1998 Summer Youth Programs a Success

The PAWLP Summer Youth Programs were a huge success. With over 1,350 children attending, the program enjoyed its highest enrollment ever. In addition to the 12 programs held at West Chester University, programs were offered at 13 host school districts throughout the five-county area. Sponsoring school districts include Rose Tree Media, Interboro, Coatesville, Kennett Consolidated, Central Bucks, Neshaminy, Centennial, Hatboro-Horsham, Upper Moreland, Methacton, Upper Dublin, Kutztown, and Twin Valley. "The goal of the program is to encourage children who already have a love for writing and add to enhance their skills in an educational and enjoyable environment," said Bernadette Cant, Youth Programs Director.

Fall Festivals are currently being planned to honor the award winners from each class whose work is featured in our anthology, "Writing Takes You Everywhere." There will also be an appearance by a noted children's author at each Festival.

Both parents and students have positive things to say about the program:

"I have never before seen my son given such an imaginative task to perform. Then, he took the challenge and ran with it."
- Parent

"My child absolutely enjoyed the program. She couldn't stop talking about it."
- Parent

Peter Catalanotto Inspires Writing Institute Participants

On July 6, 1998, the West Chester and Bucks County Writing Institutes met at the West Chester University site to hear noted children's author and illustrator, Peter Catalanotto.

"Peter connected art and writing in unique and personal ways easily transferred to me and, hopefully, my students," said Maureen Noonan, an Institute Fellow who attended the presentation.

Catalanotto's relaxed and comfortable approach included reflections on his own writing process with a tribute to Miss Dunn, one of his elementary school teachers, who recognized that all of us have individual learning and writing styles. For Peter, Miss Dunn realized that drawing was his "prewriting" technique.

Peter also discussed his use of story boarding and demonstrated how this strategy can be used in the classroom to enable writers to plan their stories in a visual and easily accessible way.

Peter is a natural teacher, generous with his time and sensitive to the needs of his audience. His presentation offered tips for the writer in all of us:

1. Begin with your strength.
2. Weigh your words.
3. Focus on an audience of one person to whom you will tell your story.
4. If you're stuck, try writing a letter to someone you know describing your problem.
5. Don't forget your story! Be as wild, wacky, and creative as you want, but don't forget your focus.

"I liked that you wrote a lot and did nothing but write. I learned that verbs are the heart of writing."
- Jessica Brown, grade 5

"I thought it would be a drag but it turned out real cool."
- Billy Lewandowski, grade 5

All Youth Program teachers are Fellows of the National Writing and/or Literature Project. For a Youth site coordinator's point of view, see page 6. For more information about hosting a Youth site in your district or becoming a Fellow of the National Writing or Literature Project, please contact the Project office at (610) 436-2202.

Peter Catalanotto is a great role model for teachers and students.

- LYNN DORFMAN AND DIANE DOUGHERTY, WCU WRITING INSTITUTE CO-DIRECTORS
From the Director

This Newsletter marks the end of my first year as Project director. It has been a long, sometimes frustrating, sometimes overwhelming, but always interesting year.

In this year we became the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project. We established graduate partnerships with three regional colleges and universities. We created “Friends of PAWLP,” a fund for tax-deductible contributions to support all aspects of Project work, including Youth Programs.

We developed and successfully ran one new three-credit course - Teaching Tolerance: Texts and Techniques. We created two new one-credit courses - Preparing for the PSSA Writing Assessment and Preparing for the PSSA Reading Assessment - that will run for the first time in the fall. (See page 5). And we hired an Assistant Director for Youth Programs and Fund Raising. (See page 5).

In numerical terms, it has been a healthy year as well. PAWLP Days on the Holocaust and a Literacy Fair drew over 100 teachers each. Sixteen courses ran in nine school districts, two Intermediate Units, and at WCU with over 150 teacher-participants.

The Project provided 14 in-service programs on topics ranging from teaching revision to portfolio assessment to multicultural literature. And as the front page of this Newsletter reports, our summer Institutes, one- and three-credit courses, and Youth Program have all exceeded enrollment expectations.

Why was 1997-98 such a good year for the Project? Because of the talented, dedicated teacher-consultants who make PAWLP what it is. And that is the point of this column: to name and thank the people without whom PAWLP would not be the wonderful, successful Project that it is. These people include:

- Co-directors - Lynne Dorfman, Judy Jester, and Vicki Steinberg
- Assistant directors - Patty Koller (for Literature) and Steve Heffner (for Technology)
- Youth Programs director - Bernadette Cant
- Lead Institute director - Diane Dougherty
- Bucks Institute co-directors Shari Stem and Hilde McGeehan
- PAWLP Day coordinator - Sue Smith
- Additional course coordinators - Tony Rotondo, Jamie Fiernmonte, Terri Kelly, Linda Baer, and Kris Garis
- Youth site coordinators - Karen Venuto, Carol Townsend, Connie McClellan, Phyllis Maier, Cheryl Weisenfeld, Chris Coyne, Sylvia Pennypacker, Brenda Hurley, Richard LaCrotte, Erika Allen, Dina Cassidy, Diane Barrie, Jamie Fiernmonte, Jerry Hartle, and Jean McCarney.

These are the people who make PAWLP possible. To all of them I say thank you - for this year of hard work, dedication, and unending patience with your new director. I look forward to working with you in 1998-99 to make the Project even stronger.

Advanced Institute: Writing, Reading, and Research for PAWLP Fellows (3 graduate credits)

An opportunity for Writing and Literature Project Fellows to extend their Institute experience as a community of learners. Participants determine the kinds of writing, reading, and/or research they want to pursue.

Possibilities include: fiction, poetry, and memoir writing; professional writing for publication; exploring multicultural, Young Adult, or children's literature; reading classic or popular fiction or nonfiction; reviewing current professional literature; planning and implementing research.

What: Ten sessions, September - May
When: Begins Tuesday, Sept. 22, 4-7 p.m.
Where: At the PAWLP office
Coordinator: Andy Fishman

I wish I had space enough to name the 66 teachers in our Youth Program and the 17 who coordinate our one-credit teachers’ courses. Their work is intense, intensive, and crucial to the success of the Project. PAWLP could not exist without them either! I want to thank, too, Dr. Dave Buchanan, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Madeleine Adler, President of West Chester University. These two people have shown unwavering faith in this novice director, and have backed up that faith with real help and advice. I’ve worked for many administrators in my career, but never any with the mentoring skills and integrity of these two individuals. Both PAWLP and WCU are fortunate to have them.

I can’t conclude this column without thanking Marianne Shirk, Ann Mascherino, and Toni Kershaw, who have worked above and beyond the call of duty - and their job descriptions - to keep our shorthanded, overburdened office running, day in and day out all year long. They’ve eased my transition to director in so many ways. I can’t thank them enough for their loyalty and dedication to the Project and to me.

These are the people who make PAWLP possible. To all of them I say thank you - for this year of hard work, dedication, and unending patience with your new director. I look forward to working with you in 1998-99 to make the Project even stronger.

CORPORATE CORNER

The following corporations made generous donations to the Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Project. It is with deepest appreciation that we recognize their valuable support.

Borders Books & Music, Wilmington, DE
Encore Books, Exton, PA
First National Bank of West Chester, PA
Solvay Pharmaceutical Company, Marietta, GA
State Farm Insurance Company, Concordville, PA
I’ve mastered my “Domain” (and other Internet terms, too)

Remember the good old days when Billy didn’t have his home work because his cat ate it? Those days are gone. These days, it’s likely that Billy still won’t have his homework, but his excuse will probably go more like this: “Sorry I don’t have my report today, but last night I was surfing the web for data when I Hit a broken pipe and my server logged me off. I tried to reconnect, but couldn’t establish a network socket. Later, I got the message that the URL I requested didn’t have a DNS entry—and I’m sure it does because the search engine said it does. Anyhow, I finally did another metasearch, but the first site I came to crashed my PPP and I had to delete and reinstall that. Last week I requested information from a LISTSERV, but I got a bounce from the Majordomo that said something about a mailer-daemon. Finally, I found everything I needed, but my modem’s not a 56K or anything, and before the download finished Mom came in my room and told me I had to get to bed, and that’s why I don’t have my report.” One-sided conversations like this one often make me feel like I’m teaching an ESL class for early adolescent techno-weenies.

While many of us teachers are content to use AOL and e-mail, our students are zipping around a world-wide computer network so vast no one even knows how many computers are connected to it. But, unless we comprehend the language of the on-line crowd—the “netizens”—it’s likely that we’ll sometimes feel that we’ve been unwittingly beamed from our classrooms to the interrogation room of some Imperial Death Star in a galaxy far, far away.

The Internet has become one of the most prolific sources of new words and phrases in English. In fact, the newest edition of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary will add over 50 Internet-inspired words and phrases. Just as the English couldn’t defend their language from French influence in 1066, it’s unlikely that we’re going to fight off the millions of “netizens” who continue to spawn new and sometimes clever terms. As the old adage goes, “since I can’t beat them,” here are five of my favorite Internet-spawned terms:

**URL** — No, not “Duke of...” Sorry, phonics phonatics, but this acronym is usually spoken by spelling it out loud. URLs are those strange looking web site addresses you see on billboards, in magazines, and on TV. You know the ones. They start with http:// and go on to look like somebody’s cat walked across the computer keyboard. As an acronym, this one’s pretty cryptic. It seems no one really knows what it stands for. There’s an ongoing debate among netizens about whether the letters stand for “Universal Resource Locator” or “Uniform Resource Locator.” It doesn’t matter, of course, which is right, since most netizens simply use the acronymic form.

**Domain** — It’s neither a type of food poisoning, nor does it have anything to do with Seinfeld (a sigh of relief is appropriate at this point). Domain is simply the term for a special type of computer on the Internet called a server. It’s the part of an e-mail address that comes after the “@.” There are different types of domains. These are specified by the suffix that follows the dot. (In ancient times this dot was called a period). The most common suffixes designate domains as commercial (.com), non-profit (.org), government (.gov), military (.mil), college/university-related (.edu) and k-12 level (.k12.paus). Domains outside the United States generally use a country code after the dot. All computers on the Internet have unique numerical addresses (e.g., 207.186.93.3) that work very much like telephone numbers. A Domain Name Server (DNS) is a computer on the Internet that translates between the actual numbers and the easier-to-remember names (mci.com) we see in advertisements.

**Hypertext** — As if dealing with hyper students weren’t challenging enough, now we have to deal with hypertext as well! Actually, hypertext is simply highlighted text that will do something when you click on it. Usually, it will act as a “hyperlink,” which means that if you click on a word or name, the hypertext will “link” your browser to another site with more information. The HTTP that begins URLs stands for hypertext mark-up language, the programming language that is the basis for web page construction. Perhaps it’s good that books are not yet written in hypertext, or they might not prove so relaxing.

**Veronica** — This net-term is by far my favorite, even though “official” sources deny that Veronica has anything to do with the Archie comic books I loved as a child. Gophers are systems of menus used to organize archived computer files and they ultimately lead (if you’re lucky) to what you’re looking for. To make searching these menu systems easier, programmers first created a program called Archie (Presumably so-named because it searches archives). Veronica followed as a more advanced version, and, according to The Internet for Dummies, 3rd edition, it is an acronym for Very Easy Rodent-Oriented Net-wide Index to Computerized Archives. I’ve always had a hunch that this particular definition is little more than a post hoc acronymic etymology, but I could be wrong.

**Emoticon** — Since, according to many netizens, written words don’t convey the emotion of spoken language (take Seinfeld for instance), it’s often far easier and more amusing to do so in an emoticon! Emoticons, little faces made out of punctuation: :-)) To see the face, you have to cock your head to one side. It’s good James Joyce hadn’t discovered emoticons, or a thorough reading of Ulysses would require a post-novel trip to the chiropractor.

If you’re interested in learning more Internet terms — perhaps some that you can actually use — visit the “Glossary of Internet Terms” on the National Writing Project’s web site at http://www.gse.berkeley.edu/research/nwp/glossary.html.

BTW (Internet-ese for by the way), what was the gist of Billy’s excuse? In plain English — “My cat ate it!”
Do you have — or have you had — small physical place in the classroom where students can continue to explore the element of craft? You might design a bulletin board that lists various kinds of endings, for example, and ask students to add examples as they find them in the books they are reading, or as they experiment in their own writing. This can be as simple as a corner of a blackboard where the craft element gets highlighted, and students sign their name after they try it in their writing. This sets up an "after image" of your lesson that helps extend its usefulness to more students in the classroom.

5) **Create a spiral of craft lessons.**

It doesn't make sense to teach everything you know about a particular craft element in one giant "mini-lesson!" If you introduce the concept of leads one day, you'll want to return to this topic a number of times from a variety of perspectives. Though there is no set sequence to the many lessons you might do on leads, a spiral of craft lessons might look like this:

- **Day One:** Introduce the one-sentence lead.
- **Day Two:** Teach students to read a piece looking for where the lead ends.
- **Day Three:** Demonstrate how the lead continues on page 5...
New Assistant Director Joins PAWLP

Don E. King has joined the PAWLP team as Assistant Director for Youth Programs and Development. With an extensive background in both education and marketing, his primary duties are to oversee all summer youth programs and to promote and raise money for both the adult and youth programs.

Don received his BA from Samford University, his MAT and administrative certification from the University of Louisville, and is currently enrolled in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership at the University of Delaware. He taught English, History and Civics to grades 6 through 12.

His first National Writing Project experience was as a participant in the University of Louisville Writing Project. As a teacher, Don co-authored a state grant to establish a computer-assisted writing room, led Regional Writing Workshops for the Kentucky Department of Education, led numerous writing workshops in the Jefferson County Public School District, and designed and administered a Macintosh Writing Lab.

He then became Law-Related Education Coordinator for a countywide program with the Jefferson County Public Schools. Through this position, Don administered a Law-Related Education Regional Resource Center and a four-year professional development program for students interested in the legal profession.

He incorporated writing strategies across the curriculum through coordinating debate teams, mock trial teams, model United Nations and model state legislative teams as well as hands-on classroom, work, and community learning experiences.

Don spent his last three years in Kentucky as the Project Director for Middle School/High School Restructuring for the Kentucky Department of Education.

Before joining PAWLP, Don worked as a program consultant to the Delaware School-to-Work Initiative, to service learning programs with the Delaware Teachers' Academy for Service Learning, and to the Chester-Upland School District.

Friends of PAWLP
Create 20/20 Fund Drive

In the year 2000, PAWLP will be 20 years old. Friends of PAWLP has begun a 20/20 Campaign to celebrate.

If every Fellow gives $20 for the Project's 20th birthday, we can raise over $12,000 to support youth and teacher programs in the new millennium.

You can make a tax-deductible charitable contribution in your own name or the name of your institute class. Donors' names (if they wish) or institute class donations will be published in the Newsletter.

Checks should be made payable to "Friends of PAWLP at WCU."

Education Matters
...continued from page 4

lead can be a way to introduce one of the elements (character or setting) of the story.

7) Look deeply into a single text.

We need to be careful we don't limit our thinking when we use a book to teach a particular craft lesson. We may tell a colleague: "This is a great book for teaching kids how to write better character descriptions." But many books can be used to teach a variety of craft lessons.

You might keep a notebook about the mini-lessons you share with students. At the end of each lesson, or during the workshop as you observe students writing, keep notes of follow-up ideas that will help you continue to develop your students' understanding of the element of craft at hand.

CRAFT LESSONS: Teaching Writing K-8 is scheduled for September release from Stenhouse Publishers with a catalogue price of $17.50.

Readers will receive a discount from Michaels Associates if you mention this Newsletter when you order tollfree at 1-800-869-1467 or mention PAWLP in the body of your purchase order. The discounted price is $14.00 plus shipping & handling. Ralph Fletcher will be a keynote speaker at the 1999 Keystone State Reading Association conference in Hershey.
You Know You’re a Young Writers/Young Readers Coordinator When...

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you get both excited and anxious about the thought of eighty-five eager writers and readers coming to Springfield Lake Middle School on July 6th.

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when the sight of 30 water bottles and three large boxes of supplies in your living room doesn't seem out of the ordinary!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you become the visiting author's shadow as she travels from class to class and makes copies of all her great ideas!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you hang around after the kids are gone, doodle over books and score them on the basis of our general impressions. We are surprised when Andy graphs our responses on the board: most of us have scored the papers in a similar fashion. Those few that are out of range, Andy explains, were not the norm, would be outweighed by the others. It shows us in a visual way that the holistic scoring guide really is a valid assessment of writing. For most of us, it is the most understandable demonstration of the holistic scoring guide that we have seen.

It also shows, Andy says with a smile, "that those teachers know good writing." We leave the classroom and its uncomfortable stools behind, a little more confident that we are also teachers who can teach good writing.

Linda Cobourn
PAWLP Fellow, 1998

Back at the Writing Institute... Two Afternoons with Andrea Fishman, PAWLP Director

There are twenty-four of us who perch on the stools in the small classroom. Despite the heat of this July afternoon, we are intensely studying the article each of us holds. Our schedule tells us this is Dr. Andrea Fishman's presentation on "Literacy." We are not fools; the article she has passed out to us seems simple and straightforward enough, but all of us are sure that there is a trick here somewhere. Will we be asked to debate the author's viewpoint? Cite literary models we know that cover a similar theme? Instead we are handed a study guide that asks us to recall the information we have read.

We look at Dr. Fishman in disbelief. Surely THIS is not a way to encourage higher-order thinking skills!

And Dr. Fishman agrees, using these moments of confusion to explain that one person's definition of literacy may not be another's. It depends on what is held to be of value and what is guarded as a belief. She leads us in a lively discussion of our own values and beliefs, her warmth and laughter invitations to share. We begin to think

in classrooms, and borrow them to read at home that night!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you wake up early each morning looking forward to working with the best possible teachers anyone could hope for!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you average three miles a day just walking to the copy machine and become fast friends with the secretaries and custodians in the process!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you meet yourself rushing into classrooms and snapping pictures before the young writers even know you are there!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you get a surge of adrenalin walking through a crowded B353, with your patient husband, filling the cart with ever-important Gallery Day supplies!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when your sixteen-year-old daughter seems upset because lately you've received more phone calls than she has!

You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator when you can't believe Gallery Day is here already, writing performed, parents visiting, books bought, refreshments consumed, reports collected, and then— a quiet time—a time to reflect on another successful year!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Carol Starr Townsend is a learning support teacher for fourth and fifth grade students at Indian Lane School in the Rose Tree Media School District. This is her third year as a coordinator of the Young Writers/Young Readers summer program at Springfield Lake Middle School. She likes to coordinate the program, but she likes teaching the program even better, which is why she also teaches at the West Chester University site.

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You know you're a Young Writers/Young Readers coordinator...
PAWLPCOURSEOFFERINGS

LITERATURE CIRCLES OFFERED IN 7 LOCATIONS
CENTRAL BUCKS SD - Secondary Circle, times/dates/place TBA
AVON GROVE SD - Secondary Multicultural Circle, times/dates/place TBA
DOWNINGTOWN SD - Intermediate Grades Circle, times/dates/place TBA
WEST CHESTER SD - Elementary Circle
Tuesdays, Exton Elementary - begins 10/6
ABINGTON SD - Elementary Circle
Wednesdays, Glenside Weldon Elementary - begins 10/7
NORTH PENN SD - Elementary Circle
Thursdays, Inglewood Elementary - begins 9/24
ROSE TREE MEDIA SD - Secondary Interdisciplinary Literature Connections
Wednesdays, Springfield Lake MS - begins 9/16

Courses meet monthly for ten sessions. Three graduate credits from WCU.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING OFFERED IN 6 LOCATIONS
MANHEIM TOWNSHIP SD - Time/dates/place TBA
KUTZTOWN SD - Tuesdays, 4-7:15 p.m. at Kutztown High School, begins 9/15
ABINGTON SD - Mondays, 4-7:15 p.m., begins 9/14
WEST CHESTER AREA SD - Wednesdays, 4-7:30 p.m. at Mary C. Howse Elementary (K-5 only), begins 9/23
DOWNINGTOWN AREA SD - Tuesdays, 4-7 p.m. at Beaver Creek Elementary Library, begins 9/8
ROSE TREE MEDIA SD - Tuesdays, 4-7:15 p.m. at Springfield Lake MS, Room 10, begins 9/15

Courses run for one semester. Three graduate credits from WCU.

TEACHING TOLERANCE: TEXTS AND TECHNIQUES
KUTZTOWN SD - Mondays beginning 9/14 --- WCU CAMPUS - Thursdays beginning 9/17

Courses meet monthly for ten sessions. Three graduate credits from WCU.

WEEKEND OPPORTUNITIES IN BUCKS COUNTY
EMERGENT WRITERS AND READERS (K-2)
Oct. 3 & 4
MANAGE A WRITING/READING CLASSROOM (Grades 3-12) - Oct. 10 & 11
FLEXIBLE GROUPING (K-8) - Oct. 12 & 18

Courses will be held at Holy Family College's Newtown Campus. Courses are offered by the PA Writing & Literature Project in partnership with the Bucks County Intermediate Unit and Holy Family College. One graduate credit from Holy Family College.

For information on bringing a course to your district please contact:
Dr. Andrea Fishman,
Director of the PA Writing & Literature Project
(610) 436-2297 e-mail: afishman@wcupa.edu
Time for a change?
Please let us know by checking the appropriate box below and returning it to us with the above address label.
Thank you!
☐ Name misspelled
☐ Incorrect address
☐ Contact person changed
☐ Received more than one
☐ Remove from mailing list
☐ Other (Specify)