should reveal the personality of a small town bigot. In addition, a student might consider writing an interior monologue from the father's point of view. An effective place for such a monologue in the story is at the end when the father tells Arnold that Bessie is missing and somebody has to go up into the hills to find her before the coyotes get her. It is at this point that the father has apparently moved towards forgiveness and eventual acceptance of Arnold. By hinting that Arnold assume Eugie's former role of rounding up stray calves, the father has begun the journey back to his son. Here a penetrating interior monologue demands that

the writer review passages in the story where the father has difficulty accepting or understanding Arnold's inscrutable behavior. The writer can become involved in a process of discovery as he focuses on the father's movements towards acceptance while attempting to reconcile Arnold's apparent indifference to his brother's death. As the student probes, through the interior monologue, the depth of the father's inner conflicts, his thoughts may span the past, present, and future although the monologue itself is spontaneous first person narration. Though the interior monologue begins with the examination of simple facts, the direction and depth the interior monologue takes will depend, of course, on the amount of analysis, insight, and creativity the student brings to bear on the subject.

Finally, the mother may afford the student yet another opportunity to explore the theme of the story. Arnold's mother makes a revealing remark as Arnold stands naked and vulnerable, on the verge of a catharsis, outside her bedroom door: "Go back! Is night when you get afraid?" The exploration of the possible meaning of this callous remark provides an impetus for developing her innermost thoughts. What did she mean exactly by the word afraid? Placing the student in the position of speculating on her most intimate thoughts requires him to relate seemingly isolated facts that appear throughout the story and culminate in this crucially dramatic moment.

Below are some evaluative criteria useful both to the student involved in the writing process and to the teacher involved in the assessment of the students papers:

1. Does this writer understand, recreate, and expand upon in-depth, the thoughts and emotions of the character?
2. Has the writer chosen language appropriate to the character's emotional state, values, prejudices, age, and intellectual level?
3. Is the writer's placement of the monologue within the story developmentally effective?

As a culminating writing assignment, each student writes an expository essay, merging opposing viewpoints developed in the Socratic dialogue and interior monologues into a unified position. He needs to discover a concept that will accommodate the various views on theme and characterization that have emerged in the interior monologues and Socratic dialogue. The writer may not just arbitrarily dismiss them. This merging of divergent ideas demands that the student reach up to a higher level of abstraction to discover a framing concept for his various insights (a thesis statement). For example, viewing Arnold's exterior coldness and his interior despair as aspects of the same thing is typical of the process of mind enlargement entailed by assessing divergent points of view embodied in the interior monologues. He must account for the opposing sides presented in the Socratic dialogue as well. In fact, discovering a thesis that accounts for all the seemingly opposing interpretations of Arnold's disconcerting behavior should be the focus of the expository essay. The previous writing assignments may be now viewed as valuable pre-thesis formulation exercises.

In the expository essay, the student addresses an audience that is removed temporarily and spacially from him (unlike the audience of the dialogue and monologue), and there is, therefore, a need to elaborate and qualify remarks in a far more formal language. Unlike the language of the interior monologue where the writer is his own audience or the Socratic dialogue where the audience is present to ask for qualification or support of ideas expressed, the expository essay's language is addressed to a virtually mute audience that demands, because it hasn't the prerogative to ask questions, absolute clarity of expression. It is in this respect that the writer's purpose and audience determine the rhetoric and diction appropriate to the occasion. Evaluative criteria useful to both students and teachers are provided below:

1. Does the thesis account for divergent views of Arnold and other characters in the story?
2. Is the language chosen suitable for addressing an audience more distant and public than the other writing assignments?
3. Does the paper include the formal organizational requirements of introduction and conclusion?

Though meaningful writing necessarily implies a process of self-discovery, the student does need some help in orientation. This is not to suggest that she be given a map with the way all drawn out for her (the product oriented approach). All she needs is the appropriate instrument, or a sort of metaphorical compass to get onto the road of discovery. A multilevel writing for discovery approach offers her exactly that, no more and no less. She is her own map maker.

Endnotes

[1]Gina Berriault. "The Stone Boy" in *Points of View*. Edited by James Moffet and Kenneth R. McElheny, pp. 342-353.

[2]*Stone Boy*. Directed by Chris Cain for *Twentieth Century Fox, 1984*.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Call for Nominations** - MCTE requests nominations for a new Executive Secretary to begin duties with the 1987-88 school year. The secretary serves a 3 year term that is renewable and is paid a stipend. To nominate someone or for more information, contact Terry Flaherty, English Department, Mankato State University, Mankato, MN (507-389-2570) or Sister Angela Schreiber, English Department, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN (612-690-6612).

2. **Call for Reviewers** - The *Minnesota English Journal* needs book reviewers. If you wish to review one or more books for us, please contact Richard Dillman, Editor, the *Minnesota English Journal*, English Department, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN 56301, (612) 255-3188. Letters of inquiry with proposals for potential reviews are appreciated.

3. **Awards for Best Articles** - Two cash prizes of $75.00 each will be awarded for the two best articles of 1986-87. The awards will be presented at the annual spring conference. Authors should follow the standard *Minnesota English Journal* submission rules. The MCTE publications board will serve as judges. All articles published in *MEJ* will be considered eligible, although the publications board reserves the right not to grant an award if, in its judgement, none of the published articles meet the Publication Board's criteria or its standard of excellence.

4. **Yearly Calendar of Language Events** - We are all aware that the notification we receive about events and deadlines is fragmented at best. MCTE is considering publishing a large, poster-size "Yearly Calendar of Events" for the Language Arts. If you have an event for 1987-88 and you would like wider publicity than you now have, please send information to Betty Baldwin, 2038 Flanders Rd., North St. Paul, MN 55109.

5. Announcing **Literature of the Oppressed**, a new journal published in Minnesota. *Literature of the Oppressed* will focus on the literature that arises from the experience of oppression, especially as written by the oppressed themselves. The definition of oppression, and its relationship to literature is itself one of the issues the journal will address. It will be published twice per year, and subscriptions are $9.00 for individuals and $11.00 for institutions. Submissions should follow the new *MLA Style Sheet*. Address all manuscripts and correspondence to Dr. Daniel Taylor or Dr. Thomas Becknell, 1605 Lake Johanna Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55112.

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June 8 - July 2 ENGLISH 458-558 Individualized Instruction in Secondary Schools
9:35 - 11:30 A.M. 3 cr. Judith Kilborn,
Director of the English Department's writing center for the past two years, was for five years supervisor of the Business Writing Unit in Purdue University's Writing lab. Individualized Instruction in Secondary Schools provides an introduction to one-to-one teaching and small group work in the classroom and writing center, including investigation of theory, methods, and materials and discussion of instructional and administrative concerns. Guest speakers with secondary background include Robert Child, who uses individualized instruction in the classroom and is a National Writing Centers Association board member, and Ellen Brinkley, the 1985 winner of NCTE's Center of Excellence Award for her development of a high school writing center.

June 8 - 18 ENGLISH 438-538
Mississippi River Creative Writing Workshop in Poetry and Fiction
12:00 - 4:30 P.M. 3 cr. William Meissner,
Director of SCSU's creative writing program will discuss the techniques of writing poetry and fiction, with the help of published professional poets and fiction writers from the Upper Midwest.

June 22 - July 2 ENGLISH 495-595
American Indian and Chicano Literature
12:00 - 4:30 P.M. 3 cr. Steve Crow,
a featured poet in the new *Harper's Anthology of 20th Century Native American Poetry*, will read and discuss the literature with help from well-known southwestern Indian poet and fiction writer Simon Ortiz, author of *Going For the Rain, A Good Journey, Howbah Indians, The People Shall Continue*, and *Sand Creek* and from a visiting Chicano consultant.

You may choose to take the three courses in the module, or to combine one or two of them with any of the courses offered in literature, composition, or linguistics.

SSI June 8 - July 9, five week courses
ENGLISH 436-536 - American English - Tosh - 11:40-1:35, 4 cr.
ENGLISH 448-548 - Seminar in Literary Forms: Dickens and His Time - Gottshall - 1:45-3:40, 4 cr.

ENGLISH 494-594 - American Writers of the Twentieth Century - Perry - 9:35-11:30, 4 cr.

SSII July 13 - August 13, five week courses

ENGLISH 487-587 - Topics in Drama: Writers of Stage and Screen - Parham, S. - 6:00-9:30, T, R, 4 cr.

For Summer School Bulletins and application, write to Office of Records and Registration, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN 56301. For campus housing, write to Housing Office, Carol Hall, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN 56301.

Editorial Policy: *Minnesota English Journal*

The *Minnesota English Journal* is an official organ of the Minnesota Council of Teachers of English. It ordinarily appears twice a year, Fall and Winter/Spring. The *Minnesota English Journal* publishes articles of general interest to its membership, teachers K through college. Particularly sought are manuscripts which show how pedagogy implements theory and which describe or discuss current and real problems faced by some segment of the English profession in Minnesota. Manuscripts from Minnesota teachers are preferred. The *Journal* is distributed free-of-charge to the membership. Individual issues can be ordered for $3.50 a copy.

Manuscripts should be submitted to the editor. Please use an approved style sheet, either APA or MLA. Footnotes should be included in the text if possible. Manuscripts should be 7-18 pages, typed double-spaced.

Please consult the calls for papers that appear in each issue. At times, special issues will focus on specific themes announced in the *Journal* and posted at the *Minnesota English Journal* booth during the annual MCTE spring convention.

The editor will make every effort to acknowledge receipt of a manuscript within two weeks and to inform the contributor of its acceptance or rejection within 60 days. Include with the manuscript a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The editor reserves the right to accept or reject a manuscript. The editor may return a manuscript to request its revision, and the editor may make minor changes in the manuscript without consulting the contributor.