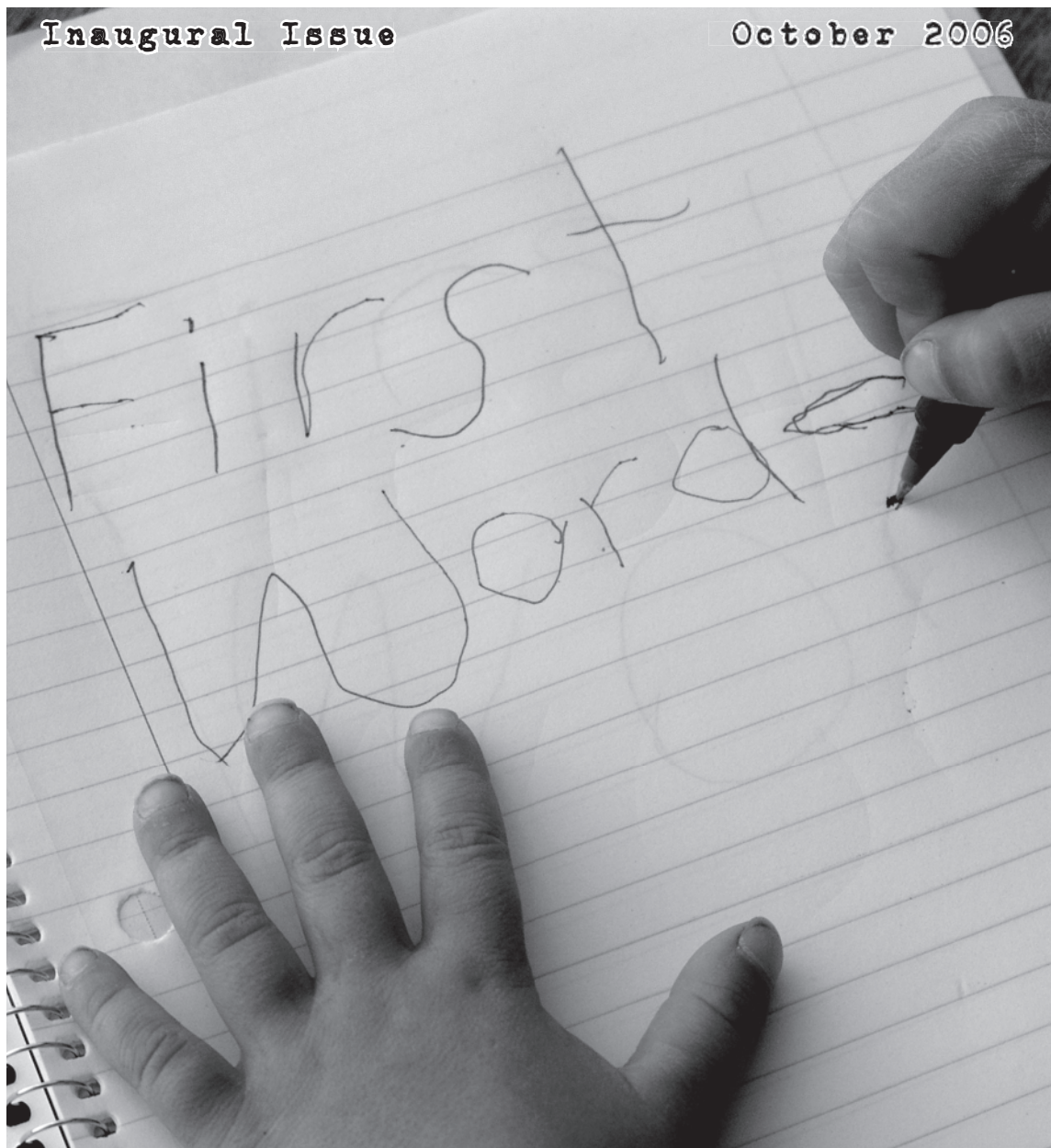


Inaugural Issue

October 2006



Journal of the Montana Writing Project Institute

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Memoir Writing

Submission Deadline: December 8

Publication Date: January 5

Memoir allows writers to start with what they know as they begin to make sense of the world around them. Memoir provides an opportunity for writers to process their own experiences and develop their own philosophies about life. It also welcomes chances to create connections among communities of authors. It can help students pay attention to detail and work on many central writing skills. In what ways does memoir writing show up in your practice? What writing prompts have yielded quality writing in your classroom? How have you used memoir to improve writing skills and build community? What forms and genres do your memoirs take? What roadblocks have you encountered and how have you overcome them? How does memoir writing fit with other curricular obligations? How have you incorporated literature into your work with memoir? As you work with your own writing and with the students in your classroom, consider how you might share your insight with a larger audience. We welcome submissions that deal with the philosophy and logistics of teaching writing while striving to remain a writer. The following ongoing features are possible ways to contribute:

The Practice of Teaching: As you work to teach writing, what methods get results? You might build an article from a demonstration lesson or a successful classroom unit. Reflect on what pedagogical practices have proven effective and share some ideas or strategies we can put into play in our own classrooms. The length of the submissions for this section could vary wildly. They might be brief pieces of no more a paragraph or two that outline a successful lesson but might also materialize as lengthier pieces that explain a whole unit and give some theoretical background or support for your work.

Fresh Insight: What is happening in education that you feel you must say something about? Use this as a forum to share your views on writing education. There are many things going on at the classroom level up to the national level that we as teachers are thinking about, wanting to change, or are hopeful or angry about. This is a platform to expand and articulate some of those ideas. What important issues are those around us (or are we ourselves) not thinking enough about?

Teachers as Writers: Amid the daily chaos of teaching, what personal writing have you been able to do? What are you ready to publish? What better way to encourage all of us to continue to be writers than to offer one another some of the work we are doing. Submissions of any genre are welcome.

Book reviews: What titles have you found useful when working on writing? Consider reviewing one of your favorite texts to give others an idea of the content and approach they can expect from the author. We'd be especially interested in fairly new releases that others may not yet be familiar with.

Original Photography: Share images from your classroom, professional development, or photos that complement any of your writing submissions. Images should be sent as 300 dpi image files. Anyone who appears in the photo should be identified, along with any other relevant caption information such as a brief explanation of what is depicted, the photographer's name and an approximate date the photo was taken.

Announcements/Upcoming Events: Please pass on any information about upcoming events or opportunities or any other information that would be of interest and use to the Montana Writing Project Community.

And of course there is always be room for quality work that doesn't fit the categories above or the current thematic issue. But, those that do tie (however loosely) to the theme will be considered first.

Please consider sharing your ideas, experience, and expertise.

Upcoming issues:

Assessing Writing

Submission Deadline: March 1

Publication Date: April 1

Multimodal Literacy

Submission Deadline: June 1

Publication Date: July 1

Submission Guidelines:

- Send any submissions to **montana.writing.project@gmail.com**.
- Manuscripts are only accepted in digital form, saved as an RTF or Microsoft Word file.
- Follow MLA guidelines, including in-text documentation, the works cited list, or any other bibliographic information (where needed).
- In general, manuscripts shouldn't exceed 2,500 words.
- Please list your name, address, academic affiliation, and e-mail address on your manuscript.

Progress, Changes, and Updates



I want to take this opportunity to report some changes and new developments at our site. Kristi Murphy, our administrative assistant, took a different position at the University of Montana in March. Laurie Gries, our inservice coordinator, left in July to pursue a Ph.D. in composition and rhetoric at Syracuse University in New York. Caroline Smith Simms, a 2006 MWP teacher consultant, started with us just last month and will be filling Kristi and Laurie's shoes. Eric Reimer was given a tenure track position with the English Department at U.M. in May and so he retired as our technology liaison in order to give full attention to his new position. Christa Umphrey, a 2006 MWP teacher consultant, stepped in as our new technology liaison in July. Christa is developing this quarterly newsletter and soliciting articles, poems, teaching suggestions for publication. Send any submissions or questions about the publication to her at montana.writing.project@gmail.com.



We held Summer Institutes both in Missoula and in Browning this summer. Next summer we plan to hold Summer Institutes in Missoula, Browning, and Billings. Because of your earnest efforts, our work is expanding! We have become part of the National Writing Project's "Project Outreach" network whose purpose is to provide professional development that focuses on issues of access, relevance and diversity for teachers of students living in poverty. Our Project Outreach work will focus on inquiry that enables us to fulfill the promise of Indian Education for All among other literacy projects. Our leadership travel team for Project Outreach is Laurie Smith-Small-Waisted Bear (Team Leader and Site Coordinator for Project Outreach, UM composition teacher), Woody Kipp (Blackfeet Community College communications teacher), and Lisa Waller (Hellgate High School English teacher), and Rina Moog (Billings Senior High School English teacher). The team traveled to a retreat in Nebraska City, NE this summer developing plans for our Project Outreach work.



Thanks to Donna Miller and Rina Moog's coordinated efforts, we also became an official curriculum group of MEA/MFT this year. MWP teacher consultants will present a full strand of workshops at the MEA/MFT conference in Billings October 19-20. Sheridan Blau, former NCTE president and Director of the South Coast Writing Project in Santa Barbara, CA will be our keynote speaker and will offer a workshop. I guarantee it will be fabulous! Bring your copies of his book *The Literature Workshop* for signatures.

Caroline Smith Simms offered a successful Youth Writing Camp in Missoula this summer. She had help from Jake Hansen and Jenni Frizzell, both 2006 Missoula Summer Institute fellows.

Assistant Co-director Wendy Z. Warren was elected to the NCTE nominating committee as its chair and is co-editing the journal *Full Circle: Indian Education for All* with Bobbie Starnes. This is a fabulous resource. Co-director Rina Moog was elected to the NCTE Executive Committee as Secondary Representative-at-Large. David Christensen completed his term as Elementary Representative-at-Large (MWP has a strong presence nationally!), which allowed him the time to co-write a technology grant with Christa Umphrey to develop a two-week institute focusing on media literacy. Look for the grant to be successful and to updates about attending this wonderful institute next summer.

I hope to see you in Billings. Have a wonderful and productive school year.

Heather Bruce,
MWP Director



Whispering Awake the Writer Within

Donna L. Miller

Powerful in their ability to elicit memories, aromas and flavors have long been recognized as portals to our pasts. Numerous authors use these triggers to generate poetry, fiction, memoir, and vignettes.

For instance, in her poem “Knoxville, Tennessee,” Nikki Giovanni favors summer for its tastes from Daddy’s garden: fresh corn, okra, greens, and cabbage; as well as for the seasonal treats offered at church picnics: barbecue, buttermilk, and homemade ice cream. These gustatory gems transport her to childhood again.

Likewise, Marcel Proust remembers petites madeleines dipped in tea and speaks of them in *Remembrance of Things Past* as possessing extraordinary power: “An exquisite pleasure invaded my senses. . . . And suddenly memory revealed itself.” The present dissolved like cookie crumbs, and he was back in Combray on Sunday mornings with his aunt Leonie sharing tea and palette pleasing madeleines “[which looked] as though they had been molded in

the fluted valve of a scallop shell.” With the madeleine’s double surface texture and its buttery, lemony taste as a complement, we can imagine the precious perfection in this intimate moment.

We all respond similarly to triggers that invade our senses and send us shuddering with the surge of memory. For some of us, these madeleine moments are tied to seasonal treats, to holiday meals, to comfort foods, or even to confections.

Teachers can coax these memories from their writers with creative invitations which whisper awake the past so that the writer can recapture his/her childhood, recording “exquisite pleasures.”

Imitation/copy change strategies work great for some writers. After simply hearing a model text, a writer can imitate its style and subject matter to produce writing. Others can effectively “take a line for a walk,” borrowing a line from a model text and letting that line lead them into imagery and memory recollection. Still, some respond to listing approaches as a brainstorming method for idea generation.

This first poem originated from a piece I read on the National Writing Project’s e-anthology two years ago, called “My Watermelon Day.” Thinking of the smells and tastes of summer, I wrote my own version:

My Cherry Popsicle Days

Today, the first day of summer vacation,
I am looking ahead to reading good books, just for pleasure,
to lying beside the pool,
enjoying the sun and warmth of a Montana summer,
to unhurried conversations with friends since no homework awaits.

I look forward to picking strawberries from the garden patch and to making smoothies,
to shopping—with nothing particular needed,
to picnicking with friends and to the Frisbee game that follows,
to sleeping in—just a little,
to staying up later—just a little.

I crave time to count the stars
from my sleeping bag on camping trips,
to walk stress-free beside a meandering river,
to paint my toenails in a lawn chair on the deck, and
to eat cherry popsicles that dye my lips and tongue
as my chlorine-scented hair blows across my face
in the lazy summer breeze.

I have recycled the first line and a half of that poem many times for a writing prompt, inviting students to take them for a walk: Today, the first day of autumn, I am looking ahead to . . . ; Today, the first snowfall, I am looking ahead to . . . ; Today, the first day of Christmas vacation. . . ; Today, our first football game You get the idea about this line’s versatility. You can even tweak it to celebrate a last day of basketball season, the last day of a semester, or some other commemorative moment.

This next poem came after a prompt to think of candies from childhood. Cynthia Rylant has a similar poem called “Wax Lips.” I remind students that rich detail and vivid imagery make for the most pleasant reading.

Adams Country Store

When extra money begged to be spent,
we pedaled our bikes two miles to Adams Country Store
on the corner of Raymond and Lolo Streets
where penny candy lined up in boxes
for sale on wooden shelves.



Donna Miller teaches high school English at Chinook High School. She is also the assistant co-director of the Montana Writing Project.

Sans Food? Heather Bruce

After deciding and discarding Pixie Sticks, candy necklaces,
Atomic fireballs, jawbreakers, and eighteen-inch ropes
of grape or cherry Bubsy Daddy Bubble Gum for a nickel,
we'd ride off,
smoking our chalk-white candy cigarettes,
their artificial red tips glowing.

Both of these texts have functioned in my classroom as successful writing stimuli.

Finally, this last task has performed as a companion to reading Giovanni's "Knoxville, Tennessee."

Imitation as Writing Prompts

What is your favorite season?

Name a smell associated with that season.

Name a sound associated with that season.

Name an activity or activities (something you do, like rake leaves, go on picnics, etc) connected to/enjoyed during that season.

Name a taste, a food most often enjoyed during that season.

Name a feeling (tactile or emotional) connected to that season and its activities.

Name a special person you see or share time with during that season.

Now read "Knoxville, Tennessee" by Nikki Giovanni.

You will write an imitation poem, using the details you collected during the prewriting phase above. However, you will write in first person (I, me, my), not second person (you, your).

The key is to make the poem flow, not sound like a list, and to make the imagery concrete and rich. Word choice should be vibrant, using simile, metaphor, or other analogies. Also, work on incorporating alliteration, assonance, and consonance.

Finally, delineate with a purpose. You should not end-stop more than half the lines in your poem; the images should stand on a line and then the line should wrap to the next image/line.

If you prefer to write a story rather than a poem, this procedure also works with Cynthia Rylant's book *In November*. You can use it as a model, imitating its form and pattern. Write in first person (I, me, my, we, us) whenever appropriate.

Choose a month that you consider memorable.

What are plants doing during this month? Name a specific plant or two and tell how this season affects it/them.

What are animals doing during this month? Name a specific animal or two and tell how this season affects it/them.

What are birds doing during this month? Name a specific bird and describe its activities during this month.

What do people do during this month? Name an activity or activities (something people do, like rake leaves, go on picnics, etc) connected to/enjoyed during this month.

Name a smell(s) associated with this month.

Name a sound(s) associated with this month.

Name a taste(s), a food most often enjoyed during this month.

Name a feeling(s) (tactile or emotional) connected to this month and its activities.

Name a special person you see or share time with during this month.

"The poetry instruction book
contains many rules
about what to avoid and what to follow."

Do not use food
to describe body parts, is one.

But I imagine an immeasurable starvation
occasioned by hunger for
turns of phrase like
her sour cottage cheese thighs or
rancid butter hair.

A famine induced by
scarcity of images like
his sweet potato nose,
musty whiskey breath and moldy garlic warts.
Or her bruised Crenshaw knees tinged in green,
twisted turnip ankles purpled, and
tuna fish stale sighs beigned the heavy silence.

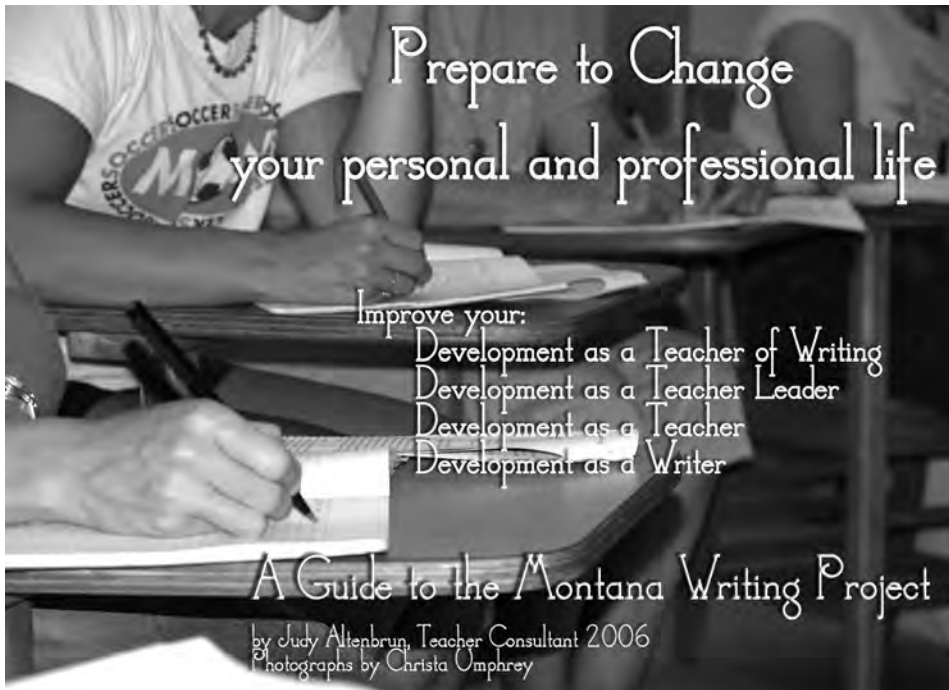
Appetites craved by
lines like his beer belly froths over his belt...
her pudding butt ripples below the lip
of her too-tight skirt...
his jello jowls jiggle,
jack-o-lantern teeth as orange as pumpkins...

Diets prescribed
by stanzas like
her watermelon skin seeded with
pocks the size of cranberries proliferate
chin whiskers thick as carrot roots,
and hair stringy as celery sticks.

Desires tantalized
by a menu of metaphors—lick her mango breasts;
Savor her creamy chocolate skin;
Drink her triple caramel eyes;
Tongue her cherry lips; taste her ripe raspberry
cheeks.
Or squeeze his thick sirloin thighs;
Barbecue his rare beef steak behind;
Deftly drizzle his olive oil complexion with light
fingertips.

With such desserts, ignore those
caloric cholesterol cautions. Go ahead. Gorge on
a gastronomic feast of poems
creamed in cheesy similes.
Tuck in.

¹ Collins, Billy. "The Student." *The Trouble With Poetry*. New York: Random House, 2005. 51.
Thanks to Claudia Crase for inspiration.



The most positive aspect of MWP for me was the spirit of community we built through our four week writing institute. I now have a network of teachers I can call upon when I need a professional opinion. We bonded through sharing writing on a daily basis, discussing hot-topics and articles tied to our work in literacy circles, supporting each other through our demonstration lessons and providing valuable feedback, helping one another revise and improve our writing assignments, and overall experiencing together a complete and intense immersion in the process of writing in many genres.

As I move on, after the MWP, I want to take the information, philosophies, and strategies of best writing practices with me into the classroom. I am very excited to apply what I have learned through the institute.

I will strive to use the model of community in my own classroom. Response groups and shared writing as well as the "spirit of inquiry" shall become an integral part of my new and improved philosophy of classroom management.

Below, the group gathers for the morning announcements, scribe notes, and hot topics discussion.



The Marathons. Ernest Hemingway had nothing on us. Touring local cafés, bars, parks, rivers, museums, and bridges we created a "moveable feast." Our writing marathons were whole afternoons devoted to writing amongst the local citizens and scenery of Missoula, a rich background of people and places to write about. I had been a teacher who didn't write. Now I am a teacher who will forever write.

At right, during a Fort Missoula writing marathon, Claudia Crase composes a story inspired by the fire lookout from which she is writing.

The directors of MWP provided an amazing library of professional books about all aspects of writing for our use throughout the month, as well as gifting each participant relevant books worth \$200 to build their own professional library. The amount of professional reading and research I did in class has improved and increased my strategies and methods of teaching writing. Authors, such as Lucy Calkins, Nancy Atwell, Katie Wood Ray, and James Graves, provided a framework and overall philosophy for teaching the process of writing which I will rely on from now on. Not only has MWP improved my pedagogy of teaching writing but it has enabled me to confidently support and defend my style of teaching writing.

As a student, participating daily in the writing process helped me define my priorities of the process of writing, and the MWP inquiry model was invaluable in demonstrating that the role of the teacher can be as a nurturing guide not as one who regurgitates information. The directors model their belief of effective teaching.

MWP is a demanding course. It will put you into a wobble but also help you to "notice what you notice." I will be forever changed by a process that left me working many late hours and feeling unsure and insecure many days, but which also allowed me to reflect, and think deeply about my personal and professional life.





Throughout the institute I learned so much about myself as a writer. I had an “ah-ha” moment, as we ended the week on the deck of the Iron Horse restaurant, working in small-groups, revising our work. The process of sharing my work with two other writing teachers taught me that revision is a process of dialoging. The research process helped me find solid solutions in helping students with the process of editing and revising their work. And as we prepared for our own professional publication, I enjoyed writing about the possibilities of becoming a system of hope. At left, the group at the Raven Cafe for the weekly Friday workshop.

“Research a topic you’ve been grappling with in your own classroom, or an idea you’ve always wanted to try, and teach it to the other fellows in the MWP. You have 75 minutes to do so.” When I first heard this assignment, I thought an hour and 15 minutes would be much too long to stand up in front of my peers. But as I began to plan out my presentation I found I needed more time. My subject came from a problem I was grappling with in my first grade classroom: How to get students to work together effectively revising their work. I learned a lot as I heard groups working together during my workshop, largely that the process of dialoging is key to helping students organize and visualize story development. I also became more confident in my ability to put on a workshop, and the research proved invaluable to my future of teaching writing in my own classroom. At right, Judy Altenbrun and Joni Olson work on their demonstration lessons.

**“I had been a teacher who didn’t write.
Now I am a teacher
who will forever write.”**

“You must find a way to capture a day in the life of the Montana Writing Project.” As our group fulfilled this scribe notes assignment, we had an incredible Power Point, poetry, trading cards, articles, a collage, and even a song accompanied by guitar! In comparison to other writing project’s daily notes, we declared ourselves winners – even if we were the only ones competing. As scribes, we were able to build a strong sense of community, and build on the creativity of others. I learned it was difficult to accurately represent everyone’s point of view, but I also enjoyed how we all expressed ourselves through many of Howard Gardiner’s intelligences. This assignment had the most impact on me personally.



Above, Pam Poole shares her scribe notes about the previous day’s experiences.



Back: Mandy Knight, Claudia Crase, Kathryn Reed, Heather Bruce, Donna Miller, Dave Christensen, Jenni Frizzell, Caroline Smith, Jake Hansen, Christa Umphrey. Front: Joe Campana, Joni Olson, Judy Altenbrun, Pam Poole

A Positive Role Model: Moving Forward with Indian Education for All

Caroline Smith Simms

Montana's state legislature and Office of Public Instruction have finally committed to requiring the inclusion of Native Montanan culture and history in schools' curricula, and have shown a new level of commitment by funding the program with several million dollars. Indian Education for All is an important step in the project of eliminating the racism and more than a century of oppression waged on the Native tribes of Montana. It is a state mandate, though, and all directives from on high face questions and opposition, especially from the teachers who carry its responsibility. Some teacher concerns are honest while others are predictably negative. How do I teach Native topics when I know nothing about them? How can I teach Native culture when I am not even a little bit Native? I have too much else to fit into

a curriculum already pressed for time. What am I supposed to teach, exactly? Don't we cover that in Montana History in junior year? But I don't have any Native kids in my classes. But I have one or two Native kids in my classes: won't that be awkward for them? Will anyone know if I don't follow this requirement?

These questions reflect an omnipresent human tendency: our resistance to change. To truly take part in Indian Education for All and teach against pervasive racism, we must do more work, enter unfamiliar territories and take risks. None of these tasks are easy. True integration of Native culture into schools is possible and necessary. If it does not happen, then we as educators are showing the public that we are complacent with an education system that excludes its indigenous people and perpetuates the cycle of poverty, disenfranchisement and ignorance. To reiterate: Indian Education for All must and can be implemented.

One way to inspire and reassure Montana's teachers and Native American communities that Indian Education for All is achievable is to hold up examples of similar initiatives that have worked elsewhere. New Zealand's nation-wide Maori education program, called Taha Maori or literally the Maori side, has successfully integrated colonized indigenous peoples in schools and instituted effective bi-cultural education. In 2005 I taught eighth grade English in Auckland, New Zealand and had the chance to experience Taha Maori first hand. What I learned and observed gives me hope that Native Americans can gain similar recognition and nation-wide respect in U.S. schools.

The Maori people of New Zealand have enough in common with Native Americans to warrant this comparison. The many Maori tribes or iwi were overrun and dominated by the colonizing British in the 1800s, then subjugated to various forms of oppression well into the 1940s, including forced enrollment in English-only boarding schools. Today, white Europeans are 80% of the total population and own and control the vast majority of New Zealand's resources, institutions and wealth. 15% of the country is of Maori descent. Unlike the United States and Australia, however, the New Zealand people and government have made concerted efforts to maintain the integrity of the native people's culture, language and well-being. It was the Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840 by the English governor and chiefs of several Maori tribes, that established English rule but with deference to Maori beliefs and cultural autonomy. Elements of this document are still hotly debated but its emphasis on Maori rights to their language in culture has held up over time through the strength of its legal arm, the Waitangi Tribunal. It has, however, taken decades for some of the Treaty's covenants to be enforced, and several were not officially recognized until the 1990s (May 283).

Because of the Treaty and the persistent work of Maori leaders, there is now a strong and active Maori Party represented in Parliament, the native language (Te Reo Maori) was recognized as an official national language in 1978, and schools are required to incorporate Maori history, culture and language into their curricula at all levels. This is real progress, but still too many young Maori are faced with futures similar to that of so many Native Americans. A disproportionate number of Maori live in poverty, drop out of school and succumb to the influence of drugs and gangs. Maori also hold the highest unemployment rate of any ethnic group in New Zealand at 17% out of a 7% overall rate (www.stats.govt.nz).

Schools are a place where Maori influence has become strong, especially in regards to language and culture, and this is empowering more young Maori to succeed in their white or pakeha run country. In 1984 the Department of Education implemented Taha Maori, defining it this way: "Taha Maori is the inclusion of aspects of Maori language and culture in the philosophy, organisation and the content of the school... It should be a normal part of the school climate with which all pupils should feel comfortable and at ease" (May 285). Because of this mandate, all New



Caroline has taught high school English in Missoula, Montana and eighth grade English in New Zealand. She is currently teaching writing classes for both the Composition and Business departments at the University of Montana in addition to handling administrative duties and program development for the Writing Project.

Zealand schools now teach Te Reo Maori as part of the standard curriculum, and all schools are required to teach Maori history and culture to every student. For example, New Zealand's national curriculum document for English, English in the New Zealand Curriculum, dedicates a chapter Maori students and studies. Its language is clear about its emphasis on Taha Maori:

All students should be encouraged to appreciate New Zealand's bi-cultural heritage. In their approaches to learning and teaching, in issues that are addressed, and in their selection of spoken, written and visual texts, teachers should include Maori perspectives (14).

This strong language clearly states support for Taha Maori but also leaves room for individual teachers' and schools' interpretations.

Over twenty years after implementing Taha Maori, most New Zealand schools do not seem to question the value of bi-cultural education and have made it including it feel second nature. Maori culture is integrated into most subject areas and in extra-curricular activities. Students highlight their achievements in Te Reo and Maori dance in competitions, and the haka or war dance is a mainstay at sporting events and ceremonies nationwide. In all of the schools I am familiar with, Taha Maori is considered par for the course by faculty and students and is included in schools' guiding documents. Each school's mission statement or charter clarifies their purpose and direction. The school where my husband taught, for example, had a fifteen-page charter that included the following statement as its third point on the very first page. "We recognize the unique place Tikanga Maori [customs and traditions] and Te Reo Maori have in our country and we actively seek to develop respect and understanding for Maori issues and language" (ASDAH). Even though that school's student body was primarily of Pacific Islander descent, their charter emphasized the importance of all New Zealanders' familiarity with the culture and language of the country's native people.

This is not to say that Taha Maori is flawless or has gone without criticism. There are those New Zealanders who resist adapting and hang onto old notions about race. They question why they must take classes in Maori language if they have little contact with Maori because of geographical location. Some say that Maori get too much attention in curriculum and funding at the expense of other ethnicities or basic subject areas. Conversely, there are those who feel that Taha Maori distracts from instituting more dramatic changes in Maori education. One critic argues that the program "can be seen as a useful ideology for *containing* the conflicts of ethnic groups within existing social relations rather than as the basis for any real power-sharing between Maori and Pakeha" (May 286, author's italics). It has been criticized by Maori leaders for being only a token representation of Maori culture. It has also been accused of misdirecting indigenous educational efforts towards mainstream schools, thus detracting from the work to improve Maori student achievement. Some say that it benefits white students more than native students.

It is, however, one of the best examples of normalized bi-cultural education as it has increased all New Zealanders' awareness of Maori issues and history. This work, in the long run, will only serve to help younger generations internalize the truth that the country is truly multi-racial and should value the cultures and languages of all of its citizens. Taha Maori has not stopped the progress and development of Maori immersion schools. These schools, which are growing in numbers, focus on keeping the language alive and its speakers fluent, as well as more traditional Maori educational practices (for example, the inclusion of families and the oral tradition as instructors). Taha Maori does not distract from that project, and instead has been a stepping-stone toward keeping the country's schools focused on its indigenous people.

Clearly there are differences between Native Montanans' situation and that of the Maori. Unlike the Treaty of Waitangi, the U.S. government did not hold to any national treaty honoring Native cultural rights. Also, the relative population of Native Americans is smaller than that of the Maori (6.4% of Montana's population is Native American or Native Alaskan). Numbers do not tell the whole story, however. Native tribes have influence and important roles to play in Montana and the education system should recognize this. Therefore Montana can learn important lessons from New Zealand's example.

Taha Maori succeeded in the face of its critics because its supporters were confident and persistent. Montana Native education supporters and teachers must follow suit in order to integrate Indian education at all levels. We must be patient and persistent with Indian Education for All if it is to be normalized into various curricula. As future generations become familiar with Native issues and knowledge through IEFA, they will hopefully be receptive to more curriculum-wide changes that would be even more inclusive of Native education. As in New Zealand, perhaps it will be possible to establish more Native language immersion schools and to incorporate more traditional education methods into mainstream schools. These types of major Native education improvements may not happen without IEFA as a first step. Without IEFA as that first step, it will be difficult to improve cultural acceptance and understanding of Native Montanans. It is an educational tool that can help to reduce societal and institutional racism.

Montana is in an excellent position to distinguish itself nationally as a

“Montana is in an excellent position to distinguish itself nationally as a model for positive change in Native American education...”

model for positive change in Native American education and promoting social justice in the schools. If the U.S. is ever to work collectively against racism and oppression, it needs to include real multicultural education in its schools, beginning with Native education programs like IEFA. When students internalize the worth of indigenous culture and traditions, we will have done much towards the project of extending that valuing of culture and diversity.

Smooth integration of Indian Education for All may not happen quickly, but already acceptance and support is growing. Teachers and tribal members have been creating and sharing resources. Educators are feeling less isolated when faced with this work. In the near future we may see Native Education normalized in schools to the same degree that it is in New Zealand. We should therefore look to Maori education for ideas, inspiration and help. True Indian Education will require connections to Montana tribes and their knowledge, but it need not stop there. Montana schools, through Indian Education for All, are broadening the scope of culture and inclusion, and our teachers should feel confident, with the help of New Zealand's example, that bi-cultural education is possible.

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Flight Home Jenni Frizzell

They sat feeding the wanderlust that had settled, drift-like, between them. Teeth clenched behind lips that know too much about what it means to really be kissed. The flight was delayed and the plane sat dormant on the runway, waiting. Their hands barely touched. Air came from somewhere discreet. They were changed.

Afraid to look at one another, for fear of remembering where they had to go when the wheels hit the ground on the other side of two hours, they stared straight ahead. She glanced out the window every so often, and when she did, his head would turn slightly, like the rocking of a sailboat, towards her.

In one hand, he held a magazine rumpled and unread. Somewhere creased in the middle was a poem she had written in green ink. In his other hand, hidden in a fist, was his heart, bruised and dull from lack of use.

The voices over the intercom hurt her fingertips, her knees, her elbows, her ego—everything she wanted to hand over. What If? veiled itself and filled the space under their legs. The backdrop of big red letters extended peripherally: Emergency Exit.

She thought about what she should use as a flotation device if it's not water she's swan diving into. If somebody told her, would she remember as she plummeted towards her forgotten destination?

She'll skip work next week. So will he. He'll pick her up in the parking lot in his old blue Volvo with the torn seats that smell like polished leather and fossilized perfume. They'll tuck themselves into conversations about writers they love and lovers they've written. For the day they'll strip their souls bare of everything they carry in bags made of to-do lists and signatures. They'll dive off cliffs into black water and lay on the rocks drinking cold beer. They'll take naps while the sun turns cliché into two bodies burning, barely touching.

She wants to erase his life up to now. He wants to write hers on cave walls of ghost town innuendoes in the spilt blood of catastrophe.

The plane touches hollow ground. It has been documented in the record books of silent gazing pauses acting as bill-boards. Seatbelts release like their fingers, tangled tree branches after a hurricane. They are changed.

He politely takes her bag as far as the terminal, coincidentally. They shake hands and say how awfully good it was to meet. She levels her tired eyes towards his sleepy half-smile. They hang on perhaps a bit too long. Skin screams relentless, pleading for more time. They walk away, learning a new language without knowing it.



Jenni Frizzell teaches English at Hellgate High School in Missoula. She is a 2006 Writing Project teacher consultant.

Teachers as Mentors

Mandy Knight

I walked into my classroom on the day before school started, a new teacher in an unfamiliar town ready to take on my first teaching job. After finally finding the textbooks I was expected to use, I spent the remainder of the day arranging my classroom and wondering why my education classes had not prepared me for this experience of feeling lost and alone.

As a participant in a transition to teaching program, I had not spent time in a traditional teacher preparation degree program. I was hired with a provisional license and my program's expectation that I would have a mentor to guide me through the joys and pitfalls inherent to public education. Since there is only one other English teacher in my building, she was naturally appointed to become my mentor.

Over the course of my first year, my colleague became a great friend and was supportive of my teaching decisions. Entering my third year at the same school, she continues to welcome my questions and commiserates with me over the daily frustrations and triumphs we both experience. We talk about content issues and curriculum choices, as well as other aspects of our personal and professional lives. Having a good friend with career experience makes me fortunate, but there are other aspects to creating a successful teaching career that new teachers must learn to navigate.

In the chaos that comes from beginning a new job, whether it is a teacher's first year or their tenth, it can be difficult to fit into the professional community within the school and at large. During my first year of teaching, I did not realize that I could join our school union, nor did I understand the purpose of the state teachers' convention. I was also unaware of the many professional teaching journals available as well as the benefits that come from joining professional associations. This ignorance did not change during my second year of teaching when I found myself feeling frustrated and uncertain about wanting to

continue on this career path. And, though my mentor was always available to listen to a problem or question, it was difficult to articulate the dissatisfaction I felt about my career. I needed more than a friend; I needed a guide into the world of associations, journals, workshops, and conferences.

Fortunately, I was able to attend a few workshops sponsored by the curriculum cooperative to which our school district belongs and it was through these workshops that I discovered additional professional development opportunities. I learned about the Montana Association of Teachers of English and Language Arts (MATELA), as well as the Montana Writing Project. As I continue to participate in conferences and workshops, and join professional associations, I am able to create a network of mentors who meet my various professional needs while continuing to build a personal and professional relationship with my colleague and first mentor.

Mentors can come from a variety of sources, including professional organizations, workshops, or through online programs. The importance is that new teachers have someone to talk to about their experiences in the classroom and someone who can guide them to useful tools and resources to enhance their professional know-how. Experienced educators should see it as their responsibility to the profession and to the students they work with to involve new colleagues in professional activities. Taking an interest in the success of new colleagues would not only give professional educators the opportunity to renew their commitment to education, it would also give them a chance to re-examine their own beliefs about their chosen occupation. Veteran teachers hold the proverbial keys to the closet of knowledge and are new teachers' most accessible resource to opening that door. Through mentoring, veteran teachers can serve as advocates of teacher retention, job satisfaction, and involvement in professional communities.



Mandy Knight teaches in Fort Benton and is a 2006 Writing Project teacher consultant.

On Teaching:

"The easy way is to keep a part of yourself out of the game. I think this is why we admire the gambler who risks his entire stake on a longshot. We gape and recoil at the same time. We watch the wreck through our fingers. Well done, teaching demands everything. You've got to bet the whole pot every day."

Joe Campana

Year-long Plan for Writing Workshops

Judy Altenbrun

As I think about this school year, I am most excited to take specific craft lessons from Nancy Atwell, Lucy Calkins, Katie Wood Ray, and Ralph Fletcher & Joann Portalupi and teach them throughout the school year. I took a year long sample writing plan from Katie Wood Ray's book, Wondrous Words and Ralph Fletcher & Joann Portalupi's book Craft Lessons and planned out my next school year. I will put this in my lesson plan book and use it to guide my instruction, using the more detailed lessons from their books. Next year, we are leveling our reading program. I have been designated as the Gifted and Talented teacher. I think my year-long plan will especially apply to these students, of course with a more open-ended, inquiry based approach, to challenge them.

September

- Write about your name: Community building writing centered around "the name"
- Examining illustrations of several picture books: Nancy Linnell's lesson
- Study of different kinds of writing: Imagining What's possible
- Author Study: Frank Asch

October

- Study of Where Writers get ideas and why writers write
- Genre Study: Alphabet books
- Author Study: Eric Carle
- Craft Lesson: Match words with Picture: "Officer Buckle and Gloria" by Peggy Rathmann

November

- Craft Lesson: Match words with Picture
- Study of how to read texts like writers
- Genre Study: Label books
- Partner Collaboration book
- Thanksgiving book

December

- Craft Lesson: Beginning, Middle, End "Fireflies" by Julie Brinckloe
- Author Study: H.A Rey
- Craft Lesson: Beginning, Middle, End "The Polar Express"

January

- Craft Lesson: Nudging Students to Move Beyond "list" and "love stories and "Where Are You Going, Little Mouse" by Robert Kraus
- Collaboration: Small group story – dialoging – organizing-learning to help each (two weeks)
- Craft Lesson: Describing the Setting, "On Call Back Mountain" by Eve Bunting
- Study of writing for an audience

February

- Study of writing for an audience
- Write about Love: Valentine's Day book study
- Collaboration Lesson on revision
- Craft Lesson: Using Details to create a "mind picture"

March

- Author Study: Lio Lionni – Illustrating
 - Craft Lesson: How to pace a story "Little Nino's Pizzeria by Karen Barbour
 - Author Study: Tomie de Paola
- Spring Break



Judy is a first grade teacher at Hellgate Elementary and a 2006 Montana Writing Project teacher consultant.

April

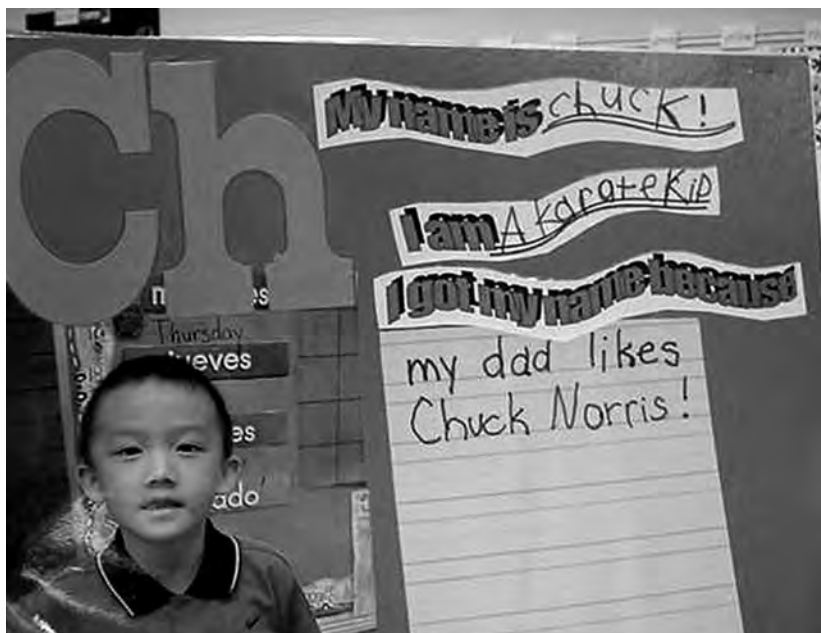
- Craft Lesson: How to Write a strong lead, “Shrek” by William Steig or “Willy the Wimp” by Anthony Browne
- Two-week Poetry Genre Study
- Craft Lesson: Staying on the topic

May

- Craft Lesson: Cause and Effect, “Lilly’s Purple Purse” by Kevin Henkes and “Old Henry” by Joan W. Blos
- Author Study: Kevin Henkes
- Craft lesson: Physical Description of Character, “Ghost Eye” by Marion Dane Bauer
- Craft Study: The Repeating Line, “The Doorbell Rang” by Pat Hutchins

June

- Craft Lesson: Surprise Endings
- “Just Like Daddy” by Frank Asch



The poster Chuck, one of Judy's students, created in her beginning-of-the-year writing workshop centered around students' names.

Writing is like Fog

Good writers:

Layer words
slowly
building
emotion
Hiding
the meaning
in the
misty
condensation
Leaving behind
a heavy
impression

Judy Altenbrun

Writing Invitation: Take a Moment for Your Own Writing

Look back at Donna's writing prompts (pages 4-5), and choose one or combine a few and see where they lead you. A few highlights and possibilities:

- Take one of the lines from one of her poems for a walk: *Today, as the first leaves begin to turn the colors of fall, what are you looking toward?*
 - Immerse yourself in thoughts of your favorite foods. What seasonal tastes bring back memorable times?
 - Pick a season or time of year. Which is your favorite and what are the sounds, smells, and tastes that come to mind? What activities do you enjoy? Who is there with you?
- Write an imitation poem using one of Donna's or Giovanni's
- “Knoxville, Tennessee” (readily available online via a Google search).

Though it's often hard to find the time to write anything very extensive in the middle of a hectic school year, it's rejuvenating to even occasionally take just a few moments for your own work. See what memories these prompts bring. When you come up with a few lines you like—whether it be it a poem or prose, or even a few dozen words that may (or may not) someday become a longer piece of writing, submit your work to montana.writing.project@gmail.com with “writing invitation” in the subject line.

We'll feature some of the responses in our upcoming Memoir Issue.

No Binder Curriculum

A Review of William Strong's *Write for Insight*

Donna Miller

William Strong describes his latest book, *Write for Insight; Empowering Content Area Learning, Grades 6-12*. (Pearson Education, Inc., 2006) as a "teacher book with attitude," a felicitous label for this 187 page book that encourages teachers to shift from their roles as "information dispensers" to "learning facilitators." In this shift, teachers aim not so much to "cover" material as to "uncover" it. They teach for insight, helping learners construct and internalize knowledge (9).

I read this valuable professional development resource every morning for a ritualistic week while sipping Swiss Chocolate Almond coffee by an open window, sunlight soft upon the page, letting the learning wash over me. In the brisk morning air, Strong reminded me of what I already know by heart: writing matters, writing is every teacher's responsibility, and students don't do enough of this endlessly educational activity.

This is not a book written in a professorial tone, blowing pipe smoke and engendering academic boredom. Instead, it shares a Saturday sweat shirt and blue

jeans kind of practicality. With his inviting anecdotes, rich descriptions, creative ideas, and mentoring voice, Strong engages the reader. My eye balls voraciously consumed Strong's concepts; I moved from chapter to chapter as if touring the kitchen cabinetry to satisfy a craving, to learn how to counter the mind-numbing effects of writing to specifications. I wanted what Strong offered: to turn my students away from the notions of viewing writing in terms of grades, from adopting strategies of pleasing the teacher and playing it safe. I'd rather see them explore ideas, raise questions, and make personal connections. Strategies like the Neuron Note, exit slips, entrance slips, and designating my red pen for semi-retirement are new ones for my teaching cache.

Presently, for many, "school is a game, and the score is kept with grades. Fakery is valued, and personal insight devalued. But it doesn't have to be that way" (33), Strong insists, and he tells us how to shift the paradigm, to get students to do the intellectual work without the fixation on grades and without an added correction burden for teachers. Through ungraded writing-to-learn activities, teachers have a powerful tool for content learning, a way of empowering students to construct meaning and to develop insights (7). With a variety of writing invitations for every subject, from art to zoology, students revisit their learning experiences, reflect on the significance of those experiences, and extend their knowledge.

Strong offers a multitude of content area writing-to-learn formats, a rich array of activities that form the basis for higher-order thinking. He challenges the insidious effects of the hidden curriculum at every turn, explores expressive writing as a way to make thinking visible, and seeks to stimulate, not suppress, the playful, imaginative impulses of childhood. Rather than shutting down curiosity, Strong shares methods to foster genuine inquiry, to enhance motivation, mental toughness, and student confidence. For example, with daily writing practice on learning logs or in double entry notes, students develop fluency, releasing the brain power that gives them access to the good ideas between their ears (64).

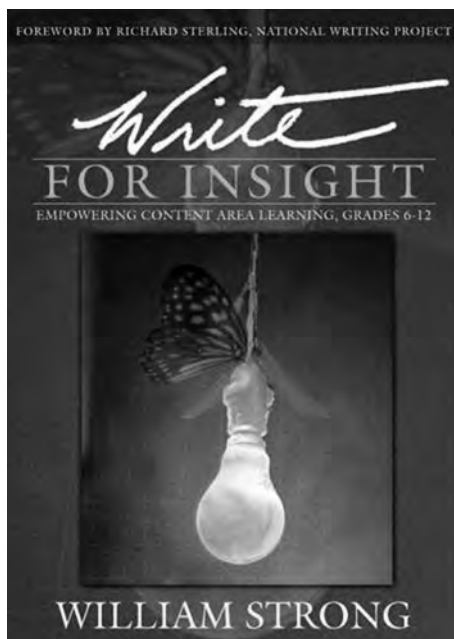
As students construct knowledge, Strong distinguishes between "schooling" [what one does to earn credits and get a grade] and "learning" [what one truly takes away in terms of insights, changes in attitude, or new behaviors] (91). Strong dedicates an entire chapter to the power of metaphor as an image-making strategy for understanding complicated ideas.

Another chapter assists the content-area teacher in assignment and rubric design. With Strong's "Ten Design Principles" (98), we should soon all have our students writing-across-the curriculum. Writing is a process for developing intellectually productive students who retain what they learn. After all, "if students are to make knowledge their own, they must struggle with the details, wrestle with the facts, and rework raw information and dimly understood concepts into language they can communicate to someone else" (5). That's a powerful definition of learning, a true assessment of retained knowledge.

This book's ten chapters and four idea-rich appendices are packed with research-proven, classroom tested strategies from the National Writing Project. Some are simple ideas: "Write a conversation between the bench press and pectoral muscles" (57) or "What if George had not killed Lennie in *Of Mice and Men*?" (47), and some are more complex: "Use a factory metaphor to depict plant photosynthesis (81) or "How does the weather change as you go from Freud's view of the personality to B.F. Skinner's (90). Yet, they are all useful.

And when you put down the book at last, lean back and reflect, you

continued on page 15



How to Draw a Richard Cleofus Demurs

Jake Hansen

In the center of the page, draw a pair of plain black pants and plain black shoes holding up a plain white shirt. Let these suggest the figure of a man. You'll have to draw a different tie each day, but there are only seven or eight of them; once you've got those down, you can just rotate through them one at a time. Attach a superhero's cape onto the back of the figure, but make sure that it's invisible to everyone else. The cape should not really be there.

Make a cartoon speech bubble with inspiring and entertaining lectures coming out of the blank space where a face should be. These might mention Alexander the Great, Moby Dick, and Peggy McIntosh's article on white privilege. They should seem funny and well researched, and each should be at least forty-five minutes long.

Place at least thirty-five desk chairs in a large circle, ceremoniously arranged around the figure of the man. There should also be room for students in window wells, on the floor, and at the large desk in the corner of the room. Make room for student conversation in the space not taken up by the lectures, but don't let the lectures or the conversation take up more than their share of the page.

In the background, signify notes on a black board and a syllabus and some feedback on some essays. Include tests with multiple choice and matching sections. None of this should be written legibly.

The walls of the room should be covered with inspiring poems, pictures, and various humanities paraphernalia, including a weekly quote from Roget's Thesaurus of Quotations. Copy these into your notebook with devotion. Find space to fit the rumor of a diploma from a prestigious East Coast University.

Somewhere out of the way, graph a bell curve with standard deviations labeled "A," "B," "C," and so forth. Let this information determine your self-worth.

Underneath the figure of the man, draw a very large marble pillar. It should look Greek or Roman, and academic. It should resemble an alter.

Label this pillar: "Trying to crumble and hold up the sky at the same time."



Jake taught in New Haven, Connecticut before moving to Montana last year to teach composition and complete a masters degree in English Teaching at the University of Montana. He is a 2006 Writing Project teacher consultant.

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will be schooled enough to agree that somewhere along the educational journey, "busywork and mindless activities and paint-by-numbers teaching [of drill and kill worksheets or of binder/canned curriculums] conspired to snuff out personal insight and the joy of learning" (3). However, teachers can put the pleasure back in the curriculum by creating classrooms that focus on discovery and by placing the responsibility for learning back on the student, stimulating the student with authentic learning tasks. Writing assists in this process because it "makes content knowledge meaningful and provides a way to probe what a student doesn't yet know or fully understand. It is a complex set of skills—an orchestration of hand, eye, and brain—that uses processes of two-channel thinking and decentering in order to select, connect, and sustain a flow of ideas. And that's why writing for insight has the potential to make content learning infinitely interesting—to our students and to us" (169).

With this book, William Strong reminds us that success is the most important motivation to continue learning any skill, and with the basics of good teaching: modeling, providing practice, guiding, reinforcing, and tapping that retained knowledge with copious transcription and composing activities, we have a greater chance at success with and for our students. Strong's book took me to writing camp, and I brought back a writing curriculum I can wrap my heart and mind around, sharing its tasks and tips with teachers in every department.



Events & Announcements

montana writing project

Montana Writing Project (MWP) is one of 195 sites in the National Writing Project (NWP) network, the premier effort to improve writing instruction in America. Through its NWP authorized professional development model, Montana Writing Project builds the leadership, programs, and research needed for teachers pre-20 to help their students become successful writers and learners. At the University of Montana-Missoula, Montana Writing Project sponsors an intensive month-long Summer Institute for Reading, Writing, Questioning, and Reflecting about best practices for teaching writing across all content areas and grade levels. Montana Writing Project also sponsors open one- and two- week summer institutes, academic year in-service, and conferences on writing education.

Join the Montana Writing Project!

*Every student deserves a highly accomplished teacher of writing.
Let Montana Writing Project help you increase your effectiveness.*

Stop by our membership table in the Skyview Commons area at the convention.

Officers:

Heather E. Bruce, Director
Department of English, University of Montana

Donna L. Miller, Co-Director
English Instructor, Chinook High School

Dave Christensen, Co-Director
5th Grade Teacher, Lolo School

Join the Montana Writing Project and benefit from what MWP offers:

- ☐ Newsletter subscription
- ☐ Workshop strand at the MEA/MFT fall educators' conference
- ☐ Professional resources from the National Writing Project
- ☐ Networking with writing teachers nationwide
- ☐ Professional development support
- ☐ Opportunities to conduct writing workshops and curriculum in-service

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
E-Mail Address: _____
School: _____ Grade Level _____
Phone (work): _____ Phone (home): _____

Please enclose \$10 for regular membership.

Mail this form and your check to→

Montana Writing Project
University of Montana, LA 133
Missoula, MT 59812

Visit us on-line at www.umt.edu/english/mwp/default.html

On Writing

A bibliography of favorite resources from Montana Writing Project teacher consultants

Our next issue's bibliography will offer titles related to memoir writing. Share one or two of your favorites by e-mailing the title and author and a few sentences about the book to montana.writing.project@gmail.com. Please put "bibliography" in the subject line.

Atwell, Nancy. *In the Middle: New Understanding About Writing, Reading, and Learning.* Boynton/Cook, 1998 (2nd edition). ISBN: 0867093749. \$37.00.

"Right now I'm into this book. I'm trying to figure out how to set up my classroom following her advice, and it's going fairly well."

Bean, John. *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom.* Jossey-Bass, 1996. ISBN: 0787902039. \$40.00

"The book focuses mostly on writing across the curriculum and has an excellent chapter on grammar, too—one that will help you convert any grammar mavens you have to work with. The book also shows teachers how to offer students revision-based feedback rather than corrective feedback."

Bomer, Randy. *Time for Meaning.* Heinemann, 1995. ISBN: 0435088491. \$25.00

"I love how he talks about teaching and the necessity to build a curriculum that matters to students. He isn't hung up on NCLB or standards... which for those of you in schools might be a let down, but the book is sooooo inspirational."

Christiansen, Linda. *Reading, Writing and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word.* Rethinking Schools, 2000. ISBN 094961250. \$12.95

"Her arguments for community building are so strong and her practices so sound that it kills me that I hadn't been doing this stuff since the beginning. And why not write a "I am From Poem?" There is always enough time to build relationships and trust in any class."

Claggett, Fran. *Teaching Writing: Craft, Art and Genre.* NCTE, 2005. ISBN 0814152503. \$25.00

"A quick read that does a nice job of prefacing each writing activity idea-filled chapter with the research that supports their suggested methods. Claggett and the other authors included suggest approaches for various essays, poetry and grammar."

Cleaveland, Lisa and Katie Wood Ray. *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with Our Youngest Writers.* Heinemann, 2004. ISBN: 0325005117. \$27.00

"This is the book I'm referring to mostly right now in terms of working with my students to notice what good authors do well-- and to encourage my children to begin writing at a developmentally appropriate level."

Collom, Jack and Sheryl Noethe. *Poetry Everywhere: Teaching Poetry Writing in School and in the Community.* Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 2000 (2nd edition). ISBN 0915924986. \$16.95

"Another of my favorites!"

Dean, Nancy. *Voice Lessons: Classroom Activities to Teach Diction, Detail, Imagery, Syntax, and Tone.* Maupin House, 2000. ISBN 0929895355. \$19.95

"As the title suggests, there isn't any talk about teaching here, but rather a collection of activities you can put to use right away—for a brief warmup activity or as the main writing lesson of the day. For those familiar with Daily Oral Language, this seems to be an approach trying to do similar things, but in a more useful, higher-level way that addresses more aspects of writing than basic grammar rules."

Gardner, John. *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers.* Vintage, 1991. ISBN: 0679734031. \$12.95.

"A good read as I explore reading and writing short stories with my students—the book is uncomplicated and sensible."

King, Stephen. *On Writing.* Pocket, 2002. ISBN: 0743455967. \$7.99

"Another good read as I explore stories with my students; again uncomplicated and sensible."

Mahoney, Jim. *Power and Portfolios: Best Practices for High School Classrooms.* Heinemann, 2002. ISBN: 0867095296. \$21.50

"It preaches to the unconverted without backing away from its student-centered roots. It combines inspiring idealism with nuts and bolts logistical information that will help teachers bring Mahoney's plan—which often seems like a dream—to life. Accessible, readable, useful, and important."

"I too have been converted to *Power in Portfolios*. I am trying portfolios with my students this year and, although the wobble is a little hard to deal with at times, student-centered work has made a huge difference for my classroom."

Morrison, Carol. *How to Build a Long-Lasting Fire: Writing Poems from Your Life.* NTC/Contemporary Publishing Company. ISBN: 0844259357 \$37.65.

"One of my favorites!"

Noden, Harry. *Image Grammar: Using Grammatical Structures to Teach Writing.* Boynton/Cook, 1999. ISBN: 0867094664. \$25.00 (with CD).

"Image Grammar is the text I use most often for Noden's brushstrokes to help students vary sentence beginnings, add vivid detail, and develop greater fluency."

Ray, Katie Wood. *What You Know by Heart: How to Develop Curriculum for Your Writing Workshop.* Heinemann, 2002. ISBN: 0325003645. \$22.50

"I appreciate the manner in which Katie shows teachers how to write like a teacher of writing. She weaves her stories of finding good ideas for teaching writing from everyday experiences into the means by which we can do the same. Ultimately, the beneficiary becomes our students as we pass on how to read like a writer and write for the reader, helping them uncover and tell their stories."

Welty, Eudora. *One Writer's Beginnings.* Harvard University Press, 1998. ISBN: 0674639278. \$12.95.

"I still love Eudora Welty's *One Writer's Beginnings* as a personal account of the life of a writer."

Convention News

To stimulate your curriculum with new ideas, be sure to journey to Billings on October 19-20, for sixteen workshop sectionals offered by MWP Teacher Consultants, as well as a keynote address, workshop, and book signing with Sheridan Blau. Blau, a former NCTE President and current Director of the South Coast Writing Project and the Literature Institute for Teachers, will speak on *Consequential Literacy* in the Skyview High School Auditorium on Friday, October 20 at 11:00 A.M.

Stop by our membership table in the Commons area and visit our hospitality room at Billings Skyview, Room 217 to relax and mingle with Montana Writing Project Teacher Consultants and to reunite with colleagues who share your concerns about writing instruction. We invite you to converse in an atmosphere that will stimulate and renew your enthusiasm for the profession. A full schedule of our events (times and locations) is published in the MEA/MFT Educator's Conference booklet.

Also, plan to join us for a no-host dinner at Jake's on Thursday, October 19 at 7:15 in downtown Billings (2701 1ST AVE N), where MATELA will honor Montana Writing Project Director Heather Bruce and Big Fork Teacher Mary Sullivan as Distinguished Educators.

For continued networking and communication, we invite you to join our curriculum group. With your \$10.00 membership fee, you will reap the following benefits:

- ◇ Connected Community Network
- ◇ Newsletter Subscription
 - Classroom Ideas
 - Grant Opportunities
 - Writing Invitations to Maintain Your Writing Life
 - Book Reviews
 - Annotated Bibliographies
 - Rich Resources in Reading, Writing, Thinking, and Reflecting
 - Publication Venue
 - Announcements
- ◇ Workshop Strand at MEA/MFT Educator's Conference
- ◇ Professional Development Support
- ◇ Listserve Subscription
- ◇ Opportunities to Conduct Writing Workshops and Curriculum In-Service
- ◇ Professional Resources from the National Writing Project

MTEA Keynote Address

Suzan Zeder

Wild Minds: Igniting the Spark of Creativity

Thursday, October 19 8 - 8:50 am
Skyview High School Lower Gym

Professor Zeder has been recognized nationally and internationally as one of the nation's leading playwrights for family audiences. Her plays have been performed in all fifty states, Canada, Great Britain, Japan, Australia, Germany, Israel and New Zealand; and have been published in Great Britain, Germany and Japan. *Step On A Crack*, Wiley And The Hairy Man, *In A Room Somewhere* and *The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes* are regularly performed by professional and university theatres throughout the country.

Doors and *Mother Hicks* were produced at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., which also co-commissioned *Do Not Go Gentle*. In 1990 Anchorage Press published *Wish In One Hand and Spit in the Other*, an anthology of her nine published plays.

Her most recent play, *The Taste Of Sunrise: Tuc's Story*, premiered at Seattle Children's Theatre in September of 1996. Professor Zeder is the three-time winner of the Distinguished Play Award given by the American Alliance of Theatre and Education. In the spring of 1996, Ms. Zeder was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Theatre in Washington, D.C. Professor Zeder is the first holder of an endowed chair in Theatre For Youth/Playwriting at the University of Texas.



MWP Keynote Address

Dr. Sheridan Blau

Consequential Literacy

Friday, October 20 11 - 11:50 am
Skyview High School Auditorium

Sheridan Blau, Ph.D. is a senior faculty member in the Departments of English and Education at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he also directs the South Coast Writing Project and the Literature Institute for Teachers. A former President of the National Council of Teachers of English, he is presently Director of the National Literature Project Network and serves as a member of the National Writing Project Task Force.

Dr. Blau has published widely in the areas of seventeenth century literature, composition theory, professional development for teachers, and the teaching of composition and literature. He has also written and edited textbooks in composition and literature for students in middle school, high school, and college classrooms.

His most recent book for teachers, *The Literature Workshop: Teaching Texts and Their Readers* (Heinemann, 2003), has been named by the Conference on English Education as the winner of the 2004 Richard Meade Award for distinguished research in English education.



Montana Writing Project

MWP is one of 195 sites in the National Writing Project (NWP) network.
Our state officers include:

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Dave Christensen, Co-Director
5th Grade Teacher, Lolo School
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