

Newsletter



Volume 29, Number 2 Winter, 2009

INVITATIONAL SUMMER INSTITUTES

Four Institutes in Summer of 2010!

PAWLP is excited to announce a new Institute dedicated to improving instruction in mathematics. In partnership with the Bucks County IU and supported by a grant from the Carnegie Foundation and the National Writing Project, participants in the Math Institute will learn how to use writing strategies to develop further understanding of mathematical concepts and different types of technology to improve instruction and inquiry-based strategies.

The Math Institute, as well as

an Institute in Teaching Writing will be held at the Bucks County IU in Doylestown June 28 - July 22.



A second Writing Institute and the Reading and Literature Institute

will be held at the Graduate Business Center in West Chester during the same time period.

Richard Sterling, past president of the National Writing Project, said "The NWP Summer Institute has become one of the most inspiring and motivating programs for teachers nationwide."

See page 6 of this *Newsletter* for details. For more information and an application form please call 610-436-2202 or e-mail smalarney@wcupa.edu.

"NWP Summer Institutes provide the space and time for teachers of all grade levels and disciplines to reinvigorate their teaching and enhance their knowledge of theory, research, and practice to help students become better writers and learners."
- Sharon Washington, NWP Executive Director

Three outstanding authors headline this year's PAWLP Spring Literacy Conferences

Dr. Frank Serafini - whose picture book entitled *Looking Closely Along the Shore* was recently awarded an Honor Citation from the Society of School Librarians International for best Non-Fiction Picturebook in 2008, and was a Teachers Choice Award Selection

from the International Reading Association - will join children's author Jordan Sonnenblick to keynote the conference on April 10 at Central Bucks High School South.

Author of the widely popular *Readicide*, Kelly Gallagher, will keynote the conference at the Gradu-

ate Business Center in West Chester on May 1.

Both conferences will also feature numerous breakout sessions on a wide variety of topics for all grade levels.

See page 5 of this Newsletter for details.

Spring Courses/Conferences, pages 4 - 5
Summer Courses, page 7

FROM THE DIRECTOR
ANDREA FISHMAN

Though writing is deeply social and though we must also practice enhancing the social dimension of writing, writing is also the mode of discourse best suited to helping us develop the reflective and private dimension of our mental lives. -Peter Elbow and Jennifer Clarke, "Desert Island Discourse: The Benefits of Ignoring Audience"

I think all of us in the district, especially at the high school, need to create more authentic writing experiences for our students. Experiences where they write for real audiences. -An 8th grade English teacher

"Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century" -title of a recent MacArthur Foundation report

All three of the above ideas convened in my life over the past 24 hours. The first is the concluding statement of an article I assigned in my Writing and Teaching Writing class. The second statement was made in a workshop at the Chester County IU. And the third is the title of a report someone brought to my attention in that workshop, a report demonstrating why and how "educators must work together to ensure that every American young person...develop(s) the cultural competencies and social skills needed for full involvement" in our new "participatory culture." I agree with all three. But more interesting than my agreement is the sur-

prising connection that lurks beneath these three ideas, which I think we all should consider.

Let me take them in reverse order. The MacArthur report makes a foreground/background distinction that warms my heart. Instead of being all about digital literacy, it's about the kind of culture digital literacy creates. It's not about technology per se, but what technology has wrought in social terms. What they call "participatory culture" is the easily accessed, social networking world created by not just Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and YouTube but by blogspot.com, xanga.com, blurting.com, livejournal.com and blogging venues you can name that I can't. Not only do these venues create literacy opportunities valued by students and even by teachers. They create a world with a new fundamental implicit assumption: everything you do and everything you say is not only valuable and interesting, but it should be made public.

Of course, some of us would argue that the answer to "What are you doing?" is neither inherently valuable nor interesting, but that isn't what concerns me. That everything our students do and think should be public concerns me quite a bit. Fifteen minutes of fame is no longer enough. Now everything they do can be seen as performance - with a live audience - and no one need ever be alone. Thinking becomes thinking aloud. Life is all show(ing) and tell(ing). There are no walls, no closed doors. There are screens, keyboards, and cameras everywhere. Our "right to privacy" becomes moot. (One high school teacher I know expected her stu-

dents to object to and resist hallway cameras in their building. She was appalled when their response was "Who cares? It's only a problem if you're doing something wrong." Big Brother smiled that day, she sadly reported.)

So that's Point #1: Not just the idea of audience but the fact of audience is an omnipresent reality in our students' lives.

Point #2 connects the MacArthur report to the teacher's suggested need for "authentic writing experiences" and "real audiences." Participatory culture gives us many more ways to not only provide real audiences for authentic experiences but creates an even greater need to help students read like writers. Who is really behind the postings, tweets, and blogs they read? Who is the writer's audience and what is her purpose? How is the writer presenting herself? How can you distinguish truth from fiction? Reliable from unreliable narrators? Students' daily lives are much richer sources of literacy lessons now than they have ever been before.

Which brings me to Point #3, the most intriguing point of all. In 1987 when Elbow and Clarke suggested students ignore audience to develop "the reflective and private dimension of their mental lives," they could not have foreseen just how omnipresent audience would become in the 21st century. They were concerned about students paying too much attention to external demands often before they fully realized and explored their internal ones. What did they care about? What did they know, think and believe? How could they explain themselves to them-

selves before they tried to explain themselves to others? All good questions. But if the world was too much with students then, how much more so is that true today? And how much more important do those good questions become?

I worry about our students' ability to hear themselves think. I worry about their inability to distinguish their own voices from the cacophony coming through those earbuds and phones they're never without. I worry, too, about our students' limited time spent mentally alone. So I wonder how we, as writing teachers, can help them be more present in their own lives. How can we teach them to think - and rethink - their own thoughts? To ask their own questions and explore their own answers? To experience the world in real-time, face-to-face terms? To look around without benefit of lenses, screens, or any mediators of experience other than their own eyes and minds?

I'm agreeing with everyone cited here: audience matters more than ever, so ignoring audience matters more than ever, too. Let's be sure our students know they have - and have a right to - "the reflective and private dimensions [of] their mental lives." And let's use literacy - writing and reading - to help them spend more time and become more comfortable with their audience of one, for that's the one audience they will have for as long as they live.



A New Twist for the Process Essay

- by Linda Walker and Gwen Douse, co-teachers of the summer Historical Fiction Writing class for students in grades 3 - 6

The goal of a *process essay* is to describe how a procedure is accomplished. How often has *make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich* been used as the example for a process essay? Too many! Here's a new twist for the old standard. As part of the *Reading, Writing and Talking History* Youth summer workshop, children visited the *Peter Wentz Farmstead* in Worcester, PA. A period-costumed presenter demonstrated flax making, a process which re-

By adding transitional words, such as *first, then, next*, children were later better able to visualize the process and write about it. After the flax-making demonstration, children worked in groups to write creative interpretations of the process. The groups took varying approaches including: developing characters and including them in their flax making story; incorporating their drawings to relate the process; using a Reader's Theater approach to present their facts.



sulted in cloth for this 1700s household. The interpreter's hands-on approach encouraged the children to experience first hand the use of flax-making tools. Children also took notes and used field sketching as a way to quickly record the flax-making concept for later writing. Nature journalists sketch to connect with their surroundings. Children, too, can use their drawings to help them connect with their writing.

Field visits to places which showcase how something is done are often not an option for today's educators, but inviting someone into the classroom is one way to overcome that hurdle and bring the process essay to life.

Reading, Writing, and Talking History will be held at the Highlands Mansion and Gardens, Ft. Washington from July 12 - 16, 2010. For more information on the summer Youth programs visit www.pawlp.org.

Spring Courses

Strategies for Teaching Literature, 4 - 12

PWP 520-01

Location: PAWLP Classroom, WCU

Dates: Tuesdays, January 19 - April 27, 2010

Time: 4:15 - 7:00 p.m.

Coordinators: Diane Dougherty and Tony Rotondo

The experience of reading literature is central to designing experiences for teaching literature. To this end, teachers will read a variety of current and canonical literature and explore pertinent theory and pedagogy in light of these texts and their own teaching. In this course, participants will discover their own processes as readers, share lessons in literary elements, apply PA Standards and Assessments to curriculum, discuss current theory as it applies to their classrooms, and design and experience writing activities about and inspired by literature.

Literacy in Bloom: Botanical Inspirations for Reading, Writing, and Learning, K - 12

PWP 510-01

Location: Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square

Dates: 5 Saturdays: January 23, February 6 and 27, March 20, April 10 (snow/make-up dates Jan. 30, Feb. 20, April 17)

Times: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Coordinator: Patty Koller

Spend five Saturdays at beautiful Longwood Gardens. Engage in literacy activities inspired by the natural surroundings, participate in behind-the-scenes tours by Longwood Gardens professional staff, research a topic of personal interest, and collaborate with other teachers to create nature-inspired learning experiences for your students.

Units of Study in the Writing Workshop, 2 - 8

PWP 599-01

Location: Bucks County IU, Doylestown

Dates: Wednesdays, January 13 - March 24, 2010

Time: 4:15 - 7:45 p.m. (+6.5 independent hours)

Coordinator: Angela Watters

***Registration deadline is December 22, 2009**

Experience a units of study approach by becoming actively involved in expanding curricular possibilities and asking big questions about writing. In this course, you will gain practical know-how to fill your writing curriculum with rigor and challenge. Build confidence to engage in authentic study with your students, motivating them to produce high-quality, authentic writing and grow as writers.

Reading Essentials: Teaching Readers What Really Matters, 2 - 8

PWP 599-02

Location: Bucks County IU, Doylestown

Dates: Two weekends, March 19 - 21/April 9 - 11

Times: Fridays, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays/Sundays 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

*Includes the spring conference with Frank Serafini and Jordan Sonnenblick

Coordinators: Chris Kehan and Angela Watters

Have you been struggling to manage the demands of teaching reading effectively and still create a love of literature in your students? If you have, then this is the perfect course for you. In this course, you will be provided with multiple strategies for establishing and maintaining a classroom community of readers. You will learn what matters to children's reading lives, what children need to know about strategic reading, how to assess and move your students forward, and how to ensure your students comprehend and develop a lifelong love of reading. We will focus on building a literate community, the importance of involving students in read-alouds, independent reading, conferring, and assessment.

Tuition and fees:
On-campus course: \$1,357.68
Off-campus: \$1,293.57

Register on-line at www.pawlp.org
Call 610-436-2202 or
e-mail Sally Malarney at smalarney@wcupa.edu
for more information.

Strategies for Teaching Writing is offered in the Methacton and Hempfield School Districts in the Spring of 2010. To find out how to bring a course to your district call 610-436-2202.

Spring Literacy Conferences

Lessons That Matter to your Writers and Readers



Keynote Speakers:
Jordan Sonnenblick and
Dr. Frank Serafini

April 10, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

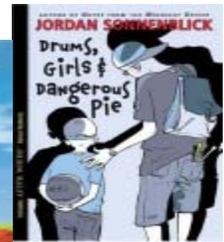
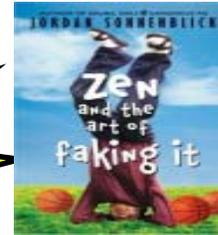
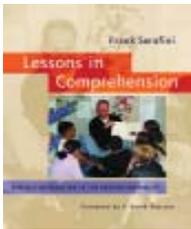
Central Bucks High School South, Warrington



Jordan Sonnenblick

Children's books author who creates characters you will love!

Dr. Frank Serafini
Shares his passion for teaching reading in his professional texts!



Springboards for Reading, Writing, and Thinking

Keynote Speaker:
Kelly Gallagher

May 1, 2010

8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Graduate Business Center, West Chester



Kelly Gallagher

Co-Director of the South Basin Writing Project

COST: \$100/day (\$75 for PAWLFP Fellows)

or

\$175 for both days (\$150 for PAWLFP Fellows)

Fee includes light breakfast and lunch.

Register for both events or Bucks County only by March 31.

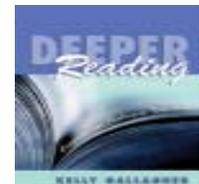
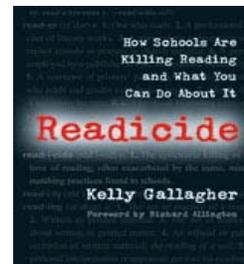
Register for West Chester/Gallagher event only by April 23.

Register on-line at www.pawlp.org (Coming Events)

e-mail smalarney@wcupa.edu

or call 610-436-2202 for more information.

Register 3 or more participants from the same district at the same time and get a \$10 discount for everyone!



Invitational Summer Institutes

- Join other experienced teachers to examine your classroom practice, study the latest research about teaching, and develop your teaching skills
- Become better prepared for teaching in your own classroom and for teaching other teachers
- Learn to engage students in a reading and writing life
- Find the antidote to teacher burnout

New!

Math Institute

- Use writing strategies and ideas to develop communication and further understanding
- Use different types of technology to improve instruction and inquiry based strategies
- Increase collaboration, community, and professional development K - 12

Meets at the Bucks County IU

Writing Institute

Revision, Rhyme, and Reality: Writing for Life

- Write in diverse genres and modes in model writing workshop
- Read current professional literature on the teaching of writing
- Experience strategies that work with all students, K - 12
- Explore an issue central to your teaching

Two locations!

WCU Graduate Business Center
Bucks County IU

Reading and Literature Institute

Beowulf, Virginia Woolf, and The Big Bad Wolf: Reading for Life

- Read diverse kinds and genres of literature as a community of readers
- Experience literature circles, grade level groups, and whole class formats
- Read current professional literature on the teaching of reading, literature, and literacy, with opportunities to pursue topics of individual interest
- Experience reading and teaching strategies appropriate for all students across the curriculum

Meets at the WCU Graduate Business Center

All Institutes run four days/week for four weeks

June 28 - July 22, (no class July 5)

8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Participants become teacher-consultants of the National Writing Project and join a large local and national professional development network.

Stipends from the National Writing Project help reduce tuition and fees for the six-credit Institute.

Please call 610-436-2202

or e-mail Sally Malarney at smalarney@wcupa.edu for an application packet.
Enrollment is limited. Applications are accepted on a rolling admission basis.

Summer Schedule

Invitational Summer Institutes

Six graduate credits
June 28 - July 22
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Four days/week (no class July 5)

Math Institute
Bucks County IU,
Doylestown

Writing Institute
Two locations!
Graduate Business Center, WCU
Bucks County IU, Doylestown

**Reading and Literature
Institute**
Graduate Business Center,
WCU

Please call 610-436-2202 or e-mail smalarney@wcupa.edu for an application packet.

Courses

At WCU Graduate Business Center

Manage a Writing/Reading Classroom, K - 8 June 28 - July 2
Growing Readers, K - 5 June 28 - July 2
Teacher as Writer, K - 12 June 28 - July 1 and July 6 - 9
Grammar for Teachers, 3 - 12 (one-credit) July 6 - 7
Reading and Writing to Learn Social Studies July 12 - 16
Popular Mechanics, 4 - 12 July 12 - 16
Strategies for Teaching Writing, 4 - 12 July 19 - 23
Reading and Writing in Digital Spaces, 5 - 12 July 19 - 23

At Bucks County IU, Doylestown

Writing Essentials, 1 - 8 July 12 - 16
Popular Mechanics, 4 - 12 August 2 - 6
Comprehension Connections, 2 - 8 August 9 - 13

At Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square

Literacy in Bloom: Botanical Inspirations for Reading, Writing, and Learning . July 12 - 16
with mandatory meeting June 17, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

The Summer Institutes and most 3-credit courses apply toward the WCU Master's Degree in Writing, Teaching, and Criticism.

For course descriptions and registration information visit our website at www.pawlp.org
e-mail Sally Malarney at smalarney@wcupa.edu
or call 610-436-2202.

Visualizing Words and Worlds: Writing, Literature, and Art

3 locations!

July 26 - 30, with introductory meeting TBD
at the **James A. Michener Art Museum**, Doylestown

August 2 - 6, with introductory meeting June 23, 1 - 4 pm
at the **Brandywine River Museum**, Chadds Ford

August 9 - 13, with introductory meeting TBD
at **GoggleWorks** in Reading

Parents as Writers Program

"I hope you weren't planning to sit in the back row!" This was my first comment to the parents as they entered the first floor classroom at 210 Rosedale. It was Monday, July 13th, and Cecelia Evans and I were piloting a program for the parents of children who were current or past participants in the Young Writers/Young Readers Program. We were a very small group, so there was no back row, literally or metaphorically. Instead, we were a group of writers, who quickly found common ground and a sense of shared purpose.

Cecelia and I had collaborated with Mary Buckelew to design a program that would offer the parents direct experience with the writing process and encourage their identity as writers. We drew inspiration from several sources, including our

own PAWLP experiences, our shared experiences with the *With Pen in Hand* Family Writing Program, our collaborative conversations, and a variety of professional and mentor texts. We had agendas prepared for the three sessions, but we also provided opportunities for oral and written reflection before, during, and after each session to uncover the parents' specific interests and goals, and to adjust our plans accordingly.

Some of the many areas we explored together during the three sessions were: generating topics, keeping a writer's notebook, using mentor text, conferencing, revising, writing children's books, and motivating one's own children to write at home. The parents had the opportunity to create entries in a writer's notebook and develop them

into short pieces in a variety of genres. Along the way, Cecelia and I shared excerpts from our own writing, including a "behind the scenes tour" of our own processes.

The overall tone was one of positive energy and mutual support. We agreed that if the program was a pilot, we had all been copilots. After three afternoons together, the parents exchanged email addresses and hope to continue their new writer's group. We concluded with an excerpt from Mary Oliver's poem "Sometimes," from her anthology *Red Bird* (2008).

Instructions for living a life:

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

- by Janice Ewing,
'04 WC Writing

From Young Writer/Young Reader to Summer Intern

When I turned onto Rosedale Avenue to begin my internship at the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project in May, I slowed down and stared at the building ahead of me. *Wait. That looks really familiar.*

It should. After all, five summers ago, when I was a rising junior in high school, I'd taken a *Lord of the Rings* literature class in that same building.

This internship wasn't my first experience with the program. In fact, even the *Lord of the Rings* class wasn't my first. I did the Young Writers/Young Readers program when I was in elementary and middle school, and then returned when I was in high school to take the *Lord of the Rings* class and *Science Fic-*

tion, Fantasy and Horror Writing.

I've always loved to write. My mother still has the first story I wrote, something about a pumpkin, and occasionally brings it out to embarrass me. The PAWLP classes were a way for my parents to encourage me. It must have worked. I'm now entering my third year at Dickinson College as an English major and Creative Writing minor.

My stories have evolved, of course, and I tend to not write about sentient squash anymore, but that love remains. So it's appropriate, in a way, that I came back to the Project so many years later. I learned so much here as a child and now I have a chance to give back by helping them with public rela-

tions—designing fliers and pamphlets, writing press releases and news articles.

At the same time, I'm still learning from the Project, improving my skills with various pieces of software and my eye for design. This was the first time I'd ever designed a small anthology; and it gave me a chance to experiment and discover how to put together the certain look I wanted.

That seemed appropriate, too. PAWLP is about learning—one of its mottos is "Teachers Teaching Teachers." I'm still learning. It may not be through a class any longer, but I've learned a lot during my time here and can't wait to continue learning and writing in the future.

- Alyssa Coltrain

Notebook Connections: A Look at Writer's and Reader's Notebooks

The PAWLP Day in Bucks County had a new look and a great turnout. The new look was a result of many past participants wanting PAWLP to bring back our fall PAWLP days. Aimee Buckner, author of *Notebook Know-How* and *Notebook Connections*, impressed a packed IU on a cool fall Saturday. The Bucks County Intermediate Unit was the perfect place to hold the Fall PAWLP Day. Its central location allowed for teachers from many public and private schools to attend.

Teachers, reading specialists, and librarians from area school districts such as Central Bucks, Souderton, Council Rock, and Pennridge were in attendance. The energy level was high and Aimee was passionate.

Aimee Buckner opened the day reading *Courage* by Bernard Most, and she told us that it takes courage to teach writing well. Her focus in the morning was writing and the writer's notebook. She said that we have to protect class time for writing. After all, "we have nothing to read if writers don't write." What goes into the writer's notebook is for the writer. She encouraged teachers to use their own writer's notebooks as mentor texts. When the students see and hear our writing,

they see writing as doable. All participants received their own notebooks, compliments of PAWLP, to get started in their writing journeys.

In the afternoon Aimee focused on answering participants' questions and addressing the reader's notebook. She said that the reader's notebook is part of the reading workshop. It's a place for readers to express their understanding

throughout the day by Michaels Associates. Greg Michaels graciously donated books for the raffle, and he surprised a kindergarten teacher in the audience with a wonderful basket of poetry books appropriate for Pre-K and K teachers. The participants shared countless positive comments as the day went on, and they are eager for next year's fall day with Jeff Anderson, author of *Mechanically Inclined*. The committee is already in the process of improving the fall PAWLP day thanks to your valuable feedback.

April 10, 2010 will be the

PAWLP Literacy Conference featuring the passionate professional author, Frank Serafini, and the talented children's author, Jordan Sonnenblick. The following year's conference will be on April 30, 2011, and it will feature the influential writing professional author, Katie Wood Ray. Educators interested in joining the PA Writing and Literature Project email Newsletter list can go to www.pawlp.org to be kept up to date on the latest graduate courses and literacy conferences.



of themselves as readers and the books they are reading. Many student samples were shared throughout the day which made it real and tangible for teachers. She also tied in reading like a writer, which is essential to the reading-writing connection. Her presentation on Powerpoint is available on the PAWLP website, www.pawlp.org.

Professional books were sold



- by Chris Kehan,
'95 Bucks Writing, '97 Lit

Teacher Tips

- by PAWLPCo-Director Diane Dougherty



"What's in a name?"

We know that proper nouns come packed with connotations. When I sought names for my own children, I was keenly aware of how a particular name could become playground fodder. "Oscar" suggests one thing; "David" another. Art Peterson in his practical and informative *The Writer's Workout Book* suggests using names to discuss with students the subtexts words can summon. We need look no further than Charles Dickens for fitting character names. Try this exercise with students.

First read descriptions of characters from Dickens (or other age-appropriate authors):

"Some people likened him to a direction-post, which is always telling the way to a place, and never goes there." [Seth Pecksniff in *Martin Chuzzlewit*]

"...a face in which a queer attempt at melancholy was at odds with a smirk of satisfaction" [Mould Undertaker in *Martin Chuzzlewit*]

"An attorney of no good repute" and "One of the greatest scoundrels unhung." [Sampson Brass *The Old Curiosity Shop*]

"When Monsieur...laughed, a change took place in his face, that was more remarkable than prepossessing. His moustache went up

under his nose, and his nose came down over his moustache, in a very sinister and cruel manner" [Riguad/Blandois/Lagnier in *Little Dorrit*]

Then, give students a list of Dickens-like or real Dickens names such as:

Wilkins Macawber

Rosa Dartle

James Carker

Alfred Jingle

Henrietta Nupkins

Rev. Mr. Stiggins

Dr. Slammer

Ms. Flite

Horatio Fitzkin, Esquire

Lady Dedlock

Challenge students to write a paragraph about one of the above characters describing his/her appearance, occupation, "lifestyle," and temperament. Let them share and compare the associations they made with these names. The discussion that follows can become a vehicle for real understanding of the importance of word choice in writing.



Kudos

Linda Kerschner, '98 WC Writing, '09 Lit, had her article entitled *Postcards: a Versatile Tool for Making Connections* published in the August, 2009 issue of NCTE's Classroom Notes.

Wendy Hopf, '05 Bucks Writing, had her article entitled *Blurring the Line Between and Classwork and Homework* published in the October, 2009 issue of ASCD Express.

Lesley Roessing, Writing '02, Lit '04 had her article entitled *Losing the Fear of Sharing Control* published as a chapter in McGraw-Hill's Annual Editions: Education 09/10. Her book entitled *The Write to Read: Response Journals That Increase Comprehension* was published by Corwin Press in July. Lesley recently moved to the Savannah area to join the faculty at Armstrong Atlantic University.

Matt Alloway, '08 WC Writing, had his article entitled *Don't Forget Your Local Libraries* published in the August 28, 2009 issue of the Daily Local News.



Education Matters

a column from Michaels Associates

CD or not to CD?

Michaels Associates LLC is about to release a somewhat revolutionary way to browse and purchase professional resources. This is a move that has been contemplated for three or four years, but we think that the time may now be right to "pull the trigger."

We're all book people - myself included - or we probably wouldn't be doing what we're doing to earn our livings. There is comfort in the feel and even the smell of books. It's still not hard for me to resist the Kindle and other e-readers because I like to mark and highlight books and even to look at them on my shelves. Books don't crash like computers, and once you own one it's yours forever to dip into as a reference or re-read altogether. Battery life and storage capacity also don't enter your thoughts when you decide to pull a book off your shelf.

As a company that prides itself on being customer-focused,

we constantly look for ways to make your experience with us easier, faster, and more productive. Informal interviews with our customers about the way educational materials catalogs are used have produced some insights that we have used to make a leap forward in customer service. Catalogs as a print medium are similar to books, but the way they are used to plan school or professional purchases are very different from the way we use books. For instance, a book may be circled in a catalog and at some point in the future the title, ISBN, source, price, and shipping charges must be written on a requisition and later re-typed on a purchase order. This involves duplication of effort and takes time away from instruction or your personal life.

The solution - and a risk - was to convert our printed catalog to a "greener" and more comprehensive CD-ROM catalog. The risk is that book people like us are so used to our print catalogs that we might be reluctant to put it into a computer in the first place. That's a real risk, and a scary thought for us. Following are our main reasons to proceed:

1. Our previous two catalogs were only new and recent titles to make the catalog small enough to afford the mailing costs. The CD has thousands of titles.

2. You can search for specific books by title, ISBN, author, or subject. You can also search for all books by a specific publisher, or by any of 28 categories.

3. Once you make a choice, you can click to send it to an order form where you can change the quantity if you'd like or continue shopping. Shipping charges and tax - if applicable - are automatically calculated.

4. Once your order is the way you want it, you can e-mail, mail, or fax the order toll free. Purchase order customers can simply attach their P.O. to the order form without re-typing everything.

5. You can print the description of a single book or the whole catalog if you'd like.

We think you'll agree that the net effect will be a real time saver for you. Wish us luck.

Cordially,
Greg Michaels

A Kid Touched by PAWLP

[Recently, PAWLP Director Andy Fishman received this e-mail from a former Young Writer/Young Reader]

Dr. Fishman:

My name is Michael, and I attended the Young Readers/Young Writers program in Bucks County for four or five years up until seventh or eighth grade ('tis early in the morn, and thus my memory fails). I was *incredibly* fortunate to have Chris Coyne Kehan (then simply Chris Coyne) as my first teacher.

Her love of reading and writing was incredibly strong and genuine and, luckily for me, quite contagious. She inspired my little seven-year-old hands to write until they fell off... well, they haven't fallen off yet, nor have they stopped writing. Although the short stories and limericks have become strange free verse and lyrics for my music, I totally have Ms. Kehan to thank. Not that my other teachers weren't awesome as well, but Ms. Kehan was special.

I wanted to let you know that

this stuff really makes an impact. The actual techniques that were taught to me? I can't remember a single one off the cuff. What has stuck with me is what I consider to be the best form of education: the tools with which I am inspired to ask questions and find the answers for myself.

Thank you and keep up the awesome work!

~ MH

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