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ABSTRACT

The following are nine papers delivered at the annual workshop for junior and senior college English teachers held at Hinds Jr. College on February 5, 1972: "The Role of Grammar in the Classroom" -Mrs. Elba Patterson; "Grammar in the English Class" -Dr. Gerald Walton; "Creative Writing and Freshman English" Gordon Weaver; "Attitudes Toward the Term Paper" -Mrs. Pauline Fitzgerald; "The High School Research Paper" -Mrs. Rose Scherck; "English Literature and Captive Sophomores" -Dr. Maria H. Butler; "The Effective English Teacher" Edward Gordon; "Literature's Credibility Gap" -Harry Wells McCraw; and "Encouraging Sophomores to Enroll in World Literature Classes" -Mrs. Alyne Simmons. (AL)

PAPERS DELIVERED
at
THE JUNIOR/SENIOR COLLEGE ENGLISH WORKSHOP
Hinds Junior College
February 5, 1972

and

THE WORKSHOP FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS
University of Mississippi
February 12, 1972

also

A RESEARCH PAPER OUTLINE
prepared by
Coahoma County High School

Compiled and Edited
by
Augustine H. McPhail, State English Consultant

State Department of Education
Jackson, Mississippi

FOREWORD

An annual workshop for the junior college and senior college English teachers in Mississippi was held on the Hinds Junior College campus in Raymond on February 5, 1972. Some of the papers are presented here in order to provide useful materials for teachers and administrators. Also a workshop for English teachers (high school, junior college, and senior college) was held on the University of Mississippi campus on February 12, 1972 under the direction of Dr. T. J. Ray, Director of Freshman English. Papers delivered there are in this publication also. It is the desire of those contributing the papers that they will be informative and resourceful to the teachers in the classroom. An outline of The Research Paper, presented by Mrs. Scherck of Coahoma County High School, is included in this publication in the hope that it will be helpful to the high school teacher.

These papers are compiled for the purpose of giving information to all teachers and administrators in the schools and colleges of the state.

Augustine McPhail
English Consultant
State Department of Education

CONTENTS

THE ROLE OF GRAMMAR IN THE CLASSROOM

There are three important reasons for the study of grammar by students in today's schools. First, they need to have some understanding of how language works. Language is fascinating in itself. The study of grammar is more than the memorization of rules and the repetition of drills. Students need the kind of knowledge that does not allow practice to become meaningless and haphazard. Third, students must be able to comprehend the ways in which imaginative writers employ the complex structures of our language.

The three major grammatical systems used in today's schools are traditional grammar, structural grammar and transformational-generative grammar. A teacher of grammar today should draw from these systems the best insights into what our language is and how it works and involve the students in the study of the system in a positive way.

English teachers do not have definite answers to the question about how language is learned. They do not have definite answers about how to teach another to use his language effectively. Within the limitations of our current knowledge concerning our language, we need to improve the teaching of the language and the ability of the students to use it precisely when they need to do so.

Students can use their language when they begin attending school. The task of the English teacher is one of teaching them to develop an awareness of language as a body of knowledge, widening their scope of understanding and building positive attitudes toward language learning. The ultimate goal is more effective use of the language by the students.

They do not need to know everything that the scholars know about the system of language. One of the first things that the English teacher should do is to make the pupils aware of what they already know about their language. The creation of a positive attitude toward the language system is probably the most important ingredient for efficient learning of the system.

Grammar is a continual source of frustration for teachers and pupils because there are those who believe that the study of grammar in the traditional sense is necessary for effective language learning. It is a fact that the study of grammar rules does not mean that the students will automatically begin to write and speak more effectively. There is not enough transfer from the completing of pages of sentences illustrating grammar rules to the writing and speaking of the students.

In the classroom the writing of the students provides one of the most effective resources for the teaching of grammar as a body of knowledge. The study of grammar should be integrated with the compositions of the students to make the study of grammar more relevant to the students. They should be given opportunities to write frequently. Their own sentences should be used as the sentences for grammar instruction. Improved facility in the use of language can be achieved much more rapidly through the use of the students' own compositions than through the use of page after page of drill material.

It is important to teach grammar in small doses. Spend more time analyzing the pupils' work. Allow pupils to spend more time writing. Teach organization of composition first, and then help the students to polish their compositions with identification and omission of grammatical errors.

Developing flexibility and versatility in the use of language is one of the major focuses in the study of grammar. Students must learn to use the language patterns that are appropriate to the social environment in which they find themselves. Precision and effectiveness in the use of one's language may determine whether one is accepted or rejected for employment. They may also determine whether or not one is accepted socially.

In conclusion, the study of grammar in the classroom and the role of grammar in the classroom is to assist the pupils as they improve their effectiveness in the use of their language. This is accomplished best through the use of the pupils' own writing and speaking. Creativity and imagination in the designing of instructional materials planned to increase facility in the use of language.

Elba Patterson
English Coordinator
Jackson Public Schools

GRAMMAR IN THE ENGLISH CLASS

Let me begin by saying that I have never taught English at the elementary, junior high, or high school levels. I teach classes in advanced grammar (both from a traditional and a transformational viewpoint) to English majors in college, and I usually begin each course with some remarks that might seem blasphemous to English teachers and future English teachers. I start the semester by saying that I do not expect the student to gain any knowledge of grammar during the course that will necessarily help him to be a better writer, speaker, reader, or listener.

Now, let me make clear my definition (and I recognize that some of you may tell me I am speaking of only syntax, just one element of grammar). I would define grammar as a set of rules which governs or orders the relationship of words to allow for sentence producing.

Given this definition, then, I am not saying that one can not teach, or help a student learn, things that will generally help a student's writing, but not his grammar as such. I do believe in teaching, by means of drill or even memorization if necessary, items of mechanics, including proper spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. And likewise I believe that careful study of good writing and repeated practice in writing (preferably corrected by a knowledgeable stylist) can aid a student considerably in logic, paragraph development, unity, parallelism, coherence, and other elements of style.

But I do make a distinction between mechanics and style on the one hand and grammar on the other. I tell the juniors and seniors in my classes that if they grew up in an educated society with parents who spoke American English, they have known whether they knew any of the grammatical nomenclature, grammar for about eighteen years. It is doubtful that many normal Americans have learned any grammar (using my definition) since they were about eight years of age. By the time, then, an elementary student is able to "study" the rules of grammar, he already "knows" them. For example (and again I remind you of my definition of grammar), did you ever hear a child get his verb phrase mixed up and say "John seeing be might the dog" rather than "John might be seeing the dog" or "John sees brown big the dog" instead of "John sees the big brown dog"? My point is that the speaker has learned the grammar needed for the production of the sentences involved almost as soon as he has learned the vocabulary.

Parenthetically, let me say that you probably know of the recent interest, on the part of linguists and psycholinguists, in children's language acquisition and development.

Also let me say, parenthetically, that I am not sure how much the linguists (or the English teacher) should become involved in the teaching of a specific dialect or in deciding what is correct or proper or standard--though I think that most English teachers have no difficulty in communicating to their students that the language used between friends over a cup of coffee is generally quite different from that of an essay in the Atlantic Monthly.

Why, then, you might ask, would I suggest that we study grammar at all? Look at the prefaces or introductions to most textbooks--traditional, structural, transformational, stratificational alike--and you will usually find that the authors state, or at least suggest, that a study of grammar will improve one's ability to speak or write. I would maintain, instead, that the study of grammar should be interesting in and of itself. What could be more fascinating than the study of something that is almost as much a part of a person as the color of his eyes? The fact that a student already knows the rules of grammar instinctively or intuitively should be justification enough for a formal study of the rules. I suppose, therefore, I am

practicing the "body of knowledge" theory and that I am properly labeled as a theoretical linguist, rather than as an applied linguist. Nonetheless, I maintain that it is valuable (and should be interesting) for every speaker of English to "learn" the things he already "knows." A "discovery" in grammar may not be as useful to society as the discovery of a cure for a disease, but one should feel a sense of pleasure in discovering, let's say, that some writer or speaker has used (and was understood because his listeners and he know the same grammar) a retained objective complement or a future perfect progressive passive verb.

Gerald W. Walton
University of Mississippi

CREATIVE WRITING AND FRESHMAN ENGLISH

The thrust of what I have to say is that there may just be some tangible and positive achievements possible in the teaching of first-year English composition in the junior or senior college classroom, using creative writing as a teaching tool.

I realize that this may, for some teachers, amount to a rather extreme sort of heresy, but I am prepared to defend the thesis.

The formal study of creative writing--the posture of creative writing in the educational establishment, we might say--is still a rather new phenomenon in academic life. We can recognize the pioneers in this area very quickly, and find they are still rather close to us in time--too close to be called anything so venerable as "pioneers," I suppose, but that is what they were. I refer to men like Hudson Strode at the University of Alabama, who produced writers like Borden Dean and Daniel Curley in his classes, to Wallace Stegner at Stanford University, to Paul Engle at the University of Iowa (currently the "leader" in college-level studies in creative writing), to John Crowe Ransom at Vanderbilt...there are some others, but I think the point is made. Creative writing is a new area in American education, at least relatively speaking.

I would note that while more traditional areas of specialization within English language and literature are currently somewhat "overstocked" (to use a term from marketing), creative writing teachers are still in good demand across the country.

Here, in Mississippi, I would like to call your attention (however immodest it may seem of me to do so) to the Center for Writers program within the English department at the University of Southern Mississippi, at Hattiesburg. It is my pleasure to direct this program, and I can assure you that, with the very generous support of my chairman and the administration, it is a growing one.

My point in all this preamble is that though creative writing is a relatively new area in American higher education, it is firmly established there, and will, I think, grow in both quantity and quality in the future of education, both in and out of our state. Studies in creative writing, then, are already academically respectable.

Still, an orthodox critic might say, creative writing is an activity that must be reserved for the gifted student; once a student has proven that he or she can punctuate, spell, come away from the combat with English grammar with the honors, etc., then (and only then!) may we consider that student with respect to the writing of fictions and poems. I disagree.

Let me point out first that both poems and stories are not, to begin with, a particularly artificial activity for people--whatever their ages or degrees of relative linguistic sophistication might be. On the contrary, it is the most natural sort of activity, one can observe, short of language itself.

How, for instance, do we account for Mississippi's having produced so many successful writers, per square mile and per capita income, by contrast with both richer and more populous states? Does this not come from what we call the "Oral Tradition" in Mississippi culture? In short, the nature of society in a state like Mississippi was, and is, conducive to people's telling one another "stories" of all kinds--and this provided the cultureal basis for such figures as Faulkner, Welty, Richard, Wright, et al. In short, we begin, in Mississippi, with people (our potential first-year English students, for instance) who already have the habit of "story telling," which is no more nor less than the habit of using language with respect to the very rich properties of language, which is no more nor less than the literary usage of language.

Almost anyone, no matter what his skill with grammar, punctuation, or spelling, can tell a story. Yet, my critic might say, surely this cannot be extended to poetry; poetry, surely, is so refined and elevated an activity as to bar any but the most gifted student from language learning through that activity, much less satisfactory achievement in it! Again, I disagree.

It is a commonplace that children love poetry. And they love it, not because it is used, in nursery rhymes, say, to tell amusing stories. They love it because it, like a fictional narrative, exploits the properties already implicit in our language. The English language is full of rhyming words, and so poems are rhymed, and that is why children love poems. One can test this contention easily. Read some rhyming poems to children (be they four, five, six years old--it does not matter much). Observe them: before long, they will be making up their own poems. The content of the poems will be absurd, or even pure gibberish, but those poems will be rhymed, even if the child in question has to make up nonsense words to rhyme with, due to his or her limited vocabulary.

Take this a step further. Read a child some very metrically regular verse (and recall that nursery rhymes are, for the most part, written in strong trochaic meters, to make the metrical regularity most evident to the child's untutored ear). The child will, given a little time and encouragement, make up more poems, and those poems will have a very pronounced metrically regular rhythm.

If my critic denies me, I shall have to city my own daughters (ages three and four) as evidence to convince him.

How then do we take what I have stated to be the "facts" of the situation, that story telling and poetry are inherent capacities in human nature, given language, and put it into our first-year college or junior college English classroom? It is really rather simple.

You assign, for example, some poetry from your textbook anthology--poetry of all kinds, rhymed and unrhymed, from the deceptive simplicity of Thomas Hardy or Robert Frost to the obvious complexity of poets like Gerard Manley Hopkins, and you get your students in the habit of reading those poems aloud, of hearing you read them aloud. And then you let your students write some poems (<u>make</u> them write some poems, just as you would, ordinarily, make them write expository or persuasive essays). My critic might well ask: do you expect them to write poems of any real achievement?

Of course not. What I expect, from this procedure, is to make students <u>aware</u> (a most important word, and concept!) of the properties of language that come into play in, for instance, a poem. Let us be realistic: the students we are all concerned with in our first-year English composition classes are not the gifted, who might very well write a good poem for us, but those who have not the slightest awareness that these considerations are of the slightest importance. This is the sort of "block" I think creative writing in the classroom can conceivably overcome.

To be specific, one might begin by asking his or her students to write a poem, on any subject whatsoever, that requires the use of the syllabic line--what poets call "parsing meter." We say, then, to our students, you will write a poem in which each and every line is, say, no more nor less than seven syllables in length.

I suspect this has the potential, at the very least, of teaching some valuable specifics about English. It can teach them about syllables as the basic "building blocks" of the English language, and it can go on to teach them of the relationship

between accented and unaccented syllables--and do we not have students in all our classes who need this sort of awareness the nature of the English language?

Beyond this, it may have some other effects. To arrive at his or her syllabic lines, the student is going to have to start to listen to the language for what may be the first time in his or her life--"listen," that is with a particular frame of reference in mind (syllable content) - to listen, in short, with heightened awareness.

Very few of us, however sophisticated we might like to think we are, can dash off a line of seven syllables, "poetic" or not, without taking great care. This means our student is going, more than likely, to have to read the line in question with a concentration that may be a whole new experience. In short, the student is going to see the language for the first time within a perhaps new frame of reference. It will not do just to write words--those words must be listened to, carefully, and looked at, carefully, to bring them into conformity with the prosodic format for the poem in question --the syllabic norm.

And this sort of scrutiny does not stop with a single line of a poem. A poem, after all, no matter how "special" a use of language it is, is still a rational discourse, and this means that the first line of the poem bears, of necessity, some interesting and complex relationships to the second line--much as one sentence relates to the one following it in a paragraph within the conventional freshman English theme. The student is going to have to pay some intense attention throughout his or her poem, and this means that the awareness of language as language is wide open for development under the guiding presence of the instructor.

Poems, like freshman themes, have structures, must answer to logic, to unity, to coherence, to clarity, to the controlling idea or proposition--the things we all want so badly to teach the less gifted students we all face in our classes.

A further, and I hope not too obvious advantage of this sort of teaching device is that it is probably going to catch the interest of the student in a way that an assigned theme on the subject of, say, "Why I Am in College" or "What I Did On My Summer Vacation" will often not.

Even if this does not, miraculously, teach the student to spell and punctuate overnight, I think it has at least an ourside chance of allowing him or her to take delight in the fact of language--something he and/or she may not have been able to do since childhood. And I further suspect that this hypothetical student is going to begin to pay particular attention to the mundane matter of spelling and punctuation and grammar, if only because he or she will be aware of language and the ways it can be used, for perhaps the first time.

I have been speaking with respect to the student all this while, and none of this will work, can work, if I do not say something with regard to the teacher involved.

The first requirement for the English teacher in this situation is that he make a real effort in the direction of genuine tolerance.

I think the teacher is going to have to be patient with the student. The student will misspell and punctuate incorrectly (and maybe not at all!) in that first poem, and very probably in those that follow as well. Forgive it; we so seldom make any progress by dousing a student's theme in red ink, so we might as well give him a bit of free rein in this exercise, or at least a relatively freerer one than is the custom. Nothing can be stifled more easily than what we can call a "creative" impulse by an authoritarian instructor who fails to see the forest for the trees, or worse, sees it, but ignores it.

And this goes without saying with respect to what a student chooses to write in a poem. Though Frost writes beautifully of nature, and Father Hopkins exults in the glory of God, you ought not to require your student to do so. The idea here, is, after all, not to make poets of them (little Frosts, for instance, or little Eudora Weltys if it's fiction writing at hand), but to make them aware of language, to develop what we can call a "literate habit of mind," or "cast of mind" is better.

The teacher, then, must be careful not to impose eigher his favority poetry or his personal value-system on the student within this exercise.

A second, and equally important requirement for the teacher in this situation is that he may very possibly have to do a little brushing up with respect to poetry and fiction. The best way would be to read as much poetry and fiction as one can--it will not do to rely on one's lecture notes (no matter how august the professor who delivered those lectures back at college was!).

In this regard I cannot forebear mentioning the USM Institute for Teachers of Creative Writing that will be offered by the Center for Writers and visiting faculty this coming June 1st, 2d, and 3d in Hattiesburg; it is designed to prepare the English teacher for just such an activity in the classroom as I have tried to describe above.

My critic might ask, last of all, if there is any evidence that this sort of thing can work? I would refer him to a book by Kenneth Koch (a contemporary American poet of some reputation). It is called Wishes, Lies, Dreams: Teaching Children to Write Poetry. It is available in paperback, and would make an excellent beginning point for anyone who might like to follow the process I describe. I spoke of having one's students write, at least to begin with, a poem in parsing meter. Koch gives some marvelous examples of sestinas written by sixth grade (yes, sixth grade!) schoolchildren in New York City--children who are by no means gifted.

For further proof, if it is to be had, I intend to try just what I have been speaking of with a section of freshman students at USM this spring quarter--this can happen, of course, only with the support of my chairman, so let me make a final plea to department chairmen and directors of freshman English programs to bestow a bit of "creative" freedom on their subordinate teachers! If proof is forthcoming, I shall be sure to share it with anyone interested.

Gordon Weaver, Director
Center for Writers
University of Southern Mississippi

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE TERM PAPER

I. At what levels should the term paper be taught?

A few years ago when Mississippi schools first began to seriously innovate the curriculum and methods of classroom instruction, I remember noticing the cover of a school magazine that impressed me very much. The cover was a drawing of a group of students watching their teacher dispense algebra problems onto the chalk board from a pressurized spray can. My first reaction was to resent the implication that classroom instruction was both mechanical and impersonal. Since then, I have often wished for such a device that could dispense all the necessary information in neat, little applications suited to each student's need. If such a device were possible, teachers could easily determine the students' readiness for such activities as the writing of a term paper.

Until recently the term paper was exclusively a project for the senior year, regardless of a student's readiness or ability, simply because such a paper was a requirement for graduation. In most cases students were wholly unprepared for such an undertaking, especially if they were required to select a topic from a stereotype list prepared by the teacher. As a result, students generally approached the writing of a term paper with dread, fear, and an intense dislike. On the other hand, the burden was a tremendous one for the senior English teacher who had to attempt to instruct all the procedures necessary for an acceptable paper. Most papers were invariably long, sub-standard, plagiarized reports taken from various encyclopedias. Too much hto be attempted in too little time even for the ambitious students. For the low achiever the experience often proved to be chaotic.

Fortunately these conditions no longer exist in most schools. Teachers have gotten together, whether at planned in-service meetings or at coffee breaks in the teachers' lounge, and changes for a more efficient approach to the writing of the term paper have been made that will benefit both the students and the teachers. Planned scheduling of sequential levels of progression in composition and research has proved the most successful approach used so far for teachers in this area. For the past several weeks I have contacted English teachers and asked their opinions concerning the levels for teaching the term paper. Notice that now the term is levels, plural, not just the level. Nearly all teachers contacted were in complete agreement that the teaching of the techniques for the term paper should be the responsibility of teachers at several levels -- even in the seventh and eighth grades, students should be taught how to use the library facilities. The Reader's Guide, the card catalog, vertical files, etc., should be introduced to students as aids in finding material for reports. They should be trained to document information obtained from newspapers, periodicals, or whatever source from which material is taken. Students in junior high grades are capable of learning to paraphrase (by reading material and restating the information in their own words). Summarizing material lays the foundation for precis' writing. Finding the central idea and organizing ideas into proper sequence are the beginning of the outline.

Roget's Thesaurus and other books of synonyms should be introduced to the ninth and tenth grade students for vocabulary enrichment and variety. Short themes or essays requiring proper use and introduction of quoted material should be stressed at this level.

Nearly every teacher contacted also agreed that a short term paper should be written, or at least the techniques of a term paper should be taught in tne eleventh grade as a preview for the final senior term paper. In the eleventh grade a student should be encouraged to read for a purpose, how to make proper footnotes and biblio-

ography. In fact, he should be allowed to go through all the stages of preparation:

selecting the topic
limiting the topic
selective reading and making a working bibliography of possible sources
making note cards (summary and quotation)
organizing materials
preparing an outline
writing a rough draft (complete with footnotes and bibliography)
proofreading and revision

Stressing the importance of avoiding plagiarism is a must.

II. What are the objectives for writing a term paper?

Writing a term paper, like any other activity, should be a valuable learning experience. Howard Blake states that writing should be a natural outgrowth and outcome of whatever students read or experience. Therefore, one of the major objectives for assigning the term paper is to help students develop techniques of invertigations that they will be able to use for the rest of their lives. These techniques will help them in preparing reports in college, business and professions, various civic organizations they may be involved in later. Term papers should be a culmination of a student's skill in writing, organization of his ideas and in the projection of those ideas. Writing a term paper is also an excellent means for teaching perserverance, patience and self-discipline. As Chaucer once said, "Ther nys no werkman wheresoevere he be, that may bothe werke wel and hastily." The term paper is based upon thoughtful planning from its beginning until its end, thorough investigation, and careful sequential organization as he performs one step after another. The student should be allowed sufficitime between each phase of writing the paper.

The most successful activities for the "now" generations with their inquiring natures and desires to seek the "why" and "how" -- new answers for old questions and situations are activities that are relevant and useful. The term paper can be made appealing to students if they are permitted to research and write about subjects important to them. It can encourage them to discover individual ways of perceiving, learning, and accomplishing something worthwhile, and every student needs to feel that he has accomplished something worthwhile.

III. What format to use?

If a term paper is worth writing, it is worth the responsibility of his instructors to teach correct and uniform techniques. Students are often confused if required to write papers for history, science, etc., if each instructor demands a different technique or format. A reliable guide should be adopted by all instructors. Kate Terabian's Manual for Writersis an excellent guide that will be useful from high school level through graduate school. Most students prefer to buy their own copies of Terabian. However, most libraries are willing to purchase several copies for use in the library. Usually the following format is sufficient for most term papers:

1. Title page (followed by a blank page)
2. Outline (Table of Contents)
3. The body (text) of paper
4. Bibliography

Mrs. Pauline Fitzgerald
New Albany Middle School

THE HIGH SCHOOL RESEARCH PAPER

The skills required in discriminating reading, locating sources, taking notes, summarizing and organizing material, and all the technicalities involved in writing a research paper are extremely difficult to learn and difficult to teach. It is believed that a gradual, grade-by-grade approach will benefit both the student and the teacher. The following outline is by no means rigid, but it should serve only as a guide to help the teacher set for her class specific goals which are not beyond the capabilities of that age group. It is hoped that this guide will help the teacher of the following grades to assess the potentialities of her students and proceed with more definite purpose in attaining her goals. It is noted that intensive review (and some reteaching, of course) will be needed in each grade. If some classes seem to be more advanced and capable of going farther than the stipulations for that grade, the teacher naturally will use her judgement and take them on as far as they can go.

In order to avoid conflicts in the use of the library, Grades 9 and 10 will do this work the first semester, and Grades 11 and 12 will do theirs the second semester.

I. GRADE 9

A. Summarizing and paraphrasing

1. Distinction between these methods

2. Class and assigned drills on same material for comparison and analysis of errors.

3. Individual assignments

4. Progression to longer selections

5. Repeated warnings against plagiarism

B. Giving sources of information

1. Practice in making bibliography cards

2. Proper form for listing bibliography

C. Outlining

1. Logical organization of facts

2. Proper form for outlines

a. Capitalization

b. Punctuation

c. Indentions

3. Practice in outlining

a. Text material

b. Summaries of material

(Note: Brevity of selections with repeated practice and careful checking by the teacher are important at this beginning level.)

II. GRADE 10

A. Thorough review and practice of all skills learned in Grade 9

B. Taking notes

1. Class drills using text material

2. Individual assignments

3. Various methods of notetaking

4. Use of note cards

a. Identification of topics

b. Source information

c. Page numbers

(It is very important to stress the use of the student's words and not the words of the author.)

C. Practice in writing from note cards - not the original

(If the notes are in the student's words, the danger of plagiarism will be avoided.)

1. Short selections of text material for class drill and comparison

2. Longer selections

3. Notation of sources - title, author, page number (Specific footnote form need not be stressed)

D. Revision of material

1. Elimination of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors

2. Practice in sentence improvement

3. Use of 3rd person

(Note: A simple, brief paper of 3 or 4 paragraphs may be required if the teacher desires, but this is not necessary. Emphasis here is on methods and accuracy rather than on final organization of material.

III. GRADE 11

A. Thorough review and practice of all skills learned in Grades 9 and 10

B. Footnotes

1. Various forms (see handbook)
2. When to footnote
3. Listing footnotes for entire paper
4. Placing footnotes on bottom of pages

C. Outlines

1. Specific outline for entire paper
2. Organization of note cards according to outline
3. Correct outline form

D. First draft and revisions

1. Following outlines
2. Correct placing and punctuation of long and short quoted material
3. Improving sentences
4. Rechecking footnotes
5. Correcting bibliographies
6. Using formal style
   a. 3rd person
   b. No slang or conversational style

(The first draft will be checked by the teacher.)

E. The finished paper (Maximum of 1,000 words)

1. Careful rechecking for typographical errors
2. Writing introduction and conclusion (if teacher desires)
   a. 1st person
   b. Introduction stating purpose and scope of paper
   c. Conclusion giving results of research to student
3. Title page

(See note at end of Grade 12)

IV. GRADE 12

A. Thorough review of all skills learned in Grades 9, 10, and 11

B. Special emphasis

1. Wider scope of investigation
2. Special work on more varied types of footnotes
3. Parallel outlines giving specific information
4. More detailed introduction and conclusion
5. Limitation of encyclopedia references
6. Longer bibliography requirements
7. More rigid requirements in revision

(Outlines and first drafts will be checked by teacher.)

C. The finished paper (1,000 - 2,000 words)

1. No errors in spelling, grammar, or sentence structure permitted
2. Footnotes correctly made and placed on the bottom of the page
3. Introduction and conclusion written in 1st person with specific and logical ideas

(Note: Teachers will spot check references for plagiarism and correctness of page numbers. Dishonesty in footnoting will be penalized in the teacher's discretion. Students should be aware of this from the beginning of the study.)

Handbook: Preparing the Research Paper - 3rd Edition
Lorraine F. Dangle
Alice M. Haussman

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Coahoma County High School
Mrs. Rose Scherck, Chairman

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND "CAPTIVE SOPHOMORES"

I'm sure some people would begin a talk about sophomores and required English literature with all the enthusiasm of some proud parents announcing the engagement of devoted lovers, sure that everyone present is vitally interested in the union of the two---and certain that they have served as the sympathetic matchmaker. Others might start with the solemnity befitting an oration delivered at the interment of a lost cause. I begin with the knowledge that whatever I may say is "old hat" to most of you and that we, as teachers of literature today, sometimes create a little less than enthusiasm in our "captive sophomores" regardless of our own excitement about the wonders that are!

Because I do sometimes despair of whether I am interesting my students, I decided to make out a questionnaire on which my 201 sophomores might express themselves freely concerning the course. I then asked another colleague who was teaching 201 and Terry Everett, who was teaching an experimental section of 202, to give the same questionnaire to their classes. Since I wanted the students to feel completely free to say anything they pleased about the course, I did not have them to sign their names, but I did ask for such items as classification, sex, quality point average, and major. These bits of data did not seem to shed much light on the answers, although there was a slight difference in comments made by music, English, and history majors and those made by P.E. and some other majors!

Three of the main questions were: "Do you see the relevance of the study of English literature to the general education of college students in America today?" -- "What three parts of this course did you find most interesting and why?" -- and "What three parts of this course did you find least interesting and why?" One chief reason for asking these questions, of course, was to find out which works in English literature today's students "relate to." Assuming that all young people today have a preconceived notion of the meaning of "relevance," I was gratified that approximately 90% saw relevance and some few made brief statements about why; but the statements were vague and generalized. At least the questionnaire had relevance spelled correctly and they were not faced with a spelling problem! Answers to the other two questions included shocking extremes--shocking because so much of today's educational effort is spent in trying to find subjects which will "please" our students or materials "to which they may relate." The truth, so far as it is shown by my questionnaire, is that they have diverse tastes, interests, and background, and, therefore, respond variously to different works of literature.

The answers to these two questions included such extremes as: "I like Beowulf because I like folklore," to "I disliked reading Beowulf because even in the translation it is archaic"; OR "I like Everyman because it teaches how to live the better life even for today," to "Everyman couldn't possibly have any relevance in 1972"; also, "I dislike Shakespeare because I am sick and tired of having heard all my life about how great he is---besides I find Milton a much greater poet"; to "I dislike Milton because he is to didactic and boring" --- obviously a good student to use the "didactic."

The extremes were somewhat the same on methods of presentation: from, "I like records and films---and slides taken by the teacher on visits to England," to "I think records are boring; they put me to sleep," and "the teacher shows slides and films just to keep from preparing the lesson and to use up class time," "to re-live his own trips to England," OR " to brag about the places he has been."

Some students criticized the teachers' spending too much time on "things they like'; others expressed the wish that the teachers would do so because "students need some indication of the teachers' preferences and the reasons for these preferences.

Almost 100% expressed the opinion that there needs to be more class participation or discussion. None suggested ways and means of bringing about this participation; and only a few had the grace to say "we need more discussion, but it is hard for the teacher to promote it when so few students either study and/or understand the lesson before the teacher 'explains' it in class." Even the students in the experimental class, which is set up for group and class discussions, said that one of the weaknesses is that "only two or three students in the class actually do participate in these discussions." It occurs to very few who make such remarks that the only way class discussion can "come about" is for each and every student to make his contrivutions even if mostly by questions rather than by comments.

Incidentally, about 90% of the students in the experimental class listed as one of their favorite "parts" of the course "the teacher" who happens to be a very personable young man. A few in the other two sections named as one of the three best "parts" the teachers--both of whom are old ladies--the other one was at MSCW with me, but is not an old maid--has three children and seven grandchildren! Another "part" favored by at least 50% of the experimental class was the fact that they receive the test questions before the tests. Of course, I had used the work "parts" in the questionnaire to mean parts of the content of the courses, but I was afraid if I said "content" they might give summaries! I certainly did not intend "part" to mean teacher or tests, but "C'est la vie!"

It seems, then, that with such varieties of choice in what the students like and dislike, we may as well continue on our stubborn English-teacher way of choosing what we think is best, more appealing, or more appropriate--or "relevant." But, I believe that we must also be constantly alert to try new and varied ways of presenting material, to discuss these methods with our colleagues, to learn their ideas, and to evaluate the effectiveness of each method as objectively as possible.

Oh, I almost forgot to say that one male P.E. major in my class said he disliked the fact that the course had too much sex in it! Never did I think I'd live to see the day that a 1972 American student would find too much sex in English literature 201.

But perhaps this is a good note on which I may end this "long preamble to a tale."

Of the many approaches or emphases used by teachers of literature, I choose to emphasize the philosophic and aesthetic values of English literature. But, because the historical background is very important for philosophic understanding and for aesthetic appreciation, I try to make each writer live in his own particular time and to relate that time to ours. Since most of the great literature of England is universal--"not of an age, but for all time!"--I do not find it difficult to do so. My hope is to help the students realize that since English after all is our native tongue (even if, in My Fair Lady, the song does say that we "haven't used it for years"), it is right and fitting that we become acquainted with the greatest masterpieces written in the English language from earliest times.

But, to talk about ways of interesting students in English literature is to tell of specific presentations which I have found effective. To use all of them in any one semester would be to cut down considerably on the amount of literature we try to cover, but, perhaps, that is the one thing we do need to do--cut down drastically! Sometimes I think we are so "busy doing what's necessary that we forget to do what's important."

One of the most effective "interest-getters" I used to use constantly was a bulletin board which I changed nearly every week. Sometimes it included notes of interest from the news such as the Red Dean's decision to allow a bust of Byron to be placed in Westminster Abbey or the finding of the latest so-called Shakespeare signature, or reviews and pictures of current Shakespeare productions. But, more often it contained those beautiful postal cards one finds all over Europe--the Canterbury Cathedral, Chaucer's pilgrims, the daffodil field, Milton's home, the Grand Canal with Byron's and Browning's palatial residences, and so forth. The students would become accustomed to looking for something new and would ask questions about such things as the Saracen's Head a week before we read the Spectator or about the Chelsea Cheese before we talked about Dr. Johnson and his circle. I do not have even a room of my own these days, much less a bulletin board! However, in reply to the question--"Does the college classroom atmosphere add to your interest in English literature?"---a majority of the students answered "Yes," and, when asked for suggestions to improve the classroom atmosphere, only a few suggested maps, pictures, or bulletin boards.

We do have a few films which have found useful. The one I show most often is McGraw-Hill's The Tragedy of John Milton. It is short, and it depicts the Restoration turmoil with Andrew Marvell, the Roundheads, the Royalists, and, of course, Milton Dictating Paradise Lost--and speaking some lines from Areopagitica in protest against the suppression of the freedom of the press and of the selling of his own books. Students usually remember how ugly Prynne is in the movie and how pitiful Milton is in his blindness!

Of course, I use some records, too--always some of the "General Prologue"--and usually short excerpts from Beowulf to demonstrate the vast difference between Old English and Chaucer's Middle English (but, on the questionnaire, two students still told me they didn't like The Canterbury Tales because they couldn't read the Old English!). Sometimes I play records that depict a typical Medieval day or a record which gives exciting Renaissance descriptions of the glories,--and some of the foibles--of the Age of Elizabeth. When I am teaching the Romantic period, I play a recording of Tyronne Power's reading of the Donna Julia episode from Don Juan (maybe the P.E. major who found too much sex in 201 would collapse in that class.). I use readings by outstanding actors of many of the other Nineteenth Centure poems and of Shaw's Don Juan in Hell episode. I also like to play some Gilbert and Sullivan, and the students are usually fascinated with this music by the "grandpas' of the modern musidal. I have even played the score of My Fair Lady to the delight of one group that studied Pygmalion.

I do use my slides--whenever I can find about 4 hours to sort them out---although I have always had qualms about showing slides, especially since EVERYBODY who is ANYBODY goes abroad, brings back slides, and bores neighbors and friends with them. I usually show slides of Winchester Cathedral (very popular a few years ago), of the Round Table in Winchester Castle, and of my own pilgrimage to Canterbury. Since the Tabard is no longer in Southwerk, I use an inn close to the Southwerk Cathedral, made famous by Dickens in Little Dorritt.

We then proceed to Rochester and on to Gadshill where I show the Falstaff Inn and a home of Dickens across the road. Then finally to Bob-up-and-down (really Harble-down) from which I took my first slides of Canterbury Cathedral in the distance. Along the way, I show Pilgrim's Rest Inns, and in Canterbury, the Twelfth Century bridge which still bears the constant Twentieth Century Traffic, the weavers' place, and other points of interest. Another good time to use my slides, I find, is when I teach the Romantics and can show Byron's Newstead Abbey, the reconstructed nightingale grove at Keats's home in Hampstead Heath, the Bridge of Sighs, "the arches on arches" of Rome, the Jungfrau of Manfred's dark abode---indicentally, I took great pains to underexpose several slides to make the Jungfrau gloomy enough---Tintern Abbey from all angles and at all periods of the day until 11:30 p.m. --- and also a stream and sheepfold "a few miles above." Now, you see why some of my students might be justified in saying I show slides so that I can brag about where I've been!

One thing that I always try very hard to do is to relate the English literature of the various periods to the same movements in the other arts. Sometimes I ask a music or an art major to bring in some interesting information about the music or art of the classical, the Romantic, or some other period. Often I play Berlioz's Harold in Italy; one time I even let it continue as background music while we discussed Childe Harold. Incidentally, it is sometimes a good "shocker" to play Mendelssohn's Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream! During the first meeting of 202, I have found it effective to take to class an art appreciation book and a music appreciation book, such as Schinneller's Art: Search and Self-Discovery (International Textbooks in Art and Art Education Co.) and Machlis's The Enjoyment of Music (W. W. Norton), and introduce the chief characteristics of Romanticism by reading from each of these books and then revealing what books they are.

To create class discussion--usually responses from the few--I sometimes assign short lyrics for the special sttention of two or three students so that they will be responsible to the class to "bring in" extra information and to lead a discussion of interpretation. The trouble I find here is that except for the good students, most of those with "special attention" assignments neglect the rest of that day's lesson. The best poems for this kind of assignment I have found are Elizabethan songs and sonnets, Conne's and other Seventeenth Century short poems, and lyrics of the Nineteenth Century---in spite of the fact that one student said on the questionnaire that she liked lyrics least "because you have to dig out the meaning."

Now, the truth, of course, is that in any one semester I "get around to" few of these varied attempts to make the literature of England live for my sophomores, especially since we have been using the Norton Anthology. Next year we are hoping to have a textbook which concentrates on fewer writers, has better print, and includes at least some illustrations. I sometimes wish for the first sophomore literature book I ever taught; it was entitled Eleven British Writers! At least the concentration was on teaching what's important instead of trying to cover what is deemed necessary!

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THE EFFECTIVE ENGLISH TEACHER

I want to look at the teacher as he should see himself. I want to put teaching, as much as I can in this brief space of time, in operational terms. I want to pass over quickly some personal characteristics of the teacher, not because I minimize their importance, but because I hope that everyone here will take them for granted.

May I enumerate quickly some important personal characteristics. A good teacher must enjoy the job; he must not take out his frustrations and grievances on those he teaches. We have too much power over students and should be very reluctant to use that power. Tattooed on the back of the teacher's right hand should be Lord Acton's dictum that power is likely to corrupt and that absolute power corrupts absolutely--on the back of his hand so that he can see it whenever he points at a boy. We seem to feel less need to point at girls. I can certainly agree with the students who all seem to feel that a teacher should have a sense of humor; if he takes himself too seriously and really thinks that he is going to affect eternity, he may be taken away in a net.

Beyond these personal characteristics he must have a good degree of intalligence, a fact that many of our certifying agencies are unwilling to admit. We have had higher standards for those going into the Peace Corps to teach in Africa than we are willing to have for those who teach our own children. The quality of a teacher's mind is important because it is the grinding wheel against which a student sharpens his own mind. If a teacher cannot match an abstraction with a definition, if he cannot classify seemingly unrelated ideas into a coherent set of generalizations, if he cannot step back from a literary work and ask the big questions that demand analysis and synthesis, then the class will be deprived of one of the major objectives of education, the ways of effective thought.

Once we have found this paragon who has that unlikely combination of intelligence and happiness, how should he operate in his classroom?

He should teach by asking questions or setting problems so that students may learn to reason. Thinking is seeing connections between things and stating what that connection is. When a man saw the connection between the fall of a seed and the growth of a new plant, he made possible an agragian life. The invention of the calendar allowed men to predict floods and to determine the planting season. The great advances in civilization began when someone asked the right questions. The question comes first and then the sifting of evidence. Teaching is a way of making a selection of the facts of the universe and forming them into meaningful patterns. The way to judge a textbook is to look at the kinds of questions it asks. The pattern that most concerns us in teaching is that of having a class draw a general statement about seemingly unrelated facts, or of supplying facts to support the general statement. These are the acts of synthesizing or analyzing. In the good thinker these are not separate procedures; he is continually seeing connections between facts and generalizations, and revising his generalizations as he discovers new facts. The procedure is one by which we decide what another person is like, and the one by which someone will find a cure for cancer. The avoidance of such thinking leads to prejudice or witchcraft.

It is by asking questions that we guide this process of thought. Together with the class we ask: how are the parts related to the whole and how can the whole be subdivided into its parts. If we teach rules before understandings are

arrived at, we destroy the very act of thought. A generalization, to put the matter another way, is a concept. If we show students how to arrive at a concept, for example: how a character is revealed, how imagery works in a poem, how setting can be symbolic, how irony can carry meaning, we have allowed our students to learn how to learn. We have not taught just this one story, but we have allowed the student to transfer his learning to the next story that he reads.

A class discussion should never be a series of unrelated statements on what students think about something and then a sounding of the bell, leaving forty-two ideas littering the floor. A well-organized class is akin to an essay in which the organization is clear, the main points stand out, and the purpose is unmistakable. By use of a blackboard, a quiz or a summary the teacher must underline what he tried to teach. What he tried to teach is the objective. A class should be about something; what that something is should be capable of being stated as a sentence or paragraph. At any rate, the student should know what the class was about.

If we consider teaching in this light, it means asking questions that will lead to an understanding of a story, a play, or a poem: not, where did Silas bury the money? but rather, how is the night-walking scene in Macbeth reflecting earlier action in the play? In what ways is Great Expectations based on the fantasies of a lonely boy? And if the questions are the types that we might ask of any similar work, questions that have transfer value, then we are truly teaching a student to read better. He will have an apparatus for learning how to learn because reading well is the ability to ask the right questions of the materials at hand.

So far then I have talked about the problems that we take into class, what is called a lesson plan: four or five questions, the answers to which will add up to some understanding of what we are trying to teach. Anyone who puts together a text book whould concentrate on writing questions that will make a class think.

The next step is to ask, who is doing the work in class? A major weakness of beginning teachers and, I am sorry to say, of many experienced ones is that they do all the work. They ask the questions and they answer them; and those who should know better add weakly, Don't you agree. In a really good class a teacher's voice should be heard for about five minutes out of forty-five. When a student does not understand a problem, many teachers "explain" by using the same words again, only a little louder. Their one concession is to keep saying, Are there any questions? By this, they mean, if there is someone in here who is so stupid that he did not get what I said, will he please identify himself. In a motion picture on teaching, I saw a teacher hold up a clarinet and say, Now who can tell me how a breath of air is converted into sound? He called on a student who said something like, You blow on it. Right, said the master teacher, and then went into a lecture on how sound is produced. Unfortunately this is the way that too many teachers perform. If there had been a second act in this drama, we might have seen him giving the same question on an examination, getting good answers from those who remembered what he said, and getting bad answers from those who did not remember or from those, as Robert Benchley used to put it, whose eyeballs had rolled back during the explanation.

The essential act of teaching is to present exciting, worthwhile problems to a class--and let them work out the answers. Why is the play called Julius Caesar? Isn't it about Brutus? In what ways is Hamlet about the failure of love? Is "The Rocking-Horse Winner" an attempt to convince us that we should

not try to make money? What different attitudes toward war do you find in these two poems? The teacher must then remember that a general statement does not answer the question. It must be joined with the evidence from the text that supports the assertion. Key words need to be defined. The hope is that the student will learn to ask his own questions, learn to solve similar problems on his own. To put it another way, the teacher is trying to make himself useless. For such reasons education should be more concerned with asking questions than with offering answers. Suzanne Langer talks of "generic questions" that set the problem in a new light.

And of course the questions can not all be big ones; that is, on a high level of abstraction. We have to adapt to the different kinds of minds that are in the classroom. Someone has said that a homogeneous class has only one person in it. Our minor questions, those that lead us to the big ones, should be on different levels of abstraction. A factual question, How does the story begin? demands only the act of memory and can be answered by a person with low ability. A higher level of question is the one that suggests a general statement, In what ways is Babbitt a typical businessman? Such a question implies the general statement that the student will have to support as he searches for evidence in the book. The second level of question demands more connections and should be directed at those with greater ability. A third level of question, Why did the story begin that way? is one in which we expect the student to form his own general statement and then support it. By level here I mean that of the thought processes that go into its answer.

Another kind of question is that which connects the work at hand with something in life, which sees the work as metaphor. Let me give some examples. What a boy who is opposed to war can do with his draft card is best seen in relation to other central debates between authority and conscience. Socrates was drafted for death and refused to escape; Antigone's actions forced Creon to kill her to maintain the state; Saint Joan's death, for Shaw, raised the question, "Must then a Christ perish in torment in every age to save those who have no imagination?" Pietro Spina's life in Bread and Wine is summed up by Silone: "In the sacred history of mankind it is still Good Friday; those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are still derided, persecuted, and put to death." When a boy reads these great moments of lonely debate, he will see them as metaphors of his own predicament. He may feel less alone; he will understand the relevance of literature. But this will happen only when he has given the book a good reading, has understood what it is saying, has seen the work as metaphor. Then and only then will he get an affective response that is relevant to the work at hand.

A teacher is also inculcating habits. Do the students do the work of the course? If not, do we care enough to find out why? if a student gives a wrong answer, do we try to figure out why he gave that answer? What process did his mind go through to arrive at that response? If a student writes a paper that we deem worthy of a 63, assuming that we have the mystical power to arrive at such a figure, what happens to the other37%? Do we leave it at that, or do we see that he does learn that which he did not know? The teacher who prides himself on giving nothing over 70% should take only 71% of his salary.

Do we know what a student's best is, and are we pushing him hard to the bring, but not over it? A wit once said, keep them surly but not mutinous. The process could more charitably be described as a form of love for all students, although I am sure that they do not always recognize it as such. But love can so easily become amiability, and some teachers prefer to identify with Johnny

Carson. At any rate, it takes tremendous caring to keep after the whole flock, day after day, and a tremendous physical effort. It demands, too, a willingness, in a fine Biblical phrase, to speak the truth with love. And if any teacher wants to know how good his school is, he need ask but one question. Not how many licked College Board exams, or how many went to demanding colleges, but rather, how many people, teachers and students are doing their best, doing their best in everything they try.

I want to repeat a phrase here; I do not wish to be misunderstood. I said, make each student do his best; and this demands that we know what each student's best is. It is for this reason that I spoke earlier of the need for setting different kinds of problems and fitting the problem to the mind of the student. I never want to beat a student by asking him to do what he cannot do.

The more I visit schools the more I get depressed about the amount of defeat that is offered as a daily dose to the average and the below average student. Classes seem to be formed on the idea of finding out what the student does not know, and the teacher usually succeeds at that. And look at the English teacher who plucks away at a paper only when he finds something wrong, and hands it back dripping with blood. Why not mark what is right on the paper? Is that against union rules?

I find this subject important because it deals with the emotional side of learning. Defeat is a kind of punishment; it produces either withdrawal or aggression; at best it produces a hostile environment. We do want people with aggression properly channeled. I want to seea a team or an individual win, to do well any task that comes to hand. This type of aggression grows from self-confidence, from success. The aggression that I oppose grows from a chronic, pounding inability to succeed. It finds an outlet in withdrawal or in a destructive attack on the modes of living: a mess in the lunchroom, the carving on a desk, unkindness to other students. It is the attempt to get even.
It grows from frustration and feeds on hate. We have too much of it in our world. It can be nurtured in the classroom.

We need, then, to set problems that each student can solve in his own way. We need to offer students more opportunity for success and for different kinds of success. Every student ought to do somethingeach day that will cause someone to say to him, That was well done. Many can act well, read poems aloud, do choral readings, illustrate scenes from stories. Many can do good creative writing because theycan look carefully at people or things. Yet all of these last activities are usually at the bottom of the scale of what we think a school ought to be doing.

What a student thinks of himself is what to a large extent determines his value system, and schools are beginning to get interested in values, some to the extent of talking about them. They have the idea that people catch values by discussing them, that the drug problem can be solved by talking about it. Remember that Eugene Debs said that even if I could talk you into the promised land, I would not; if I could talk you into it, someone else could talk you out of it. But if we offer students a steady diet of success and a feeling that they matter in school, we offer new possibilities of what can be done. We can produce better people. Students need, as we all do, a sense of self respect. It comes only with a feeling of a job well done. And anyone who does not respect himself, cannot respect his neighbor. Until he respects his neighbor, he cannot love his neighbor. These are all steps in a process of self-realization. It is an ancient psychological process to hate in others what we hate in our-

selves. Every man is given certain talents that he must develop and use; in education we use the term, Know thyself. We might add, Be content with who you are. Don't take on poses, pretending you are something else. The way to get students to change their behavior is not through force, but by changing their ideas of who they are.

We ask that our students have courage. Schoolboys are quick to recognize and cheer for physical courage; they are often very intolerant of moral courage, which is an emotional state. Anyone who watches carefully will see that moral courage is closely related to confidence. The successful student is the one who develops self-assurance, and with this dares to be different. I don't mean here that he merely belongs to that great mass of non-conformists who now threaten to outnumber what they call the conformists. I am talking of those who are willing to be for something. As a teacher I hate to produce obedient people. C.P. Snow said, "When you think of the long gloomy history of man, youwill find far more hideous crimes have been committed in the name of obedience that have ever been committed in the name of rebellion." And I might remind you that the common defense of those who took part in the My Lai massacre was their obedience.

When one finds out who he is, he doesn't have to pretend; he doesn't have to boast; he becomes free, free to make his own decisions. Then in his satisfaction with himself and in no longer needing to blow his own horn, he may be able to think of others. Then his education begins. Education is, in the final analysis, the attempt to overcome selfishness.

So far I have dealt with two major aims for the teacher; that his students learn to reason effectively and that they learn to live with compassion and without selfishness. The last aim that I want to discuss is that the student should learn his cultural tradition.

A central purpose of education is to teach how a man acts in isolation and how he faces the great moments of life. We do this by bringing students into contact with the great acts of the human mind. We need to bring to students some vision of what a man is and what a man can be, to present the image of a man. We need to understand the idea of individual dignity. We differ from a totalitarian state only as long as we think that individuals are more important than the state. We have to believe that all people are our equals in their right to work out their fulfillment of talent; this is what we mean by pursuit of happiness.

We learn this idea by searching through the breat books in which man was torturously trying to find his way through life. We ask with Oedipus, What are the limits of human knowledge? With Job, Why does a good man suffer? And if relive the asking of these great questions, we may lead what Socrates called the questioning life. We may also outgrow our own petty concerns as we come face to face with those great moments in literature, when some author dramatically presents to us what otherwise would be an abstract idea. We also give meaning to those words: love, honor, justice, equality, due process, the words that describe out tradition, but find their meaning only in the minds and hearts of men. English is the only subject in our school that deals with an individual, with what a particular person thinks and feels. It works when we read imaginative literature; it works when a student is allowed to write what he feels and thinks. It fails when it turns to abstractions: nouns, commas, and similes. Abstract-from reality is becoming a national vice: the My Lai massacre affected some

people strongly; women and children should not be killed by soldiers with guns. Aerial bombardment is acceptable because it is abstract; through a failure in imagination and compassion we can allow bombs to create far wider devastation.

Literature is never divorced from the world; it is made up of a series of metaphors of human experience. A teacher can never control what his students will think or believe, but he should insist that they have an awareness of life. He does it best when he offers instances of inner struggle, the moments of lonely debate that best define the possibilities of what a man can be.

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LITERATURE'S CREDIBILITY GAP

Chances are that the following experience has been as wommon with you as it has been with me. You have just done your best to sell your class on a work of literature you especially admire. A few leading questions have only brought reluctant and nervous replies. Desperate but with growing inspiration, you launch out on your own, bringing in (though suitable simplified) everything you can remember from Classic Comics to your graduate adviser. Breathing deeply, flushed with a sense of having given your all, with confident hope you announce the advent of pay-off time: "Now, what else would you like to know about this sublime yet lovable masterpiece?" A moment, two moments, of agonized silence, many eyes focussed on fluorescent tubes, on windows, on infinity; then, finally, near the back of the room, a hand slowly climbs upward. "Yes?!" "Uh, teacher, uh . . . how much of this is gonna be on the quiz?"

What you have just discovered or rediscovered, as you stand there with the light going out of your eyes and a grin frozen on your lips, is the truth which Paul Goodman and many others have been talking about for years, namely, that in our literature classes not one but two distinct and only slightly related games are going on simultaneously. One is the Teacher's Game, played by a civil servant who has dedicated his life to the proposition that books matter, who sees himself as Poppa Bird giving his fledglings their wings, or as a worthy if humble torchbearer in the etarnal war of light against the forces of chaos and old night. The other is the Student's Game, played by a company of hardened veterans who have all learned long ago what is really expected of them in this business, and who have a supreme regard for the one thing they will be stuck with after all the rhetoric and the promo have passed into silence. Out of this cross-purpose come not only all the hiati such as the above, but also all the defensive and communication-breaking professional malaises such as the growing conviction that you are forever casting pearls before thankless and unregenerate swine, or at least a lingering suspicion that some enigmatic evil is always at work to blunt what you know in your heart should be an invincible combination of literary genius and your own dedication.

What to do to bridge this gap? Must Keats's "realms of gold" always be converted into the brass coin of A's, B's, and C+'s before the average student will feel motivated to buy? Are we condemned, like Moses on Mt. Pisgah, to gaze into unenterable lands of the past when the general populace consumed literature (poetry included) in fabulous wuantity, not because it was Required Reading but because they got a charge out of the experience?

Barring the arrival of a gradeless academic millenium which would give us classrooms of scholars totally motivated to excellence for its own sake, it is clear, for the moment at least, that the best we can do is somehow to make the student's pragmatic pursuit of his grade harmonize more with that grade's original purpose as a measurement of what we wanted achieved, an insight-filled understanding of the literary experience. Here, for whatever they may or may not be worth, are a couple of my own pointers in this direction.

Let's begin where they are. Why should they not want to know what will be on the quiz? Anyone in the teaching business should have student memories enough to understand how important it could be to know in advance just how Professor X's grilling mannerisms differ from Professor Y's. Well, tell them, No, don't read out just that exam you had planned to use. Make them play the teacher and quiz themselves. "Suppose" (you say) "I were to begin with some short answers; could you tell me who wrote this story (or this one, or this)?" Wait for a hand to go up and pounce on it, College-Bowl fashion. Go on to more general questions ("What character makes this speech?

What is the situation when he makes it?"). With skill and a little luck, your example of an "essay question" ("What point do you think Hester is trying to make by refusing to leave Salem?") will give you at last one of those animated classroom round-robins which we are constantly supposed to achieve but don't always do. And what has been accomplished? Your students go away happy because they have (more or less) their indicators on what to cram for. And you are happy because, whether they realized it at the time or not, for a few moments you got them to think about literature in a literary way, almost as if their main purpose had been not to pry out of you an acceptable grade but to learn something about life through contact with genius and imagination.

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ENCOURAGING SOPHOMORES TO ENROLL IN WORLD LITERATURE CLASSES

1. Give basic facts to group during Orientation and to groups assembled before registration.

2. Counsel with English majors, pointing out that World Literature is a kind of fount from which so much of English Literature has flowed - and American Literature to some extent.

3. Point out the parallel in World History and World Literature. Next to impossible to teach either adequately without the other. History is richer by knowing how man has thought as well as how he has acted.

4. Nothing advertises a course like the students who have taken it - therefore, there must be a lively well prepared presentation. If this is accomplished, the news will spread.

5. The world has become so small that Greece and Rome, and for that matter - all countries are now next door. We have become a nation of travelers and World Literature is an introduction to places we may visit.

6. In World Literature, there's something for everyone:

   Teacher - Aristotle, Plato

   Traveler - Homer, Virgil

   Spiritually minded or theology buff - Milton, Augustine, Dante

   Philosophers - Descartes, Racine

   Romantic - Ovid

   Humanist - Juvenal

7. Struggle of mankind to overcome what has been seemingly unsure mountable barriers to progress, civilization, and open and free thought.

8. Teaching from aesthetic standpoint, pointing out pleasures of the mind as well as the physical - soul food, if you please. There is more to life than the work-aday world.

9. Man is instinctively curious and seeks adventure - this adventure can be real or vicarious. Literature presents the vicarious.

10. Basically, human nature does not change. Literature is a way of pointing out this axiom. Characters in World Literature of the Classical Period had the same drives, ambitions, desires, needs, and problems that figure in contemporary literature or even those in today's newscast.

11. A search for the past is essential to a grasp for the future. Man today is a between.

Pope's Essay on Criticism gives good advice

"Be not the first to lay the old aside

Nor the first by whom the new is tried."

Really a kind of Aristotle's Golden Mean.

12. One more suggestion to teachers of literature

Innovate, experiment:

Sing a song

Do a dance

Show a film

Hear a cassette

Go outside to teach

Take a field trip

Act and react

Anything to keep students involved

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