



WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER

Vol. VI, No. 6 (February, 1982)

Profuse thanks (again) to the authors of the articles on spelling which appeared in the December issue of the newsletter. Numerous readers have written to say how useful that issue was! A side benefit (appreciated by the keeper of my department's budget) was that often donation checks were included by those who remember that we don't send out bills or reminders.

Given the success of this "theme issue" in the newsletter, I look forward to another one. The March newsletter will focus on tutoring, with several articles by peer tutors--voices we definitely need to hear. Of course, we also need to hear from those of us so far over the hill that we'd never be mistaken for peer tutors. Please continue to send your articles, reviews, suggestions, questions, names of new members, and donations of \$5 (in checks made payable either to Purdue University or to me) to:

Muriel Harris, editor
WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER
Dept. of English
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Ind. 47907



NOW AND LATER AT BALL STATE

Last spring, May 10, 1986, Ball State University opened its new Writing Center. It is a clean-lined, functional structure adjacent to the library. Its central location on campus makes it convenient both to classrooms and to dormitories. Housed in this building are five basic units, all under the aegis of the English Department. They are the testing center, which includes the basic computer facilities; the teaching English as

a second language center; the office of the coordinator for the writing across the curriculum program; the freshman composition center; and the writing clinic.

The writing clinic, which had been located in the basement of a three-bedroom bungalow before 1982, now has expanded its services as well as its space. Most of the students who seek help in the clinic are still freshmen as was the case in the early 1980s, but now more upperclassmen and graduate students bring their writing problems to the writing clinic. In 1980 there was no hot line, no staff beyond student tutors, no faculty administrator, for whom the writing clinic was a primary assignment, no short-term group instruction and no planned assistance for those who might drop in without appointments. Yet even in those benighted years the writing clinic was a useful and valued part of the total English program.....

The foregoing has been, of course, a view from four years hence, a dream projection of what the Ball State writing clinic could become in a context of the whole, articulating composition program for the University. A new, attractive facility perhaps will not be forthcoming because of "fiscal and demographic constraints" (a ubiquitous phrase these days in planning documents), but all of the programs I have listed here as being offered in our 1986 writing clinic are not simply utopian dreams but services we hope soon to offer and services which are "in place" in various universities in Indiana.

In describing the current programs of our writing clinic, I want to emphasize the two aspects of medical metaphor: interns and outpatients. One could argue that the experiences of the interns, the young tutors in our clinic, are the most valuable part of the program. In the early years of the writing

clinic, all of the tutors were graduate students; but now most of the tutors are undergraduates - 80 percent English majors and minors. Candidates for tutor positions must meet these prerequisites:

1. Have a 2.75 overall grade average.
2. Pass tutor qualification tests, including both grammar and usage examination and a 500-word theme.
3. Secure recommendations from at least two members of the English faculty who are familiar with the candidate's writing.

After they have met these qualifications, tutor candidates are chosen and briefed in required orientation meetings and assigned an experienced tutor for a short period of on-the-job training. Tutors are expected to be familiar with the department publication, Standards, and the long-entrenched Harbrace Handbook.

Although the writing clinic is, of course, free and available to all students on the campus, most of the "out-patients" are freshmen in the basic composition courses. Instructors may send students to the writing clinic who need more intensive training in language fundamentals, or a student may come in on his own. In either case, these "out-patients" are all volunteers.

The tutoring sessions themselves are as various as personalities and problems are various, but the writing clinic administration does offer guidelines. Before the first session, the tutor should know not only the student's name, phone number, and time and place of the initial meeting, but also the general nature of the student's writing problems. The tutor should learn of these problems from a referral sheet provided to all English instructors and through discussing the problem with the instructor. Also, on the day before the first session the tutor should remind the student of the appointment and tell him to bring his handbook and previous themes to their meeting.

Three features of the Ball State program should be emphasized. First, we feel it is very important for the tutor to establish friendly rapport with the student. The two are peers who must trust and communicate well with each other as they work toward their common goal. Secondly, the specific writing problem must be clearly identified and understood. The medical analogy is especially pertinent at this point of diagnosis. And,

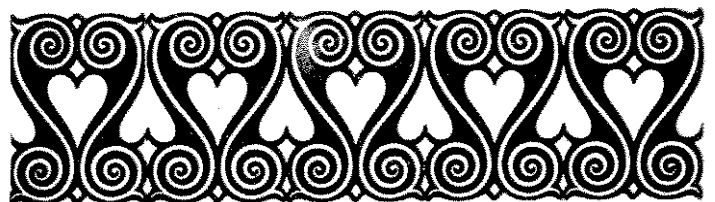
finally, the tutor must understand that he should not be a collaborator. The best policy for the tutor may be to comment on no papers until they have been graded by the instructor, but in practice tutors walk a finer line by helping students understand assignments and define a topic, suggesting the problems in an outline, and, in general, leading the student to identify his own errors.

Much of the administrating of our writing clinic is done by a very competent secretary who handles testing, assignments, time sheets and the daily flow of tutors and their students. Typically we hire thirty tutors each quarter, who are paid as skilled student workers and who are limited to ten out-patients each. Our clinic maintains a tutor message box, but each tutor makes his own appointments.

A survey conducted in the mid-1970s indicated that among students who attended the writing clinic during one quarter, 48% improved one letter grade from the first to the last writing assignment in the quarter and 30% improved two or more letter grades. We believe that such success continues to be the norm in this program. Two primary reasons appear to be salient in achieving these results: the personalized instruction provided by the tutors and the advantages in communication held by peer teachers. However we may try to alter such images, the mere presence of many English instructors strikes some freshmen mute.

Just as in the case of the medical clinic, both the interns and the out-patients in the writing clinic secure important training from their shared experiences. The student enhances his chances of succeeding in his freshman composition class--with all of the deeper values of learning to write well that his formal evaluation should imply. And while earning money, intern teachers are plying their future trade and discovering the satisfaction of helping fellow students solve important problems.

William V. Miller
Ball State University





ANNOUNCEMENT OF MARYLAND
COMPOSITION CONFERENCE/1982



CUNY LAUNCHES NATIONAL TESTING NETWORK IN
WRITING

On Friday, 16 April 1982, the University of Maryland, Prince George's Community College, Strayer College, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators will sponsor Maryland Composition Conference/1982 on the College Park campus of the University of Maryland. The conference will bring together teachers and representatives of the business community to address three issues of concern to those involved in teaching writing or administering writing programs:

- New Developments in Evaluating Growth in Writing;
- Faculty Integration (the part-time, the cross-disciplinary, the full time staff);
- A Definition of Pre-professional Writing

In addition to individual presentations, our guest speakers include Marcia Farr, National Institute of Education; Richard Marius, Harvard University; Lee Odell, Rennselaer Polytechnic Institute; and Dwight Stevenson, University of Michigan.

For registration information, write to:

Susan Kleimann, Conference Chairman
Department of English
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742



WRITING CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

La Salle College is pleased to host the Delaware Valley Writing Council's Spring Conference on March 6th. We invite all those interested in exploring the teaching of writing on the elementary, secondary and college levels to join us to discuss "The Writing Assignment" and to hear our keynote speaker David Bartholomae, Director of Freshman Composition at the University of Pittsburgh, address the topic "Designing Effective Writing Assignments." For further information and registration materials, please contact Dr. Margot Soven, Department of English and Communication Arts, La Salle College, Philadelphia, Pa. 19141.

The City University of New York is organizing a nationwide collaborative effort among educators to address the complex problem of developing reliable, valid tests to evaluate the writing ability of college students. The program is called The National Testing Network in Writing (NTNW), and the NTNW co-directors are Dr. Richard A. Donovan of Bronx Community College and Dr. Karen L. Greenberg of Hunter College.

The Network will serve as a clearinghouse for materials on writing tests developed throughout the country and provide an important service to administrators, teachers and test developers. A series of publications will introduce the purposes and goals of the Network to institutions nationwide and ask them for data on their own experiences as well as topics for discussion at a national conference to be held in the Spring of 1983. The conference and related activities will provide material for a monograph which will present a comprehensive analysis of the writing tests developed nationally and an examination of selected issues of special interest to participants in the Network. Limited on-site assistance to institutions desiring to implement ideas generated by the conference is also planned.



A
READER

ASKS.....

The articles on spelling (WLN, Dec., 1981) prompt me to this inquiry: has anyone else notice that in student papers it is often the fifth word in a line that is misspelled? Often the misspelling turns out to be bad proofreading; that I know because the misspelled word will be correctly spelled in another part of the paper. If you have observed this phenomenon, I'll appreciate your writing me about it--theories as to why it occurs, procedures for curing it (it is so pronounced in some students' writing that I make them check the fifth word in every line of a paper before turning the paper in). Curious.

George Gleason
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University
Springfield, MO 65804

A DUAL PURPOSE WRITING LAB

At Broward Community College in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, everyone is welcome to enroll; however not everyone who enrolls remembers what an adverbial conjunction is. In its first year, our Writing Lab has successfully upheld a dual purpose. First, we have tried to help refresh some memories. As in most community colleges, many of our students are somewhat older than the average college freshman and do not remember the basics of grammar and composition. Whether our students graduated from high school twenty years ago or yesterday, the Writing Lab has helped to refresh a lot of memories.

Our second purpose--as with all Writing Labs--is to reinforce what the students are learning in the classroom. The Writing Lab, whose time has certainly come, has finally given the English student a place to go for special, individualized help. Through remedial and developmental activities, we are establishing a forum to enlighten our beginning English students and a center to which all of our students can return time and time again for reinforcement and encouragement.

The Writing Lab, which was once considered a "frill," is now considered a vital part of the curriculum.

Marlene Cole
Broward Community College



HANDS OFF: FOSTERING SELF-RELIANCE IN THE WRITING LAB*

One of the major problems that writing lab instructors face is finding a balance between teaching students about composition and merely helping them get a paper written. The great advantage of teaching in a lab setting is that the one-to-one writing conference allows us to establish precise and sensitive focus with each writer and teach both rhetorical and grammatical issues within the context of the students' own writing. However, this individual attention

can interfere with the acquisition of writing skills if it fools inexperienced writers into thinking that someone else will take care of their writing problems for them. Such students can become dependent upon a writing center staff for both direction and editing. Inexperienced teachers can be fooled, too, fooled into thinking that it is their responsibility to solve as many problems as possible as quickly as possible. Such urgency doesn't produce lasting learning.

Ultimately, the goal of writing labs must be student self-reliance, not merely good compositions. Writing lab teachers should have substantive rather than merely cosmetic effects on student writing. But the goal of self-reliance goes beyond that: what students learn in the lab must be transferable to future writings. If we look at writing lab students as being in the process not simply of writing one or two papers, but of becoming effective writers, the work done in a writing conference takes on importance beyond its specific product. An instructor's management of the writing conference itself can be of key importance in accomplishing this kind of lasting teaching.

With the goal of student self-reliance in mind, I mean the "hands off" injunction in the title literally. From their first visit student writers must be given primary responsibility for what happens to their writing in the lab. A clear initial statement of this is nonverbal. The paper--a draft, a graded composition that needs revision, or just an assignment sheet ready for notes or an outline--should be in front of the student, not the teacher. The student does the writing on it. The student, not the teacher, reads aloud from it. These admonishments may seem over-simplified, but little physical adjustments can make a world of difference. After all, the familiar means of getting help on anything is for the helper to "fix things," the way a doctor or an auto mechanic might. But in the physical setting just described, the person asking for help is going to do the fixing.

A writing conference can be anywhere from 10 minutes to an hour long, but 30 minutes seems to be the ideal length. In half an hour here is enough time to focus on one major and several lesser issues. Beyond that, both the student and teacher tend to become tired and distracted. In appreciably

less than 30 minutes there is not enough time to establish the focus and rapport needed for an effective teaching session.

In essence, the objectives of the conference should be two-fold--to help students improve the assignment at hand and to give them some insight into their own development as writers. The teacher's work in the conference can be broken into three tasks, each making the next possible: focusing, making a diagnosis, and teaching the lesson itself. Although the early focusing stage is often neglected in the rush to "fix up" the paper at hand, it is crucial to the larger issue of self-reliance because the process by which we focus on the students' needs and together establish priorities becomes a model for what they can do another time on their own. It follows, then, that part of the teacher's responsibility in the conference is to make that model and its transferability explicit.

FOCUSING. The focusing process should begin with the student's concerns. Instructors must determine two things quickly: first, what the student expects from the conference, and second, what the student wants to accomplish in the writing task at hand. This means that we need to know not only what the assignment is, but also what the student has been working on--and worrying about--while writing: commas? transitions? a thesis statement? This information tells us what to look for in the paper, to praise as well as criticize, and reveals what the students know about their own writing processes and how much they may be ready to learn in the conference.

To facilitate this focusing, in the writing lab for the University of Washington's Educational Opportunity Program we ask students to write down what they want help with on a half-page form that becomes a record of the conference. This brief process of putting a help request in writing is important in the growth of self-reliance because it makes students think about what they want in the conference and in their writing. It allows them to establish priorities; it produces a tangible statement of purpose, and it provides a tiny moment of additional practice at putting thoughts into writing.

Of course, no form can substitute for careful conversation designed to find out what

a student may mean by "help with verbs" or "How am I doing?" The importance of drawing out what a student really wants can't be over-emphasized. It forestalls disappointment and antagonism, and enhances the student's self-respect as a writer. Finally, it can actually save time. For instance, a paper may have mistakes in it that the student already knows about and can fix. Once we're sure this is the case, we can turn our attention to other problems, problems most likely of greater substance.

Before we can move on to diagnosis, we also need to clarify exactly what the assignment is. It is helpful to hear the student's response to it orally so that we have something to build on if there is no draft and something to measure the paper against if there is a draft.

DIAGNOSING. In the second stage of the conference, when we turn to the paper itself and begin diagnosis, we need to remember the "hands off" dictum and resist the temptation to grab a pencil and start editing. Most papers, especially early in a term, will need work on a number of problems. In one conference we can hope to tackle one of them thoroughly and a couple of others tangentially. Thus, careful, responsible diagnosis demands not that the instructor point out everything that's wrong with a paper, but that he determine the crucial problem on a given draft, the area interfering most with the paper's success, and address it. To do this kind of analysis, we need to have seen the paper as a whole, determined whether it accomplishes what its author hopes it does, and decided whether mechanical flaws result from mistakes or from patterns of error that need further diagnosis.

And we must listen carefully to the student. Unless a paper is just completely wrong-headed, most of what the student has worked out will be acceptable, maybe even good. The student needs to know that. Then we can move from what is working to what isn't, and, with the student's help, try to find out why it isn't. Research in error analysis has shown that the best source of information about what has gone wrong in a writing, and thus how to make it go right, is not an English teacher's idea of what is "correct," but the writer's report of what she was trying to say. The opportunity to do this kind of work is one of the key advantages of individualizing instruction in the lab.

TEACHING. In the third stage, as we teach the lesson designed from all this analysis, we still must keep our own hands off the paper. We can provide information and materials, but let the student incorporate them into the paper. Questions can be jotted down on a separate sheet to guide organization and development. Another good method is to point out a better developed paragraph or sentence elsewhere in the paper. Encourage the student to draw analogies between your examples and information and the task at hand.

At the sentence level, providing models separate from the immediate problems allows us to teach students how to edit without our doing it for them. The teacher can write out sentences that imitate an error or syntactic difficulty in a more obvious way, then use these sentences to demonstrate how to correct the problem. Handouts can provide charts for punctuation patterns or models for correction. With these as a guide, the students can return to their papers and make revisions. At first they need to be shown where their errors are, but as the term progresses, they have to learn to spot their own errors so that they can correct them on their own.

When a conference takes place before there is a draft, the diagnostic and teaching phases of the conference converge as soon as we start discussing the purpose of the paper. Diagnosis: student is having trouble getting started. Prescription: a heuristic dialog. A similar dialog is useful if there is a draft that misses the point of the assignment. Following the "hands off" dictum is tricky in a conversation like this. But remember that the paper must be the student's own. We should take the role of a catalyst, using questions to stimulate the writer's thoughts and taking care not to make assumptions or impose ourselves upon those thoughts. We can make the conversation an explicit model for deciphering any assignment, explaining that students can do this kind of questioning for themselves.

Finally, the need to provide explicit models and analysis that can transfer to other writing tasks makes the last few minutes of the conference very important. What are we sending the student away with? A new thesis statement, an outline, a hand-out on punctuating subordinate clauses? They deserve a summary that can help them avoid or deal with similar problems on the next paper. Above all, we should have provided

a vivid impression of how to handle part of the writing process.

Virginia A. Chappell
University of Washington

*This is a shortened version of a paper with the same title presented at the 1980 CCCC in Washington, D.C. The full paper is available through ERIC, ED 188 195.



SEE YOU AT CCCC

CCCC will hold its annual convention on March 18-20, 1982, in San Francisco. Once again Conference leaders have recognized the contribution writing labs are making to the teaching of composition by offering a special interest session for lab directors.

This year's program, set for Thursday afternoon from 4:45 to 6:15, promises to be a rich one, with nationally known as well as new faces leading workshops on innovative solutions to familiar problems. Following a brief get-acquainted session, participants will join one of eight workshops, to last approximately 30 minutes. During an intermission everyone will be invited to examine materials available at the exchange table and then choose a second workshop.

Leaders will be Phyllis Brooks and Thom Hawkins of the University of California, Berkeley; Irene Clark, University of Southern California; Jeannette Harris, East Texas State University; Bill Middleton and Ann Torczun of The University of New Orleans; Gary Olson, University of Alabama; Karen Spear, University of Utah; William Warde North Texas State University; and James Williams, Johnson County Community College.

Workshop topics will include advances in the use of heuristics, strategies for training tutors, writing center outreach, bridging the gap between writing centers and academic departments, ensuring the success of new centers, building cognitive skills in basic writers, and developing spelling skills.

Judy Markline of Allan Hancock College will serve as recorder, and Patricia Bates of LSU-Shreveport will chair the program.
Patricia Bates
LSU-Shreveport

A JR. HIGH LAB TAKES SHAPE

One of the greatest services of The Writing Lab Newsletter is its open forum on problems we all encounter in the everyday functioning of our labs. One year ago our problem was somewhat different from most: we wanted a lab but didn't have one. Since we've remedied this problem, I thought that it might be of benefit for those of you in similar public school situations to see our answer to "how to."

Wainwright Junior High School is part of the Tippecanoe School Corporation, the county school system surrounding Lafayette and West Lafayette, Indiana. One of five junior highs feeding into two high schools, Wainwright is in a rural setting and has approximately 500 middle-class students in grades 7, 8, and 9 who are bused to school. The majority of school patrons in our area are blue-collar workers. Wainwright's twenty-seven member teaching staff includes five language arts teachers, four of whom have master's degrees.

Like many other schools, Wainwright is faced with a minor decline in enrollment. This fact, coupled with problems with both the schedule and the physical plant, seemed to prohibit the creation of the lab. When the lab was proposed, the language arts teachers were scheduled to teach six periods a day and were assigned one preparation period. Two teachers had one hour per day of lunch supervision and study hall. By transferring these duties to other departments, two periods were freed for lab operation. By condensing the remaining language arts sections, two more periods a day were freed. While the four periods we found in the schedule would not facilitate the seven hour, full day operation that we had envisioned, the prevailing attitude was "some is better than none." Finding a room for a lab was also difficult. We had no vacant room, and the room schedule could not be reworked to provide one. We did find, however, a small (10' x 11') storage room which could be cleaned, painted and used.

At this point the lab was still a dream. Without administrative concern about student writing and support for our ideas, the lab would not be in existence today. We were fortunate that our principal freely gave of his time to serve as a sounding board for our ideas and to attend planning meetings. We were also fortunate that the staff of the Purdue Writing Lab was nearby to offer suggestions and conduct an infor-

mational meeting about the possibilities for our lab. For those of you "lab hopefuls" we strongly suggest finding experts in the field who can help foresee and solve problems.

In late April 1980 our lab became an entity on the master schedule, in other words, "a sure thing." Panic set in when we realized that we had no materials, no tables, no chairs, and NO money. Our principal somehow managed to find enough money to pay for a filing cabinet, but all other items were, shall we say, "borrowed" from rooms around the school. We "borrowed" two study carrels, a table, chairs, a bookcase, and a receptionist's desk. The growth of the lab from that point on was due entirely to the dedication of our staff. We donated countless summer days to meet, work and develop materials. Critics often ask why we donated time and materials rather than insisting on payment. The answer is quite simple: had we not donated these things, we wouldn't have them. In developing a lab, one tends to put its success before other concerns.

Now in its eighth month of operation, the lab has served 237 students, nearly half of the student body, on a continuing basis. These tutorial contacts have provided one-to-one instruction and encouragement in all aspects of the writing process. We are still relying on old, teacher-developed handouts and donated textbooks, but we are looking forward to developing customized materials during the coming summer months. The Indiana State Department of Public Instruction has approved a Basic Skills Subgrant for our Writing Lab in the amount of \$4,999.83 for this purpose. Also funded by the grant will be the purchase of audio-visual equipment, self-instruction modules and interdisciplinary teacher training in the use of the lab for all content areas. With enough advance planning, we hope to expand the services of the lab next year. In addition to the things that our grant will allow us to do, we want to develop a peer tutoring program, secure a full-time aide, expand diagnostic procedures, and perhaps begin a parent volunteer program. Renewal of our grant is a possibility, and it is one toward which we are working.

A lab in the public schools? It can be done! Not easily, not simply, but it can be done. If we can help any of you in the formation of your labs, please write me c/o Wainwright Junior High School, 7501 E. 700 South, Lafayette, IN. 47905.

Paula Wilson
Wainwright Junior High



MATERIALS EXCHANGE TABLE AT 4 C's

A materials display and exchange table will be a part of this year's Special Interest Session on Writing Labs to be held as a part of the CCCC's meeting in San Francisco. Pat Bates, the chair, is arranging the program so that there will be a fifteen-minute intermission in the middle of the session. With such a format, I am anticipating a good deal of interest in what we all have to share. From the experience in Dallas, materials of great interest include PR tools (brochures, bookmarks, etc.), descriptions of writing labs, and materials used in labs. Of course, any and all materials are welcome.

I look forward to your participation. The procedure will be as follows:

1. Donors of display materials are to fill out the form at the bottom of the page, listing and describing materials. This form should be sent to me as soon as possible so that I can plan for adequate space.
2. Donors are to bring the materials with them to San Francisco and turn them in to me fifteen minutes before the session begins. (I will be on

duty at the table during this period, during our fifteen-minute intermission, and fifteen minutes or so after the conclusion of the session.)

3. Materials are to be in manila folders, identified by school and individual, and marked "Display only/Do not remove." A legal pad (with school, individual identification, and the cost of postage) should be included in the folder for names and addresses of those requesting copies.
4. While the exchange will be handled primarily by mail, you may prefer to bring 25-50 copies of your handout to eliminate the expense and delay of mailing.
5. Donors will be responsible for picking up their folders about fifteen minutes after the session ends.

Do you have any materials you think others would find useful? Please make plans to share them. If you have any questions or suggestions, please send them to Joyce K. Moyers, Writing Center Director, Department of English, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS 66762.

TO: Joyce K. Moyers, Writing Center Director
Department of English
Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, KS 66762

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

Materials for Exchange Table:
(List and briefly describe type, size, content, etc.)

_____ I will bring copyrighted materials that can be ordered.

_____ I will bring 25-50 copies of my handout to San Francisco.

_____ I will bring a sample of a handout to San Francisco.

_____ I will be able to send copies to those requesting them.

_____ I am mailing to you copies (or a sample) to be placed on the materials exchange table.

Date _____

James Hartley, ed., The Psychology of Written Communication, New York: Nichols Publishing Co. (P.O. Box 96, New York, N.Y., 10024), 1980, 201 pp., \$32.50.

To become better teachers of writing, we are often advised both to do research and to become acquainted with relevant work in related fields, yet we rarely have time to do either. In part, it is a matter of trying to locate in written form what our colleagues in other departments are doing. Thus a book which offers an overview of recent research on writing done by psychologists may prove useful, though in this case, expensive. The most useful portions of this book are the introductions by James Hartley, the editor, to each of the five sections. In addition to offering summaries of the articles in that section, Hartley introduces the topic and offers a review of what is available--what has been done, what is new and being looked at, and what hasn't been touched yet.

Section One, on reading, is of interest both to teachers of reading and of writing. Discussions of Ausubel's work on advance organizers and Anderson's ideas on schema are of immediate use in understanding the task of reading--and potentially useful to consider as tools for writers. Work on text readability may also be applicable in discussing audience needs in writing. The articles in Section Two focus on how children learn to write, and while topics such as the development of handwriting may seem, at first, of only remote or limited interest, we may find clues here for thinking about possible relationships between handwriting difficulties and spelling or between some students' slow, labored transcription processes and their inability to capture a sentence on paper before it's forgotten. Transcription difficulties, easily observed in tutorials, may need more attention than we have given them, and this introduction and the references provided may help to initiate us into a subject which is not likely to be considered by classroom teachers of writing who, unlike tutors, rarely watch students as they write. Another useful article in this section, in reviewing a research study on dictation skills, offers us insights into how much of a writer's time is spent on planning.

Section Three, "Information by Design," might also at first, look remote to our interests, with its suggestions for how to lay out pages, indent text, and use typographical cues. Yet, though we may not want to read every last word describing

experimental research on the subject, all of us who design record-keeping forms and instructional handouts, write announcements for classroom teachers, or compile training manuals need to know how to avoid producing unreadable walls of text. Other articles in this section mull over questions on the use of space and structure in instructional text, numbering systems, data presentation, and the designing of forms--all matters that may come up in working with our technical writing students. In short, this section is not as remote as it first appears.

Section Four explores new techniques of communicating in print, that is, how current technology impinges upon the production of text. The articles focus on microfilm, text presentation on television, and word processors. The last section deals with scientific communication, methods of writing scientific papers, strategies for writing review articles, editorial practices of journal referees (and their biases), and strategies for writing textbooks that succeed in the marketplace.

Since most of the topics in this book are not the standard fare of composition journals, the steep price may turn out to be a worthwhile personal investment. Then again, you may decide that this scholarly collection should be added in to the book-buying budget of your lab, department, or campus library. (MH)



CROSS-DISCIPLINARY WRITING WORKSHOP

The Great Lakes College Association (GLCA) is offering its second cross-disciplinary writing workshop at Albion College, Albion, Michigan, June 20-23, 1982. Faculty from any discipline, with or without experience in cross-disciplinary writing, are welcome. The workshop staff, who are all faculty at GLCA colleges, strive for a balance of the theoretical and practical, with special emphasis on individual consultations. For further information, contact Catherine Lamb, Department of English, Albion College, Albion, Michigan 49224. Application deadline is May 1, 1982.



ANNUAL WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE:
"THE FUTURE OF WRITING CENTERS: PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES"

The annual Writing Centers Association Conference will be held on May 1, 1982, on the campus of Ohio Dominican College in Columbus, Ohio. The theme of this year's program is "The Future of Writing Centers: Programs and Resources."

The conference will include discussion and presentations on these topics: instruction of ESL students, sources of revenue and proposal writing, the function of reading instruction in the writing center, interaction with the English Department and other departments, use of instruction materials, and staff training.

To register for this conference, please complete the following and mail it with your check for \$15 to: Joanne Petrick, English Department, Ohio Dominican College, 1216 Sunbury Road, Columbus, Ohio 43219.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER
Muriel Harris, editor
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