



# INK

THE LSU WRITING PROJECT

---

INTERNAL NETWORK OF COMMUNICATIONS VOL.VII NO.3 February 1991

---

## IT'S WORKING !!!

**WHAT'S WORKING?** The National Writing Project at Louisiana State University. Teachers are teaching teachers. Teachers are writing. Teachers are influencing the development and implementation of curriculum in many disciplines. Changes are taking place in classroom practice--slowly, systematically, surely. New ideas are surfacing; old ideas are being proven. Real change of any kind takes place over time and usually when nobody except those involved is watching or cares.

Read again the Basic Assumptions of the National Writing Project. Where can your strengths effect change, promote excellence, achieve success?

## CALENDAR

ASAP Anthology submissions	March 13,14 NCTM Region 5 Plus
January 10 Proposals for Writes of Spring Conference	Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas
January 16 Advisory Board Meeting	March 21 Writes of Spring at LSU
January 25 All Project Meeting at LSU in Baton Rouge	
February 1 Last acceptable date for In Addition to Everything Else submissions	
March 6 Pre-registration for Writes of Spring	

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Our birthday list is so incomplete that names are inappropriate-- , so have a happy one. Who wants to update the list?



## The National Writing Project

### **Basic Assumptions**

1. The university and the schools must work together as partners. The "top-down" tradition of past university-school programs is no longer acceptable as a staff development model.
2. Successful teachers of writing can be identified, brought together during university Summer Institutes, and trained to teach other teachers in follow-up programs in the schools.
3. Teachers are the best teachers of other teachers; successful practicing teachers have a credibility no outside consultant can match. .
4. Summer Institutes must involve teachers from all levels of instruction, elementary school through university; student writing needs constant attention and repetition from the early primary grades on through the university years.
5. Summer Institutes must involve teachers from across the disciplines; writing is as fundamental to learning in science, in mathematics, and in history as it is in English and the language arts.
6. Teachers of writing must also write: Teachers must experience what they are asking of their students when they have students write; the process of writing can be understood best by engaging in that process first hand.
7. Real change in classroom practice happens over time; effective staff development programs are on-going and systematic, bringing teachers together regularly throughout their careers to test and evaluate the best practices of other teachers and the continuing developments in the field.
8. What is known about the teaching of writing comes not only from research but from the practice of those who teach writing.
9. The National Writing Project, by promoting no single "right" approach to the teaching of writing, is now and will always be open to whatever is known about writing from whatever source.

## THE PRESENTATION - A SAGA OF STALWART PRESENTERS IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES By Snookie Daniel

Anne Campbell and Snookie Daniel arrived an hour and a half before Anne was to deliver her presentation in an outlying district. Spirits were high on this cold, crisp journey through pine covered, rolling hills in rural parishes of south Louisiana.

Upon arrival at the school, the two shivering TCs scurried into the building to find out where the presentation would take place. An open door to the principal's office revealed a middle-aged gentleman sitting at a desk, glancing over his newspaper. The TCs waited a moment, thinking he would feel them staring at him. When he didn't, Snookie started introducing herself and Anne. After contemplating the situation, the man said that he was Mr. B., the principal, and that he was not in charge of the program. Snookie's first thought was, "Let's\_\_go HOME!" However the ever cool headed Anne came to the rescue and said, "Sir, can you tell us to whom we should report, or how we can find out where my presentation is to be held. I need to set up."

Mr. B. said that Rev. J. was the man to see. "He's here. See his car." He pointed through the venetian blinds behind his desk. The TCs waited to see what might happen next. Finally, Mr. B. stood up, ushered them out of his office, and took them to the edge of a very old building. He pointed to temporary buildings off to the side and said, "You'll probably have to do it in Chapter 1. Go to the second building and tell them to let you do it."

Mrs. B. (no relation to Mr. B.), the Chapter 1 teacher was amazed when she heard the TCs' story. "I didn't know we were having a workshop in my room this afternoon. Wait here while I go talk with Rev. J."

Progress was made from that moment on. Mrs. B. returned with news that Mrs. W., the 1st grade Chapter 1 teacher, would host the presentation. Anne and Snookie rushed to the other side of the campus to Mrs. W.'s brick temporary building. Set-up was quick. A full half hour was left before the workshop was to begin. Nobody mentioned lunch, so Snookie and Anne were glad for the sandwiches and drinks stashed away in Anne's car. "I saw a wonderful place for a picnic on the way in," said Anne. "Do you want to chance it?" A hungry Snookie did not object.

The TCs braved a chilling wind to enjoy a tailgate picnic in a cemetery that had been recently decorated for All Saints Day. It was a quick meal because they were getting nervous about a presentation that \_wag\_ to\_\_start at noon.

A tired, sluggish group of people straggled into the brick temporary building for the workshop--23 teachers, K-12. Three schools had early dismissal so teachers could attend workshops in the area that day. Anne and Snookie flittered about greeting people and giving them nametags. No one signed the registration sheet unless personally approached. The TCs wondered what they had gotten themselves into.

Anne rose to the challenge. Within a few minutes, she had those teachers writing questions they wanted her to answer. Next, she had them designing T-shirts to wear for different occasions. She tumbled from one activity to another--participants writing their hearts out and responding enthusiastically. It was a revelation to see such a passive congregation come to life at this marvelous exhibition.

## IN ADDITION TO EVERYTHING ELSE

The Anthology Committee requests submissions for In Addition to Everything Else, our LSUWP anthology. Each TC may submit two entries, but the total number of pages per person may not exceed four.

Submissions are due to Susan Ours by February 1, 1992. She teaches at Istrouma High School and lives at 2285 Fadardale in Baton Rouge (70808.)

This is your design page. Do not write outside the lines. Top, bottom, and right margins are 1 inch. The left margin is 1 1/2 inch. You may type anywhere within the outlined space, title included.

The title of each writing should be centered at the top of the first page. Allow five spaces between the title and the text. Single space prose with double spaces between paragraphs. Put your name at the left bottom of the last page of the entry, on a line by itself, within the lines.

Poetry may be designed at will within the margins drawn.

Proofread copy carefully. Computer spell-check programs will not find a misspelled word if the word you type is a real word--no matter how obscure.

Sharp, black copy is necessary. Do not use erasable bond paper. Letter-quality word processing is acceptable. Please use standard type faces and fonts--10 characters per inch horizontal, 6 lines per inch vertical.

Submit art work with your entry or take your chances with the committee. All art work should be black-line and clean copy. Please indicate where the picture should appear within the text. Editors will have final say on use of art work.

Attach a cover sheet listing (1) Your name, (2) Title of work, (3) Your school, (4) Work phone, (5) Home phone, (6) Date of submission.

Submit work in 9 by 12 envelope. Do not bend, staple, or otherwise mutilate the manuscript.

The Anthology Committee will select manuscripts on the basis of quality and appropriate content for this anthology.

## NOTES FROM MARY-ELLEN

Thanks to the enthusiasm and commitment of many LSUWP TCs, our inservice plans for the 1991-92 school year are getting off to an auspicious start. A Saturday morning planning session for presenters held at Destrehan High School on October 26 was well attended and enabled those individuals offering inservices to a particular parish to become acquainted with one another. On very short notice, Ann Campbell and Snookie Daniel agreed to inaugurate this year's inservice schedule by presenting in St. Helena Parish on November 4. Most of the inservices in the ten other parishes we'll be supporting will be presented in January, February, and March. Without your generous sharing of your expertise, we could not have developed such an exciting and varied series of inservices which truly reflect the NWP model of "teachers teaching teachers."

Our second Advisory Board meeting of the year was held on Thursday, November 7. My thanks to the many board members who traveled to Gonzales to spend the evening together renewing friendships and planning future directions for the LSUWP. Highlights of the meeting included:

1. Plans for an All-Project social activity sometime in January (Martha Rothkamm is coordinating this. If you have ideas or are interested in helping, please let Martha know).
2. Several board members have pointed out that we need to be more vigorous in publicizing who we are and the contributions we can make to teaching writing. We've decided to launch our publicity campaign by updating the LSUWP brochure. We anticipate unveiling the new brochure at the January All-Project meeting.
3. The LSUWP has grown large enough that the Board feels a need to formalize basic organizational operations in writing. An ad hoc committee was formed to draft a series of by-laws which we hope to present to all TCs at the All-Project meeting in January.

Finally, note the Writes of Spring call for proposals in your newsletter. The conference is an ideal opportunity to try out a new presentation or share something you've been doing with your students. There couldn't be a better place to showcase your talents.

A joyful holiday season to LSUWP TCs and their families. Special thanks to each LSUWP member for working so hard during the past few months to help us come together as a vibrant, deeply committed community of writers.

## FROM ST. CHARLES

by Rickie Bruce

As was formally announced on October 9th, the St. Charles Parish public school system has joined with Union Carbide Corporation in a ten-year effort of school reform. The joint effort is aimed at increasing parental involvement, raising expectation for academic performance, and developing clear goals and methods for assessing academic improvement. Union Carbide will provide up to \$150,000 per year for ten years toward that end. In a statement delivered in Luling, Robert Kennedy, chief executive officer and chairman of Union Carbide stated, "This is the first time Union Carbide has teamed up with an entire school district in a restructuring project." Chosen "because of its leadership, community cooperation, willingness to experiment, and desire for partnership," it is hoped that the local program will be used as a national model for school reform.

As a prelude to this announcement, selected parents, teachers, administrators, students, and civic leaders attended a two-day conference in New Orleans this past April entitled "Restructuring Our Schools: A Vision for the Year 2000." Among the selected teachers were Rebecca Becnel, Rita Bourgeois, Angie Wall, Nanette Dufrene, Lynn Garcia, Felicia Rapp, and myself. The next step is the creation of an advisory panel representing both schools and Union Carbide.

It is hoped that through the involvement of these local TCs, National

Writing Project assumptions will be well represented in the restructuring effort.

[Next Month: What I see as the link between school restructuring and the National Writing Project.]

## FROM EVELYN'S DESK

Because Broadmoor Elementary students are using Crista McAuliffe Center for classes as a result of tornado damage, EBR November, December, and January R&R meetings have to be relocated. We will meet November 20 at the Burger King on the corner of Jefferson and Lobdell at 4:00 p.m. If this works out, we'll meet there again January 8, 1992.

The December meeting will be at my house. Please respond to the flyer you received about dates and plans.

Facilitators are needed for inservice sessions in the spring. Please let me know when you will be able to participate.

Many LSUWP books are stored in my office where they are available to be checked out by TCs. Call 922-5472 to request specific titles, and they will be sent to you by Pony.

## CONTESTS

Louisiana Reading Association has announced its Educators as Authors Contest. Participants must be active faculty members of a Louisiana school system and be a member of the LRA. Entries must be postmarked or delivered to the Committee Chairperson no later than January 15, 1992. For more information, contact Rickie, Evelyn, or Anna Catherine.

## BOOK NOOK

### THE HOUSE TIBET

by Georgia Savage

We writing-teachers-of-writing know the therapeutic value of writing about our own experiences. The therapy comes not with the audience but with the writing for a myriad of reasons. In *The House Tibet*, Georgia Savage takes on the voice of Vicky, the thirteen-year-old girl who is the central character. Vicky writes of her experiences because she needs to understand the adults around her, the world around her, and herself as an emerging woman.

Georgia Savage focuses the reader's attention on a problem which is pervasive in spite of all our civilization in the twentieth century. Man's inhumanity to man is being inflicted on our children violently and incestuously. This is a book that we educators need to read and by which we need to be confronted, for our children's sake..

Vicky comes from an average family in Australia, much like an average family in America. Her father is an architect and her mother an artist. James, the younger brother, is eight. Vicky has had charge of him since he was about four or five, after the parents found that he is severely language delayed but very bright. Dealing with him and his handicap put too much strain on the father and the mother. They felt that Vicky was more capable of handling James and his situation.

The book begins with this loving father raping his daughter. Vicky begins her story, "As it happened, I watched the moon." Receiving no shelter or understanding from her mother, grandmother, or aunt, she runs

away. Because James is very intuitive, especially about Vicky, he follows her. Together they try their best to make a new life for themselves as run-aways. Their adventures are chronicled by Vicky when she realizes that their life is puzzling and unusual. She began writing as a way of explaining it to herself.

Vicky's residence in that third world of the unwanted of society brings her face to face with potential danger. As the reader, one is able to feel her estrangement from herself, because she writes with a voice that feels like third person.

Again, this is a book that we educators need to read and by which we need to be confronted, for our children's sake.

by Sara Sims

### CHECK IT OUT

These books are available for from the LSUWP library. Call Evelyn, Mary Catherine, or Rickie for access.

Calkins - *The Art of Teaching Writing*  
Farrell - *The High School Writing*

Center: *Establishing and Maintaining One Graves - Writing: Teachers and Children at Work*

Hall - *Evaluating and Improving Written Expression*

Judy - *The ABC'S of Literacy*

Powell - *What Can I Write About: 7000 Topics for High School Students*

<<<TCs have more books than shelf space. Would someone be willing to coordinate a loan, swap, or gift exchange for the Project? The INK will publish needs and offers.>>>

## NEWS ABOUT US

### READING RECOVERY

Cindy Elliott had an article published in *The Running Record*, Autumn 1991. This is the newsletter for Reading Recovery! teachers, published at Ohio State University. She wrote a column for the Book Corner highlighting *The Lady with the Alligator Purse*. In the article Cindy talked about extending writing from this book by having children make alligator purse shape books to write in during early lessons in the Reading Recovery program.

### CORRECTION

In the October newsletter, the committee listed for the Writes of Spring is really the Social Committee. Sorry about that.

### POLITICS

Joan Robbins ran for Councilman in St. Charles Parish District 1.

### MINI-PRESENTATIONS

The St. Charles Parish Reading Council is featuring Writing Project TCs at their monthly meetings. On November 5, Marcia Griffis (*Using the Newspaper in your Classroom*), Lala Go r (*Publishing your own Writing*), Barbara Forshag (*Developing Literary Characters Through the Use of Props*), and Sara Sims (*Establishing a Readers' Workshop in your Classroom*) presented. Word is that Sara's presentation was almost silent. Wonders never cease!

### SPECIAL READING PROJECT

Four LSUWP TCs, Rita Bourgeois, Rosemary Sanders, Kathy Campbell, and Carolyn McArthur are participating in a reading enhancement program in St. Charles Parish. Teachers are paired for instruction. While one teacher teaches reading skills to a small group of students, the other teacher works with the remainder of the students from the two classes on a reading enrichment lesson. Teachers and students are using writing skills and ideas presented in LSUWP sessions. Students are beginning to share their excitement of reading and writing with their parents.

### ANOTHER SPECIAL PROJECT

Donnie Cross is reaching at-risk students in a pre-vocational project, **WORK--Wonderful Opportunities for Reaching Kids**. Donnie works with students who have failed one or more grades on projects for which they can see some immediate use, especially things which will be used in the school. They made chart racks out of PVC pipe, mailboxes for another class to use, and spinners that they sell for \$1.00 each. They have sold more than 100 of these. In addition to building self-esteem, learning life skills, and having fun, these students are putting math and science principles to practical use. For some students this program has turned their attitude about school completely around. This has had a positive effect on the effort put forth in school, as well as, the way these student treat each other and teachers.

Call for Proposals  
**1992 WRITES OF SPRING**  
sponsored by the L.S.U. Writing Project  
day, March 21, 1992 - 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. L.S.U. Union  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Presentations should be 60 minutes long and offer  
hands-on demonstrations of instructional techniques.

Presenter's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street City State Zip

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street City State Zip

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ School Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESENTATION INFORMATION**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: (circle one): Elementary Middle School. High School

One sentence Summary of Presentation (for program):

\_\_\_\_\_

Special Equipment/Arrangements: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief summary of Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Deadline for. Submission: January 10, 1991

Submit proposals to: Dr. Mary Ellen Jacobs

230 Peabody Hall, Louisiana State University

Baton Rouge, LA 7080