

# WRITING LAB NEWSLETTER




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A perennial question for most of us is how to train tutors, and while many readers express appreciation for articles focusing on this topic, there seems to be an even stronger interest in reading articles by peer tutors. Thus, while stacks of excellent articles written by lab directors are waiting to appear, the scarcity of articles by tutors is particularly evident. So, perhaps the next time you peer tutors find yourselves twiddling your pencils when you have a "no show" appointment, you'll consider writing something for the newsletter. What do you think you need to learn in order to be effective tutors? What kinds of questions do you want answers to? What techniques, methods, and materials help you? If you were to design a training program, what would you include? The rest of us are waiting to hear from you.....

In the meantime, continue to send your articles, announcements, reviews, queries, and donations of \$5 (in checks made payable to Purdue, but sent to me) to:



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## SOME THOUGHTS AND REMINISCENCES ON HOW A FACULTY-CENTERED SKILLS CENTER BECAME A PEER TUTORING PROGRAM

The peer tutoring program at the College of Staten Island CUNY has been in operation for the last three years. It is still in the process of growth; however, it has reached a point where the program is now understood and respected by students,

colleagues, and administration.

The peer tutors at CSI work in the English department's Reading, Writing, and English as a Second Language Skills Center. The Skills Center was born out of necessity during the early 1970's when the college had a large open enrollment program and an ever increasing number of underprepared students. The English department of what was then Staten Island Community College knew that in order to prepare these students to make it through at least their freshman year, they would need to develop a sound program of basic skills remediation. Since that time the Skills Center has been an important part of that program. Some thirteen years later the basic skills program is still in existence, and its staff has worked hard at learning more about the ways of helping underprepared students improve their reading, writing and speaking skills.

The Skills Center was originally staffed by faculty members, and I have learned from colleagues that there were many success stories. However, during the 1975-1976 New York City fiscal crunch, which coincided with the merging of Staten Island Community College and Richmond College into the College of Staten Island, budget cuts forced the English department to do everything short of closing the Skills Center's door. But as the newly formed CSI started to understand itself better, and as the budgetary problems abated a bit, members of the administration asked the English department to go ahead and rethink our tutoring service and spend a little money -- but not too much. Faculty tutoring hours were increased but that could be costly if not done in moderation. So the idea of creating a peer tutoring program which would train students to work alongside faculty with remedial and non-remedial students started to take shape. The college instituted a 400-level writing course called

Writing & Peer Tutoring. Students who successfully complete this course may be hired as peer tutors in the Skills Center. Each semester we hire about twelve student tutors.

Three years later, the Skills Center is a different place than it was in those early days. Now students work on papers and texts with their peers instead of their teachers. And together they learn how to strengthen their power of communication. They also learn how to respect each other's learning and how to intellectualize on school-related topics. However, the mission and methodology of the original Skills Center are still intact--to work closely with students and try to get them to learn more about themselves as readers and writers, and to encourage them to build on their strengths to overcome their weaknesses. In short the tutors in the Skills Center, now as always, do not help students complete assignments; they help students become better readers and writers so that they can then go home and complete assignments on their own. This policy clearly makes the function of our tutoring service different from one which operates as a college laboratory that serves as an adjunct to course work. Our tutors are trained, and the first two steps in that training are an exploration of how learning happens and empathy awareness raising.

During the past three years I have met with other tutoring service directors, and most of us seem to agree on one basic and essential question. Before directors (or prospective directors) try to "sell" a peer tutoring program to their administrations, they must first convince themselves about the relevancy of such programs to the needs of their institutions. The goals for both the students and the student-tutors must be clear first in the director's mind. If clarity comes through understanding, then directors might inform themselves about such things as peer tutoring and collaborative learning by tapping those ever-expanding fields of literature. Professionals from many fields--from educational psychology as well as from history--have cogently explained the benefits of such programs.

The administration at CSI agreed to begin a peer tutoring program when they learned how well such programs worked at colleges across the country. But the thing that encourages them to continue the program at

CSI is the proof of how well it is working at home.

Maryann F. Castelucci  
College of Staten  
Island



Announcing

the Publication of

a Newsletter

Computers and Composition

Editors: Kate Kiefer, Colorado State  
University  
Cynthia L. Selfe, Michigan  
Technological University

Computers and Composition is a newsletter designed to inform its readers about computer applications in composition research and the composition classroom. Among other things, we will publish descriptions of new software packages for use in composition programs, ideas for employing computers productively in writing classes, and reports of computer applications by composition teachers and researchers.

Computers and Composition will be published quarterly at a cost of \$5.00 to subscribers. Our first issue is planned for November 1983. We encourage writing teachers interested in the uses of computers and computer software to submit short articles (1000 words or less) for publication in our newsletter.

Send subscriptions to:

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Humanities Department  
Michigan Technological  
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Send articles and notices to:

Kate Kiefer  
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I agree with Peter A. Lyons ("Selecting Tutors: A Two-Step Process," Writing Lab Newsletter, 7, No. 8, April 1983) that choosing tutors for the writing lab is an important part of the lab director's job. I also endorse and use some of the components of his interview process. However, I disagree with his commentary regarding the roleplaying exercise he includes as part of his interview. He states that he gives the prospective tutor a short paper and asks for the student to comment on it. He says that "The applicant whom I do not want working with students begins by making suggestions on how to improve the paper, focusing, generally, on mechanical matters..." Later, Mr. Lyons indicates what he is looking for in a tutor: "the ideal applicant begins by trying to understand the general assignment and the student's response to that assignment..." Contrary to this statement, my experience suggests that ideal tutors are "trained, not born" to respond to students in a manner promoting principles of developmental learning. It is simply unrealistic to expect anyone to produce the "proper" response unless he has had prior tutoring experience. I have modified my own interview approach through the years, in recognition that I have missed opportunities to hire fine tutors based on my own earlier dogmatic expectations.

I have now come to believe that a tutor's personality is a better clue to her future success as a tutor than the manner by which she answers specific questions about writing, all things such as ability and good grades being equal. Let me introduce my approach by saying that the college I represent, Husson College, is a business school and as such produces no English majors. All tutors in our writing lab are also part of a larger Peer Tutor program and receive training in interpersonal skills as well as English skills.

Peer tutors in English at Husson must first lay the groundwork for an interview by following this procedure: preparing an application, acquiring two faculty references, and obtaining a copy of their college transcript. These items are forwarded to the lab director by the Peer Tutor Coordinator along with a writing sample from the student; next, the student makes an appointment with the director. This procedure screens out the poorly motivated student; thus, those who fulfill all the requirements up to the interview stage have demonstrated some level of

commitment. Successful applicants are ranked after the interview on a scale from 1 - 10 and a list of alternates developed at that time for future personnel use. In addition, I always maintain the same interview format within every interviewing cycle so I can validly compare the responses of each applicant. Like Mr. Lyons, I also use a two-part interview, but I place much more emphasis on interpersonal skills than he. I begin the interview by asking some technical questions about writing; many questions are idiosyncratic and are designed mainly to elicit information about how a student perceives himself as a writer without openly asking him that question. Some sample questions follow:

1. What is a thesis statement?
2. What is a run-on?
3. What is a fragment?
4. How do you construct a conclusion? (This seems to be more difficult for many writers than creating an introduction.)
5. What mark of punctuation do you use least? Most? Why?
6. Do you have a special research method that you use?
7. Discuss your strong points as a writer. (Unlike Mr. Lyons, I have never met a student, at this college or elsewhere, who has bragged about her writing ability. Writing seems to be an activity that generally produces humility, not hubris. Regardless, bragging also seems to be an undesirable characteristic in a tutor.)
8. What are your weak points as a writer? What characteristics about you as a writer are you working on or would you like to change?

From the answers students give, I get an idea of their technical knowledge of English, their seriousness as writers, and the degree to which they search for innovations as writers. I try to weigh their answers carefully because they may be unconscious of vocabulary I use. For example, some excellent writers will be unfamiliar with the definition of a fragment or a run-on since they never produce these errors themselves.

The second part of an interview I devote to questions about students' interpersonal skills. In the space of a half-hour meeting, this second portion will take more time -- generally 20 of the 30 minutes. I

ask a series of questions first whereby I hope to ascertain the applicant's feeling about the following topics:

1. Do you have special feelings about working with the handicapped?
2. With minorities?
3. With slow learners?
4. What are your strong points as a person?
5. Name a weak point that you would like to work on or are already working on.
6. Have you successfully dealt with confidential situations in the past?
7. Why do you want to be a Peer Tutor?

These questions are an attempt to screen out those applicants who betray feelings of prejudice or who exhibit other unsuitable traits such as dishonesty, excessive shyness, and so on. I have received surprisingly frank answers to these questions; however, this is not a gauge of their validity. I can only say that they have been beneficial to me.

Within this part of the interview, I also introduce two case studies for applicants to discuss. Here I am interested in the skills they bring to the problems posed. The case studies reflect actual situations and always have to do with interpersonal situations rather than writing skills. Again, a person can be trained to be a skilled tutor; it is infinitely more difficult to train someone to be pleasant, helpful, and mature. I ask students to react to situations like the following:

1. What would you do if a tutee of the opposite sex developed a crush on you and, to your annoyance, followed you around campus?
2. What would you do if a tutee demanded help from you outside your regularly scheduled tutoring hours?

Discussing these situations is useful in ascertaining a student's maturity level. It is also easy to ascertain from the discussions the level of problem-solving skills a student can bring to the job. As it happens, the case studies have become the most useful part of the interview for me.

Last, returning to Mr. Lyon's paper, I take issue with a statement he makes that

seems to direct his philosophy regarding tutors. He states that "The would-be tutor has to have sense enough my emphasis to know that she must avoid being cast in the role of referee between professor and student." While I readily appreciate Mr. Lyons' ethical and political acumen in attempting to avoid problems in the lab, I would remind him that most of us, professionals and paraprofessionals alike, must be oriented and trained to understand the responsibilities and limitations of the roles we play. In fact, some occupations such as teaching require rather more training than others. I stress strong interpersonal skills in my hiring practices so I will not penalize candidates for lacking skills that only training can provide. Mr. Lyons would do well to do the same.

Suzanne Comins  
Husson College



#### TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF WRITING CENTERS

meeting with

CONFERENCE OF COLLEGE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

March 1-3, 1984

CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers may be on any aspect of writing center administration or instruction and may be practical or theoretical. Papers that focus on the use of computers or word processors in the writing center are especially invited.

Reading time for papers should not exceed fifteen minutes. Four papers will be selected for the program, which will also include a business meeting.

Deadline for submission is November 15, 1983. Please mail papers to the following address:

Jeanette Harris, Director  
The Writing Center  
Department of English  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, Texas 79409

Telephone: (806) 742-2548





The English Language Program Lab at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago serves a large, diverse population. Each trimester we hold an average of seven hundred tutoring sessions for students who range from the inadequately prepared recent high school graduate to the insecure returning adult student. For a significant number of our students, English is a second language. The Lab is staffed by graduate students, Master's candidates in either linguistics or literature, who are hired primarily to teach in our developmental program. There is very little time, and no money or academic credit available for attendance at extensive training sessions. Until recently, what training we did have consisted of one two-hour session scheduled as part of a day-long orientation program for all new T.A.'s. Those two hours were packed with descriptions of our philosophy, goals, programs and students; details of record keeping and scheduling; and a survey of the materials available in the Lab for tutor support. What could be classified as training materials (specific suggestions for a first session, ideas for establishing rapport, problems to be aware of in approaching ESL student needs, etc.) were put in a tutor's handbook which was distributed at the initial session. With this introduction the staff, most of who had never tutored or taught before, began to see students.

Given the constraints imposed by the program itself, what could be done to provide useful in-service training, training that would quickly instill in the new tutor an appreciation for the unique opportunities of the one-to-one learning situation? The constraints dictated tutor training that was individualized since once classes started the tutors' schedules precluded the possibility of large group sessions. The object, a training device that would take a minimum of the tutor's time yet be effective and pedagogically sound, seemed to call for a method that could serve as a model as well. Our priorities for learning in the lab setting are consonant with current theories and practices in the teaching of writing. If we wanted tutors to focus on process not product, on the student rather than the material, and if we wanted dialogue rather than didacticism, then we needed a heuristic that would mirror these goals. Just as we know

that telling students the rules of grammar and the do's and don'ts of paragraph organization will not usually help them produce competent writing, so too, telling new tutors the goals for a tutoring relationship will not automatically produce a cadre of listener-responders. In order to learn the value of a listener-responder as a facilitator of learning, the new tutors ought to experience the process themselves.

A survey of articles on tutor training indicates that lab directors are using a variety of methods to achieve this goal; these methods range from the collaborative learning model of Ken Bruffee's Brooklyn Plan to the use of role playing techniques at group training sessions. The use of videotapes of actual sessions can provide another option. The use of videotapes for tutor training is not a new idea. However, most often lab directors report on the use of tapes made of hypothetical tutoring sessions produced from scripts written by the administrators or by the tutors themselves as part of their training. But, as Fran Zaniello noted in her December, 1979 article in the Writing Lab Newsletter, such tapes are too obviously staged to be effective training devices. Moreover, the time involved in such a project made it unacceptable for us. My attention had been caught by another observation Ms. Zaniello had made when she described the accidental taping of an actual session by the technician waiting to tape the scripted ones. Although the administrators preferred the real session as a teaching device, the tutors had seemed to learn more from the hypothetical sessions which had been designed to be examples of "good" or "bad" tutoring. I hypothesized that the tutors had known what to look for, their responses had been set up by the clearly positive or negative scripts. To re-establish my analogy to the teaching of writing, this method is somewhat like teaching writing by analyzing professionally written models. To be sure, there is value in this teaching method, but it can not be said to afford the student a direct experience. In order to accomplish this goal, I decided to tape actual sessions and then confer with the tutor as an in-service training method.

The Learning Services Department of the university was pleased to assist us; this

project marked the beginning of an ongoing collaboration. They provided a camera and a technician in the lab on request. Although I had originally scheduled individual half hour tapings, I soon found that the coming and going of the equipment was distracting. When I block scheduled tapings I found that after a while the camera and technician became less intrusive and both students and tutors became somewhat more comfortable. Because being on camera does not initially appeal to everyone, we only tape with the tutor's and the tutee's permission. I carefully explain the function of the tape for in-service training rather than for critical evaluation, and ask the tutors to explain to their tutees. Perhaps it is only a coincidence, but usually the tutors who seem to be the most insecure report that their tutees do not want to be taped. Seemingly confident tutors will sometimes shy away as well. My experience with occasional negative responses from graduate students seems to parallel the findings of lab directors who have encountered resistance to practice writing as a training device in a non-peer tutoring framework. Because I want learning to take place in a positive environment, I do not insist that everyone tape a session.

If our schedules permit, the tutor and I view the tape immediately after it is made. One of the most interesting aspects of the procedure takes place at the viewing; the tutor often speaks directly to his image on the screen. He becomes a listener-responder to himself. I write down the comments; I do not interrupt the tape to comment or ask questions. After the viewing, I ask the tutor a series of questions designed to elicit perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the session based on the goals for tutoring established at our initial meeting. I follow the same procedure I use in a writing conference with a student: my comments are supportive, emphasizing the positive aspects while trying to draw out an awareness of elements to be improved. Importantly, this method has provided the tutor with the means to monitor his own work. The tutor has confronted himself; I have not confronted him. The tutor's own image on the screen is a powerful device in itself. Vividly etched in memory are visions of what he liked and didn't like. I find less defensiveness in these conferences than I do in other situations. Also, I have been able to observe the tutor under circumstances significantly less threatening than had I sat in on the session. Unsolicited

feedback from tutors and my own observations in the lab indicate that the procedure does indeed provide a learning experience.

Because of the positive response I had gotten from the tutor who made the first tape, I realized the possibility of creating a permanent resource. With a tutor's permission, instead of erasing the tape I can add it to a slowly growing stock for use in initial tutor training. The procedure differs although it is still individualized and not too time consuming. In order to be useful as a teaching device, any visual aid should really be presented in a three step process: previewing (preparation for the viewing), viewing, and post-viewing (analysis and evaluation). Without preparation, the post-viewing discussion, even one led by a competent questioner, can be insufficiently specific and ill-informed. My tutors prepare for viewing a videotape by reading through a questionnaire I have prepared. They then view the tape at their convenience and fill out the questionnaire. Later, we meet together for a conference. Where staffs are large, group discussions could be used. Obviously too, the tape or parts of several tapes could be shown at a group training session. The most important element for new tutor training seems to be the questionnaire; its goal is nothing less than to help the tutor teach himself.

The questionnaire is designed to do three things: heighten awareness, stimulate critical thinking and call forth specific responses. Its function is to be an inductive training device, and in order to do this it needs to focus the viewer's attention on the discrete bits of information that make up the totality of the image of the tutoring session. The value of questioning in eliciting not simply any responses, but particularly those responses calling to consciousness that which is already known is well established. To train new tutors quickly, yet effectively, we need to make them aware of what they already know but don't know they know, and to help them to become alert listeners and watchers. The process of watching the tape and filling out the questionnaire seems to be useful in accomplishing these goals. They view and react immediately, something that would be difficult and distracting for them to do if they were sitting in on a session with an experienced tutor. Of course, a videotape has another asset: instant replay. Careful, thorough analysis can be done at an

individual pace. Because the tape is of a real session, not a staged one, not a perfect one, but one of a "tutor in progress," the new tutor cannot feel programmed in his responses. Critical, discerning judgment is expected. The fact that their supervisor feels them capable of such responses when they themselves often feel totally inadequate to the task has proven to be another positive feature.

Although admittedly still a work in progress, the questionnaire has been designed to be, in its form as well as its content, a training tool. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions. There are no questions that call for an unsupported yes or no answer. The same question may be asked from two different angles or in different words. Questions asked call for the responder to infer conclusions after specific factual information is generated. The order of the questions sometimes sets up an inductive pattern, sometimes a deductive one. The tutor's responses to the questions provide a substantive base for our conference. The responses of the tutor-as-student, not the questions, not the taped session, and certainly not the supervisor, are the focus of the conference.

This all sounds very familiar, I hope. If we want our new tutors to learn how to conduct effective tutoring sessions, then we, as lab directors, ought to frame at least some of our staff training procedures in the desired mode. The use of the videotape-questionnaire technique has enabled me to become a tutor for my staff rather than a trainer of my staff. The distinction is not mere semantics; this method gives me an opportunity to practice what I preach. If you would like a copy of our videotape questionnaire, please write to me at the following address:

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English Language Program Lab  
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Chicago, IL 60625

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If you plan to attend the Modern Language Association meeting in New York, you are invited to attend a session entitled "The Writing Center as a Context for Composition Research," scheduled for December 27, from 7:00-8:15 p.m. in Room 504 of the New York Hilton. Jeanette Harris will chair the session which will include three reports of research projects conducted in writing centers by Lil Brannon, Jeanette Harris, and Joyce Kinkead.



#### BOOK REVIEW

The Tutor Book by Marian Arkin and Barbara Shollar (New York: Longman, 1982) is a comprehensive text geared to tutors of writing. This is the book I wish I had a few years ago when I was teaching a course for peer tutors. However, all is not lost. This excellent text is invaluable for any composition teacher interested in collaborative learning or for teaching writing to professionals in industry. In any case, what stands out in this remarkable book is its insistence on "practicing what it preaches." This is most evident in its tone, which does not seem artificial, as in many teacher-to-student texts, but which flows naturally from the authors' relationship with students, a relationship that is founded on mutual sharing and respect. It speaks to both students and professionals alike. I would like to briefly describe the format of each chapter, give an overview of the contents of the book, and

finally discuss a portion of the book that deals with counseling and tutoring, an area Arkin and Shollar shed particular light on.

Each chapter has a similar structure; first an introductory text, followed by class projects, then lab applications, and finally, a relevant reading. The class projects are useful even in a traditional classroom setting as mentioned above. For example, from the introductory chapter, one of the authors recalls with pleasure an eccentric, yet memorable teacher who brought alive Victorian literature. The project asks the tutor to recollect a traditional setting and instructor in an attempt to isolate the elements of good teaching. Acting out this scenario is also suggested. The emphasis on analyzing why certain learning experiences were successful is important here. The tutor can then discover certain individual techniques that become particularly his/her own. Following class projects are lab applications (for use in a writing and skills center or in an individual tutoring session). To illustrate each aspect of tutoring, readings from various disciplines in a variety of styles are included. These essays range from the moving account of a community college tutor who feels she is being rejected by her tutee to a classic Socratic dialogue by Plato.

Reading chapter by chapter the reader appreciates the thoroughness with which Arkin and Shollar understand the tutoring experience. Chapter 1 introduces and defines tutoring, collaborative learning, preparation for tutoring and the ethics of tutoring. Chapter 2 prepares the student for the session and includes an interesting discussion of learning contracts and evaluation. Chapter 3 discusses tutoring the handicapped. As its reading it has a remarkable account by Howard T. Hofstater on his own experiences as a deaf learner. Chapter 4 discusses the session itself from planning to analysis. Chapter 5 presents a guide to tutoring in multicultural settings and some helpful guidelines for tutoring students for whom English is a second language. Chapter 6 examines the counseling part of tutoring. It is this and Chapter 7 that I would like to discuss more fully.

As one who had trained peer-tutors I agree with the authors' emphasis on developing the tutors' psychological acumen.

Starting with Maslow's very useful hierarchy of motivations, the authors draw on psychological ideas ranging from the self psychology of Carl Rogers to the behavioral ideas of Pavlov and Skinner. They present the reader with clearly understandable ideas presented in a format that is well-peppered with useful examples, techniques, and lab studies. The authors have an obvious understanding of the practical need for the tutor to understand the tutee's psychological world and to appreciate the extent to which this world can impair basic learning. The focus is on developing counseling skills which will enable the tutor to break through some of the psychological blocks to learning. The authors clearly delineate these chapters by cautioning the tutor away from seeing him/herself in the role of the therapist. The rich, very practical examples and role-playing techniques are all realistic in this tutor-counselor situation. It seems to me that after going through the practical techniques and the stimulating readings these chapters will equip the tutor at a psychological level appropriate to tutor effectively.

The Tutor Book is ambitious and, while it cannot be authoritative in all areas, it does give the tutor an excellent understanding of the complexity of the task before him/her. For more assistance in specific areas Longman offers a series of booklets: The Writing Tutor by Arkin and Shollar, The Math Tutor by Peter Resnick, Tutoring ESL Students by Arkin, and Tutoring Reading and Academic Survival Skills by Shollar. Obviously I recommend this intelligent, innovative text to all tutors and teachers of writing and hope they will pass it on to their colleagues in other disciplines.

Marjorie Levenson  
Massachusetts Bay  
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## THE LAB LIBRARY: WHAT GOES WHERE?

As we all know, every writing lab has a library or at least a collection of print and A/V materials. Indeed, the new, gung-ho lab director spends lots of time with books: sorting them, shelving them, making catalogue cards for them. But as the term progresses and the lab slips into full gear, the library slips too--to the bottom of the priority list. When we spend fifty minutes looking for that book we know was here two weeks ago or need a shoehorn to wedge one more examination copy on the shelf, it becomes clear that something must be done. And it's equally obvious that we don't merely need an efficient library system, we need a low-maintenance one.

I have headed up three learning labs: a resource center at a busy regional high school, a small writing lab at a private four-year college, and a multi-disciplinary basic skills center at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee. All three labs initially had the same organizational problems, and the same system worked for all.

The best organizational system--that is, the most effective and the simplest one--is based on primary user categories. Every lab has three categories of primary users, persons who choose which materials they will take from the shelves: tutors, teachers, and students. Tutors remove information for their clients to use during lab time. Teachers choose items which could be useful in class or for course preparation. Students also take material for their own use without tutor supervision. It's true that the tutor/teacher roles overlap: many of us are tutors as well as teachers. But each category is distinct and should contain separate material.

The tutor shelves should contain texts which are primarily exercise books, especially programmed or auto-instructional texts. These can be published books or home-made items. Audio/visual aids and taped lessons should go here too along with any diagnostic tests used regularly in the lab. A notebook or scrapbook of short writing assignments for in-lab completion, grouped by rhetorical mode or keyed to the Freshman English syllabus is also very helpful. Copies of texts and syllabi used in Freshman English courses should be here as well so that lab clients who forget to bring them can use them during lab time.

This is a handy place to keep any sign-in sheets for tutors and a great place for a bulletin board with notices to tutors.

The teacher shelves should contain material with a theoretical bent such as copies of professional journals and books about writing labs and the teaching of writing. As the lab grows, this area may expand into a general professional development library with volumes concerning rhetoric, publishing, and other academic concerns. This is the appropriate place for classroom exercises and essay topics which have proved effective. At Lincoln Memorial, we use this shelf as a central location to place exam copies for possible adoption. Tutors as well as teachers are encouraged to use this material, not as lab material but for their own professional development. If there's room for a bulletin board, it's a good spot for announcements concerning fellowships and summer seminars.

Student use is probably the most neglected area of lab library development. As well as shelving, this area ideally contains some comfortable chairs and attractive paperback and magazine display racks to create a cozy browsing atmosphere. Handbooks, dictionaries, and other writing reference works should be found here--all plainly identified as lab property to keep the inevitable pilfering to a minimum. Rubber-stamp lab logos add a touch of class, but we find it more effective to scrawl LAB COPY across the front and back of each volume with a bright magic marker. Any programmed texts which can be used without tutor guidance can be here also. And this is the spot for hand-outs, lots of them: short, home-made guides to punctuation, footnoting and study skills, crossword puzzles and vocabulary "brain-teasers," as well as copies of syllabi and college publications like the school newspaper or literary magazine and course listings for the coming term.

Any light reading should go here too. At Lincoln Memorial we have a paperback library for students with books grouped under popular subject headings: sci-fi, romance, thrillers, sports. Of course, paperback donations from faculty, staff and students are gratefully accepted. We also subscribe to a variety of magazines--news magazines, Reader's Digest, journals of regional interest--and two newspapers, the local paper

and The Christian Science Monitor. Again, donations are gratefully accepted. The main reason is to encourage reading, of course, but the light reading collection serves two other purposes: it lures students into the lab and makes them feel at home there, diminishing their reluctance to come for help. The collection also broadens and perhaps raises student reading habits. In the romance section we have Mary Stewart and Elizabeth Goudge. Sci-fi contains Kurt Vonnegut and Ursula LeGuin. None are great classics; it's folly to wean students directly from Zane Grey to Dostoevski. But one can instill a reading habit.

A user-oriented lab library should aim for quality, not quantity. Any books that do not seem to fit in any of the three categories should probably be pitched. So often the lab ends up as a warehouse for unwanted books on the theory that if one has a wide range of materials and approaches, there'll be something for everyone. But books are only useful if they are used. Too wide a selection is confusing for students and tutors. Some books may actually be counterproductive. If a text has been rejected by the department for classroom use because it is outdated, confusing, or

antithetical to departmental philosophy, it does not belong in the lab to confuse or misinform students and tutors. One is much better off with multiple copies of selected texts than with a smorgasboard of old examination copies.

Many instructors feel rightly that the students should be physically exposed to books: that seeing books in the lab promotes reading. This seems to be true, but it's only true if the books show evidence of use. A small but varied selection of paperback bestsellers and magazines attractively displayed does promote reading. Row upon row of solid, dark-spined, dust-covered tomes most emphatically does not.

To achieve a low-maintenance, efficient library, the rule of thumb is "Keep it simple." Shelve multiple copies of selected materials, group everything in primary-user categories, and throw out what isn't used. These three guidelines almost guarantee a lab library which will practically take care of itself.

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