



WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER



Vol. III, No. 5 (January, 1979)

With this issue of the newsletter, the mailing list for our group has topped the four hundred mark, a rather hefty increase from the original sixty when the newsletter started after a 4C's session on labs in April, 1977. The 1979 4C's, in Minneapolis, promises to be even more informative for those of us interested in writing labs, and it will include the Special Interest Session on Writing Labs with its Materials Exchange Table, both of which are described in this issue. Do plan to attend the 4C's this year!

In the meantime, continue to send in your articles, names of new members, \$2 donations (with checks made payable to me) to:

Muriel Harris, Editor
WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER
Department of English
Purdue University
West Lafayette, In 47907

OHIO WRITING LABS CONFERENCE

On Saturday, May 12, 1979, The English Department of Youngstown State University will host the Ohio Writing Labs Conference: what we are doing that works and ways to deal with apparent obstacles to our work at college Writing Labs in and around Ohio. The Conference will include workshops on the following topics:

- Selecting and developing instructional materials
- Developing writing center services beyond tutoring
- Training programs for peer tutors and graduate assistants
- Working effectively with the English Department and other campus agencies
- Diagnosing writing problems and forming reasonable expectations
- Accountability for the writing center

-Alternative funding sources

In addition to the workshops, there will be an open "Ideas and Materials Exchange" throughout the day.

For further information please contact Nancy McCracken, Writing Center, Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio 44555 (216-742-3419)



Ken Bruffee, at Brooklyn College, is beginning to plan a summer seminar and internship in how to train and supervise peer tutors. The seminar would also address issues and problems in peer tutoring, including establishing a credit-bearing course in writing and tutoring. The goal is to help faculty make tutoring a valuable part of tutors' education.

The seminar would be based on the Brooklyn program, described in Change, July, 1976, and in College English and Liberal Education, both December, 1978.

To go any further with these plans, Ken has to have some idea how many people might conceivably be interested in developing their expertise in this area, and would also have institutional support for making the curricular adjustments implied by the procedure to be taught (establishing or adding a section of Advanced Composition for peer tutors).

If you think that you, someone else on your faculty, or someone you know at another institution might be interested in the seminar, please write: Kenneth A. Bruffee, English Department, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210. Any comments you would care to make on the need for such a seminar program would be welcome also.

1) Arbur, Rosemarie, "The Student-Teacher Conference," CCC, December 1977, 388-42.

Journal Articles Reviewed
by Writing Lab Staff at
the University of Akron

The Writing Lab at the University of Akron is housed in the Department of Developmental Programs, though we maintain close ties with the English Department. For example, as part of their teaching load in the second year of the M.A. program, English Department graduate teaching assistants have the option of staffing the Writing Lab for one semester, during which they do not teach a class. These graduate students have a year's teaching experience when they come to the Lab, and often they have taken the course Theory and Teaching of Composition as well. The Writing Lab practicum nicely rounds out their training, with its combination of intensive individual sessions with students and daily close contact with the three permanent Lab staff, who are seasoned classroom teachers as well as skilled tutorial teachers.

One other formal aspect of the practicum has considerable value for our T.A.'s, and for the rest of us as well: we maintain a small library of resource materials which we read and discuss during the year as we have the time and the need to do so. These materials include journal articles which most Writing Lab Newsletter readers may be aware of already, as well as a few books of theory and pedagogy, which those of us with literature rather than composition backgrounds may not have read. In either case, we have found them to be the most useful of recent publications for teachers of the adult beginning writers that are appearing in college classrooms in ever greater numbers.

This semester's Teaching Assistants have provided the following two reviews of articles they, as initiates in the Writing Lab, have found to be of considerable practical value. In future issues of the newsletter, we will provide a bibliography of our materials, some of which we will review throughout this academic year.

Mary Paolucci
Writing Lab Coordinator
University of Akron

Fledgling staffs of writing labs, especially staff members coming from a chiefly literary background, may be uneasy as they begin their work. With all the good will in the world, they may yet feel unsure about the process of the actual interview. One article that can help is Rosemarie Arbur's "The Student-Teacher Conference."

Arbur applies the strategies of social work to the student-teacher conference, strategies equally applicable to a help-session in the writing lab. Her step-by-step outline begins with the actual physical arrangement of the conference, pointing out details of seating and manner conducive to confidence and amiability. These kinds of details are not generally considered, and Arbur's emphasis on them is refreshing.

The article also points out the importance of having the student see the problem himself, rather than just telling him, and of helping him to narrow the areas to be worked on, in the interests of encouragement as well as practicality.

Other needs Arbur points out are for the student and teacher to make a formal commitment to working together, and for "task assignments" in which the student analyzes his own writing. "Solution is relative," whether recognition, understanding, or removal of error; but the tutor should clarify the accomplishment for the student, giving him something tangible to base future work and improvement on.

Arbur's plan can be useful because it delineates supposedly elementary procedures that may not be elementary for the beginning tutor. This plan sets up a framework within which the novice can clarify and identify for herself the objective of the session, and organize her own procedure. By dividing and analyzing the elements of the session this way, the tutor can help set herself at ease before, as well as judge her own performance after, she meets the students. Ms. Arbur's article is valuable both as introduction and as review.

Reviewed by:
Diana Lueptow
University of Akron

2) Collignon, Joseph. "Why Leroy Can't Write,": College English 39 (March, 1978) 852-859.

Mr. Collignon's contention is that Leroy can't write because he can't hear himself on paper. He has not been trained to read aloud, and therefore both reading and writing are silent, impersonal tasks to be accomplished with a great deal of difficulty. If Leroy could hear what he and others write, he would become a better writer.

Accordingly, Mr. Collignon spends the first four weeks of the semester reading to his classes and, eventually, asking them to read aloud. Rather than teach grammar formally, he introduces the students to the "sound of punctuation": e.g., when the reader comes to the end of a sentence, his/her voice inflection drops to indicate a period; with a comma, inflection rises slightly to indicate a pause, but that the sentence will continue.

The students learn gradually to transfer this sound punctuation to writing, first through a series of exercises and then by imitating the sentences and paragraphs from various magazines. After six weeks, students begin writing and reading aloud their own papers. They gain confidence in their writing as they learn to hear the personal voice (and grammar!) of the written word.

Mr. Collignon's approach to writing seems particularly useful in the Writing Lab, where students have the opportunity to catch their own mistakes when they read their papers aloud in a student-tutor situation. The sample exercises in this article are useful and serve as a very practical guide for those who, like myself, are just learning to help students write more effectively.

Reviewed by:
Maggie Stouthamer
University of Akron

Canadian Conference on Writing

On May 8 - 12, 1979, the Canadian Council of Teachers of English -- the Canadian counterpart of the N.C.T.E. -- will be holding its annual conference in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The conference, which we are calling

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Learning to Write, will focus on the teaching of writing at all educational levels to students whose first language is English as well as to English as a Second Language students.

That part of the conference designed specifically for college teachers will extend for the full five days and will include both practical workshops as well as papers dealing with theories of composition or research relating to the development of writing abilities.

The list of invited speakers includes: Anthony Adams, Christ's College, Cambridge; Elsa Bartlett, Rockefeller University; James Britton, University of London; Carl Bereiter, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education; Edward P. J. Corbett, Ohio State University; John Dixon, Bretton Hall, Yorkshire; Margaret Early, University of Syracuse; Janet Emig, Rutgers University; Donald Graves, University of New Hampshire; James L. Kinneavy, University of Texas; Lee Odell, S. U. N. Y.; Marshall McLuhan, University of Toronto; Frank O'Hare, Ohio State University; Randolph Quirk, University College, London; James Squire, Ginn and Co., Boston; Andrew Wilkinson, University of Exeter; W. Ross Winterrowd, University of Southern California; Richard Young, Carnegie-Mellon University.

The English as a Second Language component of the program will include presentations by Gerald Dykstra, University of Hawaii; Keith Johnson, University of Reading; Robert Kaplan, University of Southern California; Ann Raimes, Hunter College; and H. G. Widdowson, Institute of Education, London University.

We have sent out a call for papers for this conference as well. Any of you who are interested in presenting a 20 minute paper dealing with theory or research should send me three copies of the complete paper by January 15, 1979. Do not put your name on the paper; instead enclose a 3 x 5 card containing your name, the title of the paper, your institutional affiliation and mailing address. Selected papers will be published in book form.

Whether you present a paper or not, we hope you'll attend the conference.

Aviva Freedman,
English Department
Carleton University
Ottawa Ontario
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Faculty Seminars Planned at
Atlanta Jr. College

MATERIALS EXCHANGE TABLE AT 4 C'S

Atlanta Junior College is a predominantly Black, urban institution. Our Writing Center is a voluntary student support service staffed by the English faculty. We see writing development as an ongoing process which should be enhanced by the challenges of every writing assignment a student faces in college. Consequently, we work with students on papers written for almost all the courses in our college. We rely on a one-to-one tutorial method, in which we discuss student papers at several stages in their development and revision.

With funding from NEH, we are planning a series of faculty seminars on student writing development. We hope to engage faculty members from across the college in discussions of how their writing requirements can best foster their students' overall intellectual growth, including their growth as effective writers.

To help us plan these seminars, we would like to hear from writing labs at other colleges in which similar faculty discussions have taken place. Please write c/o Humanities Division, Atlanta Junior College, 1630 Steward Avenue S. W., Atlanta, GA 30310.

Ron Chandonia
Director of the Writing Center
Atlanta Jr. College

I don't know if you are acquainted with the monograph entitled The Learning Center: A Comprehensive Model for Colleges and Universities (1977) by Deanna C. Martin, Mary Lorton, Robert A. Blanc and Calvin Evans, which may be obtained for \$5.00 from Mary Lorton, Developmental College Studies, Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. This monograph provides helpful, practical advice and materials on staffing, training tutorial/teacher assistants, diagnosis, instructional methodology, evaluation, and preparing proposals among other items.

While the 150 pages deal with a Learning Center, most of it applies specifically to a writing lab and/or reading lab. We have found it invaluable in our Learning Center with our emphasis upon writing and reading. I recommend it strongly.

Arlie R. Peck
Learning Center Director
Mid-America Nazarene College

In conjunction with the Special Interest Session on Writing Labs at next spring's 4 C's meeting in Minneapolis, a materials display and exchange table will be open during the session.

The procedure for participation will be as follows:

1. Donors of display materials are to fill out a standard form (included in this issue) listing and describing materials. This form is to be sent to the indicated address as soon as possible, so that we may plan for space requirements.
2. Donors are to bring the materials with them to Minneapolis and turn them in at the table. Where possible, materials are to be in standard manila folders, identified by school and individual, and plainly marked: "Display Only/Don't Take." A yellow pad (with school and individual identification) should be included for names and addresses of those requesting copies.
3. The exchange is primarily for display, with exchange by mail, but, space permitting, there can be some handout items: up to 200 copies, single sheet, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11, or equivalent space (until we know the amount of materials, we can be flexible about this).
4. Some volunteers will be needed to help out at the table. You may sign up when you turn in your materials.
5. Donors are to pick up materials and yellow pads before leaving meeting.

The criteria for materials are still wide open: anything that the donor believes others might find useful.

Address questions or whatever to Richard Mason, Humanities, Michigan Technological University, Houghton, Michigan 49931. (Office (906) 487-2447; Home (906) 482-1295.)



TO: Richard Mason
Humanities/Language Lab
Michigan Technological University
Houghton, Michigan 49931

Date: _____

FROM: (name) _____
(school) _____
(address) _____

MATERIALS FOR EXCHANGE TABLE:

(List and describe briefly as to type, size, content, etc.)

(use additional sheets if necessary)

- I will bring materials to Minn.: Yes __; No __. (If no, mail to above address well before meeting date.)
- I will be able to send copies to those so requesting: Yes __; No __.

Signature _____

Chairman - Muriel Harris (Purdue University)

A. General Session

1. "Caution: The Writing Lab Road Can Be Paved with Good Intentions" -
Mary Croft (University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point)
2. "Approaches to Conferencing" - Anita Brostoff (Carnegie - Mellon
University)

B. Materials Exchange Table

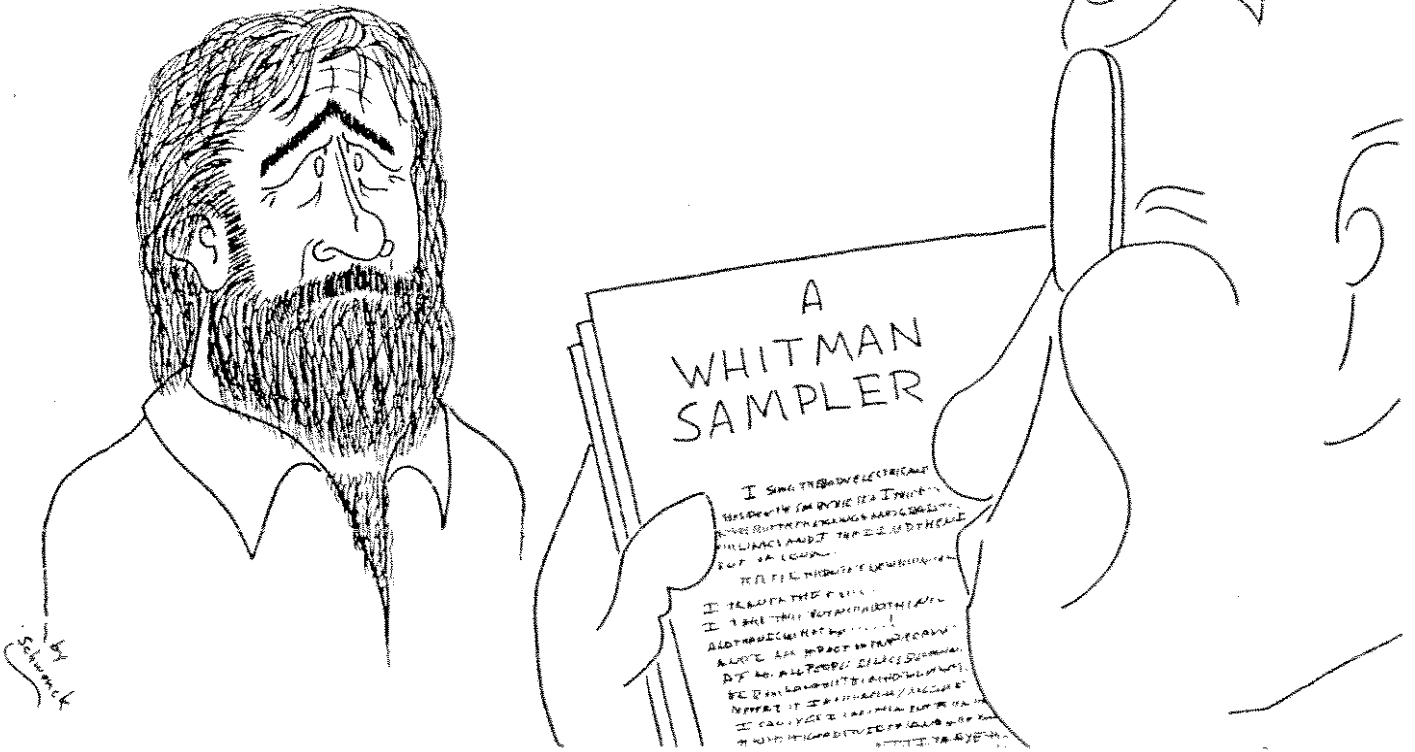
Coordinator: Richard Mason (Michigan Technological University)

C. Discussion Groups

1. "An Affective/Cognitive Approach to Training Tutors: A Participatory Workshop"
Lil Brannon (University of North Carolina at Wilmington)
Jeanette Harris (East Texas State University)
2. "Setting Up a Writing Laboratory"
Rudolph Almasy (West Virginia University)
Kathy Osterholm (Clarion State College)
Phyllis Sherwood (University of Cincinnati)
3. "Beyond the Basics: Expanded Uses of Writing Labs"
George Hayhoe (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University)
Helen Naugle (Georgia Institute of Technology)
4. "Don't Bolt It to the Floor: Arranging a Lab"
William Demaree (Purdue University)
Janice Kleen (Dixie College)
5. "Proving Our Success to the Folks With the Power"
Janice Neuleib (Illinois State University)
6. "Teaching Materials for Writing Workshops"
James Coomber (Concordia College)
Cecile Hanley (Trenton State College)
7. "Writing Labs: Purveyors of Progress and Proficiency"
Ann J. Sporborg (Emanuel County Junior College)
8. "Integrating the Writing Lab Into Freshman Composition: Organizational Strategies, T. A. Training, and Material Development"
Barbara Kroll (University of Southern California)
Betty Bamberg (University of Southern California)
Patricia Murray (University of Southern California)
9. "Serving ESL Students in the Writing Lab"
Jon Jonz (East Texas State University)
Kathleen Blake Yancey (Purdue University)
10. "The Autotutorial Lab"
Mary Epes (York College, CUNY)
Carolyn Kirkpatrick (York College, CUNY)

GREAT MOMENTS
IN WRITING LAB
HISTORY, #8

MR. WHITMAN ~ YOU REALLY MUST STOP
OVERUSING THE FIRST PERSON
SINGULAR PRONOUN!



WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER Mailing List-Supplement #17

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