

And you found some of the advice helpful and some not so. Recall some advice from the latter category and write a letter to the individual who gave it, reminding him of his advice and then point out, in sufficient detail, why you believe it was misleading. Your goal should be to convince that individual that he misled you, and to suggest, (more or less directly, depending upon your audience) that he should not offer such advice to others.

This assignment is both referential and argumentative, with an emphasis on the latter. There is room for egocentric, expressive discourse, but the aim is such that the writer should have to strictly limit any egocentric response for fear of alienating his audience with a highly emotional or bombastic reaction. As in the two previous assignments, the aim and audience are identified, and the student is provided with a framework upon which to organize the paper: the addressee is first to be reminded, then persuaded to reevaluate his position. Furthermore, the student is being asked to write a letter, so the conventions appropriate to that form of communication apply. The student shapes his discourse to convince that particular audience and no other. Evaluating this exercise is more difficult both for peers and teacher, as they are probably not familiar with the advice-giver. However, the tone which the writer adopts, his choice of detail and incident, and his closing suggestions give the reader some insight into the character of the audience and allow him to make some guesses

about the effectiveness of the letter.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to judge a particular assignment's quality until students have responded to it. Nevertheless, it is important to design assignments with care. The act of writing will seem less formidable to the student when he is given an assignment which not only recognizes his ability as a creator of discourse, but also provides some guidance for the writing process. And a carefully developed sequence of such assignments will be much more effective in helping students reach a desired level of proficiency.

#### BOOK PREFERENCES OF MINNESOTA STUDENTS

Early in 1977, Norine Odland and Richard Beach of the College of Education at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, sent a request to all school librarians in Minnesota asking each one to list the five titles most popular in the school library. Because of limited returns from middle schools, those results are included in the junior high statistics. The following are the results:

##### Elementary School Results

Number of responses from librarians: 515

Title:	Number of times named:
<u>Little House Books</u>	218
<u>Charlotte's Web</u>	168
<u>Are You There, God? It's Me Margaret</u>	116
<u>Curious George</u>	111

## Title:

Guinness Book of World Records  
Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing  
Boxcar Children  
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory  
Encyclopedia Brown  
Freaky Friday  
Hardy Boys  
Nancy Drew  
Where the Red Fern Grows  
Great Monsters of the Movies  
Mouse and the Motorcycle

Total number of titles named: 434

Middle School/Junior High School Results

Number of responses from librarians: 203

Outsiders

Are You There, God, It's Me Margaret  
Go Ask Alice  
Guinness Book of Records  
Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones  
That Was Then, This Is Now  
Sunshine  
My Darling, My Hamburger  
Deenie  
Where the Red Fern Grows  
Roots  
The Other Side of the Mountain  
Eric  
Rumblefish  
Alive  
Carrie

183 titles named once

Total number of titles named: 296

Senior High School Results

Number of responses from librarians: 171

<u>Outsiders</u>	31
<u>Go Ask Alice</u>	30
<u>Roots</u>	28

## Title:

Number of times named:

<u>Guinness Book of World Records</u>	26
<u>Carrie</u>	24
<u>Alive</u>	22
<u>Sunshine</u>	18
<u>That Was Then, This Is Now</u>	17
<u>My Darling, My Hamburger</u>	16
<u>The Other Side of the Mountain</u>	16
<u>Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones</u>	16
<u>Eric</u>	15
<u>Jaws</u>	14
<u>Sybil</u>	13
<u>Rumblefish</u>	11
<u>Forever</u>	9

207 titles named once

Total number of titles: 322

## IDEA EXCHANGE

At the Idea Exchange at last spring's conference innumerable useful suggestions were exchanged. We wish that we might print all of them, but space does not permit that. Many were submitted without names. If one of the following ideas is yours, let us know. We would like to give belated credit in the next issue.

Gems for Junior High Journals

1. The thing that worries me most about junior high is...
2. So far junior high has been...
3. Which month are you like? Explain.
4. I wish I were a grownup because...
5. Fathers are okay...
6. If only I had...
7. My favorite television show is \_\_\_\_\_ because...
8. My favorite food is...
9. If you could rename yourself, what name would you select?
10. Is it easier to do assignments at home or in school? Why?
11. What do you think you should work hard(er) at in the next weeks?
12. Why did your parents give you the name you have?