



PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 12 NUMBER 3

SPRING 1992

**AUGUST CONFERENCE FEATURES AUTHOR
RUSSELL FREEDMAN, JACK PIKULSKI, AND J.
DAVID COOPER**

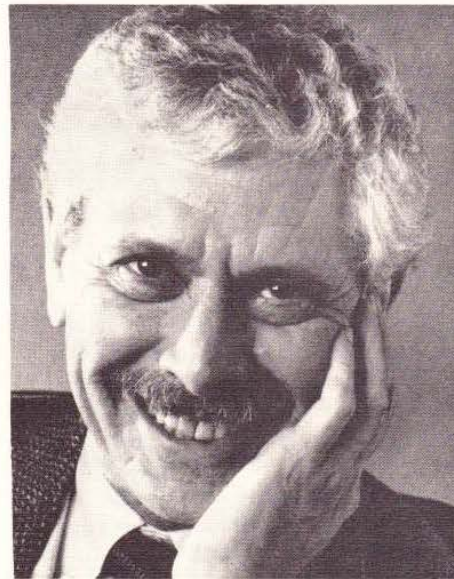
PAWP/HOUGHTON MIFFLIN PROMOTE LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

Newbery Medal winner Russell Freedman, author of Lincoln: A Photobiography and other children's books, will be the featured author at this year's Summer Literacy/Whole Language Conference for K-8 teachers, August 12-13, 1992. Also featured will be nationally recognized speakers Jack Pikulski of the University of Delaware and J. David Cooper of Ball State University.

The August conference is the sixth in an annual series that PAWP has co-sponsored with publishers, beginning with Boynton-Cook/Heinemann, then Scholastic, and now Houghton Mifflin, which has been the co-sponsor for three years. The focus is always on improving the teaching of writing and reading. Conference registrants have the option of earning a graduate credit.

This year, the conference highlights Literacy Opportunities and emphasizes sharing classroom ideas and strategies that work, as presented by successful local teachers and workshop leaders. Topics include: fitting whole language into your curriculum, authentic assessment including portfolio use, practical suggestions for the whole language classroom, beginning reading and writing, relations with the Pennsylvania Framework, and ways to present literature, writing, and skills as a "whole." Many PAWP teacher-consultants will be leading these sessions.

The featured author, Russell Freedman, began his writing career as a reporter and editor for the San Fran-



Newbery Medalist Russell Freedman

A WEEK OF WHOLE LANGUAGE INCLUDES THE AUGUST LITERACY CONFERENCE

To provide a forum for those K-8 teachers who want more "processing" of the ideas presented in the Summer Literacy Conference, PAWP has scheduled "A Week of Whole Language." For two days before the conference and one day afterward, several PAWP teacher-consultants will conduct a workshop that addresses key issues of teaching writing and reading. Participants will focus on ways to implement whole language instruction. The workshop leaders are Jim MacCall (Lower Merion SD) and Nancy McElwee (Central Bucks SD). "A Week of Whole Language" carries three graduate credits; participants complete an independent project afterward and submit it by mail.

continued p. 6

EDITOR'S CORNER

BRINGING 'LIFE' INTO THE CLASSROOM

In the past 15 years teachers have more and more frequently heard the cry to relate classroom work to the students' "real" lives. After I put aside my annoyance at the thought that their school lives aren't real but somehow at a distance from the other 17 hours a day they don't spend in school, I took a look at my students, the work I asked them to do, and the things I asked them to read and write about.

I had to admit that, in many cases, I made assumptions about their understanding of why I was making a particular assignment. I knew that among the reasons for our reading Hamlet was so the seniors could make connections between Hamlet's indecision and their own indecision about their futures but did I help the students see that? Looking back, I'm sure I said it but only in the last ten years have I actually designed an exercise for the students to do so they can discover it for themselves.

As I look more and more into using writing process and PA Framework ideas with my students I spend more time on helping the students make the connections. Success, however, is not always assured. There are times when the students treat this work with as much interest and care as un-recycled trash. When it does work, though, I remember why I thought teaching was the profession for me. Too, when the students are seeing the connections between school work and their "real" lives, I am reminded of the enthusiasm of excellent first grade classrooms.

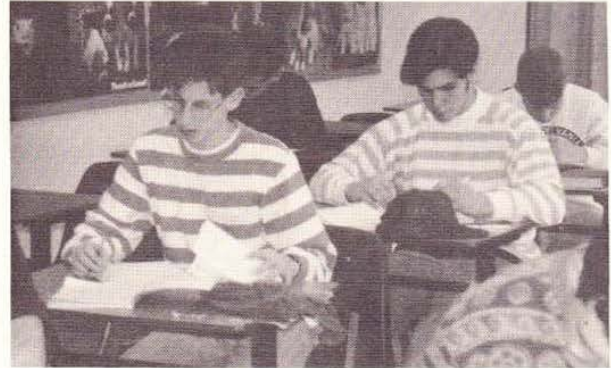
Recently, my Communication Skills class (that's a basic course in writing, listening, speaking, and a little reading for tenth graders, the first year in my high school) started the semester with description. I imagine almost every planned course of study calls for descriptive writing and I've tried many different activities, dropping ones I didn't find effective and even occasionally dropping ones the students and I liked when I got bored with them and could no longer write with the students.

Keeping in mind that I wanted to get to know these kids since I hadn't had them before and that I wanted to develop a sharing classroom atmosphere, I brainstormed with them about our favorite items of clothing. We thought about our infancy, childhood, junior high years, and now. We closed our eyes and envisioned our closets and drawers. While I made lists and maps on the board, they did the same in their notebooks.

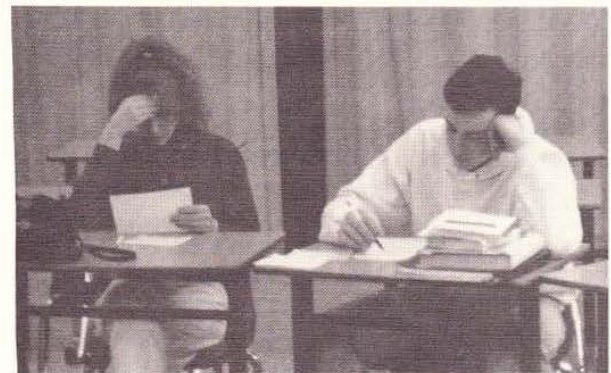
For the second day, we all brought one important item (I told them no underwear) to class. First I shared my red and white Scottish sheep sweater and encouraged them to ask questions. Next they shared their items in informal groups of two or three. This led very smoothly into our making a list of the types of things we wanted to know about each other's clothing: these ranged from the physical (color, size) to the emotional (why is this important?).

The steps we went through to arrive at a final piece describing our clothing aren't important. What matters is that we learned something about each other, we began to develop that camaraderie so vital to a pleasant working atmosphere, and we connected the dry, old descriptive assignment to our "real" lives.

What also matters is that everyone actually brought an item and everyone's paper was descriptive with interesting choices in adjectives, sentence structure, and organization.



To help with rough drafts, Len and Doug use the actual clothing, their original brainstorming, and a map.



Brandi and Chris proofread classmates' final drafts.



Most of the class shows off favorite clothing items.

**A GUEST EDITORIAL:
OBSERVATIONS ON PA FRAMEWORK**

by Rosemary Hiriak

We as teachers have spent so many years doing the work--and we grew--now it is time to allow the students to work and grow.

The Framework is a lesson in self-esteem, interdependence, cooperation and communication--life skills! Once a teacher has experienced this manner of working with children, the old way is an unacceptable alternative.

After a series of experiences with mixed groups of third, fourth, and fifth graders, I asked them to identify the process (activity) that helped them learn most effectively. The answers: reading, underlining, taking notes, working with a partner, bouncing ideas off each other, VENN diagram. The fact that these children could name the process and determine which one(s) work for them made me realize that I have come a long way and the children have gained so much from three 1/2 hour lessons--and they did the work.

Three important areas need to be noted. First, all over the country we have teachers teaching writing who are not comfortable writing and sharing. Second, we have students who are also uncomfortable writing and sharing but we can not allow them the disservice of leaving our schools unable to communicate in every format. Third, the sooner we address the problem of involving kids in interactive experiences, the sooner they will become more comfortable and start to grow in all areas.

Rosemary Hiriak, a Spring 1991 participant in a PA Framework course, is a reading specialist for the Pottsgrove Area SD.

**NEW YORK CITY WRITING PROJECT
PRESENTATIONS ON REFLECTIVE PORTFOLIOS**

At the recent NCTE conference in Seattle, Washington, four members of the New York City Writing Project offered a secondary-level workshop session on "Freedom to Learn: Teaching the Habits of Reflection and Self-Assessment." The session was rapidly filled, with over 100 people crowding into a room set up for 75. The presenters were Denise Stavis Levine, Nick D'Alessandro, Kerry Weinbaum, and George Golden, none of whom had exclusively straightforward classroom jobs but all of whom had some classroom responsibilities.

Immediately they explained that the presentations initially planned for the session were no longer suitable, that they preferred not to make formal presentations but to workshop the group, that they intended to do so, and that if people wanted to leave they could. I didn't see anyone leave.

The presenters then provided two questions and gave

out 5 x 7 cards for us to write our responses in 15 minutes. Everyone in the crowded room, including those standing in the rear and those sitting along the side wall on the floor, complied. The questions were:

1. *What is valued by you in the classes you teach?*
2. *How do you know when you are doing your best?*

Then, although the room was impossible for a workshop or any sort of group activity, we grouped. My group of five was joined by a sixth. We were to share our answers, have a recorder. (Our group never managed to appoint a recorder.)

In my small group, we rapidly showed many similarities in our responses to Question 1. I had written: *smiles, activity, resources, engagement, satisfaction, success, performance.* Others added: *lessons taught by students, "stretching" teaches me, growth, treat me like a person, dialogue is organic, genuine self-evaluation, values are shown, invisibility of teacher.*

When the full group heard from several of the recorders, the list increased:

<i>trust</i>	<i>student autonomy</i>
<i>students find value</i>	<i>no need for discipline</i>
<i>all actively involved</i>	<i>can make connections</i>
<i>be independent learners</i>	<i>comfort</i>
<i>make connections</i>	<i>curiosity</i>
<i>personalize learning</i>	<i>transferring beyond lesson</i>
<i>fun</i>	<i>take risks</i>
<i>challenge ideas</i>	<i>change</i>
<i>students interact with self & text</i>	<i>excitement</i>

For Question 2, I wrote:

<i>observed by me</i>	<i>testified by students</i>
<i>shown in performance</i>	<i>including tests</i>
<i>seen by others</i>	

Others added:

<i>no need for discipline</i>	<i>enthusiasm and focus</i>
<i>work toward individual goals</i>	<i>can say they've met goals</i>
<i>had staying power</i>	<i>stayed at the bell</i>
<i>say thanks</i>	<i>say things publically</i>
<i>teacher doesn't feel fatigued</i>	<i>process becomes important</i>
<i>recommended you to other kids and for awards</i>	
<i>"when they've done it all" as distinct from</i>	
<i>depending on you to do it for them</i>	

Some questioning occurred and some people left, but the group was on task and liking it. The workshop leaders recommended several books: Portfolios: Process and Product, ed. Pat Belanoff & Marcia Dickson (Portsmouth, NH Boynton/Cook-Heinemann, 1991); Robert Tierney, Mark A. Carter, and Laura E. Desai, Portfolio Assessment in the Reading-Writing Classroom (Norwood, MA. Christopher-Gordon, 1991); and Assessment and Evaluation in Whole Language Programs, ed. Bill Harp (Norwood, MA. Christopher-Gordon, 1991.)

1991 NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT INFORMATION

Number of Sites: 154 Sites: 141 sites within the U.S., 1 site in Puerto Rico, 12 sites outside the U.S.

Location of Sites: 46 states and five foreign countries (Canada, Australia, Sweden, Norway, and Finland) plus sites overseas serving U.S. teachers in DOD dependent schools (European, Pacific, and Atlantic Regions) and independent schools (East Asia Writing Project and The Athens Writing Project)

Numbers of Teachers Trained: 1989-1990 programs:

<u>Invitational Summer Institutes</u>		<u>School Year Programs</u>	
Elementary	1,438	Elementary	28,810
Junior High	637	Secondary	24,132
Senior High	1,057	College	1,249
College	141	Other	1,613
Other	151		
Total: 3,424		Total: 55,804	

All Other NWP Programs: Total: 39,395

Total Teachers and Others Trained in 1989-1990 Programs: 98,623

Number of Teachers, Administrators, and Others Trained in NWP Programs are to Date, 1974 to the Present: Total: 832,326

WRITING ASSESSMENT MODULES

With the aid of several PAWP teacher-consultants, Bob Weiss has "modularized" the Writing Assessment courses so that participating teachers may select options worth from one to four credits. Previously offered as either a 3-credit course in writing assessment or a 1-credit workshop in holistic assessment, the program now has the following components which may be taken separately or together:

June 23-25	Holistic Assessment (1 credit)
June 29-July 3	Portfolio Assessment (2 credits)
July 7-9	Conferring and Feedback (1 credit)

Bob has offered the Holistic Assessment workshop annually since 1981, with much favorable feedback from teachers. In 1991 he began the Portfolio Assessment course for elementary teachers in Bristol Township, made a videotape of portfolio plans, and gathered many resource materials on portfolio systems. The conferring and feedback module, developed as part of the Writing Assessment course in 1991, provides insight into evaluation within the process of writing. In all of the sessions, emphasis is on the appropriateness of assessment to instruction and includes such topics as grading, response to writing, portfolio management, setting standards, and writing assessment research.

In the Holistic Assessment module, participants will be introduced to the theory and practice of rapid and reliable

assessment of large numbers of writing samples as currently used in schools and colleges. Several systems of holistic scoring will be examined in relation to the functions of diagnosis, placement, ranking, exit proficiency, and program evaluation. Participants will gain experience in analytic, primary trait, and developmental rating, as well as familiarity with the 6-point scale used in the Pennsylvania Writing Assessment. PAWP teacher-consultant Mark Ruppel (Council Rock SD) will share some of his experiences with district assessment and the Educational Testing Service.

In Portfolio Assessment, topics to be addressed include purposes for portfolios, contents, student involvement and choices, and daily and long-term management. A key feature of this component is the actual design of a complete portfolio system. Many teachers and administrators have become interested in using portfolios for instruction and assessment. This workshop will assist them in sorting out ideas and applications, and in avoiding mistakes.

The Conferring and Feedback module analyzes and demonstrates different models for formative classroom assessment of writing, emphasizing teacher and peer conferences, checklists, and commenting about student work in progress. Many of the materials available in this workshop will help teachers decide which models of classroom and portfolio assessment are suited to their needs.

continued p. 5

Teacher-consultant Marcia Cole-Quigley, who currently has a fifth grade classroom in the Marple-Newtown SD, will assist with both the Portfolio and Conferring/Feedback modules.

Persons interested in individual modules should sign up for them separately. Persons interested in earning all four credits should sign up for Writing Assessment (PWP 511) and the Writing Assessment Workshop (PWP 517).

6TH ANNUAL WORKSHOP ON ADMINISTERING WRITING PROGRAMS

Supporting its emphasis on the classroom teacher, once again PAWP will offer a 3-day summer program for school administrators. Readers of this Newsletter know PAWP's commitment the power of classroom-tested knowledge and to the primacy of experienced teachers as the major ingredients in educational change. In our annual program for administrators, we provide the experiences and knowledge that should guide those who are responsible for full programs in writing and language arts: principals, curriculum directors, supervisors, coordinators, specialists, and of course superintendents.

Over the three days, participants learn the latest theory and research about writing and language, examine successful programs, and plan for implementing new programs or improving existing ones. Many who have attended seek to clarify their understanding of "hot topics" such as: writing as a process, whole language, writing across the curriculum, critical thinking, the PA Framework (PRCP2), the PA Assessment System and its writing sample, performance and portfolio assessment, outcome-based education, and strategic learning. Several central issues are always addressed: how to adopt a rationale for your program, how to develop curriculum, how to provide staff development, and how to evaluate what you have begun.

About 20 administrators from districts throughout Pennsylvania attend this workshop each summer, and evaluations have been very favorable, including comments such as:

"This is the most valuable workshop that I have attended as Language Arts Coordinator for our School District. Many thanks!"

"There is no doubt that our curriculum has been dramatically influenced by your outlook, materials, and training."

"Thank you for the openness, generous sharing, and positive experience. We learned so much. I now consciously understand how to make it work; before, it was hit or miss!"

"As our students write more frequently and receive improved instruction, the quality of their writing is improving. Parents comment favorably on the writing program in our school."

"This workshop has given shape to our staff development programs--an extensive theoretical base and exciting ways to buy in, to translate ideas into meaningful classroom practice."

"I now understand what's going on in the field."

The 1992 administrators' workshop is again led collaboratively by Bob Weiss and Marion Dugan. Marion is currently the Director of Curriculum and Staff Development for the Souderton Area School District.

The workshop is offered July 14-16, 1992 from 8:30 to 2:30 and includes "working lunches" where ideas are hatched and shared. One credit may be earned by participants.

YWP PREPARES FOR 8TH SEASON

This June the Youth Writing Project will begin its eighth season. Each year the program grows, and a larger number of participants is anticipated this summer. Last year nearly 300 youngsters participated in the project, ranging in grades from first to twelfth. For the kids it is always a positive accomplishment. As Danielle Jewell (age 9) said, *"It's a new experience."* Timmy Lee (age 11) said, *"If you enjoy writing, you're going to love this."* *"Everyone should try it once--you never know--it may make you famous and rich,"* remarked 17-year-old Shabnam Naseer.

Next summer we again look forward to the three regular sessions of the Youth Writing Project, each running for a two-week period from one to four at West Chester University. Session dates are June 22-July 3, July 6-17, and July 20-31. Classes are offered in the traditional writing method as well as in word processing, using IBM computers and the "Word Perfect" program.

There is also a special one-week session to be held at the extension campus in Exton August 3-7.

Each year the fellows who participate in the project find the experience rewarding and the days when the guest authors visit enlightening and enriching for their yearly classroom teaching. Authors Janet Falon, Claudia Reder and Jim Giuliano will stimulate the writing sessions with their wit and expertise. If any Fellows are interested in joining the ranks of teachers for the YWP, please contact Chris Cardamone at (215) 436-3089.

Grammar is the grave of letters.

-Elbert Hubbard

Usage is the only test. I prefer a phrase that is easy and unaffected to a phrase that is grammatical.

-W. Somerset Maugham

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING: THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Once again the WCU Exton Center will be hosting the frequently offered PAWP first course, Strategies for Teaching Writing (I). Begun in 1980 by the first cadre of PAWP teacher-consultants, Strategies has now been offered over 100 times in southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond. The touchstone of the National Writing Project model, it is often said, is the course that it develops to teach other teachers. PAWP is pleased to have created and maintained a "jewel" of a course in its Strategies (I).

Nine different presentations are made for this course, in addition to the coordinator's, so that participants receive a generous variety of perspectives and lessons on successful ideas for teaching writing. At least two new presentations are added for each version of the course, so it remains fresh and benefits from infusions of current ideas and practices. More than any other course, Strategies (I) thus puts the teacher at the center of writing instruction.

Teachers' evaluations over the years have corroborated the initial positive response to Strategies (I). One of the surveys completed by course participants focusses on changes in student writing behaviors. In 24 Strategies courses offered from 1988 to 1991, 320 participants noted that their students now:

- spend a longer time writing (N = 275 [86.0%])
- do more writing of various kinds (N = 268 [83.8%])
- do more self-sponsored writing (N = 274 [85.6%])
- do more pre-writing (N = 261 [81.6%]) and re-writing (N = 219 [68.4%])
- do more reading and writing activities in class (N = 275 [86.0%])
- take more pleasure with the written products (N = 278 [86.9%])

With this track record, it is no wonder that PAWP advises all teachers to experience this course, and to experience it as their first contact with the writing project.

The 1992 summer version of Strategies (I) is available for three graduate or in-service/certification credits.

continuation from p. 1

cisco bureau of the Associated Press. This experience, he says, taught him to meet deadlines and to respect facts. Later, he moved to New York City and worked as a publicity writer for network television. This job taught him the importance of capturing and holding the reader's interest. He published his first children's book in 1961 and now has well over thirty books to his credit. In 1988 he received the Newbery award as author of the most distinguished contribution to children's literature in the United States in the previous year. School Library Journal,

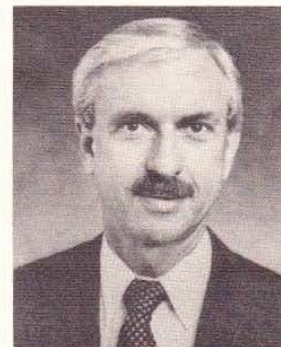
in its starred review of Freedman's Lincoln, declared it to be "an outstanding example of what biography can be. Like Lincoln himself, it stands head and shoulders above its competition." Other books by Freedman include: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Children of the Wild West and Cowboys of the Wild West. Many of these books will be purchasable at the conference, and the author will be available to sign copies.

Featured speaker J. David Cooper has the distinction of having been asked to make presentations in all 50 states. A noted educator, he has coauthored The Classroom Reading Program in the Elementary School and The What and How of Reading Instruction, and is the author of the popular book Improving Reading Comprehension. Cooper's topic for the PAWP conference will be "Meeting All Children's Needs in a Literature-Centered Classroom."

A regular speaker at the summer literacy conferences, John J. Pikulski is a Director of the International Reading Association. Pikulski has been Director of the Reading Center and Department Chairperson at the University of Delaware, a regular contributor to The Reading Teacher, author of numerous articles, and co-author and co-editor of several books on reading instruction. A consultant on reading to the National Assessment on Educational Progress, he is in the vanguard of new ways to understand and evaluate literacy. His tentative topic for PAWP is "Current Issues and Trends in Developing Literacy and Literacy Assessment."



J. David Cooper



John J. Pikulski

WRITING IN THE CONTENT AREAS WORKSHOP AT UPPER DARBY SD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The successful 4-day workshop on Writing in the Content Areas, led by PAWP Assistant Director Martha J. Menz, will be held July 13-16 in the Upper Darby SD. Martha, who holds certifications in Social Studies and English, currently is Supervisor of Staff Development at Upper Darby and directs the district's Center for the Enhancement of Teaching.

The emphasis of the workshop will be on using writing to aid learning in both elementary and secondary classrooms, no matter what the content and level. Presentations will be provided by other PAWP teacher-consultants, and participants may earn two credits, either graduate or in-service.

PUBLISHING IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

Beginning July 14, PAWP will offer a 3-day, 15-hour workshop designed to explore practical publishing techniques used in elementary grades. A wide variety of student samples will be displayed to show the many options available, and participants will be involved in hands-on activities from bulletin boards to book-making. The workshop also focusses on implementing or improving a publishing center in your school, and on publishing student work outside the classroom.

Coordinators for the Publishing workshop are two elementary teacher-consultants from the Rose-Tree Media SD, Holly Clark and Sue Smith. Sue is currently visiting area schools to photograph and learn about their publishing centers, and she will build this new-found knowledge into the summer workshop.

****ATTENTION, PUBLISHING CENTERS****

Does your school have a publishing center? If so, please contact Susan Smith, 215-363-1432. She will be glad to visit your school, take photos of the center layout and operation, and mention it in the Publishing workshop. She will accumulate responses into an information resource for area teachers. If you can't call, write to Sue at 1432 Burgoyne Road, Downingtown, PA 19335 before May 1.

WCU INSTITUTE CONSULTANTS

Four talented teacher-consultants and writers will be visiting PAWP's summer institute at WCU-Exton, promising a varied and exciting learning opportunity for all participants.

Poet Julia Blumenreich, who teaches elementary students in the SD of Philadelphia, is a frequent contributor to PAWP programs. Her work with the poetry course for teachers is highlighted elsewhere in this issue of the Newsletter. Julia will be the resident writer for the institute over a two-day period.

Lela DeTroye directs the Mississippi Valley Writing Project, formerly taught grades 5-6, and now teaches language arts methods at Webster University. She has written about writing and thinking at all levels and has co-directed a summer Whole Language Institute for teachers across the United States. She will be sharing information on both topics when she visits PAWP.

Bob McCann, a PAWP teacher-consultant since 1981, teaches English at East Senior HS in the West Chester Area SD. He has published several articles and poems and has co-directed many of PAWP's summer institutes. Bob's presentation will be on writing and learning.

Mark Ruppel, a PAWP teacher-consultant who has taught in the Youth Writing Project for several years, works during the year at Council Rock High School. His presentation will derive from his special interest in holistic assessment, which he does for his own district as well as Educational Testing Service.

THE PHYSICS PUMPKIN MAN

by Jim Delaney

In PHYSICS class, he's meek and mild.
But, on this hallowed eve,
The gruesome PHYSICS PUMPKIN MAN
Comes out to haunt each child.
He'll VECTOR forth, ACCELERATING
(SPEED's no limit - beware!)
To catch your friends and scare
RELATIONS
Even if they're SQUARE!
But, keep your wits, for, worst of all.
His pumpkin hands detach.
They'll seek and frighten when you see
His SIGNIFICANT DIGITS crawl!

Jim Delaney teaches Physics at Manheim Township High School in Lancaster County.

**Pages 13-17: About programs
for poetry, poems by teachers.**

HOW SHOULD ENGLISH TEACHERS BE EDUCATED?

The Council on English Education (CEE) Commission on English Education and English Studies, created three years ago, has been studying the question of English teacher preparation, specifically, the relationship between English and Education Departments - what it is and what it should be. At the NCTE Conference in Seattle, Commission members reported on their work to date.

A survey of English professors and Education professors at 31 colleges brought 400 responses that revealed the differences in thinking within and between these two groups. English professors with literature specializations, for example, tended to agree that "for the teacher of composition, the most important activities are to provide exemplary texts as models, to prescribe rhetorical virtues, to proscribe rhetorical vices, and to give detailed critiques of students' completed essays."

English professors with specialization in composition and Education professors, on the other hand, tended to agree that "for the teacher of composition, the most important activities are to foster apt prewriting strategies, thoughtful drafting, and clear-sighted revision by guiding and encouraging students' performance of these processes."

Similarly, literature professors tended to agree that "If the curriculum in language does nothing else, it should develop students' knowledge of standard English and their understanding of 'the best word in the best place.'" But Composition and Education professors thought "the main reason for including the study of language in the English curriculum is to teach students the legitimacy and power of their own language in their lives."

When asked "What differences, if any, [they] have observed between [their] students who are teaching majors and those who are non-teaching majors," members of the first group wrote comments including, "teaching majors tend to be under-achieving with low self-esteem." They described teaching majors as "less assertive," "less adventurous," and "more conventional" than the non-teaching majors in their classes. The second group, however, described their teaching majors in much more positive terms.

With a renewed three-year charge from CEE, the Commission is planning its next step: a series of regional colloquia to address issues raised by the survey. Though the actual sites for these meetings have not been selected yet, the people invited will include chairs and members of college English and Education departments, chairs and members of high school English departments, school district English/Language Arts curriculum coordinators, state department of education officials, and recent teaching-certified college graduates.

The Commission will pilot a model for these meetings at the NCTE Conference in Louisville in November, 1992, inviting people from all the identified categories. If YOU are interested in participating in this pilot session - or if

you would like to be involved if a colloquium is planned for our area-contact Andy Fishman at the PAWP office.

PAWP CREATES PENNLIT & NEW SUMMER PROGRAM IN TEACHING LITERATURE

This summer PAWP will inaugurate PENNLIT - the Pennsylvania Literature Project. PENNLIT is a pilot site of the National Literature Project which started in California two years ago and is currently being piloted in several locations around the country.

PENNLIT will offer its first summer Institute beginning on June 24 and running for 3 1/2 weeks until July 17. The Institute has three components, worth a total of six credits. Institute participants will become PENNLIT teacher-consultants with the opportunity to present in the Project's other courses. Two components -the short conference-course (1 credit) and the Teaching Literature course (3 credits) - may be taken separately.

Part I: "Teaching Literature: Readers, Texts, and Teachers" is two-day conference (June 24-25) open to all teachers, K-12, but required of Institute participants. The first day's keynote speaker is Miles Meyers, Executive Director of NCTE. The second day's plenary session presents an expert panel on censorship in the 90's. Concurrent sessions will be interactive and will include topics like whole language/whole literature, developing students' personal response to literature, and authentic assessment of literature learning. A special grant will bring Katie Whitney, a folklorist from the Folklife Center in Philadelphia, to share applications of folklore as literature across the grades. And Diane Sidener-Young, Program Director of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, will discuss grant writing to bring writers-in-residence into classrooms. (Participants in the 1-credit conference-course will attend an additional session, 9AM-1PM, on June 26.)

Part II: Teaching Literature, is the 3-credit course. Meeting from 8:30AM-11:30AM, June 29-July 17, the course will combine theory and practice to focus on the teaching of drama, poetry, and fiction. Participants will read a major text in each genre and consider what it means to be a reader, a student of literature, and a teacher of literature. They will keep reading journals, participate in reading/writing response groups, and experience various pedagogical approaches to literature. Experts in different aspects of literary study will be visiting consultants in the course.

Part III: Teaching Literature, is the 2-credit seminar (for Institute participants only). Meeting from 1-3:30, June 29-July 17, the seminar builds on the morning course, providing the opportunity to apply what is learned directly to participants' own teaching. In the seminar, participants will learn additional classroom strategies, develop units and lesson plans they can use in their classrooms in September. Guest teacher-consultants will also visit in the seminar.

PAWP SUMMER PROGRAMS 1992

Exton Center

WRITING ASSESSMENT

(PWP 511-31) 3 Graduate Credits

- Includes Holistic, Portfolio, Conferring modules
- Pennsylvania assessment goals and methods
- Assessment systems in relation to effective instruction
- Feedback and grading at all grade levels

June 23-July 9, 1992 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

HOLISTIC ASSESSMENT OF WRITING

(PWP 504-31) 1 Graduate Credit

- Learn to assess writing using 3 scoring methods
- Theory and practice of rapid, reliable assessment of large numbers of writing samples
- Prepare for the writing sample of the Pennsylvania Assessment

June 23-25, 1992 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

WORKSHOP IN ENGLISH: PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

(PWP 599-76) 2 Graduate Credits

- Portfolio purposes and content
- Student involvement and choices
- Daily and long-term management

June 29-July 3 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

WORKSHOP IN WRITING ASSESSMENT: CONFERRING AND FEEDBACK

(PWP 517-76) 1 Graduate Credit

- Models for formative classroom assessment
- Teacher and peer conferences
- Checklists
- Commenting on work in progress

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING I

(PWP 502-31) 3 Graduate Credits or 3 In-service Credits

- The Pennsylvania Writing Project "first course"
- Explore practical and imaginative approaches to the teaching and learning of writing
- For teachers in all subjects and at all grade levels
- Offered successfully over 100 times: designed to fit the PA Framework (PCR2)

June 22-July 10, 1992 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

ADMINISTERING WRITING PROGRAMS

(PWP 515-75) 1 Graduate Credit or non-credit

- Identify critical components of a successful program
- Program management, organization, evaluation
- Practical plans and ideas to improve programs
- Needed administrative skills and resources
- How to link writing process, critical thinking, writing across the curriculum, whole language, and PCR2

July 14-16, 1992 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

WORKSHOP IN ENGLISH: POETRY

(PWP 599-78) 2 Graduate Credits

- Explore methods of teaching diverse kinds of poetry to students of all ages
- Practical suggestions on working with poetic form, imagery and figurative language
- Activities for pre-writing, drafting, responding, revision, editing, publishing, and evaluating poetry

July 20-31, 1992 8:30 - 11:30 AM

TEACHING LITERATURE CONFERENCE

(PWP 599-31) Graduate credit option includes June 26 seminar
-a two-day conference on teaching literature, grades K-12
-keynote speaker: Miles Meyers, Executive Director, NCTE
-concurrent sessions topics including whole language/whole literature, developing students' personal responses to literature, authentic assessment, folklore, censorship
June 24-25, 1992 9 AM - 4:30 PM (June 26, 9 AM - noon)

TEACHING LITERATURE

(PWP 599-32) 3 Graduate Credits
-focus on the teaching of poetry, drama, and fiction, classic and modern
-considers the experience of reading, classroom approaches to texts, curriculum development, and lesson plan design
-includes theory from the practitioner's perspective
-guest expert presentations
June 29-July 17, 1992 8:30 - 11:30 AM

TEACHING LITERATURE INSTITUTE

(PWP 599-31,32,33) 6 Graduate Credits
-includes the Literature Conference and the Literature Course
-afternoon workshops for development of literature units and lesson plans
-visits by teacher-consultants
-opportunity to become a teacher-consultant

WORKSHOP IN ENGLISH: PUBLISHING

(PWP 599-77) 1 Graduate Credit
-Practical publishing techniques for the elementary classroom
-Hands-on activities from bulletin boards to book-making
-Implementing or improving a publishing center in your school
-Publishing student work outside the classroom
July 14-July 16, 1992 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

WORKSHOP IN ENGLISH: A WEEK OF WHOLE LANGUAGE

(PWP 599-79) 3 Graduate Credits
-A week of Whole Language addresses issues of teaching writing and reading
-Practicing teachers review ways to implement whole language instruction
-Includes Literacy Conference August 12-13
August 10-14, 1992 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

WHOLE LANGUAGE/LITERACY CONFERENCE FOR K-8 TEACHERS

A program developed in conjunction with the Houghton Mifflin Co.
Graduate credit option available (PWP 501-75)
-Lectures by well-known educators followed by hands-on sessions for teachers and supervisors
-Topics include: fitting whole language into your curriculum, practical suggestions for the whole language classroom, relations with Pennsylvania Framework (PCRP2), ways to present literature, writing and skills in a whole language framework
-Includes continental breakfast each day at 8:00 am, luncheons, banquets.
-Must register by July 24, 1992
August 12-13, 1992 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Program located at Center for Advancement of Teaching, Upper Darby

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

(PWP 505-75 and 76) 2 Graduate Credits or 2 in-service credits
-Using writing to teach content
-Differences between writing to learn and to improve writing
-Effective practices K-12
July 13-16, 1992 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING PROJECT
REGISTRATION FORM

Return to: WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE BURSAR
E.O. BULL CENTER, RM 114
WEST CHESTER, PA 19383

PROGRAM/COURSE NAME _____ Course number: PWP _____ - _____ Credit type _____
PROGRAM/COURSE NAME _____ Course number: PWP _____ - _____ Credit type _____
PROGRAM/COURSE NAME _____ Course number: PWP _____ - _____ Credit type _____

Credit types: G graduate credit I in-service credit N non-credit

PERSONAL INFORMATION: (shaded data required of graduate registrants only)

Name: _____ Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____
Your School District: _____ Building: _____
Grade(s) levels presently taught: _____ Job Title: _____
Present Certification Status: L1 level 1 ___ L2 temporary ___ TE temporary ___ PE permanent ___
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Birthdate: _____ Social Security # _____ Sex: Male _____ Female _____
Have you taken a WCU course in the last 2 years? _____
Residence county: _____ Citizenship country: _____
Check one: Black/non hispanic ___ Hispanic ___
Asian/Pacific Islander ___ White/non-hispanic ___
Bachelor's Degree from: _____ Year Awarded: _____

PAYMENT: TOTAL AMOUNT YOU ARE REMITTING (see fee schedule): \$ _____

Payment types:

A. VISA ___ Mastercard ___ Card # _____ Expiration date: ___/___

Cardholder name: _____ Cardholder Signature: _____

B. Check or money order #: _____ Check Amount: _____
(Make sure that your phone number and social security number are on the check or money order.)

C. Third party. Note: Payment must be made in full unless your registration is sponsored by a third party.

(3rd party name) _____ (contract or P.O.#)

(address) _____ (phone of third party)

(amount of third party billing)

FEE SCHEDULE (subject to change without notice)

REGULAR SESSION PROGRAMS

TUITION/FEES

Strategies for Teaching Writing I	PWP 502-31	June 22-July 10	\$438 3 cred.	\$240 3 in-service cred	_____
Holistic Assessment	PWP 504-31	June 23-June 25	\$146 1 cred.	n/a	_____
Writing Assessment	PWP 511-31	June 23-July 9	\$438 3 cred.	n/a	_____
Wkshp in Wrtg Assess: Conferring	PWP 517-76	July 7-July 9	\$146 1 cred.	n/a	_____
Wkshp: Portfolio Assessment	PWP 599-76	June 29-July 3	\$292 2 cred.	n/a	_____
Wkshp: Literature Conference	PWP 599-31	June 24-June 26	\$186 1 cred.	\$75 non-credit	_____
Wkshp: Teaching Literature	PWP 599-32	June 29-July 17	\$438 3 cred.	n/a	_____
Wkshp: Literature Institute	PWP 599-31,32,33	June 29-July 17	\$916 6 cred.	n/a	_____
Administering Writing Programs	PWP 515-75	July 14-July 16	\$188 1 cred.	\$120 non-credit	_____
Wkshp: Publishing	PWP 599-77	July 14-July 16	\$161 1 cred.	n/a	_____
Wkshp: Teaching Poetry	PWP 599-78	July 20-July 31	\$292 2 cred.	n/a	_____
Writing Across Curric (Upper Darby)	PWP 505-75,76	July 13-July 16	\$292 2 cred.	\$160 2 in-service cred	_____

POST SESSION PROGRAMS

Literacy Conference	PWP 501-75	Aug. 12-Aug.13	\$201 1 cred.	\$75 non-credit	_____
Wkshp: Week of Whole Language	PWP 599-79	Aug. 10-Aug. 14	\$493 3 cred.	n/a	_____

ADDITIONAL FEES for Graduate
Credit participants only:

First-time graduate student at WCU, add \$25
Part-time graduate student fee, add \$10 per session
Out-of-State resident, add \$40 per credit

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY _____

TO REGISTER for Inservice and Graduate Credit, complete both sides of this page and mail with your payment to Office of the Bursar - PAWP, Bull Center, Room 114, West Chester, PA 19383

DEADLINE: Register by June 8, 1992 to avoid late fee of \$25. Register by July 24 for the Literacy Conference or Week of Whole Language.

CONFIRMATION: Timely registration will be confirmed by mail.

RESIDENCE RATES in West Chester University dormitories are \$14.90 a day for single occupancy and \$10.65 for double occupancy. Apply directly to University College, E.O. Bull Center, WCU, West Chester, PA 19383 before May 15, 1992. Identify yourself as a participant in a PAWP program.

LOCATIONS and PARKING: All courses are at Exton Center unless otherwise specified. Exton Center programs are located at the University's facility at the West Whiteland Corporate Center in Exton, 10 minutes from main campus. Upper Darby School District programs are offered in the Center for the Advancement of Teaching. Ample parking is available at all locations. We will send a map when we acknowledge your registration.

TRANSCRIPTS: Grade reports are mailed to participants in mid August for Regular Session and in early September for Post Session. Request for official transcripts must be made in writing and including Social Security number and a \$3 check to the Office of Registrar, E.O. Bull Center, WCU, West Chester, PA 19383.

QUESTIONS: Call the PAWP office at (215) 436-2297.

WRITING OPPORTUNITY

The editors of the *The Teacher's Journal* invite you to write "essays, informal research, poetry, journal entries, transcribed conversations--your personal reflections on teaching."

According to *Teacher Magazine*, "few periodicals emphasize teachers' writing" as *The Teacher's Journal* does by trying to link teachers with a "thoughtful community of researchers and fellow educators." The editors say they are interested in "more than what works." They are also interested in the "people behind the plans, in their thoughts on what works and why, in writing that focuses on 'the craft of teaching.'"

Recent topics have included why teachers teach, the students, teaching and writing, educational reform and its effect on practice, reflections on Tracy Kidder's *Among Schoolchildren*.

Supporting the writing process, "each submission is reviewed by every member of the editorial board, the majority of whom are teachers. When a piece is accepted, an editor is assigned to share the board's suggestions with the writer, who is then free to develop the piece or not."

Contact the managing editor at 1-401-863-3552 about possible submissions. Subscribe for \$12 a year (two issues) by writing to *The Teacher's Journal*, Box 1969, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912.

What ever happened to...?

PAWP PROGRAMS ON CREATIVE WRITING: TEACHERS AS POETS, TEACHING POETRY, TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING

Even before the National Endowment for the Arts funded PAWP in 1987-88 for a project in teaching creative writing, we have tried to bring writers together with teachers for mutual advantage. Continuing this emphasis, in recent summers we have offered a very successful 15-hour workshop on teaching poetry, the last version under the leadership of teacher-poet Julia Blumenreich.

Last year, we were approached by Pat Carney-Dalton (1988 PAWP fellow) with an idea for a 30-hour course on teachers as poets. The course goals would be (1) to encourage teachers to see the poet within themselves, (2) to instill in teachers the confidence to teach poetry, and (3) to assist teachers in creating a classroom climate fostering freedom to explore and discover. The course would be coordinated by a teacher-consultant and would bring in visiting poets as presenters. This spring Pat offered Teachers as Poets for 14 teachers in Quakertown, her home district, with the aid of Julia and other poets (Len Roberts, J. C. Todd, Judith Baldwin Toy, and Patricia Goodrich).

The course succeeded admirably in meeting its goals.

As guided by Pat and the presenters, participants labored to produce many poems and published a book celebrating their achievement. They wrote:

-the course encouraged me to look at the poet within myself

-each poet was inspirational in her own way

-what a great idea (to include poets in this course)

-to a person, every teacher began to see herself as a poet

-listening and responding to each other's poems and viewing each individual through her poems was the highlight of this course

-this has been one of the most beneficial courses I've taken



Jane Todd Cooper (J.C. Todd) shows her rough draft

Although the emphasis was on teachers writing, the pedagogy component was not neglected:

-we were given many approaches to teaching poetry that could be adapted to various grade levels

-I have been taking ideas back to the classroom

-my students have been exposed to poetry right along with me as I learned through this course

Each participant tried a classroom lesson for teaching poetry, and all of these lessons (K-8) were duplicated for each other.

Overwhelmingly, the participants felt that they needed more time: to write, to share their draft poems, to discuss classroom methods of teaching poetry. They and Pat concurred that the course should be 45 hours for three credits.

The upshot of all this work is that two courses are being offered in the coming summer on the same theme: teachers as poets. Julia's Exton version is being expanded to two credits, and Pat's (this time in Doylestown) to three, and both coordinators are collaborating so that the programs will be parallel. Fuller information about each course will appear elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, along with a registration form.

Some poems by the participants follow.

MEMORY

by Nancy McElwee

Shuffling along
Leaves crunching underfoot
Takes me back to childhood days

Making leaf houses
Imagining a future home
The rooms
The doors
The people

What a simple time
It was
Rearranging our lives
With a rake

NEUROSIS

by Susan Harrington

We picked the stones
out of
the
perfect
blue and white
bowl.

Worry stones, she called them.
We rolled them around in our palms,
caressing different sizes and shapes,
worried to perfection.

I turned them over and over again,
feeling nature's power as I held them.
I tried to choose a worry stone,
the perfect one to fit my palm.
One marvelous stone, smooth,
cool as glass, seemed to me
an oval talisman.
I had to have it.

But it made me uncomfortable.
I pictured my hand rubbing the stone
over and over again.
I couldn't put it down.
I couldn't let it go.
It rolled itself around in my hand.
It stuck to my sweaty palm
in a sickening rhythm, gaining momentum.
I passed it from right to clumsy left,
and I became ambidextrous.
My muscles ached, my eyes blurred,
and I tried to throw it to the floor.
It would not leave me, but continued to spin.

I put
the stone
back
into
the perfect
blue and white
bowl.

WRITERS BLOCK

by Lynn Dorfman

My mind stretches before me
Blank and barren, a Sahara Desert
My thoughts run aimlessly
Grains of sand before the wind.

My pen rides a stranger in my hand
cloaked and veiled, searching for oases
Rich in palms and shimmering waters.

Trembling I bend down
To quench my unrelenting thirst
My parched lips touch the cooling waters
When suddenly the waters shrink away.

The words
A mirage
All is lost
But the emptiness.

GROWTH

by Christine Taylor Ferrara

Starting out
a loved child
secure in adoration.

Branching out
a single woman
finding her direction.

Reaching out
a married woman
expecting love's devotion.

Extending out
a single woman
faced with separation.

Back and forth
back and forth
repetitive motion.

Smooth
circular stone,
end this repetition,
suspend my apprehension.
Focus on the inner woman,
continuous and whole,
that I now need
to be.

MEMOIRS OF A FELLOW PIANO STUDENT

by Stephanie M. Campbell

The melody of that Schubert waltz
silently sings to me,
for I, too, played
that simple piece
and others
with the enthusiasm of the composers
and the technique of a novice.

My favorite piece,
"The Minute Waltz",
should have been called
"The Three Minute Waltz".
I often wondered:
Could Chopin race his nimble fingers
up and down the ivory keys to meet that sixty second
deadline?

Twenty-five years later-
my dusty piano music
rests quietly on the shelf.
I decide to awaken it
to experience again
a favorite childhood pastime.

Chopin's musical genius is now
"The Five Minute Waltz".
Instead of imitating
his delicate ornamentations
with consummate mastery,
my awkward fingers
stumble up and down the keys
like a retired marathon runner
trying to run his six-minute mile
one last time.

The sonorities drawn from the piano
by this out-of-shape player
lack the musical virtuoso of Chopin.
But, like Chopin's music,
what I have lives on:
memories of past pleasures,
the joy of accomplishment,
a love of music,
experience of life's beauty.

COALDIRT

by Karen Nina Klingerman

One great-grandfather--Molnar
Two grandfathers--Kish, Magnani
Uncles and cousins--Cecco, Serafini, Notarl, Ercolani,
Millus
and Dad--Klingerman
breakfasted on raw eggs
and black coffee
before going down the slope

Days in darkness
Deprived
of sunrise and sunset
driving gangways
and robbing the mine

Black lung
Asthma
Emphysema
Getting the shaft
and being robbed

in response to "Anthracite History" by Craig Czury

A BRYN MAWR STORY

by Marion Klaus

Pulsing,
the rarified mist,
ego engorged,
becoming monstrous.

Time for me to pull back,
I told her.
I need breathing space,
reality testing.

Not me,
she said.
Stimulation.
Total involvement.
That's for me.

And she opened herself
to the night.

The year slipped away
And so did she.
Under the wheels
of a train.

THE SYMPHONY OF HOUSTON STREET

by Susan Field

Sunday
The Lower East Side
Tradition
A black and white negative
In motion.

Black bears of men
Hair ropes twisting from skull caps
The chocolate-brown gazes
of children.
Serious
Purposeful Energy.

Bleached chickens hanging
Mid-air seemingly
Imprinted with
Black Hebrew letters.
Falafel-colored sidewalks.

Harsh guttural arguments,
Incessant horns, brazen
Boom boxes
Irratic rhythm, a
Shopper's Shuffle.

Invitations issued by
Garlicky barreled submarines,
Sizzling blintzes and
The ever-present
Perfume
Of Chicken Fat.

A photograph.
Time frozen
Tradition
Sunday
The Lower East Side.



Judith Baldwin Toy helps teachers get ideas for poems.

HOUSE OF SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

by Pat Carney-Dalton

I tell my children of the house,
the House of Sunday Afternoons.
A Philadelphia brick with a porch that stretched
ten houses, creating a community with nightly porch
chats.

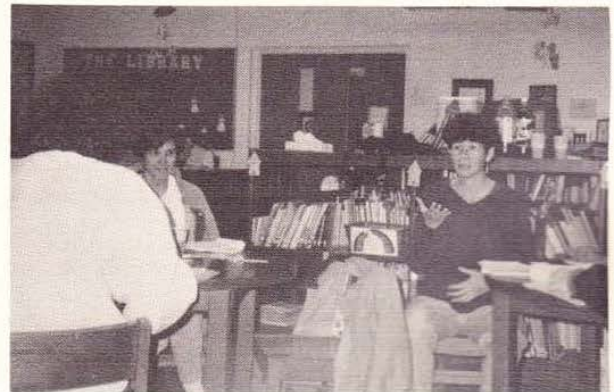
I tell them of the vestibule
with stained glass windows, a Victorian
living room with two seating areas, a dining room
so big that the eight children fit around the table.

I tell them of the two stories
of solid sturdiness. A playground more
wonderful than Oz, where cousins played hide
and go-seek and tag, without disturbing the adults.

I tell them of my grandfather,
sitting at the table reading the *Bulletin*
and *Life Magazine*, as he listened to John Philip Sousa
and talked politics to everyone, even to me the seven year
old.

I tell them of my grandmother,
standing in the range in the cooking shed
preparing baked shad, and setting up snacks of Ritz
crackers
cream cheese, and her fizzle drink of ginger-ale and milk.

I point to their great-grandmother's house.
As hostile eyes penetrate our moving car, a bottle
comes crashing towards us and we see the House of
Sunday Afternoons standing with its neighbors, gutted
and abandoned.



Stressing line breaks, Julia Blumemreich suggests participants look at the handout.

UPTOWN
by Anne Landis

Findings leavings uptown on the West Side
Tuesday's trash lines graffiti walls
and walks on Columbus Avenue bee bop bee bop
bookstall bargains honking yellow cabs
inhale starts and stops
subway steam smells like barn soaked straw
coughs between grey-brown garbage bags
chokes musty treasures stuffed in steely wire cages
rolls and rolls over bile streaked sidewalk cracks
whining siren trail urine winding dribbles
in sidewalk cracks

Hunger hangs hovers gnaws stale human paws
between the cracks up and down handicapped curbs
rolling trashed dream treats click clack
bottled delights middle class tourist frights
to walk around step over tiptoe past
in wide circle steps with horrified white whispers
feeling fine seeing so wrong for so long

Uptown in the West Side rich diner's dinners
laugh on pink flowered plates
singing sidewalks creep uptown in plate glass windows
Broadway and sixty-eighth near Lincoln Center Plaza
dance in circles drink famous fountain arias
open great glass doors

Enter the great hall like Scarlet O'Hara
glide up Lincoln Center stairs richly red
thickly plush sinking in pleasure
polished nails slither into seats
silk hands adjust mink collars cashmere cuffs clap
high class coughs crack silent yawns

Pavarotti center stage velvet voice painting
portraits like Chagall's dreaming muses
dripping blues greens and golds from
million dollar crystals hung in fourteen karat sky

Outside on the West Side ten dollar lives
linger in flat borrowed doorways
homeless hands hold rat crusts sour stomachs retch
stuck uptown mumbling maimed dreams
stumbling white moths with no wings
wonder what's for dinner

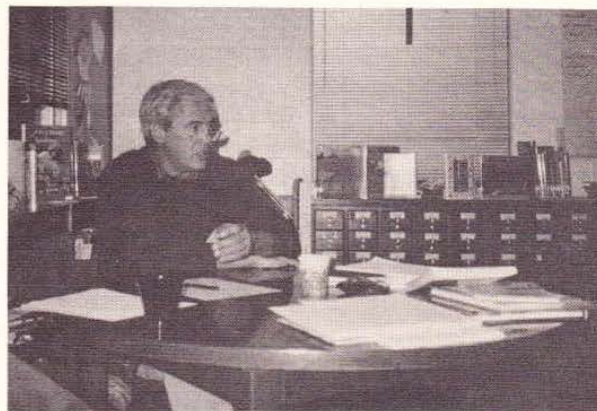
PAISANO NIGHT
by Joe Tortorelli

I loved the air outside
a PA liquor store
on a Saturday night
much better than school.

A block or two from home,
away from my father,
I waited for the man
who wore unpolished shoes
to exit with bottles

of cheap blood red chianti
for all the corner boys
to chugalug in street dark
alleys before the dance.

Pat Carney-Dalton, Lynn Dorfman, Susan Field, Karen Nina Klingerman, Nancy McElwee, and Joe Tortorelli are all PAWP Fellows. Pat is a reading specialist with the Quakertown Area School District. Lynn teaches 3rd grade and does staff development writing for the Upper Moreland School District. Susan and Karen teach in elementary and middle schools in Bensalem Township. Nancy, a kindergarten teacher in the Central Bucks School District, is PAWP liaison for Whole Language. Joe, who has been in many PAWP courses, now teaches in West Deptford, NJ.



Poet Len Roberts shows images and ideas. Len will be poet in-residence at the BLAST IU in the 1992 Summer Institute.

A GROUP REVIEW OF CREATING WRITERS:
LINKING ASSESSMENT AND WRITING
INSTRUCTION (Longman, 1990)

By participants in the Writing Assessment course held in the Upper Moreland School District, Fall 1991.

Chapter 1. The authors, former English teacher Vicki Spandel and evaluation/measurement specialist Richard J. Stiggins, have two major goals in this book: to encourage high-quality writing assessment and to link writing assessment with writing instruction. Spandel served as a coordinator of the Wisconsin Department of Education's Writing Sample Assessment and in that capacity reviewed current practices in collecting and rating school writing. Stiggins works with the Northwest Evaluation Association on improving teachers' "assessment literacy."

The authors note that valid and reliable writing assessment methods derived from large-scale direct assessments and include holistic, analytic, and primary trait scoring. Objectivity in writing assessment is created by training and practice to increase rater reliability. Spandel and Stiggins suggest making assessment part of the writing process by proposing specific well-defined criteria for writing, providing writers and teachers with insight about a piece, and revealing the piece's strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 2 offers practice training in doing holistic readings on a five-point scale. Then the chapter teaches a 6-trait analytic scale with five scoring levels and, proceeding two traits at a time, provides practice in scoring on all those traits. It's very clear from the beginning of the chapter that holistic assessment is not the favored scoring method, and the choice of the generally discredited 5-point scale helps the authors to corroborate their sense that it is lacking. They are proponents of analytic assessment using a scale based closely on Paul Diederich's (from his 1974 book, Measuring Growth in English, now unfortunately out of print). And they do a good job in teaching it by calling on readers to judge first for two traits, then four, and lastly all six.

Chapter 3. Holistic and analytical assessment may be compared for advantages and pitfalls in order to decide which method to use. With holistic assessment the advantages are that at the district level it's cheaper than other methods, it looks at the whole piece of writing, and readers gain confidence easily. Potential pitfalls in holistic assessment are that the result may be less useful than hoped for, biases may be simple to mask, and the scores do not reflect specific strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, analytical assessment

reflects relative strengths and weaknesses, teachers learn how to analyze writing for use in their classroom, and the scoring guide forces one to focus on what is valued in a piece of writing. However, the pitfalls of analytical assessment are that it may be expensive if not well managed, the criteria and traits evaluated must be well defined, and beginning readers may become frustrated with the complexity of the scoring.

In both cases, readers must be aware of biases because of appearance, length, fatigue, and personality clash. The final choice should depend upon the purpose of the assessment: holistic assessment will identify students having problems and give an overall view of how students are writing, but analytical assessment will give diagnostic information about specific strengths and weaknesses for individuals or groups and support for classroom instruction. (Linda Segal)

Chapter 4. The purpose of this chapter is to show how and where assessment can fit into the writing process by focusing on teacher comments, peer review, revision, and conferencing.

Teachers should make assessment an integral part of the writing process, teach the students to evaluate their own work, and make sure assessment results serve a range of purposes: diagnostic, grouping for instruction, evaluating students' performance.

The chapter discusses intervention that works, intervention is moving in at just the right moment with just the right kind of support. Four interventional positive comments, peer review, conferencing, and revision are defined with a scenario presented to explain each, along with suggestions to incorporate the intervention into classroom plans. The authors' note that writers should take control of their own work and should create their own versions of the writing process. (Pat Acciavatti)

Chapter 5. This chapter opens with a verbal exchange between a teacher and a student disagreeing over a grade on a writing assignment, to Spandel and Stiggins, the student and the teacher should be clear as to the criteria upon which the writing material is to be graded. They point out, "When you grade a paper, you sign its death warrant, for the student will not review it again". Students generally just look at the grade and file the paper away, not really checking their mistakes, unless they oppose the grade.

Grading is just one of many forms of feedback. Grades are simply one means of communication with parents, students, guidance counselors, etc. There is always the question if a grade should involve the level of effort, attitude, and/or ability of the student. The authors feel that there is only one acceptable basis for determining student grades in writing: "careful, systematic analysis of student's actual achievement as measured against high-quality, agreed upon criteria". Students and teachers can and should work together to

determine which papers are to be evaluated.

A sample tally sheet is presented as something concrete to show parents about grading and grading standard. The standards refer to ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency and conventions.

Assessment teaches a student to read with a critical eye, learning to view objectively what is written. Grading is here to stay and can be linked to the various scales used within each school district. The tally sheet can be the instrument to evaluate when adjusted to the school's system. The importance of fair assessment is stressed since the authors feel that evaluation must always take place if there is an atmosphere of learning and if learning is truly taking place. (Freda Schopfer)

Chapter 6. Spandel and Stiggins say "If you want to be a writing teacher, you must love it enough to make time for it." Modeling writing and being a writer offer students the opportunity to see a writer at work. Writing with students also sends the message that if teachers love writing, as they say they do, they make time for it. Journals, freewriting, and impromptu writing on the blackboard are just some of the ways teachers can share writing. No writing teacher can be expected to be consistently brilliant, but there's value in a writing failure. Teachers will know which of those assigned writing pieces were doomed to fail from the start and why some writing turns out differently from what was originally expected. Humbling as it may be at times, writing with kids helps teachers stay in touch with the

process, as well as become more sensitive to evaluation. Besides, being writing teachers rather than teachers of writing helps teachers from taking themselves too seriously. (Mary O'Gorman)

Chapter 7. "Development of Criteria" shows the classroom teacher how to teach students to become analytic scorers. The outcome is that not only will students determine the criteria by which their own papers will be marked, but they will also be using analytic scoring to determine the quality of the literature they read as well.

Five steps: (1) Brainstorm on board what students feel makes for good writing. (2) Hand out writing (4-6 samples on same topic and on same grade level) to rank and analyze. (3) Break into groups to compare notes and possibly re-rank. (4) Put lists on blackboard and narrow to 5 or 6 traits. (5) Assign one trait to each group and have them identify the weaknesses and strengths from the samples that illustrate that trait. (Phyllis Bray)

Chapter 8, "Teachers with Teachers," advocates a teachers' writing/discussion group or forum to write, read, score papers, and talk about students' writing and other literature. What gets shared: teachers' own writing, their students' writing, exchange papers to be scored anonymously (between 2 schools), their research or others' research, mini-lessons, classroom strategies. The chapter also includes advice for conducting a building-level writing assessment using analytic scoring, and then provides twelve admittedly noble parting suggestions for do's and don'ts.

PAWP CALENDAR, 1991-92

May 13	PAWP Institute dinner meeting	WCU
May 17-19	NWP Regional Retreat	Allenbury, PA
May 27	Coordinator's Meeting	WCU
June 22	PAWP Summer programs begin Bucks, BLAST institutes begin	WCU-Exton
June 29	Summer Institute begins	WCU-Exton

Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter
Published quarterly
by the Pennsylvania Writing Project
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

Editor: Vicki Steinberg
Director: Robert H. Weiss
Co-Director: Jolene Borgese Associate Director: Andrea Fishman
Assistant Director: Martha J. Menz Program Coordinator: Mariann Shirk
Secretary and typesetter: Kathleen O'Brien

Sponsors:

West Chester University Bucks County Intermediate Unit Chester County Intermediate Unit
Delaware County Intermediate Unit Montgomery County Intermediate Unit
Pennsylvania Department of Education

The purpose of the Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter is to link together all teachers of writing in our geographical area of southeastern Pennsylvania. The Newsletter features, but is not limited to, articles that deal with writing and the teaching of writing. We seek manuscripts from all teachers of writing at all grade levels and in all subject areas, and from anyone else interested in writing. All articles and submissions will be considered for publication. Comments, questions, etc. are also welcomed. Please send all communication to Vicki Steinberg, Editor, Pennsylvania Writing Project Newsletter, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383.

The Pennsylvania Writing Project (PAWP) is an affiliate of the National Writing Project and a training site for the nationally validated New Jersey Writing Project. PAWP was created by the sponsors under grants from the William Penn Foundation and the University of California at Berkeley, with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Pennsylvania Writing Project
201 Carter Drive, Room 105
West Chester University
West Chester, PA 19383

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED