

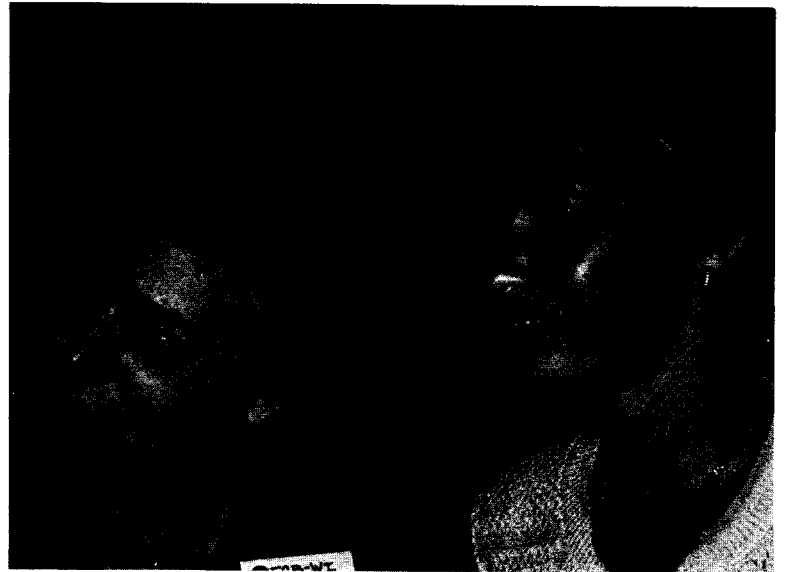
*Go to the head of the class.*



*Let's have a donut on that.*



*Close encounter of the third kind.*



*We've agreed to disagree.*



*Attending.*



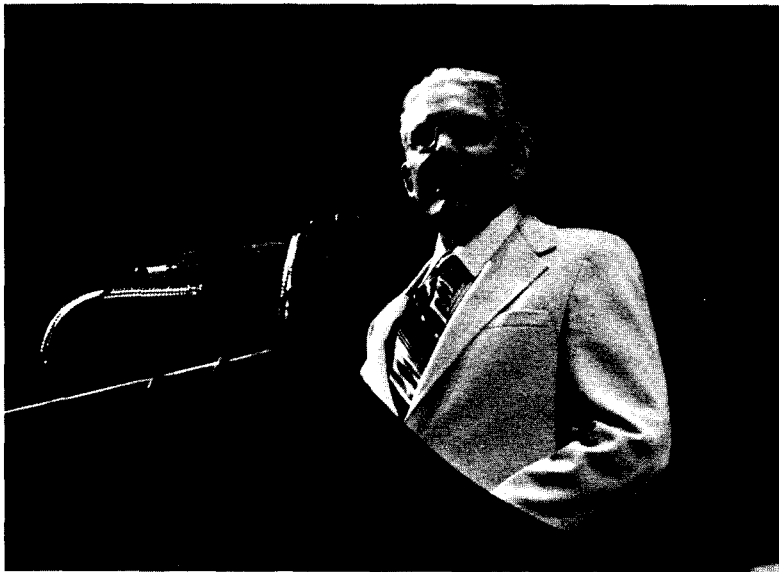
*Synchronized writing.*

## Literacy in the 1980's

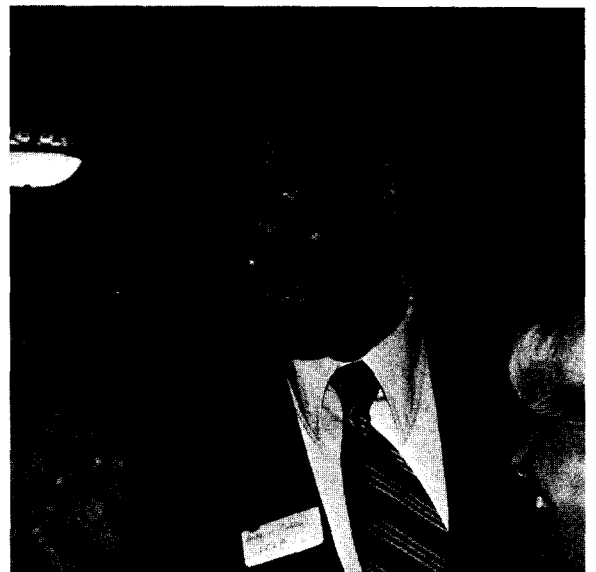
Michigan teachers of writing joined Workshop I participants in Ann Arbor on Wednesday, 24 June 1981 for a conference on **Literacy in the 1980's**. Sarah Goddard Power, Regent of the University of Michigan, and Robben Fleming, president of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and former president of The University of Michigan, welcomed participants to the Conference and set the agenda. During the following three days, nineteen representatives of education, the vocations, and the professions addressed these ques-

tions: What will be the educational, vocational, and professional demands for literacy during the next decade? Who will meet these demands, and how will literacy be taught?

Out-of-state and in-state teachers met in a wine and cheese reception on the first night of the Conference; and a banquet and dance on the last night provided participants and speakers with informal occasions to pursue their discussion of provocative issues raised in Conference papers.



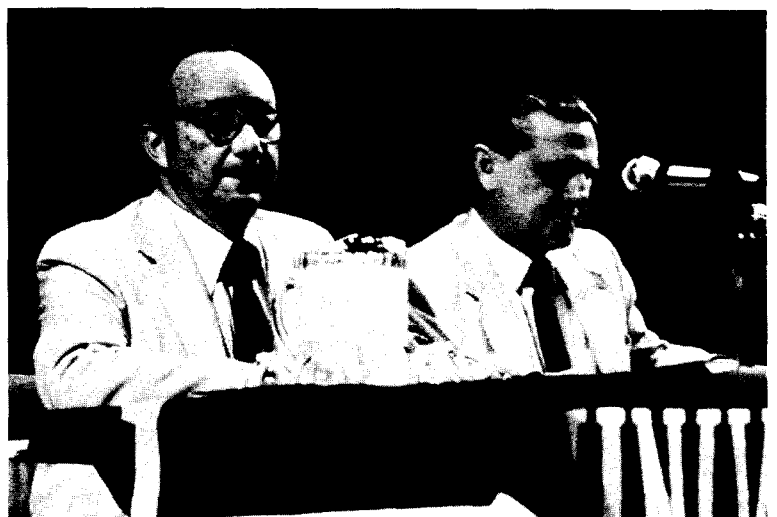
*Literacy . . . I care.*



*I'll send it to you in a plain brown wrapper.*



*The Powers that be.*



*$E=MC^2$*



*R and R at Rackham.*



*A model of student-teacher interaction.*



*Run that past me once more.*



*Turn taking.*



*Arizona in Michigan.*



*And we have only six more hours of dancing to go.*



*Cocktails on the terrace.*



*2-step to literacy.*



*Where did you get that hat?*



*The Chicago Connection.*



*Where did you get that hat?*



*A call for papers on Literacy and Dancing.*

## Workshop II

After the Conference, out-of-state participants bid farewell to one another and to their Michigan colleagues. Although 165 teachers left Ann Arbor, 150 teachers from 97 different high schools, community colleges, colleges, and universities throughout the state of Michigan remained for Workshop II. During a barbeque supper on Saturday evening they relaxed before study sessions began in earnest on Sunday morning.

Following a format familiar to most of them from previous years, Michigan teachers probed further into their study of the teaching of writing. At the closing session on Tuesday, these Michigan teachers decided to continue the tradition of coming together annually for mutual instruction and discussion. (See Donald Morse's article in this issue of *forum*, p. 59).



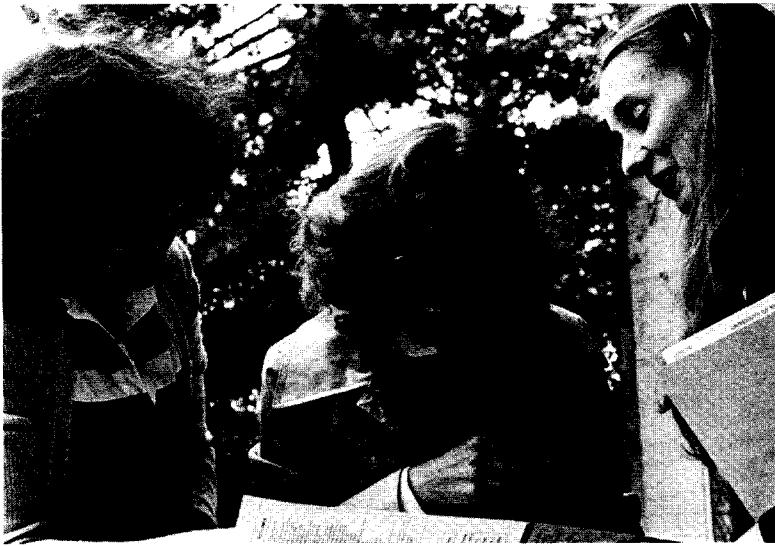
*Where did you get that hat?*



*Persuasive discourse.*



*Writing teachers need an audience too.*



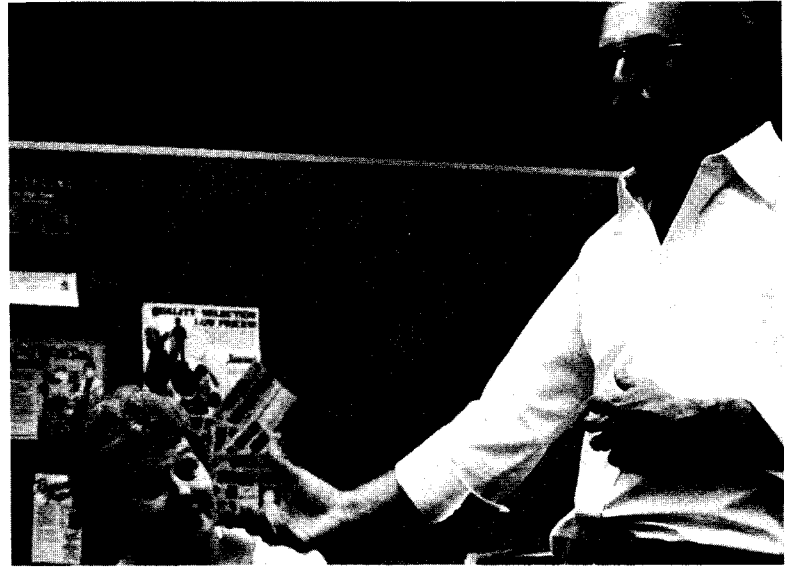
*Finding the MAPS.*



*Breaking for phenomenological coffee.*



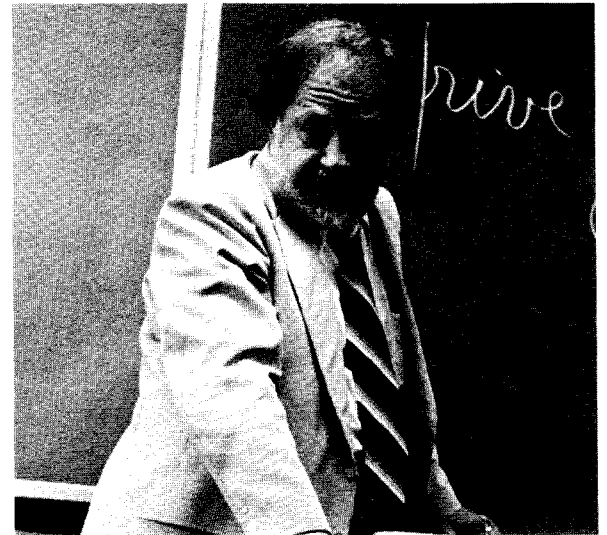
*Time to set up the next party.*



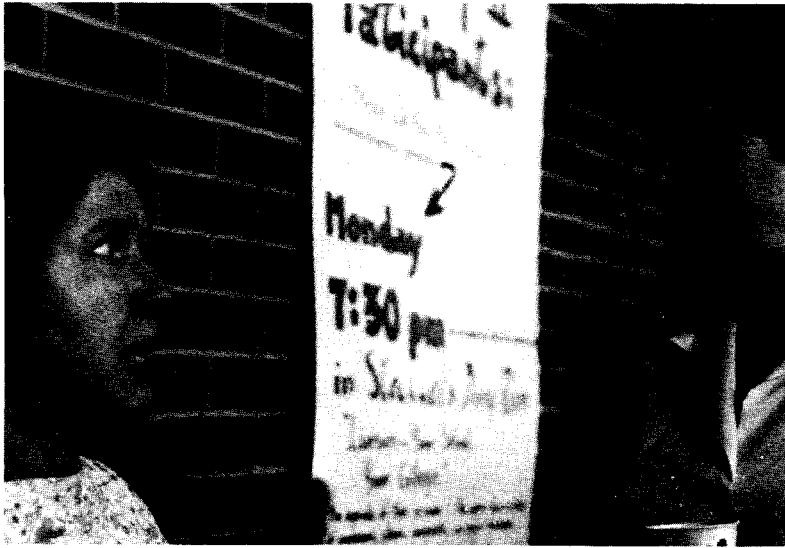
*On the other hand . . .*



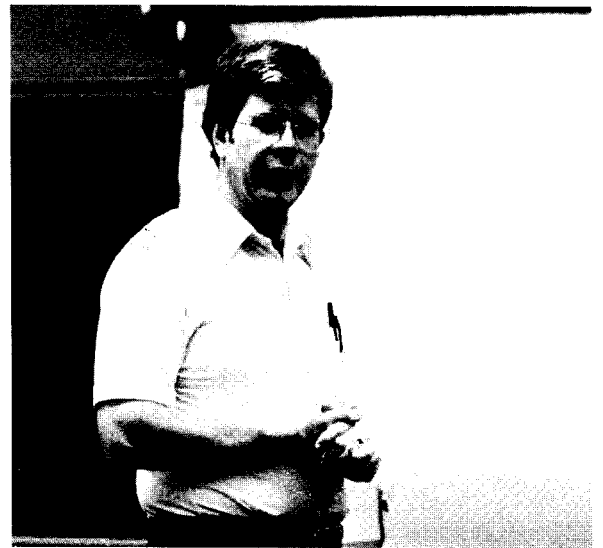
*The Model Teacher*



*Eight ball in the corner pocket.*



*If this is Monday, it must be Piaget?*



*Young at 'art.*



*Bring me your comma-tossed.*



*Vygotsky wouldn't set it up that way.*



*Where did everybody go?*



*Literacy beyond the 1980's.*

# AFTER THE TALK, THE WRITING

*Editor's note: After the Conference and Workshops were over, several participants shared their impressions of Literacy in the 1980's with me; they have given me permission to share them with you.*

## Plain Language: Despite the Ph.D., You Can Still Speak English at ECB

Edward Johnson  
Carson City-Crystal High School  
Carson City, Michigan

One important point that far too many educators ignore by omission or design is the need to speak to their audience. Considering the great concern that teachers of writing profess to have for audience, this lack of attention is ironic if not arrogant. Several speeches at the Conference on **Literacy in the 1980's** were presented in terms and language unfamiliar to me and, I suspect, to many of the other teachers present at the Conference.

We teachers who attend the ECB summer workshops come because we have a genuine interest in the teaching of writing and a very real need to improve our skills. Most of us have neither the time nor the facilities to pursue statistical studies and a wide variety of theoretical applications concerning the processes of writing. We are far too busy handling oppressive work loads, indifferent students, unsupportive administrators, and a hostile public to have the energy to engage in esoteric research.

This does not mean that we are not interested in research and theory, but that our lack of familiarity with these areas necessitates a clear, concise reporting of them to us. Most of all we need practical applications of research and theory that will renew our enthusiasm for teaching and enable us to be more effective in our classrooms.

Some speakers did recognize our desire for the practical. They spoke to **us**; their sense of audience clearly defined their use of language. Dan Fader, Jay Robinson, and Richard Bailey, for example, gave lively, interesting presentations that found their audience without a note of condescension. Toby Fulwiler and Art Young presented Britton's theory of writing to us in a logical, concrete manner, linking the theory to practice. Even the complex subject of context shaping became concrete and interesting through Alton Becker's powerful involvement with his audience. These educators know what others have failed to recognize: Dialogue about education need not be couched in mystic terms accessible to only the privileged **insiders**.

## The Pilgrimage

Luanne Baldrige  
Seaholm High School  
Birmingham, Michigan

"Vacation" and devoted English teachers journey to the ECB workshop. Sessions, lectures mostly, begin. Occasionally, a presentation seems "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing"; most, however, offer support for what teachers are already doing or new road maps suggesting courses that might be charted to meet students' needs.

The static of realities — large classes, varied preparations, endless papers, committee work, extra-curricular responsibilities, "problem" students — interferes with the reception of the word from the mountain. The frustration of learning about the time, expertise, and attention which is lavished upon the comparatively insignificant problems of the "worst" of the "cream of the crop" at The University in contrast to the time, expertise, and attention which are available for the problems of elementary and secondary students' gives way a bit to the hope that the work of the ECB will demonstrate to local school boards that class size, teacher load, individual attention, and cross-disciplinary writing *do* matter.

Once ingested, all the bits and chunks of intellectual health food and junk food settle into over-stuffed brains to be digested later. Words of encouragement and re-enforcement are tucked away in secret spots to nourish convictions questioned, doubted, ignored — "back home." And the pilgrims move on.

## Many Mansions

Mary Ann Walters  
Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Most of us live in single rooms, unaware that those rooms are part of a mansion or, even, of "many mansions." When we attend conferences, we help each other refurbish our rooms and re-arrange the furniture; the walls, the spaces, the dimensions remain fixed. Most of the speakers at **Literacy in the 1980's** were helpful decorators, suggesting Piaget modern or Skinner provincial or *nouveau* Chomsky or MAPS contemporary. A few of the speakers, however, opened doors to new rooms.



The two scientists, Paul Weiss and Paul Strassman, opened the door to an altogether different room. The walls, the spaces, the dimensions of the room to which they pointed were different from the ones familiar to us. Most of us peered cautiously through the door and recoiled in fear. The room seemed dark and cluttered with strange items clustered in an electronic setting in which the languages of trade and exchange were *Cobol*, *Forteau*, and *Français*. Horrible. Surely we would be obsolete in such a world. Surely we would not be the masters of 10,000 slaves, as Mr. Strassman kindly suggested, but would instead be the slaves of electronic masters. Unable to focus in the dark room, we retreated and laughed. We caricatured the scientists. We clapped when Mr. Salomon protested our being plugged into the walls; we strengthened our *esprit de corps* by making funny allusions to our electronic world. Now Good Ol' Boys, we even consoled each other by analyzing our shared burden as **Insiders**.

Our retreat would have been cozier if we could have dismissed the scientists themselves as **Outsiders**. But that was not possible. Even though they came from those frightening rooms and were, it seems, comfortable in them, we could find nothing amiss about them as people. They seemed humane, articulate, wise, and calm, very much like the best of us. Paul Strassman, the ultimate cosmopolitan, gave a perfectly elegant lecture. Perhaps it was too perfect. Good Ol' Boys find the mismanagement of visual aids an endearing quality.

We returned to our task of furniture arranging.

Then another door was opened for us, and we blinked at a bright room with no furniture at all — a sort of Zen room, one that was itself the only item. As Alton Becker spoke to us of other worlds in which our own assumptions do not function, we intuited reality in a blinding flash, as a whole, without the overlaid grids that we construct to help us “see.” The blinding moment passes as we searched our own room for furniture to place in the empty one. **Insiders** feel uncomfortable in empty rooms.

Again we looked at the one who had opened the door. Professor Becker, after all, had occupied that bright room. And there was nothing amiss about him either. He seemed, in fact, quietly luminous and serene, somewhat more so than the best of us. He was both an **Insider** and **Outsider**.

# Harmony

**Billy F. Birnie**  
**Dade County Public Schools**  
**Miami, Florida**

Do you know how it feels to sing with your sister again after years of being apart? All the good songs, with close harmony and clean rhythm: “Sentimental Journey,” “Play a Simple Melody,” “Carolina Moon,” “Chattanooga Choo-Choo.” After a few hesitant notes and missed beats, the melodies come back, the harmony sets in, the songs are as they were meant to be. That kind of harmony is what the week of 20-27 June 1981 in Ann Arbor was all about.

It was the harmony that Dr. Bill Handy explained in his course on literary criticism at the University of Texas in the early 60’s, the kind that makes you nod in assent at reading good poetry, that makes you say, “That’s what I would have said if I could have found the words.” It is the harmony you feel at hearing someone with authority say what you have always believed about teaching. It is the harmony you discover at exploring exciting new ideas with exciting new friends.

I said to Judy Weiner the last day we were in Ann Arbor together — only half in jest: “Dammit, I didn’t come to this meeting to question all that I’ve done in the last twenty years — to examine my entire professional life — all I wanted to get were some more formulas!”

Formulas I didn’t get. Questions I did. Important questions — What am I doing with my influence as a teacher of writing? Am I helping students to become **insiders** or **outsiders**, winners or losers? I have the sense that I am not the only one in my profession asking these questions. Those whom I admire most are asking the same questions I am.

I am not the same teacher I was when I went to Ann Arbor. I believe I shall be better than I was — a better teacher, perhaps, a better person for asking crucial questions with others who care about the teaching of literacy.

The harmony was close. The melody was clear.

# AND WRITING, AND WRITING, AND . . .

Lynn Jett  
Scottsdale High School  
Scottsdale, Arizona



Stochwell Hall  
University of Mich.  
Ann Arbor, Mich.  
June 21, 1981

Dear Mom,

I have just checked into the dorm and have given it a thorough exploration. What a PLACE! It looks like a miniature castle with huge wooden double doors, beamed ceilings and tiled floors in the lobby.

The lounge has bright blue carpeting and plush furniture covered in reds, purples and blues; it's so big my entire house would fit in it. There are floor to ceiling leaded glass windows that look inward to a courtyard and outward to a balcony that overlooks the tennis courts.

My room is great - small and spartan, and it makes me feel just like a Freshman in college again. I'm delighted to learn our beds will be made every day (not that I'd be inclined to do it myself, think?) We also get fresh towels everyday. Pretty uptown! The bathrooms are down the hall. I guess I can survive, but I'm

(2)



were glad I bought that robe. There are only women or young men come floor, but the men please. The people in the ECB are so helpful. The staff are so helpful. The minute I walked in and gave them my name, they gave me my registration materials and made me feel right at home. They even had an iron available!

The schedule looks grueling. He is going to be in class ALL DAY. There are large groups, small groups (whatever they are), but I'm excited. I think I'm going to learn a lot. Besides, there are people here whose work I've read and whose work I've admired for years. (I hope I have enough nerve to ask Leo Dell for his autograph.)

Oh, I checked out the cafeteria. It's on the ground floor and has a beautiful view of the tennis courts and the athletic complex. There's a salad bar. (Maybe I can have some weight.) It looks like we can even eat outside if we want. I think the weather is going to be fine. It was chilly (by Arizona standards)

3  
When I arrived today, I'm sure glad I brought some good walking shoes. I think we're going to be doing quite a bit of hiking - the lecture halls are several blocks away.

Speaking of hiking I did check out the arboretum; it's just a few blocks away from Stockwell Hall, and has wonderful winding paths and gorgeous trees. At the upper end there must be an acre of peonies and a huge frisbee court. Gosh, there's a magnificent cemetery directly across the street from the dorm, so I won't have any excuse not to get out and exercise.

Since I was one of the first to arrive, I've really had a chance to explore the campus. I LOVE it here - it's so green and lush. Since the campus was founded in 1815, there are some very old buildings. The law quad looks like it belongs to an English university. When I went inside the law library I had to stifle a desire to genuflect. Sunlight was streaming through the stained glass windows and there was definitely a reverential hush. No wonder the alumni demanded that the new addition be built completely underground - they didn't want to

4  
spoil the ambience. The campus itself is huge and meanders all over the city. I've never been on a campus where there is no definite dividing line between it and the surrounding community. I guess the city and everything I need is just a few blocks away. I've already located the bookstores, cleaners, clothing stores and the choicest-looking BARS. There are all sorts of cute boutiques. Thank heaven I brought my charge cards.

Now, you would love these old houses - I can't believe the size of some of them. Some are four stories tall with turrets - I wish I could get inside one of them to look around. They're so big, several have been turned into fraternity houses. Well, I have to run. The Arizona group is due to arrive in a few minutes and I want to meet their bus.

Love,

Ly

P.S. This place makes me feel like a preppy. I may have to buy some penny loafers!

July 1, 1981

TO: MEMBERS OF THE PHOENIX DELEGATION  
FROM: MICHIGAN REUNION COMMITTEE  
RE: MICHIGAN REUNION

Don't forget we're all meeting in the Language and Literature Building at Arizona State University on Friday, July 10, to exchange materials and ideas from Michigan. Be sure to bring copies of your small group work for everyone.

We also hope to form a support group to share ideas with our colleagues. The Greater Phoenix Area Writing Project has asked us to report on our experiences at their first meeting in September, and the Arizona English Teachers Association would like some of us to do presentations at the Fall Conference.

See you Friday. Let's plan on lunch afterwards. Don't forget to bring your Michigan pictures. (One of our number, who prefers to remain nameless, is offering cash for any pictures of William Coles.)

Page 7

*"Library v Family" Dear Judge*

Thursday July 25th

Notes prepared these notes

- 1) Spoken notes
- 2) notes in place
- 3) ?

Children are different today than 20 yrs ago

March 10, 1981

lack ability to imagine

Our group

Children must attend to read other

Our family collection

no adults models for reading/writing

Kids watch TV 6 hours a day - except

in terms with preschool children -

they watch 8 hours per day

lect autograph

Wendy

Wendy

Wendy



# SCOTTSDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCOTTSDALE HIGH SCHOOL  
7410 E. INDIAN SCHOOL ROAD  
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85251

(602) 949-6527

July 2, 1981

Mrs. Evelyn Caskey, Principal  
Scottsdale High School  
7410 E. Indian School Road  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Dear Mrs. Caskey,

I just returned from the University of Michigan where I participated in a week-long writing workshop sponsored by the English Composition Board. I had a wonderful time, met some delightful people and learned a great deal that I think can benefit not only the English department but our whole school.

If we could meet for lunch next Tuesday, I could tell you all about the week in more detail and share with you some ideas I have for improving the quality and quantity of students' writing at Scottsdale High.

I met some teachers from Minnesota who have been working with their faculty for the past year to encourage writing across the curriculum. They've given me a copy of the survey they used to determine how their faculty felt the total school writing program could be improved. If you like the survey and the idea, perhaps we can talk about using it.

I've enclosed a copy of the survey, a description of the University of Michigan's writing program and goals, and a copy of forum, the newsletter published by the ECB.

I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday.

Sincerely,  
*Lynn Jett*  
Lynn Jett

3 enc.

Journal Entry Thursday June 25, 1981

2:30 A.M.) I can't believe I'm still awake. I just got back from a long walk to the lake with a bunch of crazies from Arizona, the Gals, and Florida - we spent the entire walk singing, telling stupid jokes, and reciting "America" that was preceded by the wine and cheese party for the keynote speakers, in the rest of the week. (I think that's where this whole thing started.)

After the reception began to die down, somebody got the bright idea to go for a "walk." I know we hiked four miles - then it rained and we got soaked. He ended up the evening by coming back to Stowell and polishing off what was left of the wine, cheese, and beer.

I know I should get some sleep, but if I don't write all this down I probably won't get a chance until I get home. I can't believe how busy they've kept us. They work me to DEATH by day in groups and then party me to death at night. I've been running on nervous energy since Monday.

I'm learning so much! In my workshop with Bernie Van't Hull and Jay Robinson were studying the elements of oral language in written language.

I have a new perspective on students' writing now. I'm beginning to realize that what I thought were students' insurmountable problems with syntax and diction are little more than the conventions of spoken English cast into written English - the problems are not so serious or insurmountable as I thought.

EVERYBODY I've talked to is delighted with the workshops. There's not all getting the same information in each group, which I think is good. Even though we all get to hear the various workshop leaders, each seems to have his/her own pet topic for small groups. The Arizona delegation has four or five people in each group and we've already agreed to meet when we get home to exchange dittos and information.

I haven't been this excited about teaching school in a long time. I have learned so much practical stuff that I can take right back to the classroom - I'll have to get another suitcase to haul away all the handouts. I thought this whole workshop was going to be theoretical, but I can hardly wait to get back and try out some of these new ideas. One of the goals of the ECB faculty

6902 East Avalon Drive  
Scottsdale, Arizona 8  
July 3, 1981

Cafeteria Staff  
Stockwell Hall  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 04109

Dear Friends:

Thanks so much for all the TLC you gave me this past week while I was a guest of the English Composition Board. Your friendly, courteous manner and your wonderful meals plus your mid-morning and afternoon snacks made the stay extra special. I have lived in horror of cafeteria food since I graduated from college, and I was really apprehensive the first time I went down for a meal. But the salad bar, fresh fruit and the three entrees eased my fears and, I'm afraid, expanded my waist line.

I have two requests: could you send me the recipe for those wonderful chocolate chip cookies you served for the afternoon snack? Also, next year, might I suggest that you have a dieter's table available. Since I gained eight pounds I can't get into any clothes.

Sincerely

Lynn Jett

Would you also send me the ingredients in your Reuben sandwich?

is to help us learn how to make good assignments - one of the major contentions being that sometimes I get poor direction. I know now I have been guilty of giving poor instructions - many times. The ECB assignments are really focusing on some of my writing assignments. I am going to get some help tomorrow. I have a lot of the workshop papers on their research on writing. I'll hear about it on Friday, I hope I can get it.

Saturday, July 27, 1981

Ms. Teri Adams  
Workshop Coordinator  
Literacy in the 80's  
The University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Dear Ms. Adams,

Enclosed is a bill for the extra three hours that our band played for your group on June 26. For English teachers, those dudes swing pretty good. Next time could you give us some advance warning so we can rest up.

Sincerely,

*Cismo Nelson*  
Cismo Nelson  
Band Manager

P.S. I'll never believe the guy in the tuxedo and red bow tie is an English teacher. Too much hip action.

6902 East Avalon Drive  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
July 29, 1981

Ms. Patti Stock, Editor  
fforum  
University of Michigan  
1025 Angell Hall  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Dear Patti:

Got pretty busy here as soon as I came home from Ann Arbor. First there was the minor Indian uprising and one of my cats was wounded slightly.

Then it turned really hot (120°) and that was when the rattlesnakes tried to get into the house to cool off. Spent a lot of time just bagging and taking them back to the desert. (Can't kill them; they're an endangered species.)

Anyway, I just threw some stuff together that I had written and decided to send it to you. The letter from Michigan, but I thought you'd enjoy them.

Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

*Lynn M. Jett*  
Lynn M. Jett

Page two  
August 29, 1981

My experience in Michigan was tremendous. I learned so much about teaching writing and making good assignments. I'm delighted that I was able to share what I learned with members of the curriculum committee.

I hope you are planning the same type of workshop for next year. I would like to attend again and several colleagues, unable to go this year, would also like to attend.

Again, thank you for the opportunity. I thought you and other ECB Board members would like to know what far-reaching effects your program has already had.

Sincerely,

*Lynn Jett*  
Lynn Jett



## SCOTTSDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCOTTSDALE,  
ARIZONA 85251

(602) 949-6527

August 29, 1981

SCOTTSDALE HIGH SCHOOL  
7410 E. INDIAN SCHOOL ROAD

Dr. Dan Fader  
Members of the English Composition Board  
1025 Angell Hall  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Dear Dan and Friends:

I want to tell you how much I appreciated the opportunity to attend the University of Michigan and participate in the ECB's program. The experience not only rejuvenated my interest in teaching writing, but also will have far-reaching effects on my school district.

When I got back to Arizona, I began working with a curriculum committee to revise my school district's scope and sequence for composition, grammar and literature. I think you will be proud of the results:

The committee established a minimum writing proficiency that all students will have to meet before graduating from Scottsdale Public Schools. Student writing samples will be collected in the spring and evaluated holistically by members of the English department at each high school. Any students not meeting the minimum writing requirement at grade level will be enrolled in a Writing Workshop until they meet the minimum writing requirement. Students not meeting the minimum proficiency by the end of their senior year will not be allowed to graduate.

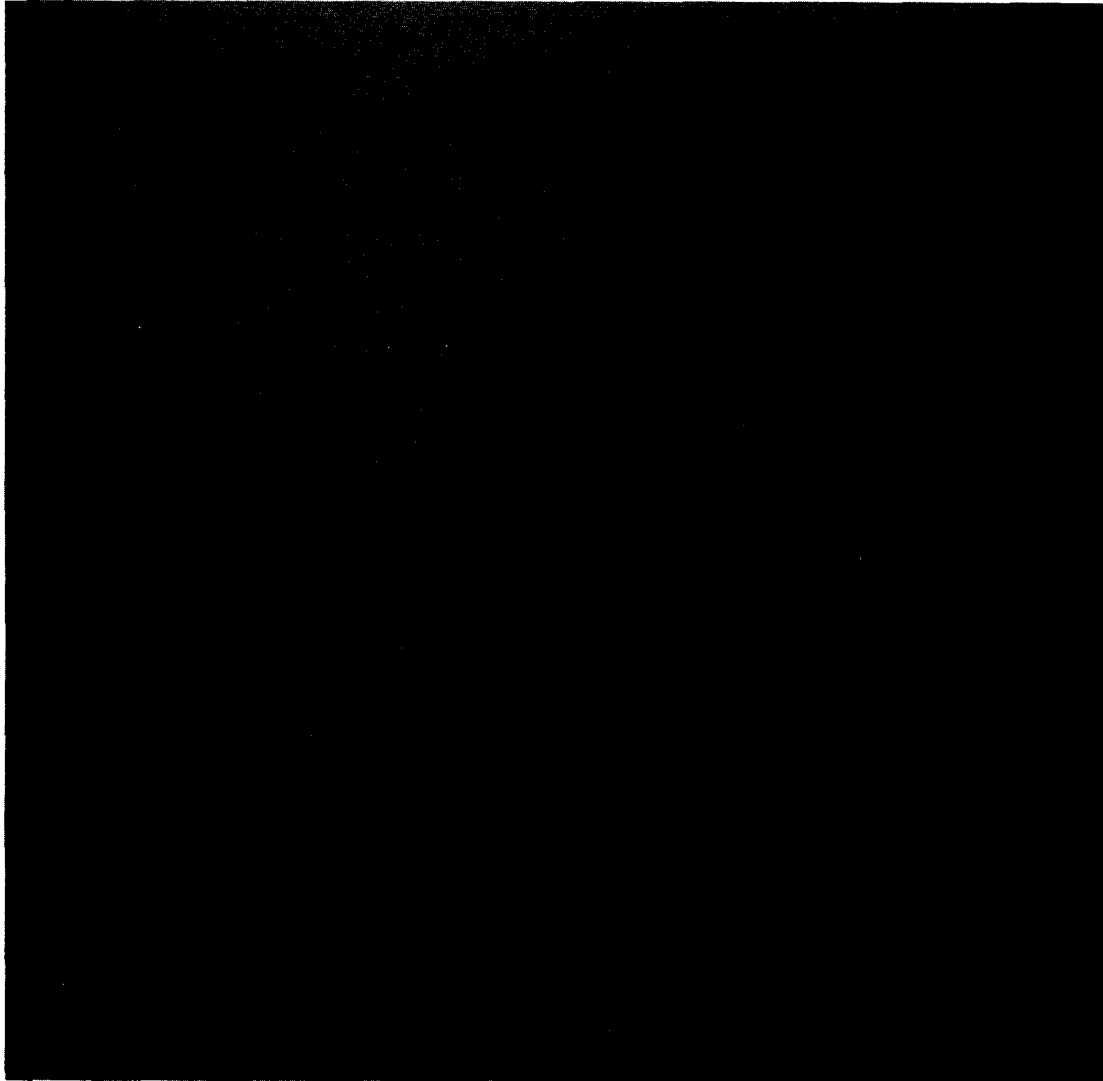
In addition, the committee established that writing should be a minimum of 50 percent of the English curriculum at the high school level. The committee also developed model writing assignments that district teachers could use to encourage writing in the classroom.

All the above is, of course, contingent on school board approval. The committee members feel confident that the board will adopt our suggestions. If the school board does adopt our suggestions, the minimum writing requirement will be phased in over a five year period so that the class of 1986 will be the first class accountable for the minimum proficiency. We envision next year (1981-82) as an experimental year in which we institute the program and amend it based on suggestions from faculty members.

Writing has always been an important part of the English curriculum in my district, but will become even more so now that the English curriculum has been revised.

# Forum's New Word Contest

Bernard Van't Hul  
Department of English  
University of Michigan



Literacy in the 1980's was a verbal feast of sorts.

From Arizona and Minnesota and Ohio and Texas and Washington, D.C. and Wisconsin and a dozen other states they came, the participants of Workshop I — almost all of them in time for dinner in Stockwell Hall. Table talk was rich with regional linguistic variety in tales of drought and flood and straitened budgets and airline disconnections back home. But jet lag had not been allowed for on the Workshop Schedule. The first Workshop session was underway in the Francis Building before the kitchen staff had washed the dishes of dinner in Stockwell Hall.

And then began the flood of specialized diction<sup>1</sup> that would pervade both Workshop sessions and Conference speeches. Their socks and other things still unpacked in their luggage, Workshop participants lent ears to the names of *Ong* and *inner Speech* and *ego-centrism* and *orality* and *Vygotsky* and *Piaget* and a *voice*, somehow in place.

<sup>1</sup>The exotic proper names and other hard words that enrich our vocational discourse with insight as with phatic communion. In one Workshop session, the *specialized diction* of our profession was distinguished from the *gobbledy-gook* of others.

The rain of such names was unrelenting. Before the end of the second day of the Conference, a competition for conferees had suggested itself; and the following notice was posted in the Stockwell Lounge:

Response was gratifying: Entries trickled in by ones; and in the chaos of ad-hoc planning, execution failed only somewhat.<sup>2</sup> It was in the farewell session of Workshop II, at 1:00 on Tuesday, June 30, that selected entries of the extant (in-State) ones were read aloud,<sup>3</sup> and the winning contributors identified. The criterion for judgment of entries was clarified as follows: How long had the Judge of the entries known each contributor of them?

#### A Selection of Entries

**aphthoniosis, n.** logorrhea occasioned by elephantiasis of the rhetorical cortex, commonly followed by atrophy of that organ.

Barry Pegg  
Michigan Technological University  
Houghton, Michigan

**clunking, n.** the skilled editor's deletion of inner vocal information so as to facilitate an easy, public cognitive style. v., to delete inner vocal information so as to facilitate an easy, cognitive style.

Donald Morse  
Oakland University  
Rochester, Michigan

**ECB'er, n.** a member of the elitist citizen's band, usually a rhetor-neck who raps in conferences with fellow ECB'ers; one who informs another of hazardous transitions, inclement conclusions, or otherwise smokey discourse hiding behind blackboards on freeways, with the aim of gaining the write-of-way.

Litsa Marlos Varonis  
ECB

**Lingua d'Frank, n.** the imitative discourse of devotees of the silver-haired guru from Arizona State University.

Barbara Couture  
Wayne State University

**logger rhythm, n.** the pace at which two persons, looking for trees in the ECB forest, might operate a bucksaw.

Steve J. Van Der Weele  
Calvin College  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

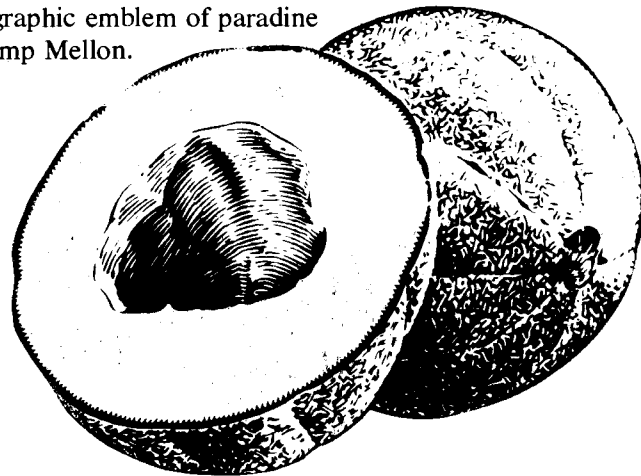
<sup>2</sup>That is to say, Stockwell Staff cleaned up the "mess" after the almost all-night dance in the Lounge. With the mess went most of the entries submitted by Workshop I participants — an ill wind for all but the in-state contributors of Workshop II.

<sup>3</sup>Bowlerized, it's true. Not all entries — verbatim — were in fact fit, then to be read aloud or here to appear in print. *Literacy in the 1980's* was an intense learning experience; and one *did* have to be there.

**mastoidbation, n.** euphoria resulting from listening to the voice in your ear. syn. auto auditoria.

Daniel Fader  
Barbra Morris  
ECB

**paradine, n.** sumptuous dining. e.g. 'The six days of dining in Stockwell Hall were an exercise in paradine.' cf. The universal graphic emblem of paradine is a plump Mellon.



**paradine lost, n.** The days in Ann Arbor together being over — the time to go home.

Nancy Taylor  
Hope College  
Holland, Michigan

The *fforum*-winning first-prize entry was conceived by Mary Ann Walters of Calvin College and defined by her colleague George Graham Harper:

**ongst, n.** the acute anxiety occasioned by one's inability to find an excuse, in conversation with one's peers, for invoking the name or even the titles of the works of Walter J. Ong, S.J.

---

**Martin** (continued from page 15)

teachers. It is a matter of bringing personal involvement back into the education scene and thereby raising the level of achievement. To see journal writing and its attendant directions as just another kind of topic set by the teachers and marked in the usual way would be to mistake the situation totally. It is in effect a different curriculum which carries with it different forms of writing.

Of course journals are not the only form of writing that students should do; nor is it invariably bad for teachers to set a topic for the whole class to do. But it is suggested that unassessed journals — written for the teacher and chiefly about the work in which the students are engaged — should form a major element in their writing. Where journals have been used in this way they have yielded rewards for students and teachers alike. The effect is to alter significantly the all-too-common authoritarian contexts for students' writing. Improved contexts — of reflection and conversation — significantly affect the students' freedom, as they learn on higher and higher levels, "to put down what's in their heads."



# Oakland University Offers To Host Writing Workshop '82

Donald E. Morse  
Department of Rhetoric  
Oakland University

At the concluding session of the ECB's 1981 Writing Workshop, Daniel Fader introduced Marie Brown, Stevenson High School, Sterling Heights; and Donald Morse, Department of Rhetoric, Oakland University, who proposed holding a similar workshop next year at Oakland University, if the university is able to get foundation support so that delegates are able to attend Workshop '82 for the same nominal fee as they have paid the last three years. In order to have a successful application in these lean times, Donald Morse asked teachers and administrators in high schools and community colleges to send letters of support for a 1982 conference; and he invited them to consider co-sponsoring it. Becoming a co-sponsor involves obtaining an official letter of support for the conference from your high school or community college. These letters are urgently needed and should be sent to Donald E. Morse.

Workshop participants also discussed the focus for the follow-up program to the English Composition Board's three previous workshops. One proposal receiving favorable comment was a workshop stressing "What Works and What Doesn't Work in the Classroom." This topic provides an opportunity to review a number of different approaches and techniques, and the occasion for teachers to learn from one another. The workshop would also feature a nationally prominent scholar and teacher of writing, such as this summer's guest Frank D'Angelo. (The time and format of the workshop would be similar to those of the last three years.) Between 40 and 50 high-school, community-college, and university teachers volunteered to help plan this 1982 workshop. If you would like to help, write Donald Morse or Marie Brown.

The preliminary planning session will be held at Meadow Brook Hall, Oakland University, on October 9 and 10, 1981. The meeting will include Friday night dinner, followed by a talk and discussion of writing led by a prominent teacher of composition. Saturday morning will feature workshops on the teaching of writing, the teaching of reading, and alternatives to traditional senior English courses. After a coffee break there will be a discussion, "1982 Summer Writing Workshop: Plans and Proposals." The group will break into small task forces, each one assigned a specific problem, including publicity, recruiting of resource people, and applying for grants. Twenty official delegates, representing individual schools and colleges, will be the guests of Oakland University for this preliminary conference. All interested teachers are most welcome and encouraged to attend. The cost of meals and room will be nominal. We hope that a stimulating speech followed by discussion, workshops fo-

cusssing on classroom problems and opportunities, and small-group discussion to plan our workshop will attract not only those who wish to be co-signers of the grant application next year, but all teachers of writing who can join us.

For more information about the proposed Spring Workshop, contact Marie Brown, Stevenson High School, 39701 Dodge Park Road, Sterling Heights, Michigan, 48078, or Donald Morse, Department of Rhetoric, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan 48063. If you are enthusiastic about a 1982 Writing Workshop for high school, community-college, and university teachers, here is how you can help:

1. *Write a letter on your school or college stationery endorsing the idea of a conference and emphasizing its potential value for you as a teacher of writing. We will use these letters in soliciting foundations for their support. Address the letter to Donald E. Morse.*
2. *Volunteer your time to help during the year with planning, publicity, or recruiting participants in the conference. We would like to have an official representative of the workshop in every high school and community college.*
3. *Be certain that your school has an **official representative** at the fall planning session of **October 9 and 10, 1981**, at Meadow Brook Hall, Oakland University. Plan to attend this preliminary conference yourself, either as your official school representative or as an engaged participant. The setting will be a beautiful one. And we promise that the program, fellowship, and conversation will be worth your time.*

# Letters to the Editor

## To *forum* Readers:

Two conferences held in Michigan at the close of the '80-'81 academic year complemented one another remarkably well in locating the position of current language arts instruction and pointing toward the direction it must take in the future. At April's conference of the Michigan Council of Teachers of English the emphasis of the keynote address, workshops, and presentations was on the connections among the "sub-topics of English" — reading, writing, grammar, and literature — and between English and other disciplines. In theoretical discussions of these relationships and in explication of classroom practices such relationships suggest, presentors at the MCTE conference were able to offer complex but viable approaches to language arts instruction.

The second conference, the English Composition Board's June conference on literacy, presented a series of lectures drawing on findings in rhetoric, linguistics, reading, cognitive psychology, media, business, technology, speech, and education, all relative to the meaning of literacy and the means to achieve it. Though not all the experts were in agreement about the definition of literacy and obstacles to obtaining it, all were convinced that it would play an increasingly significant role in the future and that its complexity transcended the limits of individual disciplines, both in application and as a topic of study.

Taken together these two conferences point out the inefficiency of narrow approaches to literacy instruction. The compartmentalizing and pigeonholing that has divided and subdivided educational study for so long has passed the point where constrained expertise can effectively promote the broader demands of general literacy. Together the findings and focus of these conferences confirm one of the major premises of Stephen Judy's study, *The ABCs of Literacy*, that "the teaching of literacy must increasingly become an interdisciplinary effort."

In light of that confirmation I would like to direct our attention to a second premise of that book: "Change in literacy instruction must begin with individual teachers and local

schools, spreading outward, rather than being imposed by external agencies." I am encouraged that such change can occur by the very fact that such conferences as those of MCTE and ECB have taken place and that others, like the MCTE state conference on the theme of "Teaching, Testing, and Technology," scheduled for October, 1982, in East Lansing, are consolidating the efforts of these gatherings and taking them forward. I am encouraged as well by the wealth of talent and expertise that teachers in Michigan are able to draw on at every level, from local school districts through colleges and universities, and in so many areas vital to the advancement of literacy. Michigan language arts educators are highly active in sharing and disseminating the insights and scholarship on literacy; access to current research is readily available throughout the state as are teachers and scholars willing to serve as consultants and correspondants. In sum, the resources of individual teachers and local schools willing to begin changing literacy instruction are abundant and accessible throughout Michigan.

On behalf of the Michigan Council of Teachers of English, I invite those teachers and administrators interested in finding consultants and sponsoring workshops to use MCTE as an agency for information on literacy resources throughout the state. Of course, I hope too that every *forum* reader will become a member of MCTE (P.O. Box 892, Rochester, MI 48063) and that they will attend regional and state-wide meetings; I am convinced that activity in professional organizations enhances our teaching and would encourage membership and participation in NCTE as well. But principally I am interested in creating a network of individual teachers who will help one another advance the cause of literacy in Michigan. Our success — and our students' success in a future where literacy will be even more vital than it is now — depends upon the willingness of each of us to draw upon the resources waiting to be used.

Robert Root, President, MCTE  
Department of English  
Central Michigan University  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859

## FORUM

English Composition Board  
1025 Angell Hall  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Ann Arbor MI  
Permit 144