USING VISUAL MODELS AS PRE-READING EXERCISES IN TEACHING LITERATURE

By Michael W. Meeker

The teaching of writing has changed significantly since I taught my first course in freshman composition eighteen years ago. The early sixties were not exactly exciting times for composition theory. As Susan Miller has recently suggested, we were in a largely "pre-theoretical" period.[1] Today we have theory, a great deal of theory, and it is almost redundant to assert that writing is a process. By comparison, our teaching of literature has changed very little in spite of constant theorizing about the nature of literature and literary study. Most of our literature classes are still modelled on the ideal graduate seminar. Since most English instructors teach composition as well as literature, it is surprising that the new composition theory has had so little influence on the teaching of literature.

Recent journal articles have stressed the need for a renewed integration of writing and literature, but primarily in terms of using more literature in composition classes or more writing in literature classes.[2] I will argue that teachers of literature can learn much from the new process-oriented rhetoric, especially from its emphasis on invention. Just as pre-writing exercises prepare composition students for writing, pre-reading exercises can help literature students understand what they read. For example, the use of visual models of a text's metaphoric structure generates an effective form of subjective-response criticism within the limited format of the college literature class.

Writing has always been a traditional part of the teaching of literature. But that writing, especially at the college level, has for the most part been in the form of reports, essay exams, and critical papers. Such writing assignments are valuable. They allow students to clarify and synthesize what they have learned, and they allow teachers to evaluate student progress. But such product-focused writing, with its emphasis on a correct answer or a defensible interpretation, forces

even some of the best students to distrust their own responses to the literary text. They learn to view the work as a puzzle to be solved, a code to be deciphered; they seek its "meaning" without moving through the emotional intensity of experience that the writer wants to capture and evoke.

If we wish to move our students beyond a sophisticated "Cliff's Notes" approach to literature, we need to encourage them to evoke the literary text in all its particularity before making generalizations about it, to examine their own associations and feelings about the text before moving, perhaps too quickly, to an acceptance of the pronouncements of teacher or critic. Recent parallel developments in composition theory and literary criticism, especially in their emphasis on the processes of making meaning, of creating a text or a theme, suggest that pre-writing (or pre-reading) activities can be valuable heuristics in the interpretation of imaginative literature.

Maxine Hairston has recently argued that the teaching of composition is in the midst of a "paradigm shift" ("The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing," College Composition and Communication, 33 (1982), 77). Judging from the steady procession of freshman rhetorics that has passed across my desk in the last few years, we are clearly moving away from an emphasis on the writing product (the "current-traditional paradigm") to what is generally termed a process-oriented approach to teaching composition. James Berlin has cautioned that there is still a wide gap between pronouncement and practice, that although "Everyone teaches the process of writing....everyone does not teach the same process" ("Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories," College English, 44 (1982), 777). This only indicates, however, that these are exciting times for composition theory; the new paradigm is still developing. Theory has not, as yet, become dogma. And the more significant focus of the emerging theory is on what Berlin calls an "epistemic rhetoric."[3] It is less an emphasis on writing as process than on writing as

discovery, on the connections between writing and thinking. When we think and when we write, we compose. We put ideas together. Like thinking, writing is a process that discovers or constructs relationships.

At the heart of the newest of the New Rhetorics, then, is an interest in the creative process itself, not merely in a refurbished inventio, but in a pedagogy committed to assisting in the making of meanings. Drawing upon the work of Suzanne Langer, Ernst Cassirer, Max Black, E.H. Gombrich, and Kenneth Burke--as well as I.A. Richards--Ann Berthoff states that "we can't make sense of one thing by itself . . ." and that we discover meanings "in the process of working (and playing) with the means language provides" (Forming/Thinking/Writing: The Composing Imagination (Rochelle Park, N.J.: Hayden, 1978), pp. 44-5).

It is an unusual freshman rhetoric that fails to stress these generative powers of language or the processes of invention. Students today are led through Macrorie-Elbow freewritings, various adaptations of Kenneth Pike's tagmemic matrices, and Burkean dramatistic pentads. They study Aristotle's topoi, Berke's twenty questions, and Larson's lists. They practice brainstorming, dialoguing, looping, and cubing.[4] While no single technique promises mastery of the invention process, the importance of prewriting activities in generating ideas is clearly established.

Literary criticism seems to be moving in similar directions, although we cannot properly speak of a paradigm shift in the field. Since the New Critics focused our attention on the formal aspects of the literary text, we have eagerly shifted paradigms (archetypal, sociological, psychological, linguistic, anthropological, structuralist) in a search for the methods or criteria that would best evaluate and interpret the literary work. But a new pattern does seem to be emerging. Just as composition theory has found valuable support in the fields of cognitive psychology and linguistic philosophy, literary criticism is turning to epistemology and reading theory. James Hoetker points out that reader-response critics and reading researchers

still have much to learn from one another ("A Theory of Talking about Theories of Reading," College English, 44 (1982), 1979), but the sharing of ideas has already produced a renewed focus on the question of meaning, on the process of discovering a text.

Whether subjective, transactional, or deconstructionist, the newer New Criticism--like the New Rhetoric--stresses the function of the individual reader or writer in the making of meaning. When we read, as when we write or think, we compose. The chief theme of Ann Berthoff's book is that "the acts of mind involved in critical reading, in making sense of texts, are the same as those in operation when we compose: how we construe is how we construct" (p.6). Such reading may be a recomposition, but it certainly is no longer seen as a passive process--if it ever truly could have been. We don't merely decipher what we read, we recreate it (perhaps each time anew) out of the ideas, experiences, and skills we carry with us to the literary work. Reader-response critics such as Louise Rosenblatt (The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978)) see the text as more of a guide than a blueprint: the reader's evocation of the literary work is "an active, self-ordering and self-corrective process" (p. 11).

No matter how we define the literary text, we are forced to admit that each reader enjoys a different poem, whether it is the truest poem or not. As John Dewey wrote in 1934, "A new poem is created by everyone who reads poetically . . . Every individual brings with him . . . a way of seeing and feeling that in interaction with old material creates something new, something previously not existing in experience (Art as Experience (New York: Minton, Balch, 1934), p. 108). Some creations are certainly more informed and more effective than others, but it is our task as teachers of literature to move students to the fullest and most meaningful reading they can have.

Good teachers know this, of course, and they naturally attempt to provide means by which students can translate the text through meaningful associations with their own experience

and knowledge. At its best the literature class is involved in a dialectic with the work, a place where students are encouraged to respond, to brainstorm, to question and construct a work, to build upon their own, their classmate's, and their teacher's ideas. Such a dialectic also performs what I.A. Richards called "a continuing audit of meaning," a testing of responses against the text itself (How to Read a Page (Boston: Beacon, 1959), p. 240).

David Bleich's methods of subjective criticism (Readings and Feelings: An Introduction to Subjective Criticism (Urbana: NCTE, 1975)) seem to offer specific help in translating reader-response theory into classroom practice. Bleich feels we tend to ignore or suppress the role that our feelings play in creating thoughts; therefore, he attempts to encourage the development of student "affects" and "associations" before moving to premature generalizations about the meaning of a work. For Bleich the literary work is its subjective re-creation, and he seeks to move students through exercises in perception, feelings, and personal associations before making judgments on literary importance. Interpretation, he says, "is always a group activity"--whether in the high school classroom or the professional journals of the critics (p. 94).

Bleich's ideas have found support among teachers at all levels. But his approach is ideally suited to the secondary school classroom, primarily because of his focus on the adolescent experience, and because secondary teachers of literature have had more opportunity to work in the affective mode than college teachers.[5] College teachers of literature do not usually have the time or the sustained contact with students necessary to utilize Bleich's methods, even if they do feel comfortable with his psychoanalytical approaches. They also are more committed, perhaps obligated, to covering a certain amount of subject matter. And thus we are left with what might be called the current-traditional paradigm of teaching college literature: lengthy reading assignments that often severely tax the student's reading level, a lecture presentation of what the instructor

views as the major aspect of the work, and an attempt at individualization in discussions in which the instructor provides all the questions and the clues. It is no wonder that the writing of our students often seems little more than an awkward imitation of the critical ideas of the instructor or critic without any hint of originality, common sense, or meaningfulness.

But there is something we can do. It doesn't involve spending half of our time on what we might consider "touchy-feely" games, and it doesn't require us to be skilled in psychoanalytic classroom management. It does require that we make use of our considerable knowledge, as English teachers, of process-oriented teaching. Just as we provide composition students with pre-writing assignments, we can provide students of literature with pre-reading activities. Let me illustrate what I mean by examining some of my own problems in teaching a course in "Masterpieces of American Literature" and in trying to get my students through Thoreau's Walden.

Anyone who has taught Walden will not be surprised to learn that my undergraduate students had difficulties with Thoreau--with his wit, his allusiveness, his Nineteenth Century style, and his general contrariness. I tried to point out his puns, footnote his wandering mind, and work through paragraph forms never taught in modern composition courses. I tried to explain and defend his sometimes abrasive and hortative stance. Above all, I found myself trying to make clear that for Thoreau, as for Emerson, nature was not mechanical but organic, not merely an ecosystem (a metaphor that contemporary students too easily substitute for transcendentalism), but a developing hieroglyph of God, an expositor of the divine mind.

Ideally, the class should have read Emerson's Nature and investigated the peculiar mix of Deism, German Idealism, Romanticism, the new natural science, the developing aesthetics of the sublime and the beautiful, and that curious independence of American thought that all came together in places like Concord to form the complex amalgam of ideas and beliefs we

call transcendentalism. Perhaps they all should have been older as well and have spent more time reading than watching TV. Realistically, in a ten-week course, about all I could do was try to explain that for the transcendental mind, beauty and order were the same (kosmos) and that art, as Emerson said, was "a nature passed through the alembic of man."[6]

None of which, of course, helped very much. For most students, the correspondence between nature and spirit remained some archaic foolishness to be dutifully recorded on an exam like an Emersonian syllogism:

> Words are signs of natural facts.
> Particular natural facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts.
> Nature is the symbol of spirit (p. 31)

Most students never understood the correspondence as a key to Walden, and Thoreau remained an irritating enigma.

They were particularly puzzled by the crucial section of the chapter "Spring" where Thoreau finds delight in observing "the forms which thawing sand and clay assume in flowing down the sides of a deep cut on the railroad . . ."[7] However, it was not surprising to them that Thoreau observes the coming of spring in a railroad cutbank, for he has already introduced the season, not by the traditional first robin or crocus, but by gauging and recording (in meticulous detail) the thawing and breaking up of the pond itself, for him a barometer which charts "the absolute progress of the seasons" (p. 204). Here the sand and clay flowing out of the melting snow obey the same immutable laws of freeze and thaw:

> When the frost comes out in the spring, and even in a thawing day in winter, the sand begins to flow down the slopes like lava, sometimes bursting out through the snow and overflowing it where no sand was to be seen before. Innumberable little streams overlap and interlace one with another, exhibiting a sort of hybrid product which obeys half way the law of currents, and half way that of vegetation. As it

> flows it takes the forms of sappy leaves or vines, making heaps of pulpy sprays a foot or more in depth, and resembling, as you look down on them, the lacinated lobed and imbricated thalluses of some lichens; or you are reminded of coral, or leopards' paws or birds' feet, of brains or lungs or bowels, and excrements of all kinds. It is a truly grotesque vegetation, whose forms and color we see imitated in bronze, a sort of architectural foliage more ancient and typical then acanthus, chiccory, ivy, vine, or any vegetable leaves; destined perhaps, under some circumstances, to become a puzzle to future geologists (p. 208).

With some prodding, and a dictionary, the students managed to stay with Thoreau thus far. If the sand reminds him of leopard paws or flowing lava, that's his business.

The problem is that Thoreau is not merely describing nature metaphorically in "Spring." Nature is metaphor. Thoreau is moved as if he were standing "in the laboratory of the Artist who made the world . . ."; he feels nearer to the "vitals of the globe"; he finds in the flowing sand and clay "an anticipation of the vegetable leaf" (p. 209). The point is not that an imaginative mind can discover fanciful relationships between thawing clay and growing leaves. The point is that "nothing is inorganic," that the atoms of sand and leaves and leopard paws all follow the same universal law.

> The atoms have already learned this law, and are pregnant by it. The overhanging leaf sees here its prototype. Internally, whether in the globe or animal body, it is a moist thick lobe, a word especially applicable to the liver and lungs and the leaves of fat (Leibw, labor, lapsus, to flow or slip downward, a lapsing; Lobo's, globus, lobe, globe; also lap, flap, and many other words); externally, a dry thin leaf, even as the f and v are a pressed and dried b. The radicals of lobe are lb, the soft

> mass of the b (single-lobed, or B, double lobed), with the liquid l behind it pressing it forward. In globe, glb, the gutteral g adds to the meaning the capacity of the throat. The feathers and wings of birds are still drier and thinner leaves. Thus, also, you pass from the lumpish grub in the earth to the airy and fluttering butterfly. The very globe continually transcends and translates itself, and becomes winged in its orbit. Even ice begins with delicate crystal leaves, as if it had flowed into moulds which the fronds of water plants have impressed on the watery mirror. The whole tree itself is but one leaf, and rivers are still vaster leaves whose pulp is intervening earth, and towns and cities are the ova of insects in their axils (p. 209).

It is in passages such as these, where Thoreau moves beyond mere simile and metaphor to assert the underlying correspondences between all things, that students experience great difficulty. It is a mistake to dismiss such a passage as a playful exhibition of a naive nineteenth century linguistics, a mere playing with words. Although he is having fun, Thoreau is deadly serious. The feathers of birds are not described as being like leaves--they are leaves. And in the thawing clay Thoreau goes on to discover human forms--the ball of the finger, the palm of the hand, the bony system, and cellular tissue. "What is man," Thoreau finally asks, "but a mass of thawing clay?" (p. 210). To Thoreau "this one hillside illustrated the principle of all the operations of Nature. The Maker of earth but patented a leaf" (p. 210).

To my students, in spite of all I did to explain the tenets of transcendentalism, the passage was only a tour de force, an unnecessary complication of the issue, a confusing and thus unimportant elaboration. And yet this section of "Spring," if not the keystone to Walden, is certainly representative of Thoreau's method, his way of thinking. In order to understand the importance of the chapter as well as what Thoreau is

attempting in Walden itself, students must do more than underline the epigrammatic passages concerning the principles of Nature; they must attend to relationships and detail, think like Thoreau, see the world in the grains of thawing sand and clay. Obviously, such learning is difficult to achieve in a ten-week course. And the problem is not just with Walden--there is Melville and Whitman and Faulkner and . . . just about any serious work of literature that requires a range of experience and sophistication that most college undergraduates lack.

Teaching any complex literary text to students without sufficient literary background (in some cases, it seems, without any background) is so frustrating that I considered not teaching Thoreau at all. Luckily, however, I stumbled across the following exercise in Berthoff's Forming/Thinking/Writing while preparing for a Minnesota Writing Project workshop on writing across the curriculum. Berthoff states that "virtually every aspect of composing is represented in listing: naming, grouping, classifying, sequencing, ordering, revising" (p. 63). She offers the following heuristic as a means of creating a dialectic:

Naming and Defining: Chaos and Dialectic

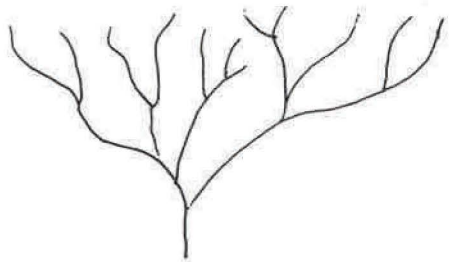


Fig. 1.

Step 1. Write down at least 20 words at random in response to this figure. In your inner dialogue, you can ask, "What do I see?" and "What does this figure make me think of?" Take five minutes.

Step 2. Across from each noun, set down a verb appropriate to the figure; e.g., tree . . . grows.

Step 3. Choose one of your words and see if any of the other words cluster around it. What context of

situation is being developed that allows this clustering to happen?

Step 4. What is the most general name (other than "thing"), the one which could include other names, the way "produce" includes parsnips, pears, lettuce, apples, etc.? If there is no such word in your chaos, can you develop one by combining two or three words from your chaos? Can you add a new one?

Step 5. Choose two words from the chaos of names that seem farthest apart and write one sentence in which they both appear. Does this sentence create a context of situation or is it nonsense?

Step 6. Can you form two--and only two--classes that include all your names? (The names needn't be equally distributed.) How would you rename these sets?

Step 7. Using any of your original chaos and any new names generated as you grouped and sorted, write a few sentences in which you consider the figure (pp. 63-4).

Our group of twenty faculty from a wide variety of disciplines (business, history, chemistry, physics, nursing, psychology, mathematics, sociology, foreign language, education, etc.) produced the following list of "names" in response to Step 1.:

river
tree
brain
cracked plaster
leaf
bi-sulfate
free nerve ending
lightning
language tree
eyeball
artery
road map
drainage pattern
inverted mountain
fingers
chandelier
frayed wire
tendrils
palm of hand
lava flow
butterfly wings
erosion
antlers
root system
delta
capillaries
cortex
twigs

administrative hierarchy
cracked mud
highway system
railroad network
winter weeds
tornado
watershed
cracked glass
antennae
candelabra
wrinkled skin
nuclear explosion
cabbage
cracks in ice
stalagtites
pottery glaze

Our interdisciplinary group immediately discovered ways of using similar kinds of writing exercises in areas as diverse as physics, history, nursing, and business administration. And I, of course, saw immediately that such a dialectical exercise was a perfect means of introducing my students to the fundamental kind of thinking that lies behind Thoreau's Walden.

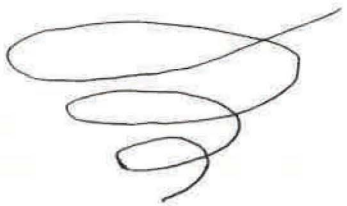
When I next taught Thoreau I had my students do the exercise the day before we were to read the chapter "Spring." As we recorded the responses to Step 1 on the blackboard, I was surprised to find that they were almost identical to the faculty list. The rest of their responses to Berthoff's heuristic were also similar to the faculty response. We noted the flowing, organic verbs that linked naturally to the list of nouns (trees grow, lava flows, brains pulse, roots expand, fingers extend, nerves communicate and so on). And we clustered words in similar contexts around the processes of growth and decay, the systems of root highway, or tree, and the structures of leaves, wings, nerves, and candelabras.

My class of 18 year-olds quickly related everything to everything, found parallels between the organic and the inorganic, correspondences between microcosm and macrocosm, and generated metaphors (in Step 5) that made them aware of the ordering power of language. "The leaves," one student wrote, burned on the trees like chandeliers." When they finally responsed to Thoreau's passage on the railroad cutbank, the results convinced me that for the first time most of them were truly interested in (and making sense of) Thoreau's ideas in

Walden. They were thinking like Thoreau. They saw the earth, not as a "mere fragment of dead history, stratum upon stratum like the leaves of a book, to be studied by geologist and antiquaries chiefly, but living poetry like the leaves of a tree, which precede flowers and fruit--not a fossil earth but a living earth . . ." (p. 210).

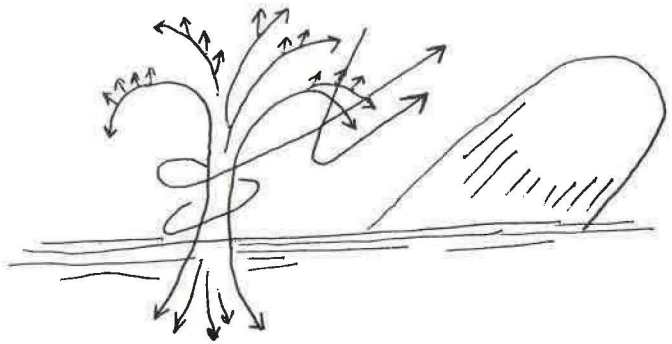
The Berthoff heuristic works so well because it requires that students explore their own sensory and imaginative responses before attempting abstract generalizations about the work. It focuses attention on particulars. Just as pre-writing helps composition students discover ideas for writing in the materials of their own experience and perception, the exercise in "chaos and dialectic" provides literature students with a foundation for critical analysis--in this case an understanding of Thoreau's transcendental metaphor. As does Bleich's method of subjective criticism, the procedure encourages emotional and associational response as a first step to literary criticism. It also teaches that interpretation is a "communal act" and illustrates how assumed group values and concepts play a role in literary analysis. Students glimpse the underlying similarities in their varied responses to the text.

At least they did in responding to Walden. But the Berthoff heuristic is an exercise in thinking and writing, not in literary analysis. Its application to Thoreau was pure serendipity. Could such a pre-writing technique be modified so it would apply to a wide range of literary works? The answer seemed to lie in identifying the key metaphor used by the writer and creating an abstract visual model for it. In some situations this is not difficult to do. The following "droodle" generated a very successful analysis of William Butler Yeats' "The Second Coming":



Students associated the figure with tornadoes, floods, vortexes, broken watch springs, explosions, spinning tops, whirlpools, cones, spirals, gyres, and the flight of birds and falling leaves. They perceived the underlying metaphors of centrifugal and centripetal forces at work in the poem, the order of disorder in a world where "the centre cannot hold . . ."[8]

Some of my other graphics created more confusion than insight, such as this attempt at abstracting the visual and gravitational tensions implicit in William Carlos Williams' "Spring Strains":



Williams clearly puns on the visual tensions between the "swift convergings" of birds in flight, the "vibrant bowing limbs" of the tree, and the powerful mass of the rising sun: But --

> (Hold hard, rigid jointed trees!)
> the blinding and red-edged sun blur--
> creeping energy, concentrated
> counterforce--welds sky, buds, trees, rivets
> them in one puckering hold!
> Sticks through! Pulls the whole counter-pulling
> mass upward, to the right locks even the
> opaque, not yet defined ground in a terrific
> drag that is loosening the very tap-roots![9]

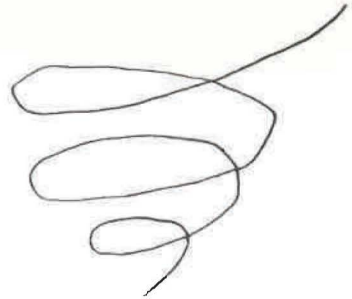
But my illustration seemed too representational. Obviously, I was limited by my inability to grasp the underlying metaphoric structure of the poem and translate it into an appropriate abstract figure.

I enjoyed creating the schematic so much that it was obvious to me that I was denying students the most beneficial aspect of the exercise. They should have been trying to find visual metaphors for the poem. Responding to visual models is an effective heuristic; creating those same models is even more effective. As Rudolf Arnheim argues in Visual Thinking (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), "perceptual qualities of shape and motion are present in the very acts of thinking . . . are in fact the medium in which the thinking itself takes place" (p. 282).

Recent work on visual paradigms in the teaching of literature seems to confirm this. Carol Earnshaw Holmberg suggests that visual models "unite the experimental with the conceptual," the thought with the thing ("Using Visual Paradigms in Classroom Teaching," Minnesota Chancellor's Fellowship Project Report, (September, 1982), p. 7).

Holmberg argues that visual models allow students to perceive works of art as embodying "layered" experiences, reflecting "multiple levels of meaning," and that by "reconstituting" the text into its sensory, rational, imaginative/synthetic, and visionary levels she can illustrate the "expansive" effect of the work of art on the mind, thus guiding general education students into a "comprehensive and analytical response" to novels, short stories, poems, and essays (p. 2).

Especially relevant to my use of visual models is Holmberg's explanation of the imaginative/synthetic (or metaphoric) level of perception. Drawing upon Kant's Critique of Judgment, she defines metaphor as a combination of the sensory and conceptual levels: "The metaphor . . . provides the abstract imageless thought with an intuition drawn from the world of appearances . . ." (p. 6). To help her students grasp the concept of metaphoric thinking, Holmberg had them graph the concrete things mentioned in the poem. For example, most of her non-literature students at Metropolitan State University saw something like this in Yeats' "The Second Coming":



This example (which is similar to my own attempt) represents a high level of abstraction. Not all of the student responses were so "pure"--in fact, they existed on a continuum from the representational to the abstract. But in comparing and discussing their visual models, students came to understand the underlying metaphorical structure of the poem. The process is an efficient means of encouraging both subjective and consensus response to a text. It is a means of opening the realm of literary criticism to students. By creating their own visual metaphors, and discussing them and writing about them, students focus attention on the particulars of the text, on their own personal associations and feelings, and on the commonalities of literary response. The visual models relate individual truths to the more universal truths of a work of art, and provide a foundation for more analytical criticism. Individual associations may be highly idiosyncratic, but in a classroom of shared response to visual metaphors, the process becomes communal and is self-corrective.

Although the work of literature itself provides a guide to its re-creation, where readers do not have the necessary skills or maturity they do not just need more information; they need ways of generating and processing the associations and relationships that imaginative literature demands. To memorize a guidebook is not the same as taking the journey. Pre-writing (or pre-reading) activities such as the use of visual models help students build upon each other's knowledge and experience.

While there is no one heuristic, visual or written, that will work equally well for all literary analysis, this is not

cause for despair. As R.S. Crane has written in The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), the pluralistic critic takes the view that "the basic principles and methods of any distinguishable mode of criticism are tools of inquiry and interpretation rather than formulations of the 'real' nature of things and that the choice of any special 'language' among the many possible for the study of poetry, is a practical decision to be justified solely in terms of the kinds of knowledge the critic wants to attain" (p. 31). If our aim is to help non-majors gain access to imaginative literature, literary criticism must be seen as a process in which students experience and re-create the work of art rather than merely accumulate and memorize information about it.

Notes

[1]"What Does It Mean to be Able to Write? The Question of Writing in the Discourses of Literature and Composition," College English, 45 (1983), 222.

[2]In addition to the article by Susan Miller, see James Hoetker, "A Theory of Talking about Theories of Reading," College English, 44, (1982), 175-81; Russell A. Hunt, "Toward a Process-Intervention Model in Literature Teaching," College English, 44 (1982), 345-57; and Anthony R. Petrosky, "From Story to Essay: Reading and Writing," College Composition and Communication, 33 (1982), 19-36.

[3]For example, Berlin uses the term "epistemic rhetoric" to categorize the work of Ann Berthoff, James Moffett, Linda Flower, Andrea Lunsford, Barry Kroll, and Richard Young, Alton Becker, and Kenneth Pike.

[4]One of the best surveys of materials on invention is Richard E. Young's "Invention: A Topographical Survey," in Teaching Composition: 10 Bibliographical Essays, ed. Gary Tate. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976; Charles R. Cooper and Leo Odell, eds., in Research on Composing: Points of Departure (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1978), have collected important unpublished articles and provide an extensive bibliography; finally, Richard Leo Enos' "Heuristic Procedures and the Composing Process: A Selected Bibliography," Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Special Issue, No. 1 (1982) contains material not usually cited in the traditional English journals.

[5]For example, see A Guidebook for Teaching Literature by Raymond J. Rodrigues and Dennis Badaczewski (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1978) with its stress on creative dramatics, individualized instruction, and materials geared to "the American Adolescent."

[6]Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Nature," in Selections from Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. by Stephan E. Whicher (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957) p. 31.

[7] Henry David Thoreau, Walden and Civil Disobedience, ed. by Sherman Paul (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), p. 208.

[8] William Butler Yeats, The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats Definitive Education (New York: Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 184.

[9] William Carlos Williams, Selected Poems (New York: New Directions, 1968), p. 9.

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IF THE AIM IS QUALITY, ENGLISH MUST BE TAUGHT AS A LIBERAL ART, NCTE PRESIDENT-ELECT SAYS

"Now that excellence in education is on everyone's mind, it's time to go back to teaching English as a liberal art," says Stephen Tchudi, president-elect of the National Council of Teachers of English.

The widespread belief that students must master grammar, spelling, and other mechanics of language before they can start reading and writing about literature is debasing the quality of U.S. education, this college teacher and author says. Translated into curriculum in the schools, this insistence on Correctness First puts the rewards of learning out of reach of young students. Too many of them, he believes, get discouraged and give up before they grasp what it can mean to become truly literate.

"English has traditionally been identified with the humanities and liberal arts," comments Tchudi, a professor of English at Michigan State University. "But in the past decade, English teachers have been more and more pressured into treating it as a simple 'basic skill' to be learned through drill and memorization."

"If studying English is to lead to true literacy," Tchudi says, "then English must be more than testing students on points of grammar and subtleties of spelling. English ought to expose students to a broad range of writing from many cultures and many eras. In English and other disciplines, students should be encouraged to talk and write about substantive ideas and issues.

"English taught as a liberal art can begin in the elementary grades," Tchudi says. "Children can be given opportunities to read far more than they do in school now, especially in the great works of children's literature. They need to write daily, everything from notes and letters to stories and plays.