

Newsletter



Volume 27, Number 4 Spring, 2008

Introducing ... Celebrate Literacy, Volume 9 The "must-have" collection of the summer!

There is something for everyone in this NEW eclectic compilation of melodious titles.

World renowned artists of words, Shelley Harwayne and Jack Gantos, kick off this collection while crooning their way into your hearts!

You'll be moving all day long with this title: *On Your Feet! Action Strategies to Improve Student Understanding and Enjoyment*



SHELLEY HARWAYNE

Back by popular demand is funny man Tony Rotondo with his two hits, *The Name Game* and *It's in the Mail*. You are sure to love this special delivery!

For true inspiration, don't miss Vicki Meigs' *Publication Inspiration*. This one will give "techno" a run for its money!

You'll make strong connections with this time-

less classic: *Interacting with Informational Text*, performed by Lori Schmidt and Andre Washington. They bring old school in touch with new school!

You'll love *Unpacking Text: Comprehension Strategies for Independent Readers*, performed by Maryellen Kenney. Pack your bags for a great ride!

The Amazing Alison Green will knock your socks off with *From Morphemes to Meaning: Vocabulary Instruction that Works*. You'll be wishing you had heard this one years ago!

The iconic Rose Capelli and Lynne Dorfman bring you *Feed Them Words: Growing Readers Through Strategic Vocabulary Instruction*. You won't leave hungry!

Rita DiCarne and Vicki Steinberg deliver two new



JACK GANTOS

powerful ballads with *Content Area Literacy: Engaging Students with Text Part I and II*.

BIG things will happen when you experience

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New Courses - New Locations

PAWLP will offer 7 new courses this summer in addition to many of our most popular ones.

New at WCU's Graduate Business Center are *Reading, and Writing in Digital Spaces: Considering Audience, Mode and Purpose with Electronic Media*, a course for teachers 5 - 12, taught by the Project's Technology Liason, Diane Barrie. In *Popu-*

lar Mechanics, 4 - 12, Tony Rotondo will show you how to painlessly ease grammar lessons into writing instruction. *Strategies for Teaching Literature*, for teachers 4 - 12, will be coordinated by PAWLP co-director, Diane Dougherty. Cecelia Evans has designed a new one-credit course entitled *Hand-in-Hand: Parents and Teachers* that will help teach

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Summer Courses Schedule on pages 4 - 5

**FROM THE
DIRECTOR
ANDREA FISHMAN**

The Efficacy of I

“Educate the parents. It comes down to that... Teachers can only do what they can do in 7.5 hours a day.”

That’s what one eighth-grade teacher told me in January, 2007. It was during his initial interview for PAWLP’s Mind the Gap program in a Montgomery County middle school. I had asked what his expectations were for the program, which involves parents as well as teachers. Why had he volunteered to participate? He was adamant about the need to hold parents responsible for students’ performance, academic and behavioral. “Bottom line: I’ve come to the realization parents aren’t only affecting their kids as kids. They’re shaping them as the parents they will become... What in the hell are these people thinking?” he rhetorically concluded.

Fast forward to February, 2008, and the same teacher’s year-end interview. We didn’t talk about what he had said a year earlier. I just wanted to know what he was aware of learning in year one of the initiative. The question: What have you learned about yourself?

“I can’t do anything about the parents. They’re in their 30’s, 40’s, 50’s. They’re not going to change what they think. The ones I can change are the ones I actually interact with every day. I look back now and wonder, ‘What was I thinking?’. How did I come into

the initiative thinking that way?”

He went on to explain that part of this realization came from looking at his own family. “My parents are the definition of enablers with my older brothers,” he explained, “[so] I don’t attempt to talk to them any more about what they should be doing with my younger brothers. I do talk to my [younger] brothers, though. They’re the ones I can really have some affect on.”

It was his own life that taught him this lesson, not an article he read or an expert he heard speak. It was reflection on his own experience that released this expertise, that taught him the power belonged not to “them” but to him. And that’s what I’ve been thinking about lately: the power of first person, the efficacy of I.

As someone who writes for publication, conducts workshops, and teaches classes, I would never deny the importance of third-person-focused education. We all need to learn what we can’t know just by living our lives. This is, after all, the Information Age. We live in a “knowledge economy” where our stock-in-trade is measured by credentials derived from schooling. I’ve gone that route myself, and every day I help others travel the same road.

But watch your colleagues at any professional meeting or conference. What is it they most want to take away? Ideas certainly, but too often ideas reified as handouts, packets, powerpoints - the “stuff” of professional learning. The more you take home, the more you take home - or so the thinking seems

to be. But what really is the “take-home” from these meetings and materials? I’m afraid it’s the kind of learning we neatly organize, staple, stack or file away, never engaging with or internalizing in ways that make us say, “I get it. And I can do something about it!”

Yet that is what we have to say - and truly know - to be effective educators. We don’t enter our classrooms in the third person any more than our students do. Nor do we teach or they learn that way. So why are impersonal, supposedly objective truths the focus of so much professional attention? How did we learn to deny ourselves a central role in our own learning?

For most of my own lengthy student experience, everything I wrote - so everything I read and thought - had to focus on other people’s ideas and be written in third-person. I didn’t know enough to have valuable ideas in high school (or so I was taught), so papers in English and Social Studies and French classes had to be about what experts thought. The same held true in college, where I was a neophyte English major, learning the ways of true New Critical masters. In my MA program, I became an apprentice with greater third-person skill but still no voice of her own. Not until I was a Ph.D. candidate did a professor want to know what I thought. And the first time one inquired, I was sufficiently startled that I asked if he was serious. Just think: I was 35 years old with 13 years of teaching experience before anyone in a position of professional authority asked me about my truth instead of telling me his and expecting me to accept and record it. If others’ experiences are anything like

mine, it's no wonder we reach for the packet instead of our journals. We've learned to read what "they" know instead of exploring what "I" know and think.

But perhaps the most insidious result of foregrounding the third-person is this: it offers what feels like a nice, safe place to hide. We can stay in the background, never putting our names or egos on the line. There seems to be no ultimate risk in doing what we're told. We may be held accountable, but can claim we're not responsible. "They" are. Fortunately or unfortunately, though, that's not entirely true. We are responsible for what we ourselves do. We know that. But a third-person world provides many opportunities to pretend that we don't.

One thing I do know is this: Teachers don't live in the same worlds as professors and pundits. Teachers live and work among very different specific realities, very different particulars. Particular students, particular families, particular faculty and staff members make up every school community in every district everywhere. Do we have things in common across settings? Of course we do. But shouldn't we become experts on our own situations first? And doesn't our expertise really lie in what we've experienced and know as ourselves? My Mind the Gap work reminds me of that truth. It suggests we all do what that eighth-grade teacher has done: stop pointing our fingers at "Them" and have the courage to say "I." It's time to stop reading and writing the world in third-person and do exactly what most teachers warned me against: find our own voices and have the courage to become first-person authors of our own lives. Then we can help our students do the same.

- *Introducing ... Celebrate Literacy*
continued from page 1, column 2

Jamie Fiermonte's *What's the BIG Idea? Thinking Deeply About Text*. You'll dive deep into your thoughts with this one!

You'll be begging for more with Teresa Moslak's *Information Please: Strategies for Teaching Informational Writing*.

Jennifer Becker will blow your mind with her latest hit, *Using Great Literature: Writing with Craft in Mind*.

Here's what people are saying
about Celebrate Literacy.
Volume 9...

"I loved Celebrate Literacy, Volumes 1 - 8, and have been waiting a WHOLE year for this one to come out!" - Dr. Andrea Fishman, PAWLP Director.

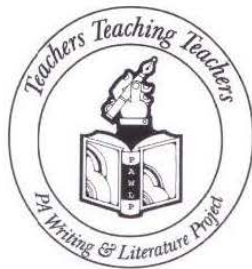
"I am so excited for Volume 9, I could just hug someone!" - Dr. Mary Buckelew, PAWLP Associate Director.

Limited time offer
ACT NOW, before June 24th,
when Celebrate Literacy,
Volume 9, goes back into the
vaults FOREVER!
Not available in stores.

Learn more at www.pawlp.org
or call 610 436-2202. Operators are standing by to take your order!

Celebrate Literacy, Volume 9
PAWLP Productions, 2008

- by Dana Ewing,
Celebrate Literacy Chairperson



- *New Courses - New Locations*
continued from page 1, column 2

ers gather ideas and strategies to involve parents in their children's education.

At the Bucks County IU, Angela Watters will coordinate *Units of Study for Writing*, a course designed to help teachers of grades 2 - 8 gain practical know-how to fill their writing curriculum with rigor and challenge.

PAWLP Co-Director Patty Koller has designed an exciting new course for teachers K - 12 entitled *Literacy in Bloom: Botanical Inspirations for Reading, Writing and Learning*. This course will be held at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square.

Another new one-credit course will be held at the Highlands Historical Society in Fort Washington. Entitled *Partnering with Children to Read, Write, and Talk History*, this course is for teachers of grades 3 - 6. Participants will work with students in PAWLP's summer youth program for part of each day.

Teachers have three locations to choose from if they want to experience our very popular museum-based course, *Visualizing Words and Worlds: Writing, Literature and Art*. For the first time this summer, the course will be offered at GoggleWorks in Reading, and will again be offered at the Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford and the James A. Michener Museum in Doylestown.

See pages 4 - 5 for the complete line-up of summer courses.

Course descriptions and registration forms may be found on-line at www.pawlp.org.

SUMMER COURSES

At West Chester University's Graduate Business Center Three credits

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (except Teacher as Writer)

MANAGING A WRITING/READING CLASSROOM, K - 8

PWP 599-02 June 23 - 27
Coordinators: Jan Pizarro and Teresa Moslak

GROWING READERS, K - 5

PWP 599-03 June 23 - 27
Coordinators: Lynne Dorfman and Rose Cappelli
Participants in the above courses will attend the Celebrate Literacy Conference as part of the class.

TEACHER AS WRITER, K - 12

This course meets 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
PWP 502-01 July 7 - 11 and 14 - 15
Coordinators: Mary Buckelew and Tony Rotondo

WRITING AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, K - 8

TAUGHT BY THE AUTHORS OF MENTOR TEXTS!
PWP 513-04 July 14 - 18
Coordinators: Lynne Dorfman and Rose Cappelli

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING, 4 - 12

PWP 503-01 July 21 - 25
Coordinators: Tina DeLiberato and Sharon Sweeney

** READING AND WRITING IN DIGITAL SPACES: CONSIDERING AUDIENCE, MODE, AND PURPOSE WITH ELECTRONIC MEDIA, 5 - 12

PWP 508-02 July 21 - 25
Coordinator: Diane Barrie

** POPULAR MECHANICS, 4 - 12

PWP 502-02 July 28 - Aug. 1
Coordinator: Tony Rotondo

** STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING LITERATURE, 4 - 12

PWP 520-02 July 28 - Aug. 1
Coordinator: Diane Dougherty

POET AS TEACHER: TEACHER AS POET, K - 12

PWP 521-02 Aug. 4 - 8
Coordinator: Don LaBranche

At the Bucks County IU, Doylestown Three credits

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

** UNITS OF STUDY FOR WRITING, 2 - 8

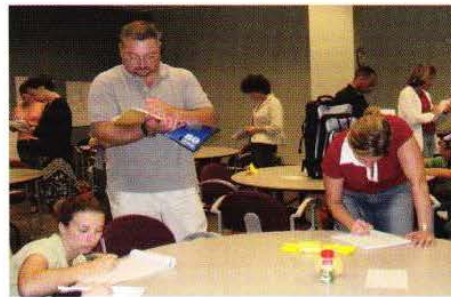
PWP 599-05 July 7 - 11
Coordinator: Angela Watters

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING, 4 - 12

PWP 503-02 July 28 - Aug. 1
Coordinators: Chris Kehan and Maria Banks

READING ESSENTIALS: TEACHING READERS WHAT REALLY MATTERS, 2 - 8

PWP 599-07 August 4 - 8
Coordinators: Chris Kehan and Angela Watters



At West Chester University's Graduate Business Center One credit

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

CELEBRATE LITERACY CONFERENCE IX, K - 12

PWP 599-01 June 24 - 25
Conference may be taken for 12 activity hours.
Cost for activity hours only:
\$185 if paid by May 30, \$235 thereafter
PAWLP Fellows pay \$150 if registered by May 30

** HAND-IN-HAND: PARENTS AND TEACHERS, K - 12

PWP 599-04 June 30 - July 1
Coordinator: Cecelia Evans

**** New Courses!**

COURSES SCHEDULE

Classes At Other Locations

Three credits, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

LINKING TECHNOLOGY WITH THE WRITING/READING CLASSROOM, 1 - 8

PWP 508-01 July 7 - 11
Coordinators: Susan Powidzki and Mark Curtis
Upper Moreland Intermediate School,
Montgomery County

** LITERACY IN BLOOM: BOTANICAL INSPIRATIONS FOR READING, WRITING, AND LEARNING, K - 12

PWP 510-02 July 14 - 18
Coordinator: Patty Koller
Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square

One credit, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

** PARTNERING WITH CHILDREN TO READ, WRITE, AND TALK HISTORY, 3 - 6

PWP 599-06 July 15 - 16
Coordinators: Linda Walker and Gwen Douse
Highlands Historical Society, Fort Washington

VISUALIZING WORDS & WORLDS: WRITING, LITERATURE, AND ART

Three locations!

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

James A. Michener Art Museum, Doylestown

PWP 513-02 July 21 - 25

Introductory meeting June 26, 9:00 a.m. - noon

Coordinators: Mark Boland and Amy Kratz

Goggleworks, Reading - New location!!

PWP 513-03 July 28 - August 1

Introductory meeting June 24, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Coordinators: Donna Searle and Doreen Holly

Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford

PWP 513-01 August 4 - 8

Introductory meeting June 30, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Coordinators: Teresa Moslak and Michele Curay-Cramer



Institutes for Experienced Teachers

June 23 - July 17

4 days/week

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

WRITING INSTITUTE

Two locations!

at the WCU Graduate Business Center
and at the Bucks County IU in Doylestown

READING AND LITERATURE INSTITUTE

at the WCU Graduate Business Center

- ⇒ 6 graduate credits
- ⇒ Participants become Fellows of the National Writing Project
- ⇒ \$500 stipend helps defray cost
- ⇒ Participants attend Celebrate Literacy Conference

Call 610-436-2202
for an application packet.

View course descriptions and download a registration form, or register on-line at www.pawlp.org

TECH MATTERS

Last week I experienced the worst month of my life with computers. What started as an engaging, relevant, motivating project became a painful, drawn-out, and exasperating drudgery. I began to wonder what I had been thinking when I planned this whole project months ago.

After my students wrote persuasive essays, they paired up with partners and selected one of their two papers on which to base a Public Service Announcement video. Working in teams as co-directors, they would use Microsoft Movie Maker to create movies, the best of which would be published on my website as well as on our morning news show.

What was supposed to take no more than five days in the computer lab, stretched into three weeks after the following series of unfortunate events (and I am not exaggerating here): an early dismissal due to a power-outage, a two-hour delay, an early closing due to weather, a snow day, and other disruptions to our normal schedule for activities such as the Spelling Bee, the magazine fund raiser assembly, and the faculty-student basketball game. Add to these disruptions countless computer issues - files not saved correctly; students not understanding the strange and mysterious ways of Movie Maker; the time it took to teach students why they couldn't just Google to find their images (I had to teach them about copyright!); filling up the "T" drive with our large graphic and audio files which resulted in running out of space to save projects. By the time I was relegated to using the laptop lab because I was desperate, I was ready to pull out my now-graying hair. To say I was frustrated is an understatement.

And then Jennifer and Lauren finished their project.

"Mrs. Barrie, wait until you see how cool our movie is! We added effects that no one else did. Watch how the color changes!" They couldn't wait for me to see what they had created. Jennifer and Lauren had worked hard on this project, probably harder than for any other project we did this year. Rather than getting pictures from the Internet, they borrowed my camera to take pictures, to capture the images that would help their audience visualize their words and make meaning from their narration. When it was their turn to record their narration, their rehearsed words were fluid and natural. Most impressive, they had written and revised with passion, and they poured that passion into every decision they had made about writing, scripting, storyboarding, selecting images and music, recording their own voices, and post-production editing (transitions, titles, credits, and timing).

This is the third time I have done digital storytelling with my students, but the first time we've worked on a movie of this length (1.5 to 2.5 minutes on average) in partners, integrating more graphics and music than ever. I have learned volumes about teaching digital writing through this project and have made enough mistakes to last a year. Thank goodness my seventh graders easily forgive and forget those times when I was short with them because I had just addressed the same problem for the umpteenth time. Thank goodness they were able to maintain their enthusiasm for a project after so many stops and starts. Because I realized that even though it didn't go as smoothly as I wanted, even though I didn't make the process as clear as I should have, and even though it ended up taking such a large chunk of time, it was worth it. It was worth it to see at least two students' pride and excitement

about completing a project. It was worth it because my students need to engage in these types of projects that make them read, write, question, revise, reflect, and use digital media to reach out to their audience.

Donna Alvermann, in her chapter titled "Multiliterate Youth in the Time of Scientific Reading Instruction" from *Adolescent Literacy: Turning Promise Into Practice* (Beers, Probst, and Rief 2007) asks, "Why is it that precisely at a time when the youth of the so-called Net generation are engaging, often simultaneously, with multiple sign systems (image, print, sound, gesture, digital) and finding their own reasons for becoming literate - reasons that extend beyond reading to acquire school knowledge - there is a narrowing of what counts as reading and how reading is taught?" Good question! Earlier in the book, Kyrene Beers writes about literacy as "a set of skills that reflect the needs of the time. As those needs shift, then our definition of literacy shifts" (7). She also checks in with Thomas Friedman (*The World is Flat*, 2005) and Daniel Pink (*A Whole New Mind*, 2006) who see our current literacy needs as for making meaning, making connections, thinking creatively, and producing information rather than just accessing information. Certainly Jennifer and Lauren, and all of the other teams of students, were learning how digital literacy means much more than texting their friends or playing video games.

Next week we will have a screening party for our movies. I've loaded up on six large bags of popcorn, bought some corny plastic gold Oscar-type awards, had the kids fill out their tickets to the event (space for their reflection on the project on the back), found a red carpet, and invited special guests like our principal and the parents who helped out in

our "recording studio." Now that we're finished, it's a success worth celebrating.

Integrating technology is not always easy, and I am afraid I will make more mistakes and face more challenges as I did with this project, but I know it is necessary and so worth the effort. I invite you to join me in this process of discovery of reading and writing in digital ways. Please join our conversation at the PAWLP Blog: www.pawlp.wordpress.com, and consider signing up for a new class this summer - *Reading and Writing in Digital Spaces*, where together we can navigate the digital landscape that consumes our students' lives and paves the way of their futures.

- by Diane Barrie,
PAWLP Technology Liason

Fall Courses

In the PAWLP Classroom at West Chester University

Teacher as Writer, K - 12

PWP 502-01

Thursdays, 4:15 - 7:00 p.m.

August 28 - December 11

Coordinators: Lynne Dorfman
and Frank Murphy

Nonfiction in the Writing/ Reading Classroom, K - 8

PWP 599-01

Two Weekends: October 3 - 5
and November 7 - 9

Fridays, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Saturdays/Sundays,

8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Coordinators: Lynne Dorfman
and Bill Crowley

At the Bucks County IU in Doylestown

Units of Study:

Inspiring and Sustaining the Work of Readers, 1 - 8

PWP 599-02

Two weekends: Oct. 3 - 5
and Oct. 24 - 26

Fridays, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays,

8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Coordinator: Maria Banks

*To bring a course to your
district, contact Andy Fishman
at 610-436-3475
or afishman@wcupa.edu*

Education Matters

a column from Michaels Associates, LLC

Audio Professional Books

A cool idea that I've heard suggested to publishers for years has finally happened. Stenhouse Publishers is releasing professional books on tape and CD. They won't be doing this with all of their titles, of course, but selected titles are already available through Michaels Associates LLC www.michaelsassociates.com - or the publisher.

Authors participating in the project so far include Ralph Fletcher, Janet Allen, and Peter Johnston. Some books are narrated professionally and some by the author. How cool is that? You can hear a favorite professional author read their work on your iPod, computer, or the CD player in your car. In addition to books, Janet Allen also presents her

"Reimagining Reading" Literacy Institute on 5 CD's.

All the books come with a reference guide, appendixes, and other supplemental material.

Technology seems to be the way of the future for sharing information. This publisher and others are moving towards providing more and more books online through e-books and other downloadable content like book summaries or sample chapters. Amazon is working hard to promote their Kindle product so we can carry the information of several books in the physical space normally required for one. I don't think they've quite figured out how one would highlight a Kindle, dog-ear a page, or make it feel and smell like an actual book. I understand that they make a serviceable night

light, though.

I have made a humble effort to balance this trend towards technology by using it to promote "Classic Kindles" i.e. books. I recently completed a simple web page to help my friends at the Endless Mountains Writing Project. A social networking site, www.squidoo.com allows users to create and post their own content. People create squidoo "lenses" on a virtually unlimited range of topics. It's easy and fun and I recommend it. I'll bet each of you is an expert on something. This is a great way to share it with thousands of people. To look at my effort, go to www.squidoo.com/realstudentbooks. If I can do it you can - for sure.

*Cordially,
Greg Michaels*

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The Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Project *Newsletter* is published four times a year by and for those affiliated with the Project. Submissions are always welcome and can be mailed to the Pennsylvania Writing & Literature Project, West Chester University, West Chester, PA, 19383.

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