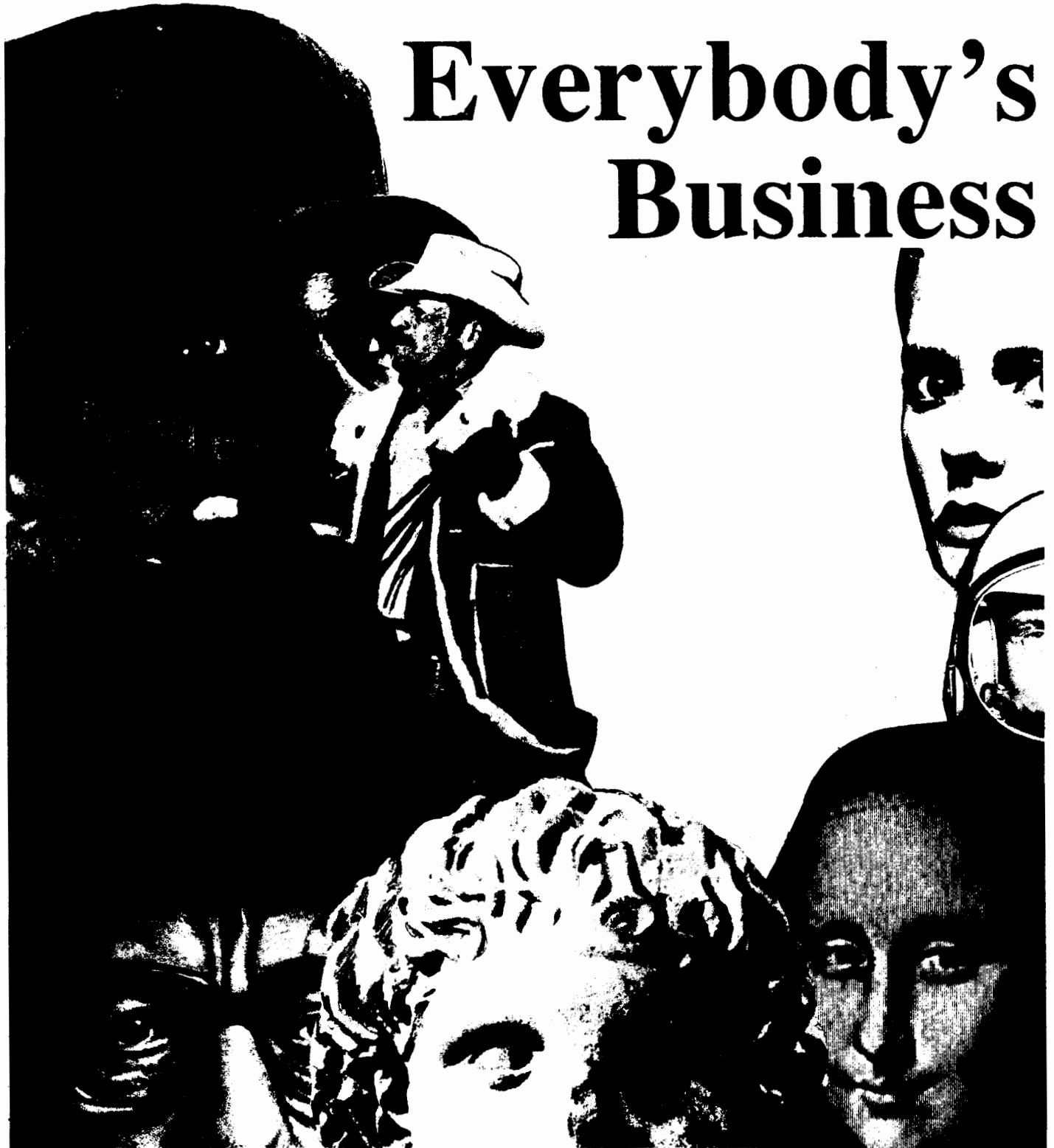


FFORUM

A Newsletter of the English Composition Board, University of Michigan

Everybody's Business



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Literacy in the 1980's

In June of this year the **English Composition Board (ECB)** will sponsor three related events in consecutive three-day periods which will occupy its members and guests from the evening of Sunday, June the 21st through the afternoon of Tuesday the 30th.

The first of these events will be an invitational Workshop on the teaching of writing for teachers from ten groups of schools in Arizona, Texas, Florida, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the District of Columbia. The last event will also be a Workshop, this one solely for teachers of writing from Michigan. The two Workshops will be connected by a Conference on "**Literacy in the 1980's**" whose purpose is to define educational, vocational, and professional needs for competent writing in the next decade. The following list of speakers and their topics illustrates the broad range of the Conference:

LITERACY IN THE 1980's

June 24-27, 1981

Richard W. Bailey, University of Michigan, "Literacy in English: An International Perspective"

Janet K. Carsetti, READ, Inc., Literacy and Troubled Youth

Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer, UCLA, Literacy: Community Colleges and Adult Learners

William E. Coles, Jr., University of Pittsburgh, "Literacy for the 1980's: The Alternative to Losing"

Frank D'Angelo, Arizona State University, "The Crisis in Literacy: A Developmental Perspective"

Lois DeBakey, Baylor College of Medicine, "Literacy in Medicine: Logic and Language"

Edwin J. Delattre, St. John's College, Literacy and Social Values

Janet Emig, Rutgers University, "The Origins of Literacy in the Lives of Children"

Daniel Fader, University of Michigan, "Literacy and Family"

Robben W. Fleming, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, "Literacy--Who Cares?"

Lee Odell, SUNY/Albany, "Writing and Learning Across the Curriculum"

Janice C. Redish, American Institutes for Research, "The Language of Bureaucracy"

Gavriel Salomon, Hebrew University, Television and Literacy

Paul A. Strassmann, Xerox Corporation, "Information Systems and Literacy"

Ralph W. Tyler, Science Research Associates, Testing Writing

Paul B. Weisz, Mobil Research and Development Corporation, "English and Science--Symbiosis for Survival"

James B. White, University of Chicago Law School, "Legal Literacy"

For the first six days--three days of the first Workshop and three days of the Conference, the **English Composition Board** will welcome 150 teachers from states other than Michigan. For the last six days--three days of the Conference and three days of the second Workshop, the **English Composition Board** will be able to accommodate 150 teachers of writing from schools and colleges in Michigan. For the second Workshop, veterans of **ECB** Workshops '79 and '80 will receive first preference in registration, with next preference going to persons who have attended **ECB** seminars on the teaching of writing offered during the past three years at secondary schools and colleges throughout the state.

As in past years, the generosity of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation enables the **English Composition Board** to pay all room and meal costs for its Michigan guests who attend the six days of the Conference and Workshop. The **Board** believes that the integrated and overlapping structure of Workshop→Conference← Workshop will provide an unusual opportunity for its guests from both inside and outside the state to profit from each other as well as from the speakers who will present and discuss their viewpoints at the Conference. Those persons who wish to attend only the Conference at their own expense are invited to do so.

This is the schedule of the three events: Workshop I begins with dinner on Sunday evening, June the 21st and concludes with lunch on Wednesday the 24th; the Conference on "**Literacy in the 1980's**" begins with dinner on Wednesday, June the 24th and concludes with lunch on Saturday the 27th; Workshop II begins with breakfast on Sunday, June the 28th and concludes with lunch on Tuesday the 30th. In order to reserve their places at the Conference and in Workshop II, veterans of Workshops '79 and '80 should write now to Teri Adams or Vicki Davinich, **English Composition Board**, 1025 Angell Hall, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 48109.

Nurturing the Individual Voice

Daniel Fader

*"English in Every Classroom" is an approach to learning based on the dual concepts of **Saturation** and **Diffusion**.... Whereas **Saturation** refers to materials used in every classroom to induce students to enter the doorway of literacy, **Diffusion** refers to the responsibility of every teacher in every classroom to make the house of literacy attractive. In discharging this responsibility, every teacher becomes an intermediary between the student and functional literacy. In order that students may come to view writing as a means to all ends, all ends pursued in a scholastic context must insist upon writing as a means through which they can be approached. In short, every teacher becomes a teacher of English, and English is taught in every classroom.*

Although the foregoing passage is taken from the original (1966) edition of Hooked on Books, it first appeared in a pamphlet called "Teaching English at Boys' Training School" which was published early in 1964 by the Bureau of School Services at **The University of Michigan**. So far as I know, the **Maxey Boys Training School** in Whitmore Lake, Michigan, was the first secondary school in North America where all teachers of all subjects in the curriculum--English, social studies, science, math, music, art, automobile shop, typing, physical education--accepted and fulfilled their roles as teachers of reading and writing.

"**English in Every Classroom**," subtitle of the original Hooked on Books and heading

of one of its chapters, was actually the proposed title of the whole book until an editor at Berkley heard me speak of my desire to get kids "hooked on books" and decided that the phrase was too good a title to miss. However good it may be, that title does not refer--as "**English in Every Classroom**," does--to the core of the program. Newspapers, magazines, and paperback books were an important **tactic** in making literacy attractive to imprisoned boys; teachers who taught reading and writing in every classroom every day were the heart of the **strategy** to make acts of literacy as unavoidable for those boys as they are for the men those boys have become.

If demanding and teaching competence in writing in every classroom was a useful option in the early sixties, it is an unavoidable necessity in the early eighties. So unavoidable, in fact, that in 1981-82 more than 3500 junior students at **The University of Michigan** will be taking writing courses in areas of concentration other than English. The reason is simple enough: The faculty of the **College of Literature, Science, and the Arts** is nearly unanimous in its belief that the quality of our students' literacy determines the quality of their learning in every subject across the curriculum. Because the faculty (and the students) find that literacy insufficient to their needs, every department and program in the **College** has agreed to teach writing to its students. This autumn, a year before the new writing requirement becomes fully effective, 43 courses enrolling 2538 students in 22 different units of the **College** are being taught as Junior/Senior Writing Courses.

As a colleague of mine pointed out, **"English in Every Classroom,"** has been one of the slowest academic travellers in history: It has needed nearly two decades to travel the ten miles from Whitmore Lake to Ann Arbor.

In those two decades we have all heard a great deal about the declining literacy of American youth, the blame attributed to everything from effective television to defective genes. In the great national search for reponsible villains, fingers of accusation pointing most often at schools and teachers, we have heard far too little about the profound loss of adult and peer models--those two most powerful sources of persuasion upon the growing child. I believe that the real urgency of **Writing Across the Curriculum** lies in its capacity to substitute in part for those lost persuasions.

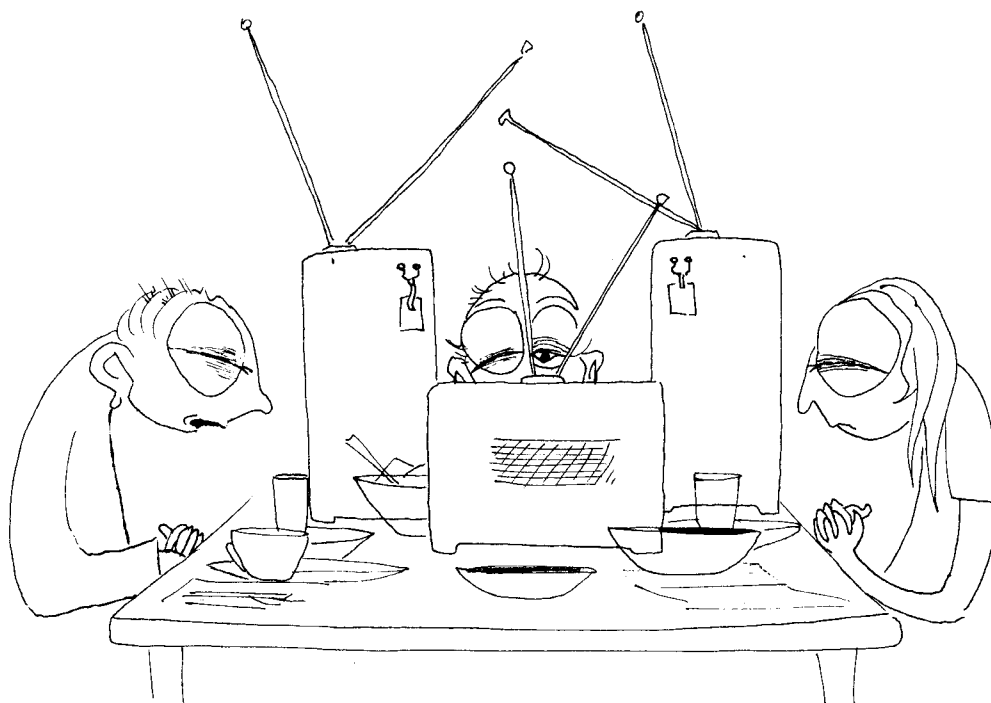
In a home in which a television set is **ON** more than six hours a day, the average home in North America, at least two customary familial acts have been replaced by two more recent activities: The family reading or writing in front of one another has been replaced by the television set projecting images to all members of the family; and the family conversing with one

another has been replaced by the television set projecting conversations in which the only familial participation is vicarious and silent. Any observer of the average American home in 1980 must remark the absence for children of adult and sibling models reading and writing, and the absence for all members of attention to each other's voices as they attend--in silence--to the television set.

What has this to do with writing across the curriculum?

Just as periods of time for reading can be set aside daily in one class or throughout the school to provide models of adults and children reading in front of one another, so can periods of activity in every subject be devoted regularly to the practice and discussion of writing. For the reluctant or inexperienced writer, the surrounding presence of the activity of writing in class after class is powerful persuasion to the act itself. To resist so much pressure so broadly applied is an heroic act of which few people are capable--especially young people, for whom peer pressure is least resistible of all.

(cont. on p. 91)



"...from thy bounty."

Language and Learning Across the Curriculum

James Britton

*Editor's note: It may be useful to readers of this essay by James Britton to recall the distinctions Britton makes between **transac-tional** language--"language to get things done" (*DWA*, 88); **expressive** language--language "that might be called 'thinking aloud'" (*DWA*, 89); and **poetic** language--"language as an art medium" (*DWA*, 90).*

I think we need to be clear at the outset that a concern for **Language Across the Curriculum** is not, in the final analysis, a concern for language--for the oracy and literacy of the students we teach--but a concern for the **quality of learning** in all subjects. This is politic--for how could teachers of the other subjects be persuaded that what the English teacher is paid to do must be shared around amongst all members of staff? But it is far more than politic: It is no less than a challenge to all teachers to consider the **processes of learning**, both in their own subjects and in the whole curriculum. It is a challenge to them to make a much needed, little heeded distinction between rote learning and genuine learning--little heeded because our policies for school organisation and pupil evaluation tend to blur that distinction. What has to be realised is that learning is not a uni-directional process (what the teacher "gives off," the pupil absorbs) but an interactional one, essentially social in nature--teachers and students learning with each other and from each other. Only in this way can what is learnt in school subjects effectively become a part of an individual's total learning pattern, his world-knowledge and his self-knowledge--in practical terms, his "know-how" in the here and now, and in terms of a wider understanding his "theory of the world in the head," as Frank Smith has called it (Smith, 11).

The view I am taking--that knowledge is a process of knowing rather than a store-house of the known--is easily ridiculed. A story went the rounds some years ago of an inspector who asked a pupil, "Where is Newcastle?" and the pupil replied, "I don't know where Newcastle is, but if you'll tell me where it is, I'll tell you why it's there." A more recent story--and I know this one is true--will serve to turn the tables: a geography teacher in an Australian school was being rated by an angry parent. "My son isn't learning anything in your lessons. He doesn't even know the names of the principal ports of Australia." The teacher (sticking his neck out): "Well, Madam, do you?" Her reply: "Of course I don't, but I learnt them when I was at school!"

To Michael Polanyi, scientist and philosopher,

*"Knowledge is an activity which would be better described as a process of knowing. Indeed, as the scientist goes on enquiring into yet uncomprehended experiences, so do those who accept his discoveries as established knowledge keep applying this to ever changing situations, developing it each time a step further. Research is an intensely dynamic enquiring, while knowledge is a more quiet research. Both are for ever on the move, according to similar principles, towards a deeper understanding of what is already known" (Polanyi, *Knowing*, 132).*

To view knowledge as a "quiet form of research" constitutes, as I have suggested, a challenge to our conception of the learning process. A science teacher at a London conference on **Language**

Across the Curriculum made his response to the challenge in these words:

*"There seem to be two different and conflicting goals in science education: one is to teach a body of accepted knowledge, the other is to teach the **process** by which that knowledge has been acquired. One of these goals--the former--continues to be dominant in science teaching today, but I believe the latter goal--the process of science--is by far the most important. The way we work is bound up with the way we use language, and a change in emphasis from science as knowledge to science as process would require, amongst other things, a change in the way we use language" (Martin, et al., 165).*

Many teachers in science as well as the humanities are shifting the focus of their pedagogy from **product** (knowledge) to **process** because they are coming to new understandings of the relationship between language and learning. Those of us who are interested in this relationship have learnt a great deal from Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist, about the way talking and writing function as means of learning (the way infant speech, for example, lays the foundations for adult thinking). Recently, thanks to the labours of four American editors, we have a posthumous work by Vygotsky which gives his views about writing in greater detail (Vygotsky, Mind, Chpt. 8). He claims here that mastery of writing comes from using it to satisfy some need or fulfill some intention--something out and beyond the act of writing itself--just as speech is acquired in infancy for the purpose of understanding and controlling the environment. It is difficult at first to see how utterly opposed this is to the traditional view in schools that writing is learned by practising it under the guidance of an expert who will tell you how well or how poorly you have performed.

Looking at the curriculum as a whole, then, I want briefly to suggest three purposes that writing might achieve for children in school.

First, there is that of establishing and maintaining a satisfying personal relationship with the teacher. If we take an interactional view of learning, it follows that we cannot effectively teach strangers: development of a personal relationship is essential. Journal writing--a written dialogue between pupil and teacher--is one very useful way of doing this. Take for example these extracts from the journal of a nine-year-old girl in a Toronto school (with her teacher's responses):

Jan. 20th, 1978. After my rough copy of my project I am going to rearrange my project around. I am going to put growing up first page. What monkeys do to eat in second page. Why do monkeys make faces page three.

(Sounds interesting!)

Jan. 25. It was interesting. Did you think it was very interesting or interesting or just a little interesting?...

Feb. 20. When you were away the class had other teachers. The first teacher's name was Mrs. G. and the second teacher's name was Mr. M. They were both nice teachers. You know sometimes I wish you were my mother.

(Lots of the time I wish I had a little girl like you!)

Feb. 21. It's too bad I'm Chinese because if I was English you could adopt me."

The second purpose appropriate to writing in school is learning in the widely accepted sense of that word: organising our knowledge of the world and extending it in an organised way so that it remains coherent, unified, reliable: building into our knowledge-from-experience the knowledge we take on trust from other people's experiences. I have before me a splendid example, a seventy-page book on Marine animals produced by fourth- and fifth-grade children in a California school. Chapter One begins: "The sea is

(cont. on p. 93)

How English Teachers Can Help Their Colleagues Teach Writing

Lee Odell

Increasingly, colleagues in other disciplines are recognizing the importance of writing and are looking to us English teachers for help as they try to improve the writing of students in, say, history or biology. Frequently, our colleagues' notion of help is expressed this way: "I know. We could collaborate. I'll read students' papers for content and you read them for grammar and style."

When we decline this invitation--as I think we must--we invite a series of questions: "Well, what can you (or will you) do? What do you English teachers know that will help me with my students? More important, how can we teachers of history (or science or...) help students with their writing without losing sight of our subject matter?" From my experience in working with colleagues in schools and colleges, here are several suggestions as to how we might respond to these questions.

We need to address colleagues' concern about what they call "grammar."

As we and our colleagues go over selected student papers, we can show them how to categorize errors. We can help them answer such questions as these: Which errors appear to be the result of careless proofreading and which seem to reflect a basic misunderstanding of, for example, the basic structure of a sentence? Which types of errors appear in the work of more than one student? Which types of errors could be eliminated by a brief explanation and which require the attention of a skilled tutor in a Writing Workshop?

Answers to such questions will enable our colleagues to focus their efforts and set realistic goals for students. Once these goals are set, of course, there are no magic solutions to the problem of improving punctuation, spelling, and usage. What's needed is a certain amount of hard work guided by these principles: students must know what the teacher will and will not accept; they must have a reasonable amount of explanation as to what certain errors are and how they can be corrected; colleagues in other disciplines must take responsibility for seeing that students have edited their papers. This last point is particularly important in light of an experience one high-school English teacher reported to me. Most of this teacher's students used complete sentences in their essays, yet their social studies teacher complained that these same students turned in papers filled with sentence fragments. When the English teacher asked students about this, several of them shared one student's feeling: "Oh, well, that's social studies, not English. He [the social studies teacher] doesn't really care about that stuff."

We must expand our colleagues' notions of what "writing" is and of what kinds of assignments are possible.

For many of our colleagues, writing is a synonym for **expository essay** or **term paper**. Of course we want to help colleagues with these two types of writing. But we should point out that writing can take various forms, many of which need not be graded, or even read, by the instruc-

tor. Toby Fulwiler has done a very thorough job of explaining how short, in-class writing tasks can help students synthesize material that is being presented or can enable students and teachers to identify students' misunderstandings of a given topic (Fulwiler, 15-22).

In addition to showing colleagues how to use frequent, in-class writing assignments, we need to identify colleagues in other disciplines who give well-focused, stimulating writing assignments. We may find fewer of those colleagues than we would wish, for many people simply assign a report or term paper and turn students loose in the library. At best, this sort of assignment may require students to do some useful synthesis. But at worst, this type of assignment tends to become little more than a cut-and-paste job based on secondary sources and distinguished by a lack of independent thought on the part of the student. Fortunately, there are colleagues in other disciplines who give quite different assignments. Consider these examples for which I am indebted to Susan Burke (eighth-grade teacher), Doris Quick (high-school teacher), and Gary Gossen (university professor).

From a middle school social studies class:

On the basis of class discussion of consumer rights and young people's important role as consumers, identify a specific consumer complaint you have, and write a letter to the organization against which you have a complaint. Your letter must explain the complaint clearly and reasonably and describe a course of action that would solve the problem you are complaining about.

Read the attached excerpts from a diary in which a soldier in the American Revolution describes the hardships of life in the Continental Army. Using his diaries as evidence, write a letter in which you persuade the Continental congress to provide benefits to veterans after the war with England is won.

From a high school chemistry class:

Assume you have removed the following pieces of chemistry equipment from your lab table. [The list included 20 diverse items such as bunsen burner, asbestos gauze, evaporating dish.] You have three drawers in your lab table and each piece of equipment must be logically placed in one of the three drawers. Label the drawers and write a one page paper in which you describe your system for storing the equipment, and persuade your classmates that your system is efficient and logical.

Explain by means of analogy or model system any topic in chemistry we have discussed this year. Your audience will be students who are taking the course next year and who are having trouble understanding the topic you are explaining. Your paper (if good) will be retained in the teacher's file and used as supplementary material for those students who are confused about a given concept.

From a university anthropology class:

On the basis of our discussions and readings about communication among non-human primates, explain your answer to this question: Could Washoe [a chimpanzee who had learned some elements of human language] "think" a poem?

Attend a religious ritual and analyze it (following procedures discussed in class) as a symbolic statement of essential characteristics of the social groups involved.

The Age of Innocence and Tom Sawyer deal at great length with the theme of socialization in American life of the nineteenth century. Using an analytic approach demonstrated in class, analyze a character of your choice from each novel as he or she reaches a "compromise" with society.

As we identify people who make assignments such as these, we will expand our own

notion of what is possible in writing about, say, anthropology. We will also improve our credibility with our colleagues, since our suggestions can be based on the actual practice of colleagues and are not simply the product of an English teacher's fevered imagination.

We must help colleagues be more sensitive to audience.

We should encourage colleagues to think about such questions as these: What are the characteristics of the audience(s) for whom their students will write? For a given assignment, what may students assume about their audience's knowledge, biases, expectations? What constraints must students accept when they write for a particular audience? One response to these questions is to claim that students are writing academic discourse for an academic audience. This, of course, is true. But we must not over-simplify our conception of an "academic audience." Its characteristics and expectations may be more diverse than one might think. One way to test this speculation is to remember the last time we attended a common paper-grading session, one at which--with no prior training or discussion of criteria--we and our colleagues read and graded a set of essays. In my own experience, comments made at those sessions indicate that people are using different sets of criteria and are attending to different aspects of the writing, some responding to diction and syntax, some to organization, some to what Paul Diederich refers to as "quality of ideas." Thanks to recent work by Sarah Freedman, we have reason to think that for some readers "quality of ideas" weighs most heavily in the evaluation of a piece of writing (Freedman, 161-64). But even here it is possible for academic audiences to vary quite widely.

To illustrate this last point: As part of my work in **Writing Across the Curriculum** I have had occasion to read a number of student papers (complete with instructors' grades and comments) from a number of disciplines. Teachers of business courses frequently give students a set of facts about a company and ask students to recommend policies that the company should adopt. In evaluating students' papers,

these instructors seem concerned with matters of practicality: Have students identified one or more specific courses of action for the company to follow? Given the information at hand, does it seem likely that the company in question **could** and **would** follow the writer's recommendations? In economics courses, instructors seem most concerned with how accurately students apply economic theory to new sets of data. In at least one political science course, the instructor places great emphasis on the imaginativeness of students' synthesis of materials studied.

Practicality, accuracy, imaginativeness: these are not the only criteria by which instructors judge the "quality of ideas" in students' writing. But these criteria do suggest the different values held by audiences for which students will be expected to write. If we can help colleagues give students a clear idea of the audience for whom they are writing, we will probably do a favor for our colleagues as well as for their students.

We need to help colleagues recognize the intellectual demands of specific assignments.

And we need to help devise ways to show students how to meet those demands. Consider the following history assignment, which asks students to write about a nineteenth-century novel in which the narrator purports to be describing life in Boston in the year 2,000.

Suppose that you had never heard of Edward Bellamy's novel Looking Backward. One day while killing time in the College Library, you came across a dusty, mutilated copy of the book. As you began to read Looking Backward, it seemed reasonable for you to guess, although you could find no date of publication, that the book had to be written after a certain date and probably before another date.

What is the narrowest time frame you would choose? Write an essay in which you defend your choice with specific references to customs,
(cont. on p. 94)

Project Read

Janet Carsetti

Teaching writing to young people can be a difficult task. Teaching writing to young people who are deficient in reading and listening skills is indeed a frustrating task--and one that challenges hundreds of teachers who work with youthful offenders. Providing motivational activities for functionally illiterate "troubled youth" has been a major task of **Project READ** during the past five years.

Funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, **Project READ** is a national literacy and arts program for troubled youth. The purpose of the project is to provide young people in the juvenile justice system with the skills they will need to become self-sufficient in a literate society. Since its inception early in 1976, **Project READ** has worked with close to 40,000 troubled youth from 400 institutions, alternative schools, and community-based programs in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Nearly 600 teachers have participated in teacher training workshops while more than 200,000 paperback books have been distributed to young people across the nation.

The results of testing well over 10,000 youthful offenders indicate that their reading ability is not only far below their grade level but also far below their language potential. While the national reading competence for this population has risen from a third-grade level to almost a sixth-grade level, most of these young people lack the communication skills necessary for survival in a literate society. It is important, however, to recognize that these data also indicate that **Project READ** students **can read, but don't**. Therefore a major task of **Project READ** has been to provide a highly motivating approach to teaching functional literacy to reluctant, yet able learners.

The following are some activities that motivate reluctant readers.

- a. Use methods and techniques different from the approach(es) used the first time around. For example, a student who hated a reading text in the primary grades should not be taught via the basal reader approach.
- b. Permit students to make decisions about the selection, quantity, and difficulty of each learning task.
- c. Focus on the strengths of students, not on their weaknesses.

Moreover, teachers working with reluctant learners must adopt a philosophy of **acceptance** as well as a positive self-fulfilling prophecy that all students can improve. The activities designed to improve functional literacy skills should also be relevant to everyday tasks and should employ techniques that build all communication skills--speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Following are a number of motivational activities used successfully by **Project READ** to improve functional literacy skills.

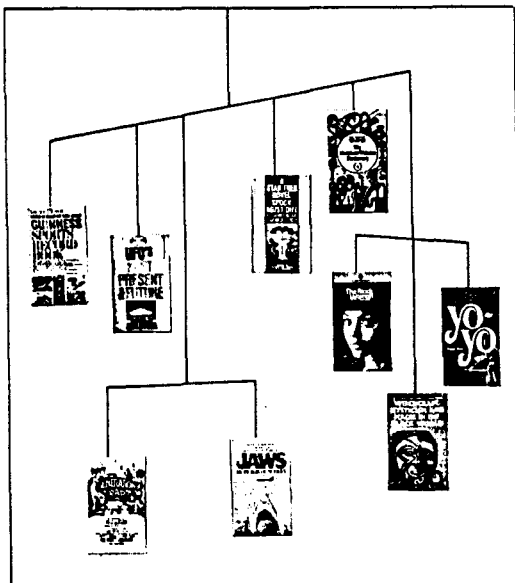
Non-Stop Reading

Each school participating in **Project READ** receives hundreds of paperback books to use during a daily thirty minute non-stop reading period. These books are grouped by interest categories, not readability; and they represent situations that teenage readers are concerned about--such as sex, drugs, career, sports, biographies, puzzles, and movie-T.V. tie-ins. Best sellers are included as well as reference books. During 1979 the

top books from a list of 800 included these:

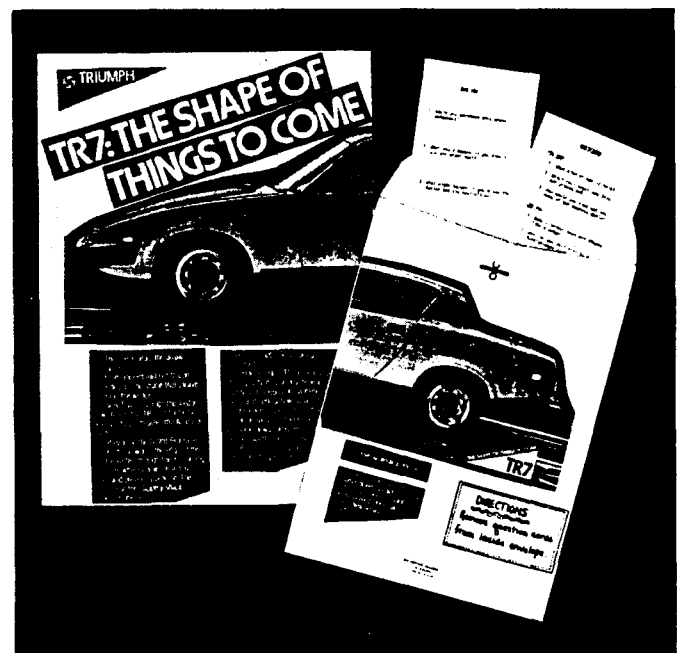
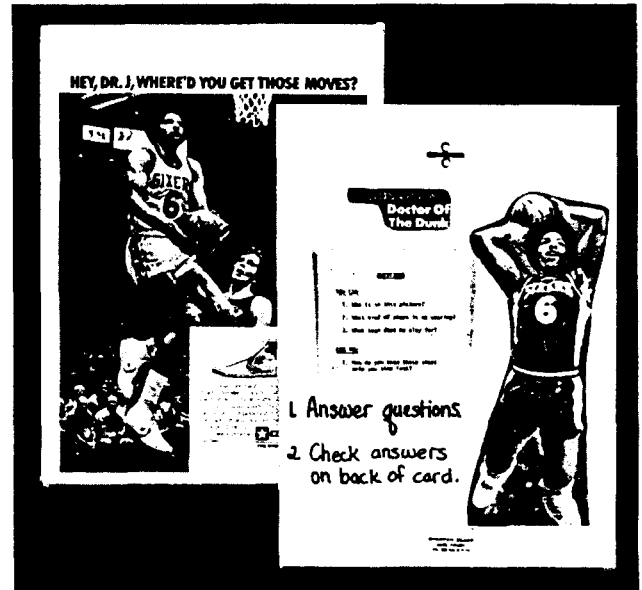
- Grease
- The Hobbit
- Sarah T: Portrait of a Teenage Alcoholic
- Rock On
- Our Bodies, Ourselves
- Coma
- Webster's New School and Office Dictionary
- How to Prepare for the G.E.D.
- Go Ask Alice
- Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman
- Guinness Book of World Records
- Drugs: What They Are, How They Look, What They Do

Non-stop reading gives students (and teachers) a time to practice reading during the school day and it stimulates intellectual and emotional interests. The importance of reading becomes apparent to the most reluctant reader when teachers, staff, administrators, janitors, and cooks stop what they are doing and read with the students each day. As a result of this "practicing," students have tripled their growth in reading as measured by standardized tests. Students who previously gained one year in reading for every two years in school are now gaining one or two years for each year in school. More importantly, they are learning vicariously through the books. As one student who read Run, Shelley, Run stated: "If I had read that book [before] I never would have run."



Functional Reading Packets

Teachers design their own learning materials from labels, applications, telephone books, menus, order forms, advertisements, T.V. guides, newspapers, catalogs, and the like. To provide for students at various stages of skill development each packet has activities at a factual, interpretive, and problem solving level. Similarly, students may respond to questions by telling a friend, matching cards with pictures, words, or phrases, or by writing. A system of self-correction built into each packet allows for immediate feedback.




Music Activities

Assuming that most young people enjoy music, activities are designed using music, which the students select, to reinforce listening, reading, and/or writing skills. For example, while listening to a song, students may be asked to fill in the missing words on an accompanying activity sheet. Likewise, they may listen for synonyms or antonyms of key words in the song; answer questions at the literal or interpretive level of thinking; listen for rhyming words; play a form of Bingo while crossing out consonants, blends, or digraphs; learn to categorize elements in a song (places, people, vegetables, etc.); or even discuss (or write) their feelings about the message a song conveys.

Native North American Child

Buffy Sainte-Marie



Listen for the names of Native North American Tribes. Fill in the blanks.


| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| S _ _ m _ _ _ _ _ | Ch _ _ _ _ _ |
| A _ _ _ ch _ _ | M _ _ sk _ _ _ |
| P _ _ _ _ _ | F _ _ _ _ |
| Sh _ sh _ _ _ | P _ _ _ _ q _ _ _ y |
| N _ _ _ _ _ | W _ _ _ _ _ o _ _ |
| C _ _ _ _ ch _ _ | H _ _ _ _ _ |
| H _ _ _ _ _ | M _ _ _ _ _ |
| E _ _ _ _ _ | S _ _ _ _ x _ _ |
| C _ _ _ _ _ | S _ _ _ x _ _ |
| T _ _ _ _ r _ _ _ | Ch _ _ _ _ _ |
| Y _ q _ _ _ | Oj _ _ _ _ _ |
| P _ _ _ P _ _ _ | Ch _ _ _ _ _ |
| O _ _ _ a _ _ _ | M _ _ M _ _ _ |
| | M _ _ _ _ _ |

From the album Native North American Child by Buffy Sainte-Marie, Vanguard Recording Society, Inc.

TOMORROW

from the Broadway Musical "Annie"

Directions: Listen for the rhyming words.




| | |
|-----------|-------|
| tomorr ow | gr in |
| sorr ow | ch in |
| s un | s ay |
| n one | m ay |
| | d ay |
| | aw ay |
| | gr ay |

Queen of the Silver Dollar

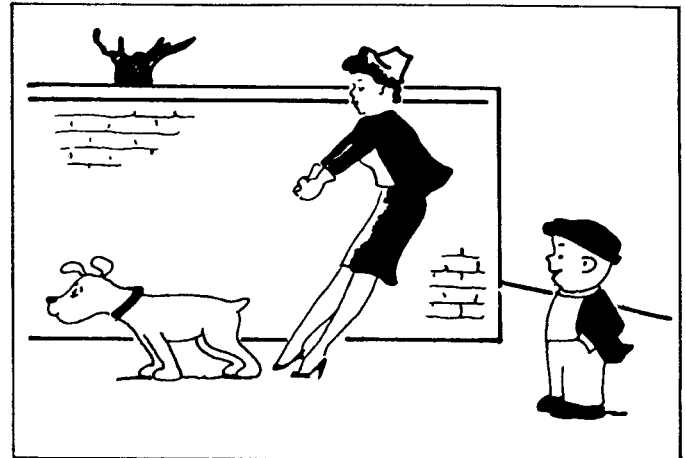
by Emilou Harris

1. The Queen arrives in splendor at _____ o'clock.
2. Her chariot is a _____.
3. The chariot stops right down the _____ (rhymes with clock).
4. She rules a _____ and it's _____.
5. Her royal dress is made of _____.
6. Her royal jewels are _____.
7. Her shoes are _____.
8. Her scepter is a _____ and _____.
9. A _____ is her throne.
10. A _____ flock around her.



Comic Strips

Using comics from the Sunday newspaper, students can develop vocabulary by matching a comic frame with a word, or develop comprehension through a more complex system. Teachers design packets containing one comic strip cut into frames. Students may be asked to sequence the frames; answer questions (orally or in writing) that teachers have written on the back of certain frames; develop captions or dialogue for frames which have none; and/or rewrite the dialogue.



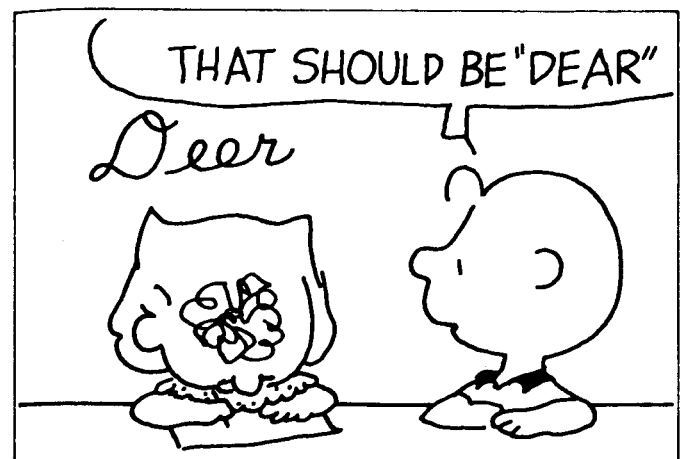
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2. What is missing from this picture?



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Write what you think was in the real note.



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1. Write a paragraph beginning with "Deer." Then write another beginning with "Dear."

Warm-up Writing Exercises

In addition to writing for ten minutes a day (see Daniel Fader's article, p. 53) in a log to practice writing, students are encouraged to write by providing them with short, fast, fun activities such as this: You have 20 seconds to make a list [of any one idea].

Make a list of
sounds in a department store
sounds heard on a farm
evening sounds
sounds at an airport
kitchen sounds
things you do at a park
things that sparkle
adjectives that
describe people you
like

Make a list of
things that breathe
things that reflect
things that chill
things that harmonize
things that hurt
things you do at a
restaurant
things you could do with
a list
things you love
things found in two's

Make a list of
delicious things
morning things
squishy things
vegetables
car parts
bike parts

"When the list is complete, write a sentence using as many words as possible."

Writing Name Poetry in Small Groups

Select one person's name and have students each contribute one line to the poem by starting their lines with the letters of the person's first name.

L oving you
I s
S o much of
A reward.

Round Robin Paragraphs

One person writes a sentence (about anything), then passes it on. Each subsequent writer adds something to expand the idea.

Shape Poetry

Draw a figure such as a star, circle, square, or abstract design on an 8-1/2 X 11 piece of paper. Have students write a poem about the shape while writing around the shape.

While all these ideas help motivate reluctant learners, they also provide them with skills necessary for survival in a literate society--skills necessary to complete job applications; read leases, street and road signs; use telephone books, read newspapers, labels and directions on food packages. Realizing that to be literate is more than knowing how to read and write, **Project READ** encourages the development of other qualities in the teaching and learning processes, such as sensitivity, respect, confidence, self-discipline, and self-appreciation. We have learned that students read and write best when they feel good. When a student's creativity is encouraged, recognized, and directed, learning becomes **fun**, not frustration.

Janet Carsetti is Director of Project READ, Inc., a national literacy and arts program for troubled youth funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Project READ, Inc. is based in Washington, D.C.

Writing Across the Curriculum: A Theoretical Background

Randall Freisinger and Bruce Peterson

By this time the phrase **Writing Across the Curriculum** is firmly rooted in the profession's consciousness. Even as the participants at the 1979 Conference on College Composition and Communication were considering "Writing: A Cross-Disciplinary Enterprise," many faculties already were seeking or had secured support for large-scale cross-disciplinary writing programs on their campuses. At **Michigan Technological University**, supported by a grant from General Motors, we are engaged in a four-year study of the effects of this approach on student writing.

In this short bibliographic essay, we will sketch the major theoretical assumptions of our program and trace their origins in those books and articles which figured in the conception and execution of our own project. Three main assumptions form the foundation of the program in **Writing Across the Curriculum** at **Michigan Tech**:

1. **There is a universe of discourse, which addresses a broad range of writing functions and audiences.**
2. **Writing promotes learning.**
3. **Writing is a complex developmental process.**

In the first three sections of this essay we address these assumptions. In the fourth and final section we offer additional theoretical premises and pedagogical applications which have either grown out of our program or which share epistemological assumptions with our concept of **Writing Across the Curriculum**.

I. The Universe of Discourse

For the most part, faculty in other disciplines (and often in English as well) own a rather narrow view of writing, limiting its use in their classes almost exclusively to the critical essay and the factual report. To counter this narrowness, we have turned to James Britton who, having coined the phrase **Writing Across the Curriculum**, is the seminal theoretician of our project. Britton's Language and Learning, his first book, is a rich source of background materials; but his second work, The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18), is the indispensable theoretical anchor of our entire project. In this book Britton offers a theory of language which expands the function of writing and a classification of discourse into the three types--**expressive, poetic, and transactional**--which he first defined in Language and Learning. His research leads him to believe that in British schools **expressive** writing (writing close to the self and for the self almost exclusively) had been generally ignored in favor of the **transactional** (formal essays, reports, informational writing); and in his view this neglect has had adverse consequences for the development of student writers. He calls the **expressive** mode the "matrix" out of which the other two modes should naturally grow, and he encourages its expanded use at all grade levels in all disciplines. We believe that, having learned Britton's categories and having considered the connection between the **expressive** and **transactional** modes, all faculty should introduce **expressive** writing into their classes.

Two other books have shaped our thinking

about the range of writing functions. The first is James Moffett's Teaching the Universe of Discourse. Moffett classifies writing into four modes. Each mode provides writers with different perspectives on their subjects: 1) What is happening (**drama**); 2) What happened (**narration**); 3) What happens (**exposition**); 4) What should happen (**argumentation**). Moffett argues that there is a logical sequence here and that developing writers should start close to the self in the present tense (**drama**) and move gradually outward toward more impersonal kinds of discourse (**exposition** and **argumentation**). As the writer moves outward, the rhetorical conventions change; and the writer must adapt to these changes in convention as well as to changes in relationship to audience. The good writer, as Moffett observes, must be able to write for a variety of audiences.

The other book which enforces our concern for a broader view of writing is James Kinneavy's A Theory of Discourse. Using the communications triangle as a starting point, Kinneavy finds implicit in it four kinds of discourse: **expressive**, **referential**, **literary**, and **persuasive**. There are obvious parallels here to Britton and Moffett. All three writers demonstrate the variety of functions and audiences which writing serves, and they encourage development of assignments which require students to write in different modes and for different audiences.

II. Writing and Learning

The second major assumption of **Michigan Tech's** program in **Writing Across the Curriculum** derives from the following: James Britton's Development of Writing Abilities; Britton's article "Learning to Write and Writing to Learn"; Janet Emig's article "Writing as a Mode of Learning"; and related theoretical discussion in Lev Vygotsky's Thought and Language. Each of these authors imply that writing is itself a way of learning and developing knowledge, not simply a way of recording or communicating information. Britton's and Emig's investigations convince them that writing performs an especially useful function in the process of learning. Indeed, Emig asserts that writing "represents a unique mode of learning--not

merely valuable, not merely special, but unique" (p. 122). She proposes that writing combines three ways of learning posited by Bruner and other theorists in cognitive psychology: **enactive** (doing), **iconic** (creating an image), and **symbolic** or **representational** (naming). Emig writes that what

is striking about writing as a process is that by its very nature, all three ways of dealing with actuality are simultaneously or almost simultaneously deployed. That is, the symbolic transformation of expression through the specific symbol system of verbal images is shaped by the enactive word (p. 124).

That is to say, writing assists in creating, synthesizing, recording, and communicating meaning, and it does so in a way which fosters cognitive development on all levels.

In The Development of Writing Abilities, Britton delineates a model of the writing process which emphasizes that writing facilitates learning in all disciplines. Britton's definitions of the **expressive**, **transactional**, and **poetic** functions are of particular importance. For Britton, **expressive** writing "has the functions of revealing the speaker, verbalizing his consciousness and displaying his close relation with a listener or reader." The **expressive** function teaches us about the world, about ourselves, and about our relation to the world. Most significantly, Britton believes that **expressive** language is what lies at the heart of our ability to conceptualize experience or contextualize a text. He then posits that writers move toward other more public writing functions through the matrix of **expressive** or personal writing (DWA, pp. 14-15). **Expressive** writing assists the writer directly in thinking about his subject ("Learning to Write and Writing to Learn"). Drawing on Emig's and Britton's work, we believe that in the classroom teachers need to encourage writing which connects the student directly to events, experiences, and facts; that is, teachers need to encourage rough drafts, journals, descriptive notes, and narrative. This writing then becomes the foundation for

communicating the knowledge which students have created and developed themselves.

III. Writing as a Complex Developmental Process

We view the writing process from two perspectives. The first focuses on the act of writing itself. Sondra Perl, Linda Flower, and John Hayes are doing sophisticated work in this area; but our primary influence has been Janet Emig's The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders. Before Emig's research, the profession was largely product-oriented. One of the first persons to look at the actual composing process, Emig identified at least ten of its components or stages. The most obvious consequence of her work is that many teachers have begun to give equal time to the process in their classes, and they are beginning to develop strategies for the nurturing of it. In our view, this shift in consciousness from product to process is the single most significant change in composition pedagogy in the last decade.

Britton's work is also important here, for he stresses the relationship between the **expressive** and **transactional** modes, his premise being that success with the latter grows out of experience with the former. Flower and Hayes' concept of writer-based and reader-based prose is also useful here.

Our second perspective on the process of writing is developmental. The long-term acquisition of writing ability depends, to a great extent, on cognitive growth. This is an especially important point for elementary and secondary teachers, but college teachers should also have some respect for the developmental process by which a writer acquires fluency in a language from childhood to early adulthood. Simply stated, the key questions are these: Through what intellectual stages does a person pass on the way to adulthood and what kinds of writing best match those particular stages? Both Moffett and Britton ask these questions; and both are influenced by the writings of Jean Piaget, whose hypothesis it is that all humans pass through a series of discrete intellectual stages on their way to cognitive maturity. We believe teachers should be familiar with Piaget's

theory of cognitive development. They should be particularly sensitive to the difficult transition students must attempt to make from such concrete operations as identification to such formal ones as synthesis. One may choose to tackle Piaget directly, but his writings are many and difficult. John Flavell's The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget is a good introduction to his ideas. In addition, two articles by Lee Odell may be useful. In "Piaget, Problem-solving, and Composition," Odell wrote about the value of Piaget's theory to the composition teacher; and in a recent article, "The Process of Writing and the Process of Learning," he has extended his concern to faculty in other disciplines, urging them to examine carefully the intellectual demands any given writing assignment might make on students. Faculty sensitivity to the way in which student minds may grow can lead to more carefully designed writing assignments in all classes.

IV. Additional Theory and Applications

A number of books not specifically mentioned before have proven useful, either as texts or as resources in theoretical background, to the development of MTU's program in **Writing Across the Curriculum**. Ken Macrorie's Telling Writing, and Writing to Be Read are both useful for their attention to the role and power of personal writing in academic papers. Peter Elbow's Writing Without Teachers contains important discussions of the processes of writing and of free writing. Elbow's organic conception of writing is reminiscent of Britton's, and Elbow's description of writing groups provides valuable resources for students and teachers hesitant about the criticism and revision of students' papers. Journal writing is central to our program. A number of techniques for using journals in all disciplines appears in Toby Fulwiler's article "Journal-Writing Across the Curriculum."

Working from the psychological and linguistic theories of George Kelly, Edward Sapir, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, and others, Britton sees important interconnections among all aspects of language--speech, writing, reading, and learning.

(cont. on p. 90)

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Patti Stock

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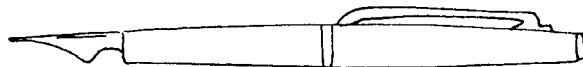
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Teachers in all Disciplines Should Teach Writing

Walter Foote

Written assignments should be submitted and resubmitted. Few learning experiences demonstrate more clearly than does writing that skill development and growth occur through successive approximations (Metcalf, 38).

Students were asked to bring extra copies of their written report to class on the day of their oral presentation. Copies were distributed at random to other class members for evaluation (Corrington and Keedy, 418).

[Keeping] a journal makes it almost mandatory for the student to monitor his/her own learning... (Graves, 8).

English teacher's shop talk? No, those three quotations reproduced above are from The Journal of Physical Education and Recreation, Engineering Education, and News for Teachers of Political Science, respectively.

Why are these PE, engineering, and political science teachers writing like English teachers?

They are part of a recent and growing trend in both England and North America--a trend known as **Writing Across the Curriculum**. The assumption is that teachers of all disciplines should also be teachers of writing--or, better yet, that they should teach their disciplines at least in part through the teaching of writing. James Britton puts it this way:

Many teachers... entertain the belief that an English teacher has

only to teach pupils "to write" and the skill they learn will be effective in any lesson and in any kind of writing task. As a result... a learning process properly the responsibility of teachers of all subjects is left to the English teacher alone, and the inevitable failures are blamed upon him (Britton, The Dev., 3).

Britton's emphasis on writing as a learning process is central to the **Writing Across the Curriculum** movement. On one level it suggests the obvious: Writing ability will decline--no matter how well it is developed in English courses--if students do not continue to write in other courses, just as students' math skills will decline unless they continue to use math in physics, chemistry, engineering, and statistics. This enlightened conception of writing itself can unfortunately lead to superficiality if writing is seen merely as a skill learned in English classrooms, and one that needs to be maintained or polished, or perhaps remediated in disciplines other than English.

Writing Across the Curriculum programs limited to this notion of writing as a basic skill are in danger of failing because non-English faculty members already see the teaching of writing largely as the chore of enforcing correctness, a chore which in fact distracts them from their real work--teaching the subject matter of their courses. They voice one all-too-familiar objection to **Writing Across the Curriculum**: "Why don't you people in English just do your job and let me get on with mine?" The answer is crucial: A truly enlightened writing program regards the process of learning

through writing as inseparable from the process of learning the subject that is being written about. And, as a bonus, in the act of their writing, students also learn about themselves as they relate to their insights about their subjects.

Writing: "A Mode of Learning"

Janet Emig refers to writing as a "mode of learning":

Writing represents a unique mode of learning--not merely valuable, not merely special, but unique.... Lev Vygotsky, A.R. Luria, and Jerome Bruner... have all pointed out that higher cognitive functions... seem to develop most fully only with the support system of verbal language-- particularly... written language (Emig, "Writing as", 122).

Emig's message echoes through the published works of Stephen Judy, William Irmscher, Nancy Martin, and Neil Postman, all of whom argue for writing as a mode of learning and, by extension, for involving teachers of all disciplines in writing instruction. Postman argues that every discipline is its language, and the proper study of every discipline must include how language is used to shape the knowledge of the discipline. What are the disciplines' central questions and how are they asked? How do its **facts** and **truths** differ from those of other disciplines? What are the contending metaphors which express its theories? How does it make its definitions?

Each subject is a manner of speaking and writing. There is a rhetoric of knowledge, a characteristic way in which arguments, proofs, speculations, experiments, polemics, even humor are expressed (Postman, 162).

It is for such reasons that faculty members in all disciplines should be writing teachers and language teachers. It is in the language of their disciplines--not only in the surface conventions and formats of that language use but also in the ways in which writing can be used as a mode of learning in that discipline--that subject area faculty are

specialists. Teaching writing in the disciplines is not a chore distracting from subject matter; it is a medium for teaching and for learning that subject matter.

Often students find that writing as a mode of learning in all disciplines makes them want to write well. Two of our **Writing Across the Curriculum** courses at **Grand Valley State**, **Writing in Mathematics** and **Biomedical Communications**, emphasize writing as both a powerful alternative and an essential supplement to learning from computer printouts and electronic media. Because writing is increasingly important on the job, students want to develop as writers in the courses they elect to prepare them for their future careers.

What do Writing Across the Curriculum Programs Mean to English Departments?

Losses

The loss of some students' bodies?

Surely. **Writing Across the Curriculum** courses will remove students from some intermediate and advanced composition courses formerly taught in English Departments.

The loss of some good will?

Yes, for those who understand the teaching of writing as only a **basic skill**, who see **Writing Across the Curriculum** as a way for English faculty to shirk responsibilities.

The loss of some control over the kinds of language students learn to write (much of which we English teachers customarily find reprehensible)?

Perhaps, but as Richard A. Lanham humorously suggests, there are two sides to this issue.

Loss of some students from literature courses which are also considered writing courses?

Yes, but this can be prevented in the main
(cont. on p. 88)