DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 123 641 CS 202 731

TITLE The Teaching of the English Language Arts; A Report of the Annual Conference (4th, University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education, July 24-25, 1975).

INSTITUTION Georgia Council of Teachers of English, Rome.; Georgia Univ., Athens. Dept. of Language Education.; Georgia Univ., Athens. Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

PUB DATE 75.

NOTE 82p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Composition (Literary); Conference Reports; Drama; Elementary Secondary Education; *English Instruction; *Language Arts; Literature Appreciation; Student Centered Curriculum

IDENTIFIERS *Georgia Council of Teachers of English

ABSTRACT

This summary of the proceedings of the Georgia Conference on Teaching the English Language Arts contains an address, "Skellingtons," presented by Katie Letcher Lyle; five keynote addresses, each followed by discussion reports; reports of the media festival; a list of the teacher/student produced materials on display; reflections on the conference; a conference summary; closing remarks; an announcement concerning the 1976 conference; and a membership application blank. The keynote addresses were presented by the following participants: Jean Greenlaw on reading, literature, and language arts; Eunice Sims on communication skills; Derek Whordley on drama; Richard L. Graves on composition; and Sandra E. Gibbs on student-centered teaching. (JM)

A REPORT OF

THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ON

THE TEACHING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sponsored by

The Georgia Council of Teachers of English

The Language Education Department
College of Education
University of Georgia

Center for Continuing Education
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia
July 24, 25, 1975

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PREFACE

The Fourth Annual Conference on the Teaching of the English Language Arts in Georgia is history now, of course. I hope those of you who were there will receive this summary of the proceedings with pleasure, will spend a few minutes or a few hours checking the account of that part in which you are most interested, and will begin planning to attend and to contribute to the 1976 Conference. I hope, too, that you will share your copy of the proceedings with your colleagues and encourage them to come to the 1976 Conference.

As we plan for our next conference, we need to continue to seek ways of involving English Language Arts teachers of all levels, K through 14, and of bringing in supervisors, administrators, and community and state leaders. Local, state, and national pressures make it increasingly imperative that all those who are dedicated to a viable educational program plan and study and work together. We cannot afford to waste our resources by pursuing our separate ways or by failing to give and receive the strength of a cooperative effort.

I look forward to seeing each of you at our Fifth Annual Conference.

Emily B. Gregory
Coordinating Chairman

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Credit for the success of the Fourth Annual Conference on the Teaching of English goes to

-The participants whose ideas, questions, and enthusiasm were most vital
-The leadership teams that directed the group sessions: the moderators, presenters, consultants, and recorders
-Katie Letcher Lyle whose opening address established a positive note for the conference
-Sandra Gibbs, NCTE Co-sponsored Speaker, who was a strand keynoter and who shared her reflections on the conference at the luncheon
-M. Jean Greenlaw, Eunice Sims, Richard Graves, and Derek Whordley who were also strand keynoters
-The State Department of Education for its support through the participation of Barbara Mathis, Mary Charles Roberts, Ralph Crandall, and Bill Hammond
-The chairmen of the conference committees--Emily Gregory, Coordinating Chairman; Nan Flowers and Ora Thomas, Hospitality; Otis Murphey and Nell Clark, Exhibits; Hugh Agee, Program--and those who assisted them
-The publishers whose displays added an important dimension to the conference
-Dell Publishing Company for making it possible for Katie Letcher Lyle to attend
-The National Council of Teachers of English for co-sponsoring Sandra Gibbs
-Angelia Moore who handled all preconference and University student registration
-Secretaries in the Language Education Department for their many hours of work before and during the conference,
-Paul Kea, Coordinator of conferences sponsored by the College of Education in the Center for Continuing Education
-The Language Education Department of the College of Education, University of Georgia, and the Georgia Council of Teachers of English for sponsoring the conference.

James M. Brewbaker, President GCTE
Hugh Agee, Program Chairman

SKELLINGTONS

KATIE LETCHER LYLE, teacher and chairman of the Liberal Arts Division, Southern Seminary Junior College, and author of I Will Go Barefoot All Summer for You and Fair Day and Another Step Begun

You're very kind to invite me to speak, but you should know better--writers go on forever, don't know when to stop, are in love with the sounds of their own words--if I'm not through by noon on Tuesday, somebody signal me.

It's wonderful to be in a part of the country that has bred such an exultation of fine writers: Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, Harry Crews and Barry Hannah and John Yount and Joy Williams, and William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Reynolds Price, Louis Rubin, Eudora Welty--to mention a few. In the south we have deep roots, and are perhaps more capable of preserving folkways and culture and value systems because we're involved with the past. I am proud and encouraged to be a southern writer. The American south has produced far more than its just proportion of good writers, as can be seen from the above list--as has the Jewish community in America. Critics attribute these phenomena variously to a history of failure, a closeness to one's personal and familiar history, cultural or geographic isolation, or a closeness to the land and the natural rhythms of the earth. Here, perhaps more than anywhere else, I find an urgency to perpetuate to children this rich literary heritage.

My speeches tend more and more to be like Frost's "Road Not Taken"--they end up in incredible places I never meant them to be--and I, like Frost, frequently feel I should backtrack to the last fork, and take the other road, and then I never do.

Last spring, I was traveling a lot, making a lot of talks about my books, about Dell's excellent young adult paperback series, about why I write, about my efforts to get my students to read--one night I was at home with my family, and my husband asked me if I'd gotten my latest talk going--I replied to the effect that I had sort of done the skeleton for it. Our 4-year-old, Cochran, looked up from his plate with huge eyes and said, "Ooh! You're gonna talk about skellingtons?" His response seemed so enthusiastic that I was sorry to have to tell him no, that I'd meant something else. He went back to his supper with a resigned sigh. "Too bad," he said, "I think it'd be neat if you talked about skellingtons." The more I thought about it, the more I began to opine that it might not be a bad idea. I'd been needing new material.

Further, I confess to a certain perversity in my nature: whenever someone asks me to make a formal address, now I know very well, having been to a few conventions myself, that all that's wanted really is entertainment, nothing that needs to be digested on top of banquet food and airline martinis and the welter of information. Yet my mind flashes up cards that say, The History of Literary Criticism, or The Tragic State of Reading Among the Young in his Day and Age: you know, heavy stuff. More frequently, I am asked to speak on Why I Write, which would seem to be a

decent question, requiring serious consideration. But that question is so unanswerable, albeit completely reasonable, that all I can muster are smart-aleck answers, like I write because it's less fattening than eating, or I write because I've found it so much easier than stone-carving. Or I write because if I don't I tell such monstrous lies. But perversity is its own challenge: could I write about skeletons?

A third reason I thought skellingtons sounded good is that I have an absolute horror of repetition, that is, of repeating myself. One year I found myself in the situation of having to handle three sections of American Literature--I nearly had a nervous breakdown trying not to say the same thing to all three sections. I was always sure there'd be some girl who for some absolutely unfathomable reason was enrolled in two of the sections, or maybe even all three, and was sitting there silently damning me for saying the same thing I'd said an hour ago. How I envy these people who can go on tour, 31 places in as many days, and give the same prepared speech over and over, day after day. But somewhere out there today I know (paranoids always know) is someone who's heard every speech I've ever given and is just waiting for me to say something I said once in 1962 at an NDEA institute or to slip and use a phrase I used at the Fort Defiance High School graduation in 1969. What this means, of course, is that I long ago used up all the wise things I know, and all the funny stories, and am by now reduced to precisely the sort of stuff you're being kind enough to listen to. It's a pity you'll never know how truly brilliant I am. I don't deserve it. You don't deserve it. But perhaps you will now understand better why I was finally willing to consider skeletons as a possible topic.

Being of a metaphoric turn of mind, I began worrying a bone. The first thing I thought of was, why should my little boy, at the age of four, be so fascinated with skellingtons? I was, my entire childhood, still am, I guess. It must have something to do with archetypes: skeletons must trigger in us reactions of some sort to the aura and awe connected with mortality, and as far as I can tell it's an untaught reaction. Now I don't for an instant believe that Cochran really understands what a skeleton is, but along with monsters, ghosts, a thing of the imagination called a Slitheradee, alligators, and dinosaurs, it calls up in him even this early a deliciously creepy reaction.

My thesis is that there is a body of information, including skeletons, that all children, invariably, find fascinating. Probably we all do, though for various reasons we eventually find it more comfortable to deny certain of these interests, or to suppress them so thoroughly that we no longer believe we are interested in them. We get conned by our culture and current fashion into believing strange things. But--as parents, teachers, librarians, editors, consultants, experts and writers for the young--I believe we are going to be lost to the more immediate call of TV and cheap horror comics and all the easy things like them if we don't stop telling children what they're supposed to want to read, if we don't heed the wide-eyed challenge of children who scrunch up their shoulders and widen their eyes and say hopefully, "ooh--you gonna talk about skellingtons?"

I have noticed a strange phenomenon: we place a great premium on our children's learning to read, then immediately clutch when we discover the children reading the Playboy Forum, or Tales From the Crypt. When I listen to kids, I keep hearing them say in effect that the things they love to read are in direct opposition to what we (the "growns," Cochran calls us) want them to read. That's one thing I want to look at this morning.

I always face a group like this one with such a mixture of elation and despair. I've only been a teacher fifteen years and a writer of books for three--and I'm elated because of the swift and positive changes in publishing for young people; I'm elated at the wonderful flexibility of teachers and their willingness to adopt shocking ideas and books for teaching; and I'm elated at the surprising liberality that I often see in the educational field, which has traditionally been so slow to change. It's a funny thing: no matter how liberal we may be in how many ways, when it comes to our kids, we're conservatives. And yet we've changed in very important ways. So I'm elated to be able to meet with you and talk to you.

But I feel despair when I read that nationally course offerings on every level are growing, literacy levels are falling; there are courses now in ecology and women's rights and playwriting and problem-solving, but no longer are kids learning to read and write. College board scores are lower, but more students are getting higher grades. Learning specialists write of a return to a time of general illiteracy and oral tradition--no longer minstrels and bards, but television, will pass on what it is believed by those in charge we need to ~~know~~. I engage in an argument over beer with a biologist colleague who defends his own use of between he and I in the classroom on the grounds that it communicates just as clearly as between him and me. What's bothering me, of course, is that he's right. I'm just one of a shrinking minority who believes that language is not just a tool to say "I'm hungry," "it hurts," "give me that," "stop," "go"--but that it is an art and a weapon and a vital exercise for the discipline of the mind--and that language is in fact, a way to order thoughts. W.H. Auden, shortly before his death made the statement: "As a poet, there is only one political duty, and that is to defend one's language from corruption. When it's corrupted, people lose faith in what they hear, and this leads to violence." That was three or four years before Watergate. In the spring of 1974, the Conference on College Composition and Communications voted to "uphold the right of students to their own language." Chairman of English Department at Ohio State replied, "That's misplaced humanism, not education." In light of these examples, how can I but despair?

What I, as a teacher, figure you, as teachers, want to know, is what we can do to perpetuate literacy among the very few students whose lives we are part of--what I, as a writer, want to do, is write books so good and so true that they'll excite students to be readers--involved, active readers, for at least part of the time. I fear that inactive receptivity to the mass media may eventually lead to a nation or a world of unimaginative, lazy, helpless humans. For TV informs us like mad, but what good is an informed human being who knows every candidate's face and qualifications, and all the issues, and who won't get out of the Barcalounger long enough to go and vote for one of them? In the fifties the folklore was that TV with its correct usage and acceptable pronunciation would eventually lead to similar usage among its audiences. It ain't happened. More and more, my students seem to be in superficial ways informed--but unwilling to use the information they have. They listen to standard English on TV for many hours a day--but they neither speak it nor write it. And it's not that they don't; they can't.

I also remember with irony a moment from many years ago: I was in Europe for the first time, and I'd taken up with a divine German student with a dueling scar on his face who mumbled endearments to me in half a

dozen languages. He was thin and gaunt, and his most ardent compliment, at least in English, was, "Ah, Katie; you are so healthy." At any rate, I was at that moment embarking on my career as an English teacher, and he asked me once what I had studied in college. English, I replied. "Oh," he said, raising his eyebrows, "it must have come rather easily."

WHY don't Americans speak, read, and write ENGLISH? I don't know, but from my own life and career I can intuit some of the reasons, and my mission these days is to lay bare some skeletons, to try to figure why kids may read some things and resist reading others, and what we as guides can do to help children to become readers. I have a friend who says there's only one way: grow up in a family that reads. She may be right, but I suspect we're all in the business we are in because we still have at least a hope that there are also other ways to get kids to like to read.

Let us begin with certain assumptions: (1) that we want children to read (2) because literature is one of the most powerful means whereby we perpetuate civilized values.

Skeletons are for tonight a metaphor for the magic we must encourage as teachers, parents, writers. In truth, the world is magic: it continues to present us with inexplicable things: super-logical connections, weird coincidences, moral problems that eventually are unanswerable, people who fit none of our categories, questions that cannont be answered, mysteries that remain insoluble.

We are driven to try to find and proivde answers even where we suspect the questions aren't answerable: the tragedy of being human probably involves, among other things, the constant need to ask questions we are pretty sure have no answers. I submit that we as Americans have hidden too many skeletons for too long, and in doing so, we have botched some of the most meaningful things in life. We are still superstitious about mental illness, we've euphemized death nearly out of existence, we're largely embarrassed by sex, which surely ought to be one of the most joyful expressions of life, we regard aging as disgraceful, we have denied that magic even exists. Why? I mean to dig for skeletons, attempting to probe the wall outside, the faddish clothing, the tough skin, and finally the protective flesh until I can reach the skeleton. I would like to dig through the innocent grass, the transforming dirt, the moldering wood to see the skeleton within the coffin. By skeleton I will mean what's really there, what's really basic, what's left after everything else goes away, what's universal, what's bone-deep in truth, what scares the hell out of us, from which we will turn away not wishing to see, from which we cannot turn away because we must look.

An example: My father left me a three-year-old curly-haired cherub when he went off to the second world war. He returned five years later to a snitty scrawny toothless eight-year-old, whom he considered shockingly undisciplined. By then too, his son, born two days after Pearl Harbor, was a charming male of about four. It was soon after his return that I wrote my first novel, entitled LINDA LOU LARKSPUR AND THE DIAMOND BRACELET. Twenty some immortal pages, it had a few flaws, but maybe you'd like to hear about it. It has an interesting skeleton that took me well into my twenties to unflesh. In it, the heroine, Linda Lou, goes to school one day wearing her three thousand dollar diamond bracelet. When she returns, her mother says, "Good gracious, dear, your bracelet is gone." "Oh, my," says Linda, "the assembly speaker must have stolen it. He was from India." Linda Lou's mother faints and Linda Lou gets the aspirin. When her father comes home, her mother relates to him the story. "We must go to India

and get your bracelet," he says. So Linda Lou and her father set off on a ship for India. As they debark in Calcutta, the gangplank gives way, pitching them into a black hoe (get it?), which has of course been placed there by the evil assembly speaker. Linda Lou's father skins his knee in the fall. "That's all right," says Linda Lou, and she puts a bandaid on it for him. Ahead, they see light at the end of the tunnel they have fallen into. They follow it out into a garden enclosed by a high wall, which is full of tigers. It is, of course, the country estate of the assembly speaker. Linda's father, frightened of the tigers, climbs a tree. "That's all right," says Linda, "I'll take care of the tigers." So she does. (I couldn't figure how, so I merely stated it thus.) Linda Lour then walks bravely into the house, and demands her diamond bracelet back from the sneering man. "It cost three thousand dollars!" she tells him angrily. He hands it over meekly. She then returns to the garden and tells her fatehr, "It's all right now. You can come down." Her father descends from his hiding place and placing his hand on her head says, "Well done, my child."

The perfect fantasy of a child not getting a lot of positive reinforcement, as we say these days.

Aristotle would frown at the improbable possibilities; the radicals among us might praise its liberated heroine but could never accept its xenophobic attitude towards people of the Indian persuasion. Just as well, I suspect, that my brother threw it in the fire on Christmas day. My mother, who adores everything I write, loved it. She always compares me to Jean Stafford and Norah Lofts--if I could just get her on the NBA committee! My second book, never completed, was a notebook I bought, with the modest title printed on the cover: WISE THOUGHTS.

We are in a difficult time for reading. We are competing for children's attention with mass media that are as easy as sitting and as immediate as Hershey bars and as universal as pollution. They let children look at violence and murder, those fascinating skeletons. Traditionally, good books for children have buried all the skeletons, hidden them, covered them with cheerful grass because they might give children nightmares.

Also the new criticism which has shaped American thinking since the twenties, textual criticism if you like, includes, in its laudable efforts to upgrade literary quality, some tenets that I believe have alientated more and more potential or former readers from the printed page. To an extent, our entire literature may have suffered in the last half century beneath a tyranny imposed on us by our educations. Think of some of the far-reaching tenets of the new criticism: that melodrama, didacticism, romanticism, sentiment must all be exorcised; that comedy is as a genre inferior to tragedy; that fantasy isn't as serious as realism; that easy to read means easy to write--a book that can be understood on first reading can't be of much worth. (Yet most people read books only once.) These are assumptions or "facts" that I believe we need to examine very carefully, and especially where literature for children is concerned. The kids themselves, incidentally, to condense pages and pages of bibliography, have three favorite topics, from the latest studies, in this order: sports, sex, and the occult.

Certainly a writer must do all he can to write excellently. I do not for a moment suggest ignoring criteria which obviously have merit. It is true that most people's lives have more subtle epiphanies than major climaxes, and our students need to hear this when they whine, "But

nothing ever happens in that story." Yet we must reexamine these criteria. I know fantasy is not real, but I submit that it frequently embodies more truth than minutial realism. And when the best literature is peeled back to its skeletons, we find many of those very qualities that modern critics put down. (My friend Richard Peck told me one night recently in New York that he thought we ought to collaborate on a novel about a bewitched Puerto Rican unwed father with a motorcycle fetish.)

In our alarm that we may teach children the wrong lessons, we have made the mistake of forcing all literature for children to fit what we now at this moment believe children must learn. Recently at a conference I actually heard a professor of adolescent literature urge removal or revision of all children's books judged to be racist or sexist or anything else he considered damaging. He justified this futuristic plan by saying that as long as this sort of literature was around it would continue to teach children that racism or sexism is acceptable. Are we to remove Shakespeare from library shelves, or to revise the plays because most of them include shocking portrayals of the low status of women?

But because romance, sentiment, and lessons clearly taught, are things which we humans crave, and which therefore constitute some of the most pleasurable elements of fiction, many people are left unsatisfied by a lot of literature judged to be good. So when a novel like Love Story or Jonathan Livingston Seagull appears, that embraces sentimentality and melodrama and didacticism with open arms and sticky fingers, it's going to hit it big, and be proclaimed by all the people who haven't understood a single movie since Doris Day and Rock Hudson and/or haven't read a book they liked in fifty years. I believe all of us, and especially children, love structure in literature. We crave catharsis and emotional outlets, and we crave balance, even if the modern world doesn't always appear to be balanced. That's why Superman is so popular.

I have so far written mainly about that period of life called adolescence, and I believe the reason for that is an overdramatic sense of the tragedy of my own. Possibly everyone thinks his adolescence was tragic. I expect that the skeletons in my closet are not more fascinating than the skeletons in anyone else's, but I thought at one time that my growing up would never be accomplished. (Now, of course, I hope it will never be.) I still see myself an awkward adolescent, taller than anyone, with stringy-colored hair and big ears and big feet, and big bosoms, dying to be loved, not by anyone as boring as parents, but by a boy. Part of it was that I lived in a small town with only a handful of eligible high school girls. But there were two men's colleges in Lexington, Virginia, with perhaps 3000 eligible young men from September to June. And there I was: a perfectly mature and rational twelve year old, and my unreasonable parents objecting to my attendance at fraternity parties, orgies, and other innocent pastimes. My father, being helpful, often suggested that I might like to go fishing with him. My mother would usually suggest I cook supper, and the suggestion would be heavily larded with warnings about how nobody wanted to marry a girl who couldn't cook. My father, who had been a marine corps general, thought I ought to be a marine because, he observed, I liked traveling and I liked people. My mother, occasionally still in her bacon-scented bathrobe when I came home from school, bringing down the fourth load of dirty clothes for the day, couldn't understand why I wanted to be anything but a mother. When I finally abandoned subtlety for the truth and told my father I didn't want to be a marine, he was very hurt. But eventually he said, "That's all right. You can be

a bank teller." "A bank teller?" I raged. "Why certainly," he replied, caught up in his idea, "it's a good place to work until you get married, and all the eligible men come into the bank." I saw years later that he'd constructed the perfect fantasy for my safety: I was to be on display, in a cage, safe from the ravening and check-bouncing college, students, seen exclusively by rich men.

Anyway, to return to my autobiography. Still rebellious at twenty-five, with the soul of a poet, or so I thought, I married a poor man. Poor Daddy. I thought I wanted to marry him, so I spent oh, a month, making chess pies, lemon meringue pies, devils food cake's, all that kind of stuff my mother had told me men loved. He remained indifferent. By then I was frantic to have him for my own, naturally. He had a car, and an almost-filled drawer of S & H Green Stamps. For some reason, that really impressed me. I'm a stamp-paster, a niggardly hoarder, myself, and his just casually leaving the stamps lying about like that seemed indicative of a largesse that was truly glamorous. But not interested, he kept pushing away uneaten brownies, fudge, apple pies--and I didn't have a clue where to go from there.

Finally, I dropped the pretense--I personally hate sweets, and so I made what I'd been craving more everyday: a garlic-anchovy omlet. Well, his eyes lit up, he ate like a starving man, and right after breakfast he proposed. He hates sweets, too, but I didn't know anything to do but keep trying what mother told me. Later that day we admitted to each other that our favorite kind of music was hillbilly--and from there on out, it was a shoo-in. I guess my point is if I hadn't quit doing what I was supposed to do and started doing what felt right--oh, horrors--he'd have married someone else. I really believe the same is true of books.

Twelve years ago, when the job market was better, I applied for the only possible job in my area--teaching American literature at a small private woman's junior college. I got the job, though I'd never had a course in American Literature. My undergraduate degree was in English and Chemistry, and my M.A. says Philosophy, but really concentrated more on literary history--but right away I began to find out what was different about American Literature--what made it, for God's sakes, worth serious consideration.

After about eight years of doing that, I wrote a novel, which happened to be about a thirteen-year-old, and I happened to get it published as a young adult novel. Within a year after its publication people began calling me and asking me to come speak on Young Adult literature--thereby forcing me, upon acceptance of such invitations, to begin the strange process of self-criticism, of actually writing down what I believe, when I wrote the novel without ever once thinking of any connection between it and my profession. I still feel very much like the New Yorker cartoon lady who said, I don't know what I think until I say it.

But I have come to realize that I cannot separate Young Adult literature from American literature. I have to see what I'm writing as part of a 350 year tradition, inexorably interwoven with our peculiar moral standards, cultural values, and ideologies.

As does any young country, ours promoted epics for the reason that epics are always made: they answer the very important question of an unformed nation: how is a good man (or woman) to act/live in America, in classical Greece, in fifth century England, in medieval France, or in any other place or time? Our literature has, of course, consistent values that are different from those in European literature, even though the people who made American literature were Shakespeare's descendents.

In adult literature, these values have been allowed to grow, to change, but where our children are concerned, we have been reactionaries.

What adults have sponsored and wanted for children, exposed children to in the way of books in America, is whatever has made them comfortable--too frequently, the books aren't particularly honest, or relevant to what the children themselves need and want. I want to try to show why, to peel back some layers, again, and to look at the skeletons.

American Literature, especially that written for children and young adults, perpetuates, among other things, a denial of aging and dying, xenophobia of all sorts, including racism and sexism, a denial of human sexuality, and a very dangerous form of simplistic thinking.

Now we certainly cannot obliterate three and a half centuries of literature--and I don't think many of us would want to--but I submit that our attitudes are formed by what we read, that we need not fear newer books which break old patterns, that perhaps we can use reason as a weapon against our own terror of aging and death, our own xenophobic attitudes towards blacks, girls, Martians, Russians, etc.--our own efforts at denying sexuality; our own simplistic thinking.

A little more detail: 1) Denial of aging and dying: our heroes don't age; in fact, they don't grow up, marry, reproduce, which might prove they were getting on--Randolph Scott is eternally thirty-five; Natty Bumpo though he ages chronologically doesn't really age. He is as wise at twenty-two as he is at seventy, and as firm of limb at seventy as he was at twenty-two. Old people are obscene reminders of the lie of all this, and so we shunt them aside.

2) Xenophobia: American heroes have nothing to do with women, who are seductresses. Girls take boys' minds off the business at hand. Xenophobia towards other than WASPS masks as patriotism and democracy: heroes take up with some member of an "inferior" group, and that's to show how big-minded the hero is, and of course diminishes minority groups to the status of good loyal dogs. Heroes are frequently people who spend their time fighting Indians, Japs, fat people, hippies, Martians--why? Because we know people different from us are bad.

3) Sexuality: think of the Lone Ranger getting married and settling down. Sexual ability is a province of adulthood, so to be child-like (asexual) is better.

4) Simplistic thinking: literature for children has traditionally erased the dim borders between good and evil, the complicated morality of living, replacing them with convenient hard lines. Thinking too much is not only hard, it also leads to confusion. And getting confused about, say, religion, could be very dangerous. Evil, if it is really evil, must be seen clearly. God and the devil must be locked in a constant battle at least equally enough matched to be interesting. Good is good and bad is bad, and any damn fool can tell the difference, and if you aren't on one side you got to be on the other. I think America is in danger of what Korzybski called the two-value orientation. We therefore condone quite easily violence and killing and blind patriotism; and people who have learned to think in terms of the two-value orientation feel forced to make choices, even when the choices aren't clear, and stick to them, and not think too much about them or they may get confused. I offer as proof the stereotypes by simplistic people of the thinkers in our society: impractical philosophers, fuzzy-headed intellectuals, effete artists and writers, absent-minded professors, frustrated old-maid school teachers--every one of them an unflattering portrait--and these are the intelligentsia

of the society. Again I submit that to fear learning and culture to such an extent can only be a damaging and dehumanizing attitude.

These are some of the de[illegible] we're stuck with in our literature. And I think we are stuck. I we have any literary integrity, then we cannot mess with books we didn't write—we can't cut and revise. We can use the books knowledgeably. If it's sexist, or pornographic, sure tell the kids it is—but don't deny them access to it. Let them look at the skeletons.

When I talk to my own students about what they like, it's usually books with skeletons, not jellyfish books. Spineless. They like books with bone-deep truths in them. Books that put unfamiliar garments upon familiar forms. Books that scare the hell out of them, yet fascinate them. Books that speak to their fears about death and other vital matters. I suspect that the reason for the popularity of such books as Pigman, The Chocolate Wars, That Was Then, This Was Now, is their hair-raising cruelty. And cruelty's a skeleton in everyone's closet. We won't make children kind, you know, by never letting them see cruelty in books. We'll just make them guilty about their own cruelty, and suspicious of us for lying when they make the discovery we have been. The point, it seems to me, isn't whether the book has sex in it or not. After all, is Homer moral? Is Shakespeare?

Because we are adults who teach children, we tend to side with Plato, who said literature's function was to instruct. But Plato was narrow-minded, and overlooked a logical flaw. If literature is in the service of truth, then it will be limited by that which is currently held (believed) to be true. And we all know that truth changes. Twenty years ago it was the truth that one should not pick up a crying baby; now it is the truth that one should.

Laura Ingals Wilder, as an example, apparently held to the truth that children aren't sexual beings. Norman Klein more recently holds to the truth that they are.

So Plato sticks us with a knotty problem: what truth should literature be in the service of?

The norms of American literature are something we ought not to leave unexamined. Critical equipment of the 20th century ought not to be swallowed wholesale. Information will armor us against the attack of threatened parents, and sometimes against even our own irrationality, and against the guilt of children who will grow up to be neurotic or not, fearful or happy, defensive or open-minded, according to how we raise them. And upon them, humanitarians or psychopaths, our own futures depend.

Finally, I look at skeletons as that universal part of us all that is alike. Skeletons are, in other words, analogies. In order to talk to children, we must see our kinship to them, and remember that inside we're all alike. Our literature, in addition to all the other accusations I have dumped on it, has denied magic. It's not only that science has explained alot of mystery away; it must also be out of a sense of terror that we deny. If there is no magic, then witches cannot affect us, we are safe in the hand of God, and skeletons can't raise and point bony fingers to threaten us. But of course, there is magic. Only yesterday on the plane I was reading The Black Prince; Murdoch's narrator makes the statement that he had regretted a little bit not becoming a philosopher in his time, but not really so much, because philosophy doesn't endure. Only stories and magic really endure.

My favorite stories as a child were ones when, wherever they began, in real waters or the misty lakes of fantasy, ended on the shores of reality.

They delighted me most of all because they suggested a truth in magic which most of the world I lived in seemed to deny. I'd give a pretty penny for a copy of a book that used to be in the glass case in my fifth grade classroom, called A Ring and A Riddle. In it a little girl received, among other gifts, a magic egg that glowed in the dark to light her way, an object she could put up to her ear anytime to hear her godmother speak to her; even if they were miles apart; and a ship that could sail swiftly on land. At the end her gifts were revelaed as a flashlight, a telephone, an automobile. That story always made me feel I lived in a world where magic really happens. Another story I loved was about a testy princess who threatened to behead her chef if he did not create for her the most fabulous dish ever made: it must be white as snow and black as night, cold as ice and hot as the sun. The terrified but ingenious chef made her vanilla ice cream with hot fudge sauce--surely magic. So who are we to say that magic doesn't exist? Going 600 miles an hour as you sip a dacquiri coming from Roanoke to Atlanta is magic. The miracle of the loaves and fishes occurs in our kitchens daily, when people show up unexpectedly and we stretch to include them

And books are magic--we can still hear Plato speak, or Shakespeare, or blind Homer. Children need to know that. Until I arrived last night, Christopher Robins' 100 Aker Wood and Winesburg, Ohio were lots more real to me than Athens, Georgia. Until I could understand and traffic in metaphor I couldn't believe the Bible. I'm convinced people who can't read and who can't think metaphorically, including quite a few of my students, are not only isloated, but actually are crippled. Children become literal-minded disbelievers only because adults make them that way.

Believing this, I try to write books in which skeletons are pulled out of closets and examined--books that inform and intrigue and satisfy. That doesn't mean every fact has to be laid out, but only that a book must be true in some deeper than literal way. I guess we all need to examine, as though our lives depended on it, what reality is, what the difference is between fact and truth.

Skeletons continue to fascinate because they are both real and not real. One of the hardest questions Cochran has asked me so far is "Can a skeleton walk?" I said, "Well, when it's inside a person it can. But not when it's just by itself." "Why not?" he asked. Now I know about ligaments and muscles--but I don't really know the answer to that question.

Prejudiced though I may appear to be, I do believe the arts and literature continue to offer mankind the best exercise for his imagination, the best link to other men, and the best hope for the continuance of what we have called civilization, that journey that man makes not only in the company of other men of his own time, but also in the comfort of the recorded wisdom of other men of other places and other times, books.

Strand A Keynote Address

THE PROCESS OF COUMMUNICATION

DR. M. JEAN GREENLAW, Reading Education Department,
University of Georgia

The most important function of the schools is to aid students in developing and expanding their communication abilities. The possession of language is what separates us from other animals and the more we develop the language capabilities of a child the greater chance for success we provide.

Our language is highly complex, and attaining great competency in its use is not simple. The child begins the process at birth by listening to the sounds around him. These sounds are quite diverse and as the child matures he begins to discriminate those sounds that are meaningful to him. Though language learning is a natural process we can enhance language development in children by providing more continuous models for them. Children need to hear their language spoken often and in adult patterns. They will learn what they hear and we must provide the best models we can for this replication.

Listening is the earliest language skill children use, but it is the least taught skill. Children are often admonished to listen, but we rarely give them anything specific or worthwhile to listen to. Schools would be wise to include specific activities for listening development in the general curriculum. Games such as "Gossip", "I'm going on a trip", and echo clapping provide children with specific things to listen for and are a medium which is fun to pursue. Activities that demand listening skills should be used often. Oral directions; recipes or science experiment directions on tapes to be listened to and followed; identification and classification of sounds that have been recorded on tape; and origami are all possibilities for listening development. These are also activities that can be integrated into your total curriculum and can make use of small bits of time that are often wasted.

An essential element in developing listening is requiring that children do listen. So many parents and teachers are quickly and easily pegged as to how many times they will repeat something before their breaking point is reached. Children out at play listen for their parent's tone of voice when being called and respond when they know it is necessary. Children in school do the same thing. They do not listen the first time instructions are given because they know from long experience that the instructions will probably be repeated more than once. Teachers who demand listening of the first occasion will increase the student's listening abilities. We need to break ourselves of the habit of repeating everything that goes on in class.

The second language skill that children develop is speaking. If children hear their language and are given encouragement, they will begin to mimic that language and the speaking process is begun. The first

attempts are random but as children are positively reinforced with attention and increased language activity, they develop their speaking vocabulary at a rather rapid rate.

It is also possible that they will develop some misconceptions in these early learning states. Beverly Cleary shows us some of these problems in her book Ramona the Pest. Ramona is a very verbal child who is eager to begin kindergarten. Upon meeting her kindergarten teacher she is shown to a chair and is told to "...sit here for the present." Ramona is delighted to learn she is going to get a present. She does become a bit puzzled as the morning progresses. They learn a song about the "dawnzer lee light" which Ramona doesn't understand because she doesn't know what a dawnzer is. Ramona becomes more upset because the teacher keeps trying to get her to leave her chair when she was clearly told to sit there for the present. The misunderstanding is finally cleared up about the present, but it is not until much later in the year that Ramona learns about a dawnzer. Language can be confusing and we must do our best to clarify and expand children's learning.

Though listening and speaking are the most often used communication skills in the adult world, very little attention is given to these skills in school. Children in school are praised for being quiet, not for talking. But, school should be a place where they can practice their oral language skills in meaningful contexts. The art of conversation; speaking before a group; relaying information; telephone manners, are all part of our everyday world, and practice in these activities should be provided in school.

Reading is a necessary skill in our complex environment, but it is, perhaps, over-emphasized in initial school instruction. We have developed such a fetish about teaching all children to read in their first year in school, that we have forgotten that a child with little school-oriented language background may have 4 or 5 years of listening and oral language activity to catch up on. A concentration of these abilities will do more to promote later reading ability, than early failure in reading tasks will.

Reading is both necessary and enjoyable and we should provide opportunity and instruction to develop this skill to a high degree. Taking children beyond the textbook will broaden their abilities and outlook on reading.

Writing is the final language-oriented skill, and, along with reading, the one we emphasize most in school. Children spend many school hours devoted to writing tasks that have little relationship to the skills they will need to survive in the adult world. As adults we spend very little time writing, and that which we do is not practiced in school. Grocery lists, letter writing, and clear instructions for friends to get to your home or for repairmen to fix something that is broken are all quite necessary. Perhaps it is time we looked at our curriculum and considered a reorientation of priorities and methods.

Curriculum Changes

In my estimation, the first change to be instituted is to move away from departmentalization, compartmentalization, or any artificial barriers to making the communication process a unified whole. There are far too many schools where teachers teach reading for one hour, spelling

for 20 minutes, English for 45 minutes, and handwriting (if at all) for 10 minutes. When each time period is up, we close that textbook and move to the next. Language must not be compartmentalized. We must stress with our children that all of these areas make the whole. As long as language is relegated to textbook learning, we will have many children who never reach their potential for language fluency. These children will never understand that each of these isolated lessons is somehow to come together in his own use of the language. To be honest, many teachers and curriculum makers do not understand that. Or, at least, they do not act upon their knowledge.

Language can be compared to a rope. The individual strands of a rope are rather weak, but when woven together they form a strong whole. Our individual components of language are weak, unless we can find some ways of weaving them together in school.

Another consideration for change is our total curriculum. We teach so many things by habit, because they have always been taught and/or because they are in the textbooks. Teachers are rational, thinking human beings, and yet they follow the curriculum as if it were writ on stone tablets.

Let us stand back and analyze our curriculum. Why are we teaching as we do? If you can not find a rational reason for teaching a skill, what possible use can it have? Let us also analyze what our children need to know. If listening and speaking are more used than reading and writing in most adult's lives, shouldn't they have at least a bit more place in curriculum?

Let us analyze, briefly, the three general topics of reading, children's literature, and language arts. What are some things that are done in these areas, and what could be done to improve them?

Reading

We generally begin the whole process of reading incorrectly. Children need to be taught to value reading, to enjoy reading, even to love reading, before they are taught the skills of reading. Children who come to us ready to read, or already reading, are those who have much orientation toward and positive success with the reading act. A child who is read to at home is not sitting in a hard little chair in a circle with 10 other children wondering what question he is going to be asked that he can't answer. Children who come to school ready to read are those who have sat in someone's lap or beside them encircled by an arm sharing a warm, good experience with reading. Why can't we do that at school?

So many children have no positive feelings toward reading when they come to school, because their experience is with the television. And our process of beginning with skills, instead of books, does nothing to ameliorate the situation. Many children learn that grunting and groaning through isolated sounds is reading. They are also led to believe that underlining words that have the long i sound is reading. It is not.

There are, of course, some skills that will aid children in learning to read. But there are other skills we belabor that harm many children. A child can spend many years making mistakes on vowel ditto sheets and workbook pages because his dialect does not happen to match that of the person who created those exercises. A child in north Georgia will never mark "fire" as having a long i sound, because that child says "far". Neither will a child in south Georgia mark "egg" as short e because he says "aig". Are these children wrong? No! They are using their language and our attempts to impose another language only makes them dislike reading even more.

Then how should we teach reading? I believe we begin by sharing a love for reading with children. No matter what level you teach--from kindergarten through college--you should read aloud to your students and share the pleasure of reading. Dr. Byron Callaway, of the University of Georgia reading faculty, conducted an interesting study in which he asked people to respond to four questions. One question was, "What one thing in school turned you on to reading?" The overwhelming response of college students and teachers was, "that teacher or librarian who read to me." If it was so important to us, why aren't we willing to share the same feeling with our students? No time? It is the best time we will spend.

We also need to find time everyday for free reading. Some schools have designated a time each day when everyone in the school reads. Children need models and in these schools teachers read, the principal reads, cafeteria workers read, the custodians read, the secretary reads, and any visitors in the school read. Children begin to look forward to this time and they have much company.

Once a child wants to read, he has motivation for learning the skills that will help him read. But, we must analyze carefully all those skills we teach and decide which ones should be taught and which really don't help much at all. If we deleted some of the useless skills, we would have much more time for what should be taught. The teacher's favorite rule "when two vowels go out walking, the first one does the talking" is a good example of a useless rule. According to Clymer's study, this rule is true only 45% of the time. In fact, in the rule itself there are two exceptions, "out" and does". Any rule that has two exceptions in its explanation can't be worth much time to teach. And worse, it can cause stumbling blocks to real learning.

And, we must remember that reading is not an easy process. There are so many things we take for granted because we can read. But, when I give adults a preprimer written in code, they revert to all the behaviors of beginning readers. They read each statement as a question because they really are asking whether what they said is correct. They fingerpoint, read word-by-word, phrase incorrectly, ignore punctuation, read ahead, whisper words aloud, and generally feel dumb the whole time we're reading. Actually, it is amazing that any child comes through this process wanting to read.

We can make reading pleasurable and meaningful, and we must work toward that end. Certainly there are skills to be taught, but endless pages in workbooks and reams of ditto sheets are not the best way to do it.

Children's Literature

Children's literature is not an esoteric realm nor is it the sole of the school librarian. Teachers need to read children's books. Once you begin I will wager that you will enjoy it. Teachers need to read children's books because that is the best way of sharing books with children. A book that you have read and enjoyed and suggest to the class or a few children is one that is almost assured of being read by them. Your discussions have so much more meaning and depth when you can get beyond the surface questions gained from reading a one paragraph synopsis of a book, while the child has read the whole book. We become incensed when students at the junior high level on up read the classic outlines rather than the work itself, but we are the ones who have provided the model for this behavior by rarely reading the books we discuss with children. The teacher's manual becomes our classic outline.

Teachers need to go to the library with children. Dropping them at the door while you go on for a coffee break sets a continuous attitude that reading books must not be very important to you. A teacher and librarian working together can create a wonderful climate for reading and sharing of books.

Now, by sharing of books I do not mean book reports. Referring back to Dr. Callaway's study, another of the questions was "What one thing in school most turned you off to reading," and a large number of answers stated that it was book reports. Children should share books: talk about them to a teacher or several friends; respond to them in some artistic way; act out the story dramatically or through puppets; write a letter to the admired author or illustrator; or, if desired, write about the experience. We must also remember that some books are too personal or meaningful to be shared, and honor the child's need for keeping the experience to himself.

I would never advocate that children's books replace textbooks. Textbooks serve as a basis through which we teach skills. I do not want Charlotte's Web turned into an excuse for a science and math project in which we study spiders and do math problems on how many eggs Charlotte laid. One filmstrip company has developed a plan of over 100 separate curriculum skills that can be taught through Charlotte's Web. They have entirely forgotten that reading it is a moving, emotional, literary experience and they have sacrificed that experience to justify selling an expensive package. Nor do I want children analyzing Harriet the Spy to see how many compound words, or words of three syllables they can find. Textbooks are meant to teach skills. Use them. But provide for your students the opportunity to enrich and enhance their learning and their lives through a great variety of children's books.

I have never been so absorbed in a textbook that when called to dinner I replied, "Just a minute. I want to finish this chapter." I have often been that absorbed in a children's book.

Language Arts

Language arts is that area of the curriculum in which we have traditionally taught children English, spelling, and handwriting. As I made obvious earlier, this curriculum needs reworking.

A child can underline nouns once and verbs twice, put circles around adjectives and boxes around adverbs, he can diagram sentences from third grade through twelfth grade and never see the relationship to his language. We need to begin with the child's language. We need to value that language and build on it. We do not need to change a child's language, we need to give him alternative choices. We all operate with a variety of languages and if we approached language learning openly and told children why they needed these alternatives, they might be more willing to learn.

To develop language, children need many opportunities to talk. Correcting a child's grammar or syntax on a continuous basis is a sure way to guarantee that that child will speak less and less. If we want him to develop alternatives he must speak more and more. So provide activities for oral language development. Erect a puppet theater in your room, encourage role playing activities, allow stories to be dramatized, and provide time for creative dramatics. Create discussion groups in your class that operate without your direct control. Some children are more verbal when the teacher is not listening.

Buy a cassette tape to record a year's oral growth for each child in your class. Throughout the year have each child record oral reading, report giving, conversation, giving directions, and any other activities you devise. When the child can hear himself, he can make more strides toward improvement. These tapes also provide you with a continuous record of each child's oral language growth. It is so difficult to remember in June what a child was like in September. You might even be surprised at how much he has improved.

Grammar, spelling, punctuation, handwriting--these are all skills that aid in communication and they are skills that should be taught. But, the best teaching is not through meaningless drills for years on end, nor lists of spelling words to be memorized on Thursday, to be tested on Friday and then promptly forgotten. The best teaching is through the child's own stories told in his own language. As oral talking progresses to written talking, the child naturally begins to see the need for community aides. As he seeks them they can be taught within the framework of language experience stories. Red penciling all written compositions is analogous to constantly correcting him orally. Be sure to praise and slowly tackle the problems one-by-one. All authors polish and re-write and when children want to put one of their stories in the class library they must do the same. The goal is good communication.

In fact, the goal of our entire language-oriented curriculum should be better communication. I am advocating that we bring common sense to bear on our school curriculum. We must delete the useless, introduce certain areas of learning that have been ignored, and bring all of the language arts into a unified whole.

INTEGRATING READING, LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE PRIMARY GRADES (K-4)

Presenters: Joan Humphries, Linda Castor, Ann Cook, Marguerite Anthony
Consultant: Bernice Cooper

The presenters described, with pictures to show the activities, a program developed by elementary teachers in Clarke County under the sponsorship of the Center for Educational Improvement, University of Georgia. It was designed to demonstrate successful techniques for teaching children who have fallen two years behind the norm for their age or are showing a trend toward doing so. The purpose of the program was to develop teacher understandings and skills necessary to meet the student needs in the area of reading and language arts.

The slide presentation showed highlights of "Target Night," held May 7, 1975 at Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary School. "Target Night" was a "show and share fair" that involved approximately three hundred elementary teachers, district-wide personnel, and displays of classroom aides from each of the elementary schools and the Program for Exceptional Children in Clarke County.

This program was presented by Joan Humphries, Language Arts and Staff Development Coordinator and the following Clarke County teachers: Linda Castor, Ann Cook, and Marguerite Anthony.

INTEGRATING READING, LITERATURE, AND LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE MIDDLE GRADES (5-8)

Presenter: Shirley James
Consultant: Shelton L. Root, Jr.

Dr. James, of Georgia State University, focused on the design and implementation of integrated reading/language arts/ literature programs for grades 5-8. A program that she initiated in the Scottsdale, Arizona, public schools served as a model to stimulate discussion. This program was structured around thematic literature/ learning contracts which involved students in reading and in other receptive and expressive communication. Advantages and disadvantages of reading/language/literature learning contracts in grades 5-8 were discussed, as were alternative ways of structuring integrated language arts and reading programs.

INTEGRATING READING, LITERATURE, AND LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADES (9-12)

Presenter: Robert Probst
Consultant: W. Geiger Ellis

Dr. Robert Probst, of Georgia State University, dealt briefly with two points. He first pointed out the unnaturalness of isolating reading and literature instruction. Secondly, if we are to integrate reading, literature, and writing, we must borrow from other fields, specifically the human potential movement.

Discussion involved the second point. The suggestion was made that writing about a specific work, such as a poem, may be approached naturally by starting with the student's responses to the work, moving from there to consider the literary importance for the individual, eventually attempting to decide on communal trends and interpretations for the work. An alternate suggestion for writing was to begin with the student's own experiences, move to comparisons of the experiences with the specific work, and deal with cognitive aspects of the work from this basis.

The other main concern of the discussion was the specific application of the techniques of the human potential movement to the English classroom.

Suggested Readings:
David Bleich, Readings and Feelings
George Henry, Teaching Reading as Concept Development
Johnson, Reaching Out
Joining Together
Pfeifer and Jones, Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training

GEORGIA'S RIGHT TO READ PROGRAM

Presenter: Bill Hammond
Consultant: Bob Jerrolds

The presentation traced the development of the Georgia Right to Read Program from its inception as the model Reading Program through the current development period and into the target date of 1980. Among the areas discussed were the Georgia Criteria of Excellence in Reading Programs, efforts in the business and industrial community, and the impact of the Title VII, National Reading Improvement act legislation. Also highlighted were the successes and shortcomings of the program to date.

The Right to Read Program is a federally funded effort working to insure that by 1980, 99% of all students sixteen years of age and younger and 90% of all adults will be able to read at a level of functional literacy. Georgia is one of 31 funded Right to Read states and has been participating in the program since March, 1972.

There are 57 local school systems (approximately 450 schools) and 14 CESA units participating in the Right to Read Program at this time. The local systems are : Appling, Atlanta City, Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Bulloch, Butts, Chatham, Chattahoochee, Cherokee, Clayton, Clinch, Colquitt, Columbia, Dalton City, DeKalb, Dodge, Dougherty, Effingham, Elbert, Fannin, Fayette, Fulton, Gainesville City, Gilmer, Gordon, Grady, Hall, Hancock, Henry, Houston, Lamar, Lanier, McDuffie, McIntosh, Montgomery, Murray, Pickins, Pike, Pulaski, Putnam, Rabun, Richmond, Rockdale, Rome City, Screven, Stephens, Stewart, Taylor, Telfair, Thomas, Tift, Vidalia City, Washington, and Wheeler.

The C.E.S.A. units include Chattahoochee Flint, West Georgia, North Georgia, Central Savannah River Area, First District, Heart of Georgia, Coastal Plains, Oconee, Southwest Georgia, Griffin, Metro, Pioneer, Northwest Georgia and Northeast Georgia.

For more information, contact Georgia Right to Read Staff:
Ms. Judy Long, Ms. Lynn Crovatt, Mr. Bill Hammond
State Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SCIENCE FICTION IN THE ENGLISH PROGRAM

Presenters: Lee Saye, Paula Bramblett
Consultant: Mary Ann Hickman

From Lee Saye, a DeKalb County teacher: "Science fiction is hip-pocket literature--exciting, slightly illicit works with vulgar papercovers and dog-eared pages more appropriately hidden behind copies of Jane Eyre and read in delicious stolen moments than in school." If too much respectability creeps into science fiction then it becomes just another genre--and dead.

After urging teachers "not to psychoanalyze our Bug-Eyed Monsters and flush out the symbolism of our Little-Green-Men," Mr. Saye distributed a Guide for Tip-toeing Through the Literary Mine Field of Science Fiction. Part of that hand-out is given here:

SF MAGAZINES:

Amazing
Analog
Galaxy
If

TEACHING WITH SCIENCE FICTION:

Where Do We Go From Here?, by Isaac Asimov

THE BACK DOOR:

Tomorrow's Alternatives, ed. by Roger Elwood
Alternatives, ed. by David Gerrold

Paula Bramblett, of Rome City Schools, described a science fiction unit in which she used Toffler's Future Shock to stimulate discussion and to introduce unit.

An essential element of the unit involved discussion of "what-if" situations, role playing, and writing from various points of view about situations. Such activities make students aware that science fiction is relevant to today's and tomorrow's concerns.

Jean Greenlaw, Reading Education, University of Georgia, provided a Science Fiction Bibliography giving books suitable for elementary students and for junior and senior high school students.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

EUNICE SIMS, Coordinator of English,
Atlanta City Schools

Education is invaded today by programs, systems, projects, assessments, innovations, objectives, evaluations, and a few other tricky names in the jargon.

We have SA, CRT, OS, BO, AS, IL, NA, and now we have RB. Confused by these initials? I use them because I am constantly hit, in educational chit-chat, with initials that form acronyms and those that don't, and half the time I nod and smile and wonder what these creatures are, like Lucy in C.S. Lewis's The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, when she first encountered the fawn in the land of Narnia.

I'll let you in on it. SA means System's Approach. CRT means Criterion Reference Tests. OS means Open Schools. IL means Individualized Learning. NA means needs assessment. RB means Return to Basics. It's the last one, the return to basics, that concerns me most. What are the basics in the teaching of English? The definition of a noun or verb? The endless diagramming of sentences? The memorization of a rule at the top of the page? It frightens me that this may be what we mean by "return to basics." Because extensive research and experimentation in the 30's and again in the 50's has demonstrated that concentration on these trivia has not produced happy, articulate users of the language, or young people who get sensuously and vicariously involved in the delight of the printed word.

The basics of communications skills, I believe, are listening, speaking, reading and writing. And I am convinced that not one of them is learned by the hallowed method of learning grammar rules and then correcting incorrect sentences, filling in the blanks with the correct form of a verb or a pronoun, or choosing the one correct - or the one incorrect, if you will - form used in four multiple choice possibilities. I am convinced that one learns the communication skills by the very direct method of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It's that simple.

Listening comprehension should be given as much attention as reading comprehension, and can be taught in the same way. A well-known reading specialist makes the flat statement that you are teaching reading when you teach oral understanding. But how many teachers give their students, regularly, the joy of being read to, and the difficult learning activity of understanding what they have heard? No one can remember Juanita Abernathy without recalling that she believed in reading something of worth to students at every level, every day; and that she read a poem to every group to whom she intended to make a speech. Juanita read the poem, ostensibly, for the good of our souls, to whet our imaginations, or to jack up our sense of humor. But I am sure she read to us to remind us to read to children of all ages.

Then the matter of speech. Given little opportunity to talk, and usually given the punitive, the negative corrections when he speaks, the student has little opportunity of encouragement to organize his thinking into clear oral expression. Our speech teachers work with the students who have speech defects. The rare teacher with forensic expertise teaches the art of formal debate. An occasional teacher, trained in drama techniques, teaches drama. A harried and distaught department chairman or luckless designee tries to clean up the usage, the pronunciation, the pitch, juncture, and stress of the "graduation speech." Outside of these rarities, very little happens in oral speech.

We do say, "Mary, dear, we don't say 'He come in yesterday.'" It's "We came in yesterday." Or we intone, with a certain condescension, "Timothy, we don't say 'I ain't got none.' Let's say, 'I don't have any.'" But the fact remains that Timothy "ain't got none," and a patronizing correction of almost everything he says isn't going to result in his "not having any."

So what do we do? We keep a check list of the things that Timothy and Mary and John and Andrew and Sally and I say that can be improved. And in a lesson all by itself, we look at both ways of saying these things. We learn which is the more acceptable way of saying them, and then hopefully Timothy can correct himself when "he ain't got none," or classmates can remind Timothy and each other of the more acceptable forms. Is it always going to work? Of course not! But correcting every oral mistake when it happens, stopping the train of thought with a sometimes embarrassing criticism, isn't ever going to work. So is it worth trying another method?

There is no way to talk about oral language without a bit about dialects. You will have the opportunity - those of you who wish - to attend a meeting on dialects tomorrow. But you who know me are well aware that, given the slightest opportunity, I have to chant my usual refrain on the subject.

The dialect problem is different from the problem of what we term "errors" in oral English. It is different because syntactic deviations in dialect are not errors, but part of a grammatical structure of that dialect. "Sue crazy," or "Mama be working," "mamie got three bruuver," "dem shoes," or "Tom want bof of 'em" are not errors. Because the omission of the verb "to be" menas one thing in the dialect, the use of "be" with the "i-n-g" form means quite another thing; and "bruuver," "dem" and "bof" occur because there is no "th" sound in African dialects.

And how do we tackle teaching the standard forms of English, to add to the students' own dialect forms? The same way we do with Timothy's "ain't got none." Not by correcting every dialect deviation! By remembering, first of all, that the dialect is not incorrect, but different. And that we teach standard forms in lessons and exercises and activities quite apart from the punitive correction department.

Enough of dialects. Except to make a comment about something that amazes me. A constant chanted complaint is that kids can't speak standard English. We wail and beat our collective breasts in anguish. And in most of the situations with which I am familiar, we do nothing about teaching standard English. We go miserably along "correcting" the dialect forms, as though they were all errors, and as though their use were a kind of sin. So be it!

Reading is an area in which I should perhaps keep my mouth shut, for two reasons. One, there is a splendid series of sessions on reading at this conference, chaired by people who know what they're talking about, and, two, because my knowledge of the teaching of reading is peripheral and largely intuitive. I spent a delightful day recently, however, listening to Dr. James Moffatt, author of Teaching the Universe of Discourse and A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13, talk on the subject of the teaching of reading. Dr. Moffatt advocates, as the most successful method of learning to read, the "lap" method - the child seated in the lap of a parent or any reader, where the child can see the printed words and hear them at the same time. And, if you will, this can be adapted to the classroom situation, not on a one to one basis, but in groups or as a whole class. Dr. Moffatt is also strongly in favor of the language experience method, letting kids dictate their own ideas and stories, with the motivation of reading what they themselves have said. He is not arguing against phonics - word particles, as he calls them - or sight words; he is urging not to isolate word attack skills, but to teach them as part of the whole. He quotes Kenneth Goodman's emphasis on the fact that reading is a whole process; that the details are mastered after the whole is achieved. I'll leave it at that. But these ideas intrigue me as making good sense.

The matter of written composing is a "worrysome thing." Most teachers are afraid of it; many hate it to the extent of teaching grammar instead of composition. Composing "ain't larned" by learning the rules for structuring sentences and paragraphs. Rather the rules for structuring sentences and paragraphs are learned by composing.

I recently received the scores for Atlanta students in the 4th, 8th, and 11th grades, in English usage. I was asked if I wasn't amazed at the low scores. No, not really! It's very very difficult to learn the usage of any thing if you're not given much opportunity to use the thing itself.

One of the most interesting set of percentages in the statistics given to me had to do with the capitalization of the pronoun "I". An unbelievably small percentage of students, in the fourth, and again in the eigth grades, had capitalized the letter in test questions in which it was involved. I haven't read the rule recently, but I'm sure it must read something like this. "The letter 'I' is always capitalized when it is used as a pronoun referring to oneself." Or even, "The pronoun 'I' is always capitalized." Either of these is unequivocally clear. But I'll lay you a wager that the youngster in the primary grades who has had a chance, or been required to write several statements or stories about himself, is quite sure, with the help of even a mediocre teacher, that "I" is a pretty important fellow and that "I" is therefore always written as a capital letter. I doubt seriously that he will ever need to hear or read the rule. He has frequently used the correct form in his own experience, writing about the most important person in the world - himself. You don't play a good game of tennis by reading about how Billie Jean King and Arthur Ashe do it. You play and practice, and incorporate into your game the fine points, the maneuvers that make for sharp tennis. And so you don't learn to write by reading and learning the rules. You write and practice writing, and gradually incorporate into your writing the fine points of self expression, the

the grammar rules that make for good writing. As James Moffatt puts it, in talking about composition as well as reading, "You don't learn the whole by first learning isolated parts. You can't go grammar into composition. You learn to compose, orally and in writing, and the 'parts' of grammar are learned from the 'whole' of the composing process."

"But how do I handle all that writing? How do I grade all those papers?" you ask. You don't! You read and grade some of those papers. You let groups of five or six students read their papers to each other, let them select the best one from each of their own groups to be read to the class. Students learn from listening to the papers, and you grade those you hear. Or you have one group read their short papers, and you grade those you hear. Or you have one group read their short papers, poems, paraphrases, and the like aloud one day, another group read theirs on another day, and so on. You grade those you hear. And you keep a check list of the major errors you hear in order to teach the correct forms from your anonymous list of errors later. You let students keep folders of their written work. After three, four, or five papers, you give students class time to proofread and rewrite what each one considers his best paper. You read and grade those. You put some of the written work on display on bulletin boards to give audience to the students' efforts. In short, you figure out ways to keep your students writing, writing, writing, without the suicidal grading of every paper.

I have just completed teaching an inservice course in composition and creative writing to teachers. Many of my ideas came from a creative writing course at Emory last fall. In that course we wrote and read our papers for a total of 18 hours. The teachers in the course we just finished wrote and read their papers for a total of 40 hours. The first day they were scared, wrote fairly dull, stilted stuff, and weren't at all sure that this was the way to get that necessary increment credit. By the third day they were floating off into more precise use of words, more imaginative use of their minds and their self expression. They wrote in response to Tschaikowsky's "overture to 1812," they listed all the things you could do with a common brick, they wrote a paragraph without adjectives, they wrote poems, they wrote reactions to pictures and slides of people, sewers, avenues of trees, abstract paintings; they wrote the endings to unfinished stories and wrote unfinished stories to use with their students. They punctuated paragraphs and argued and clarified grammatical constructions. They wrote about something in nature or in their lives which they had never really been fully aware of, or really "seen" before. They described the smells of ammonia and perfume brought to class. They wrote their hearts out - in short, over a hundred short writing assignments. And every paper was read aloud and commented on. They, and I, enjoyed the whole crazy two weeks. Don't tell me you can't do a very modified version of the same thing with kids!

I have talked too much on the subject of writing, of composing. But I am convinced that it's a "no-no" in many teachers' minds, that it's a source of fear - fear of how to motivate kids, fear of their own inadequacies, fear of the awful specter of "grading those papers." Yet it is an area of little competence on the part of students, a source of distress on the part of employers and college instructors who

receive our graduates. And it can be and should be an exciting - even a fun experience for teachers and students alike.

Spelling and handwriting need comment but I'm going to skip them. If you're interested in spelling, find out what Rome Georgia is doing about it. It makes more sense than anything I've come across. As for handwriting, you tell me - I don't know.

Let me mention nonverbal communication and I'll quit - I promise. Of course this very real form of communication is surely not limited to the communication skills we generally associate with the language arts. It's a universal means of communication. But it's part of our program and so part of our problem.

Are you aware of what you are saying when you don't utter a word but do this? (hands on hips) or this? (hands folded with index fingers pointed) or this? (rolling eyes toward heaven) or this? (folded arms) Dr. Charles Galloway, who is probably the foremost authority on nonverbal communication says that we say things nonverbally that we wouldn't have the guts to say verbally. He points out that the pointed finger and the shaking arm are seldom if ever used with folks of higher status than we are, and that the crooked, beckoning finger is never used to a state patrolmen.

Dr. Galloway also asks if we pay any attention to or make any effort to understand students' nonverbal messages. What's Andrew trying to tell you when he keeps squirming in his seat, or Annie when she keeps chewing on her pencil instead of writing. And how about hand raising. You know. Jim sits with his hand in the air, resting his elbow in the other hand. It isn't a very arresting hand-in-the-air. But it's up there and it's supposed to indicate that he knows the answer. So when he's finally called on he says "Oh I forgot what I wanted to say." Or George waits until Alice has been called on and then raises his hand. Or Sadie, who raises her hand in an unobtrusive sort of way, looking away from the teacher. And when she's called on, questions sweetly, "Oh, did I have my hand up?"

Let me finish quickly. We are all beset by the invasion of programs and demands. We are all harassed by our individual problems in the classroom and in the other jobs in the educational scene. I sincerely hope, that in the teaching of communication skills, as part of that scene, the return to basics will mean a reappraisal of a reasonably inexpensive and a readily available commodity - common sense.

TEACHING ALL THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

Presenter: Sarah Heindel
Consultant: Editha Mills

The presenter, of the Habersham County Schools, recommended blending traditional and liberal ideas in developing communication skills. The first approach emphasizes the "3 R's" of English; the second is associated with more freedom of expression, with awareness activities--listening, observing, feeling, producing--and with the use of music, drama, and art as modes of communication.

If such an electic approach is to be effective, the teacher must set clearly defined goals. The goals give unity and coherence to the variety of materials and activities which promote developing skills of communication in rich, meaningful, even exciting classroom experiences. For example: having children publish a newspaper, write biographies and autobiographies offer excellent ways for them to learn the skills of writing for publication in a meaningful context. Working in groups and pairs to prepare presentations for a real audience is also a desirable way to promote communication skills.

The presenter had puppets and slides to demonstrate the value of letting students sing and play together

TEACHING ALL THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN THE SECONDARY GRADES

Presenters: Mary Ann Bell, Helen P. Taylor
Consultant: L. Ramon Veal

Mary Ann Bell's summary:

We, as teachers, parents, or both, often become extremely concerned when Johnny cannot read as he should, write as he should, speak as he should, or think as he should. Maybe Johnny should be brought to an awareness of the need for communication that is meaningful.

In these sessions we have attempted to work together on some of this awareness and also on some of the ways we can teach communication skills. Through such games as the "Squares Game," where no meaningful communication is allowed, we can start to work with the students on the need for communication.

In dealing with students of many different interests, backgrounds, and intellectual abilities, we must sometimes present the same concept (e.g., work with dialects) but remember to gear what we wish the individual to learn to a way in which the individual will learn it best. Since this idea does not always work in reality where we are teaching to crowded classrooms, we may find it at least feasible to offer two options within each class, letting each student decide which option is best for him.

A final, and, I believe, most important point is to offer a variety of communication exercises within each lesson of any depth. Some students will respond with written essays, some with paintings or musical compositions, some with working models, and others with the most unbelievable creations.

Helen P. Taylor's summary:

Because of the broadness of the topic, I decided to use a graphic device and to involve the participants in an inductive experience as a means of emphasizing these concepts:

(1) Secondary school students are already using the communication skills; our job is to help refine and improve them for more effective communication.

(2) We normally use several communication skills simultaneously, thus the need for conscious integration; but it is difficult to

concentrate on everything at once, thus the need for specific emphases and drills.

(3) A MAJOR aspect of communication is the cognitive process: comprehension, seeing relationships, accepting, rejecting, organizing, etc.

(4) Teaching communication skills is easier if students have a real interest in the subject matter and a real desire to communicate: we must give purpose to the process.

(5) Contemporary issues (personal, school, local, national, etc.) and subject matter of other disciplines, as well as literature, provide excellent material for teaching communication skills.

(6) Communication includes not only the verbal skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but also non-verbal ones, both of receiving and sending.

(7) Communication can be loosely divided into two categories: imaginative (symbolic) and expository (specific).

(8) Although the teacher can learn subject matter with/from students, he should be proficient in the skills so he can utilize every opportunity (not just textbook exercises) for the skill-building processes.

The graphic method consists of a piece of cardboard containing vari-colored strings attached to one edge, a central focal point, and three receptacles attached to the opposite edge. Several of these are to be used in group activities to demonstrate the above points.

The audience was very interested in the activities presented. Many questions were raised but time did not permit in-depth discussion of the presentations.

Mary Ann Bell-DeKalb County Schools
Helen P. Taylor-Atlanta City Schools

GRAMMAR AND USAGE: HOW AND HOW MUCH

Presenter: Roy O'Donnell
Consultant: Betty Irwin

Dr. O'Donnell, University of Georgia, suggested that in the early grades language study should be inductive and that emphasis should be on meaningful activities involving encoding and decoding.

He recommended the following for all students, possibly beginning in grade seven:

1. The grammar of simple sentences
   a. Word Classes - taught inductively through exercises requiring students to change number of nouns, tense and aspect of verbs, etc.
   b. Grammatical Functions and Relationships-(Subject, Predicator, Complements, Modifiers)-possibly taught directly by examples and exercises for constructing structures of predication, complementation, modification.

2. The grammar of compound and complex sentences only to the extent of being able to recognize and construct sentences having (1) two main clauses, (2) one main clause and one adjective clause, one adverbial clause, or one noun clause (but not all combinations). These structures as well as those containing non-finite verb elements could be taught through sentence combining exercises.

In discussing usage, Dr. O'Donnell acknowledged each student's right to his own language. Certainly every variety of English has its unique value. But, he pointed out, students also have a right to the language accepted as "standard" in the larger society in which they live. Their choice of which variety they use should be made on the basis of knowledge rather than on the basis of ignorance.

Certainly a teacher has an obligation to offer students first hand experience with those varieties of written and spoken English which are shared by groups larger than the narrowly defined geographical or social groups that many of us identify our selves with. The teacher can provide such experiences by making reading and writing assignments that require use of "standard" English and by modelling appropriate language usage and through assigned work that employes discussion and role playing.

DIALECTS

Presenters: Charles Billiard, Warren Combs
Consultants: Edward Stephenson, Jane Appleby

Dr. Billiard, Georgia State University, presented data on the variations of dialects by social class, racial groups, sex, and age--data gathered by students who are studying dialects with him at Georgia State University. His interest is in the possibility of modifying teachers' attitudes toward different dialects and their willingness to accept language variation.

Dr. Combs, University of Georgia, discussed ways of teaching dialects. He presented three methods: eradication, dialecting, and dialect appreciation. In studying any dialect it is important to note the total context and specific factors that affect linguistic performance: task, topic, listner, interactions, and mixed aspects.

Two of Dr. Combs graduate students presented dialect units designed for high school students.

Jean Chapman of Warren County High School gave a demonstration of language used by her students (1) in communicating with peers and (2) in letters written to friends and in letters written to business firms. In each case the speaker/writer used language appropriate to the situation.

Elizabeth Brinkley and three students from Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School--Keith Mixon, Sanford Mixon, and Deborah Freeman--presented a puppet show which illustrated variations in language usage. The variations illustrated were (1) colloquial speech, (2) conversation with intimate friend, (3) conversation with casual acquaintance, (4) poetic formal, and (5) informative formal.

INDIVIDUALIZATION OF INSTRUCTION IN COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Presenters: Elyse Crites, Mildred McHenry
Consultant: Jane Payne

Elyse Crites, Secondary Reading Consultant for DeKalb County, presented slides with her commentary on one way of individualizing instruction to improve reading in various content areas. She offered several suggestions for implementing an individualized program:

- -introduce program gradually for ease of student and teacher adjustment
- -keep class time flexible, with some time spent in individualized learning and some in whole-group sharing
- -allow teacher time for record keeping so necessary to success of program
- -plan to use in-class time to work with individuals or small groups
- -encourage sharing of successes and frustrations with the program

Mildred McHenry, who is also a reading consultant in DeKalb County, suggested components of an individualized learning package. She discussed the following:

- -a rationale, informing the student of the reason for the package
- -learning objectives
- -a pretest, to determine the suitability of the objectives, activities, and materials
- -learning activities. There should be a variety of activities so that a student may choose those that are meaningful to him.
- -a student selftest, to enable the student to determine whether he is ready for the post-test or needs additional work
- -the post-test, to determine whether or not the student has reached the learning objectives
- -the quest, suggestions for optional enrichment activities.

Both presenters stressed the value of an individualized program in allowing teachers to adapt techniques and materials to the needs and capabilities of individual students.

DRAMA: SUBSTANCE AND STRATEGY

DEREK WHORDLEY, Associate Professor of Education,
Wesleyan College

In the past few years I have been able to visit both elementary and secondary school in parts of the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Turkey. For the purposes of this presentation my reflections have been focused upon observations of instructional practices in the dramatic arts.

If there is one striking element in these observations, it is the propensity of teachers to stage other people's plays as a major strategy for engaging in drama. This theatrical orientation does have a significant part to play in English Language Arts programs, particularly at the secondary level. However, it must be regarded as a rather narrow approach when considered against the expansive domain which is encompassed by drama. It also limits the corollary potential for extended learnings about facets of human interaction and novel approaches to curriculum content. This should become clearer in the discussion which follows.

One reason for the paucity of instruction in drama among American teachers may be a product of external pressures. They are faced with an increasing array of specified demands and parameters in dealing with learners. A significant number of students continue to graduate with minimal proficiencies in language skills. This has led administrators and a disenchanted tax-paying public to scrutinize the content and quality of school programs. Recent trends towards highly prescriptive and systematic forms of instruction, the extensive use of behavioral terminology, notions of accountability and competency based education, all suggest a need to describe and identify the nature and effectiveness of classroom practices. At the present time there is considerable discourse about "getting back to basics." Unfortunately, in any movement which is predicated upon a ruthless orientation to basic skills, creative arts tend to suffer. Dramatic arts, for example, may be regarded as less essential or even irrelevant, to the achievement of identified "foundational" materials.

Teachers may also be reluctant to engage in wide-ranging dramatic activities for professional reasons. Courses in drama at the tertiary level are the exclusive domain of theatre majors. Undergraduates in education have little opportunity to experience the possibilities of dramatic work in teaching the English Language Arts. Experienced teachers who do realize the potential of work in this field are often thwarted by not knowing how to begin. There are few in-service training programs which suggest content materials, propose integrative techniques with fundamental elements of English programs, or elucidate strategies for teaching drama.

The area is not so elusive that it defies description. All forms of human interchange are essentially dramatic. The scope and complexity of

these exchanges may be seen in the work of sociolinguists and ethnographers who have examined the nature of social transactions (Hymes, 1970; Groffman, 1971). The exploration of new roles and characters is similarly dramatic, whether pursued in pantomine or movement with dialogue. In addition, the interaction of realistic or ficticious characters in authentic or fantasy settings can provide broadening experiences which stimulate imaginative responses, and encourage high risk investigations of different people, value systems and cultural mores. Improvisations, socio-dramas and simulated role-palying of various kinds may provide suitable formats for these modes of expression.

Those teachers who find the terminology of dramatic work to be obscure may be more satisfied by a paradigm described by Brian Way (1967). He sees drama as an avenue through which human capabilities and experiences can be explored, enhanced or refined. His starting points are those attributes which all students possess to some degree. For example, most students can speak, and drama can provide a satisfactory medium for the development of oral language. Sensory responses, emotions, imagination, and concentration are also distinctive features of life which lend themselves to further examination through dramatic activities. These are interesting characteristics for teachers of English to capitalize on in a variety of ways apart from drama. They have collateral usage in providing a basis for writing and enriching reading comprehension. Finally, all students have a physcial self which can become better coordinated and understood in the process of movement activities and the impersonation of others.

The deficiency in this scenario is that it lacks specific information about assessing the abilities of students prior to teaching them, and does not describe forms of summative evaluation to indicate when activities have been successfully accomplished. This is a gentle criticism I have of the work of Rose Bruford (1958) in teaching mime, and the interesting ideas of Peter Slade (1954) in role taking. American authorities are no less clear in this area as the otherwise admirable work of Winnifred Ward (1957), Geraldine Siks (1958), John Stewig (1973) Nellie McCaslin (1974) will reveal. My own research with Dr. Elizabeth Feely of the Atlanta Public Schools may ultimately suggest some ways of closing this gap. Our effort is designed to help teachers overcome the time consuming problem of trial and error as a primary device for finding out how to use drama efficiently, purposefully and effectively.

English is most successfully taught when interrelationships between identified component parts are sought out and developed. If teachers are monocular in their approaches they must inevitably miss opportunities to deepen and verify the purpose and meaning of instruction in the English Language Arts. My non-empirical findings are that where drama is used as a vehicle for creating these interrelationships, and students engage in activities which effect their personal growth and development, their proficiencies in English improve. While the teaching of multiple English language skills may be laudable, the burial of students under mounds of dittoed activities and isolated test-bbok activities is lamentable. The additional comprehension that younger children bring to the area of reading when they are able to enact stories is impressive. At the high school level initial practice in foundational dramatic activities makes role playing and socio-dramatic exercises most meaningful. A multi-sensory approach to writing which may be partially facilitated by drama has produced a significant impact on the work of students.

Whole Bodies:
Compare the experience of a cold shower with a hot one. How do bodies react to fear, nervousness, anticipation, and jubilation?

Stage Five: Improvisations

By this stage students should be able to work with each other cooperatively, and have confidance in moving and speaking without embarrassment. Many improvisations can be conducted simultaneously without audience response, or groups may be given an opportunity to experiment and practice ideas and then perform them for others. Improvisations may be character oriented or predicated upon settings. Two examples are given below which elaborate these techniques. Each idea is deliberately "open ended," and may be replayed several times to add realism, exemplify alternative reactions, illustrate new outcomes, or modify differences in behavior.

(a) A number of people are trapped in an elevator between floors. Show how they might react in this situation. They are: a pregnant woman, an officious secretary, a priest, an incompetent electrician and a retired Marine colonel.

(b) Several students find the following items in a friend's room: a hyperdemic needle, blood stains, clothes and furniture scattered around, and an open window. They try to establish what might have happened and take appropriate action.

Additional ideas may be found in the writings of authors previously noted and in the work of Spolin (1963).

Stage Six: Socio-dramas

The most succint treatment of socio-dramatic work is to be found in Shaftel and Shaftel (1967). More advanced procedures may also be examined in Torrance and Myers (1970).

Socio-dramas provide opportunities for the solution of real problems. They frequently focus upon incidents which occur in schools or broader communities which create confusion or disarray. Theft, bullying, cultural perspectives and differences, role expectations and diverse values are all examples of problems which may be clarified through socio-dramatic techniques.

The most satisfactory way of using this procedure is to examine a problem which arises, and select pupils to enact it as it was said to have occurred. Additional students then replay the situation to suggest alternative ways in which the confrontation could have been resolved. For teachers to suggest the "best" answer defeats the object of the exercise. Students should be able to select the alternative which they believe exemplifies the most reasonable outcome or response. To impose values or conclusions on students ruins the technique as a device for problem solving.

Stage Seven: Playmaking

Playmaking has been left until last in this framework for instruction to reinforce the point that it is probably the most advanced form of dramatic work for students. Remembering sequences, details, precise stage movements, and internalizing character types is very difficult for many of them.

The earlier foundational activities are really necessary if a wide range of students are to be encouraged to make plays. Experiments with spatial concepts, characterization and improvisations provide an excellent background for this type of work and make the job of staging plays so much easier. Students who have no ideas of how to move, how to portray characters, how to use their voices effectively, or how to solve problems, are unlikely to succeed under the spotlights with any degree of excellence. There are always a few students who can excell in theatrical activities. It would be delightful if the advantage of these elite minority groups could become the prerogative of the majority.

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DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES FOR THE ELEMENTARY STUDENT

Presenters: Michael T. Egan, Wayne Woodard

Michael Egan, Youth Director of First Methodist Church in Athens, advocates recognizing and respecting the creative potential of children. He presented slides of productions created "from scratch" by elementary school children. He believes children should be challenged to demand excellence of themselves.

Wayne Woodward's summary (Dr. Woodward is Art Consultant for the Chattahoochee - Flint Cooperative Educational Service Agency):

Verbal learning - reading, discussing, demonstrating, organizing, analyzing, syntesizing - is the "meat" of education. It is apparent that a variety of approaches and activities stimulate and provide readiness for verbal learning by the very fact that they involve the student, catch his interest and provide satisfaction in a task well done. This is where creativity and the arts come into focus.

Among those creative educational activities that have been found to be related directly to all those communication skills advocated by language arts specialists are puppetry and film-making.

The educationally beneficial aspects of puppetry and film-making are immense. They provide opportunity for importunity for improvement of verbal learning activities in addition to offering some of the best motivations available for "turning children on" to communication skills.

These activities can be implemented in the classroom with minimal expense and do more to enhance a language arts program than many commercial reading systems costing many times as much.

Puppetry and filmmaking are only two of many creative activities that should be included in any teacher education program and subsequently be introduced into the education of all children.

READERS THEATRE

Presenters: Faye Head, Mimi Allen
Consultant: Matthew Morrison

Dr. Head, University of Georgia, and Mrs. Allen, Hall County Schools, provided a general introduction to Readers Theatre, as both a performing art and as a teaching/learning technique.

Dr. Head's summary:

In recent years a form of presentation known as Readers Theatre has come to be considered an excellent educational tool as well as a kind of performance. There has been much controversy in trying to define this technique.

1. Readers Theatre is, first of all, reading or the oral interpretation of written literature. The question is how or what distinguishes such interpretation and provides it the theatricality which can be rightfully called a performance of Readers Theatre. One approach is to examine the characteristics and conventions which are present in the literature which is adaptable to this form of presentation.

Therefore, in order to continue to allow creative experimentation and at the same time provide the security of some sort of guideline, a "philosophy of Readers Theatre" is a practical method. By providing a philosophy and arriving at the conventions which distinguish this form of activity, one can maintain creative freedom within definitive limits.

Mrs. Allen distributed a handout she had written which provided the rationale for using Readers Theatre. She had slides and pictures showing student involvement.

The following comes from Mrs. Allen's handout:

Readers theater may be thought of as either a performing art or a classroom technique. Either or both may be used by the secondary English teacher. The objective of the first is art. The objective of the latter is instruction.

As a performing art in the traditional sense, i.e., with audience and performers interacting as separate realities, the equipment and

facility needs are beyond the scope of the average teaching station. Because of facility and equipment needs, readers theater is organized institution and as a performing art is a difficult prospect without administrative support. The noise and movement required during placement of readers in the average teaching station and recitation of lines at different volumes is "unconventional" in many Georgia secondary English classrooms.

The calling together and manipulation of an audience is an art-within-an-art in readers theater as performing art. Public promotion to sell tickets and planning to seat all comers are necessities for the well-organized theater director (or "teacher-in-charge"). The audience will be a collection of strangers (non-theater class adults or students), and will bring a degree of anxiety to the theater facility and to the reader.

Finally, readers theater as performing art requires competitive casting, so that only the very best readers available will be performing. This tends to either exclude or challenge the shy or inept readers and therefore, may be either an advantage or disadvantage in a given case.

Improvisation is probably the most useful idea to keep in mind when considering readers theater as a classroom technique. When instruction is the primary objective, equipment and facilities need not be available to the extent desirable to produce an artistic performance.

Administrative support is usually easier to get for readers theater as classroom technique since extra time and money for facilities and equipment are unnecessary. Noise and movement, however, are likely to occur often in the early phases of the class period as desks are moved, roles assigned, and excitement is built. The entire technique is a device deliberately aimed at getting students' cognitive attention through physical and emotional involvements, however.

The place of readers theater as classroom technique in the secondary curriculum is very broad since the cumulative objective and hoped result of the technique, as here discussed, is instruction in reading skills of various kinds. Most English courses involve these skills at one level of objective or other. Thus, in-class time, curricular scheduling, and credits are not desrupted by readers theater as classroom technique.

The audiences for instructional theater (as opposed to artistic theater) are most likely to be composed to fellow classmates who don't have assigned roles, but may be listening or following the reading in selected or prepared scripts or textbooks. This involves no promotion or selling and usually much less anxiety for the readers.

Finally, casting for instructional theater is non-competitive to some degree. Often better readers will set a pace in lead roles, but the slow or even non-reader may be assigned a bit or supporting role that will seek his level and may challenge him to further development.

The importance of choosing either instruction or art as a primary objective in a readers theater situation cannot be de-emphasized. The equipment and facility needs, the administrative support, the

noise and movement problem, the curricular aspects, the audience availability, and the method of casting are each and collectively determiners of which objective will be chosen.

SUGGESTED READING

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DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES AS AN ELECTIVE COURSE -IN HIGH SCHOOL

Presenters: Gail Karwoski, Betty Lou Groover

"Teaching drama requires a combination of ingenuity and boldness; not necessarily a background in the academics" according to Gail Karwoski, of Clarke Central High, Athens. But she believes we all have the makings of great drama teachers.

She continued: "The way I teach, and conceptualize, Drama is a very special subject--some people think I'm teaching a course in recess. Actually, though, Drama is the most academic of all courses, even though I play down its names-dates-places-facts. Drama integrates every skill, from shop to math, home econ to phys ed, that students learn.

Mainly, though, Drama is personal enrichment at its best. It is a building of confidence through performance and involvement. Like athletics in this respect, it is much more cognitive and therefore rewards students for more different types of learning.

Everybody has been talking about "little" dramatics activities in the classroom, and I do these too. But I want to concentrate on performance, since that's what we build toward. The greatest rewards in Drama are from performance.

People are afraid of the performance aspect of Drama because of the time and skills involved in successful and lucrative production: 3 P's--prices, public relations (esp. with parents and other personnel), and promotion. But students deserve to receive community recognition in return for their efforts.

Ms. Karwoski presented slides of Clarke Central's production of The Music Man, describing many ways of cost-cutting developed by the students.

Mrs. Groover, of Macon, Georgia, discussed the value of drama as an elective and provided a valuable handout listing activities and resources. She concluded thus:

In short, I feel the argument for elective drama courses can be summarized in the following ways: the world of the theatre will be opened to your students as they read the plays of all periods and countries and learn about the intriguing personalities who have spent their lives in this exciting atmosphere.

In the second place, they will be acting and producing plays, even writing them, and in the process, learning how to use their voices and bodies effectively. No class encourages such obvious improvement as do various phases of theatre study. Work in dramatics demands more self-control, ability to accept criticism, good sportmanship,

tact, and "plain ole good" nature than any other school activity. You must be prompt, dependable, and helpful, if a play is to succeed. In the course, the student will have technical exercises to improve his voice and speech and to make his body movements effective and graceful. From these activities he will acquire poise and vitality in appearing before the public. He should move more gracefully after studying pantomime, and express himself more effectively after studying acting. Certainly the student's imagination, the foundation of all impersonation, will be stimulated in every phase of his work.

Finally, the cultivation of the emotions is I feel the chief values of a class in dramatics, for you must lose yourself in the feelings of others if you are to act successfully or, for that matter, watch and read plays wholeheartedly. Feeling, moving, and speaking like someone else will broaden your sympathy and understanding of other people's problems, enlarge your capacity for friendship, and enrich your whole life.

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ACTION WORKSHOP FOR THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

Presenter: George Hess
Consultant: Frank E. Chew

Dr. Hess, of Columbus Colelge, and Frank Chew, of Academy Theatre, Atlanta, made an excellent team each complementing the other's offerings. The group was highly receptive and involved.

Dr. Hess' summary:

The purpose of creative drama in the language arts curriculum is the development of self-discovery by means 1) of making reality of experience (vicarious and real) 2) by dealing with the whole complex of symbolization, and 3) by involving the total person. Therefore, the self-actualization that occurs through creative drama focuses on the development of the individual rather than focusing on performative-audience.related play acting. This is not to say that one of the results of expressive exploration through creative drama cannot be a "refined" performance for an audience; but it is to say that the primary goal must always be the development of the individual and his resources through a self-actualizing process.

The participants in creative drama are encouraged to develop their resources of concentration, sensory awareness, imagination, physical self, speech, emotions, and intellect in a problem solving environment. In solving problems, the participants develop and use verbal and nonverbal symbols to express ideas, notions, and understandings of the self and nonself. This requires that the individual call on and use the seven resources (note above). This happens when the individual through the suggestion of the leader extends his expression from an awareness of influences within to influences without the personal environment.

The leader begins by developing and extending the individual's concentration on his physical self and bodily movements. This warm-up period focuses mainly on freeing the mind (relaxation), imitative movement developing sensory experiences, and developing inner-images. The second stage initiates expressive activities which are more expressive of individual effort rather than a simplistic response to the leader's suggestions. In the second stage the leader assists the participants in developing the seven facets mentioned earlier. This is best done by exploring topics such as animal movements, age differences, elements of weather, etc. The third stage is improvisation. Here a story line or situation is developed. The final stage reflection focuses on the meaning of the dramatic activity. The individual begins each creative drama session working and concentrating on his own personal inner resources; and then in pairs, using and working with another's

responses; and finally working within a large group. This requires the individual to move from a concentrated awareness of self to an inclusion of an awareness of the unity of self and nonself working in harmony.

Frank Chew stressed key ideas for teachers without prior training in drama and suggested sources of help--such as the Academy Theatre group, part of the Artists in Schools Program under the National Endowment for Arts.

Interspersed with the talk about using drama in the classroom, the audience experienced some simple concentration exercises, suitable for drama-warmup, and non-audience oriented improvisation.

ACTION WORKSHOP FOR THE SECONDARY CLASSROOM

Presenter: Derek Whordley

These sessions were really action workshops. Dr. Whordley, Wesleyan College, after briefly reviewing the "framework for drama" presented in the keynote speech, guided the audience through activities representative of each section of the framework.

First, Whordley said, a teacher should find out where students are in verbal, emotional and sense development by using exploratory, warmup activities. Then, the teacher should guide students through activities to explore space, weight, speed and movement. Next, work on characterization--character development, improvisations (dialogue between two people), improvisation with a group, and then on to playmaking. In playmaking allow a student to have multiple parts, rather than a single part which may become boring.

Dr. Whordley guided the audience through every phase of his "framework" and then discussed how these activities relate to the English program. He suggested that appropriate dramatic workouts can enrich every aspect of the English curriculum as well as the total cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development of students because it leads to a search for options to realistic problems and to clarification of values.

Strand D Keynote Address

WRITTEN COMPOSITION: NEW SOLUTIONS FOR SOME OLD PROBLEMS

RICHARD L. GRAVES, Auburn Univeristy, Auburn, Alabama

Ever since the founding of the National Council Teacher of English in the early 1900's, there has been a concern with teaching the "Second R"--written composition. Every year since 1912 there has been at least one article in the journal--often several--urging the improvement of written expression. Since the founding of our professional organization we have passed through many educational movements: the academic movement, the progressive movement, the age of sputnik and spiral curriculum, the new humanistic movement, to name a few. And yet through all these diverse movements, there has been one consistent note: students need to know how to express themselves in writing. Not just the college bound, but everyone should acquire the skill of writing clear, concise English.

Yet as we enter the last quarter of the twentieth century, it is obvious that we have not achieved this goal. When we read the accounts of what our state and national leaders are advocating, rather than plain and simple truth we are often overcome with circular reasoning and with cloudy jargon. When we look at the professions in our nation today, we see that many of our most intelligent people--Ph.D.'s in academic fields, research scientists, doctoral students,--are crippled intellectually because they cannot express themselves in clear English. When we ask "Why?" and look at the composition courses in the University curriculum, there we often find a teaching staff which Richard M. Weaver described as "Beginners, part-time teachers, graduate students, faculty wives, and other fringe people." When we examine the high schools, there as James Squire and Roger Applebee reported, we find only a small fraction of time devoted to the teaching of composition. There are some occasional bright spots, but overall throughout the entire educational enterprise there is a need to improve the teaching of written composition.

If we are honest with ourselves we must admit that we have not been as successful as we would like to be. The citizens of this land have spent a large amount of time in school, but many have not mastered one of the most important and fundamental and useful skills in a civilized society--the skill for expressing oneself in writing.

Although most would agree that the current situation is (to put it mildly) bleak, it is certainly not hopeless. Traditionally the American people have been a people of optimism and accomplishment. We recognize the need, and yet we also recognize that where the need is greatest, the opportunity is also greatest. As educators in the South, we have many things going for us: an extensive system of public schools, laws mandating attendance in school, large and prosperous university systems, and the support and good will of parents and the general public.

In view of these positive benefits, is it possible to turn the situation around? I believe that is and would like to offer some suggestions which point toward improvement.

I. Recapturing the Satisfaction of Writing

Part of the problem in teaching composition lies in the attitudes of our students toward the writing experience. As teachers, we should keep in mind that our influence is extremely important in forming attitudes. Listen to what one noted writer said about learning to write:

> My first impetus to write came from a sixth grade English teacher who filled me with the feeling that writing was a good thing to do and that there was something noble about the English language.[1]

Recently I had the pleasure of attending a luncheon with the Dean of our School, and our conversation turned toward the experience and process of writing. We talked about writing being a very satisfying and yet at the same time a very difficult experience. He remarked that he sometimes rewrote his communications to the faculty as many as three times. But those communications, which I have seen on many occasions, are always extremely well done. Whatever the topic, they reflect his interest and concern. Above all they say,"I care, and the care I take with language reflects my interest and my concern with this topic."

As teachers we need to find ways for our students to experience the satisfaction that comes from caring about what is said. Just as the body has a need for exercise, so too the human mind has a natural impulse to express itself. We need to convince our students that writing is a natural and satisfying experience.

If students are to derive satisfaction from the experience of writing, then they need to spend time writing. Jean Pumphrey, who teaches composition in San Mateo, California, has described some excellent techniques from doing this. I have seen these techniques work at the high school level, and some of my former students who are now practicing English teachers have reported success with them at various grade levels.

In Jean Pumphrey's class the students and the teacher sit in a circle, and everybody writes. Here are some typical assignments:

1. The first assignment: Write for five minutes on this topic: "What makes writing so frustrating and so painful?" At the end of five minutes they stop, hold up their papers and look at the false starts and scratchouts. They count the words, then read their papers aloud.
2. Another assignment is to write for five minutes on a topic the student chooses. Those who can't find a subject write on that.
3. Another assignment is to describe objects in the class room; another is to put the classroom on paper.

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[1] "Teachers of English Can Create Prize-Winning Authors," College Composition and Communication, XIX (October, 1968), p. 218.

Throughout the experience the teacher writes along with the students. In the process they encounter all the problems and difficulties associated with writing. But most important they also recapture some of the satisfaction of putting on paper what they believe is true. Those who are not familiar with Pumphrey's techniques would be interested in her article in the February 1973 issue of College English, "Teaching English Composition as a Creative Art."

II. Emphasizing the Theory of Writing

Motivation is important, but motivation alone is not enough. Let me illustrate. Suppose that someone wanted to learn to fly and signed up to take the lessons. After paying the tuition fees and attending ground school, he found that he was ready for the first flight. He and his instructor taxied out to the end of the runway and prepared for take-off. Just prior to take-off, the instructor opened the door, got out of the plane, looked up and said "All right, now fly!"

Obviously the person was motivated. He wanted to fly but did not know how. And it wouldn't help much if the instructor turned on the radio to pick up inspirational music, or taped some beautiful pictures of clouds around the cockpit. There comes a time when theory and direct instruction are needed, not motivation.

Let us consider some ways of teaching the theory of composition. As you are so well aware, parallel structure is one of the most important aspects of the composition curriculum. This fact was recently brought home to me by a counselor in one of our schools in Alabama. She noted that the scores on the ACT tests were consistently higher in math than they were in English. After studying the test scores she concluded that many of the items which her students were missing in English were concerned with parallel structure.

How is parallel structure presented in many English handbooks? Often the theory of parallel structure is either totally neglected or just touched upon. The main teaching device is the presentation of "messed-up" examples, which the students are called upon to correct. The examples below, which were taken from a popular handbook, are typical:

1. The doctor recommended plenty of food, sleep, and exercising.
2. Come to the meeting prepared to take notes and with some questions to ask.
3. Passing the oral test is usually more difficult than to pass the written test.[2]

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[2]John E. Warriner, English Grammar and Composition: A Complete Handbook (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1957), p. 223.

By contrast, teaching the theory of parallel structure would require some positive attention to just what parallel structure is. Such study might consider aspects such as these:

1. Repetition of Key Words

> "We are no longer bound by the vertical heritage of a nation but by the horizontal spirit of a generation."[3]

2. Repetition of Grammatical Elements

> "As a result of years of intermittent combat between Egypt and Israel, the waterway had become a giant slag heap of war--blocked by scuttled and sunken ships, strewn with unexploded ammunition, abandoned by more than a million Egyptians who had fled their homes along its banks, and occupied on either side by mortal enemies."[4]

3. Combination: Repeated Words and Grammatical Elements

> "My brother need not be idealized or enlarged in death beyond what he was in life. He should be remembered simply as a good and decent man who saw wrong and tried to right it, saw suffering and tried to heal it, saw war and tried to stop it."[5]

4. The Number of Elements: Two

> "Graciousness and understanding were expressions of his philosophy. Discipline and self-control were expressions of his character."[6]

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[3]Valerie M. Johnson, "O Canada!" Saturday Review, LV (October, 1972), pp.61.

[4]Willian Graves, "New Life for the Troubled Suez Canal," National Geographic 147 (June, 1975), p. 793.

[5]Edward M. Kennedy, The Eulogy to United States Senator Robert F. Kennedy (Worcester, Mass.: Achille J. St. Onge, 1968), pp. 26-27.

[6]Robert Muller, "U Thant The Buddhist," Saturday Review, II (January 25, 1975), p. 5.

5. The Number of Elements: Four.

> "And after the years spent in the heart of it, rejoicing and wondering, bathing in its glorious floods of light, seeing the sunbursts of morning among the icy peaks, the noonday radiance on the trees and rocks and snow, the flush of alpenglow, and a thousand dashing waterfalls with their marvelous abundance of irised spray, it still seems to me above all others the range of light."[7]

A teacher might then use these examples as models for students to create their own examples of parallelism.

III. Staying Abreast with New Directions in Teaching Composition

How do new ideas and new techniques "catch on" in American education? Often a new idea will appear in abstract form in a journal article or perhaps a book. As teachers have occasion to study these ideas, they often begin to see how they can be translated into classroom practice and eventually become a part of the system. During recent years several new ideas have been developed; what is needed now is the translation of these ideas into sound practice. Here are some developments which seem to me to have potential for improving the teaching of written composition.

1. Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence. Edward P.J. Corbett has identified Francis Christensen's work with cumulative sentence as instrumental in reviving professional interest in composition. Christensen's article, "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence," has been reprinted at least ten times since it was first published in 1963. The article calls attention to the importance and the effectiveness of asymmetrical form, particularly in the cumulative sentence. (A cumulative sentence is one with a short base clause and several modifiers added after the base clause, as in this sentence from Sounder: "Nothing moved except what the wind moved--dead leaves under the cabin, brown blades and stalks from the fields which were dead and ready to be blown away, bare branches of poplars, and the spires of tall pines.") We are shown specifically how absolute constructions and participial modifiers free the writer from what Christensen calls "pretzel prose." Too, Christensen's article is the best source I know for teaching students about the coordination and subordination processes.

2. New Directions in Paragraph Structure

Two new approaches to the structure of the paragraph deserve consideration. Francis Christensen found that his theory of the generative rhetoric of the sentence also works when applied to the paragraph. And more recently this idea has extended to the full essay. (Frank D'Angelo, " Generative Rhetoric of the Essay," College Composition and Communication, December, 1974).

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[7] John Muir, Gentle Wilderness: The Sierra Nevada, ed. David Brower (New York: Ballantine Books, 1967), pp. 6-7.

A second approach to the paragraph is that developed by Kenneth Pike, A.L. Becker, and Richard Young at the University of Michigan. A tagmemic analysis of a paragraph might follow one of three sequences: TRI (Topic-Restriction-Illustration), QA (Question-Answer), or P-S (Problem-Solution). One of the most useful concepts to come from this approach is the equivalence chain, the pattern of recurring features in a paragraph. The teacher who wants to find some new ways of teaching coherence would do well to examine this approach.

3. Peer Teaching and Communal Authorship

The work of Jean Pumphrey, mentioned earlier, offers some new insights in working with students. James Moffett and the British writers have also made contributions here.

The term "communal authorship," which was coined by James McCrimmon, describes a situation in which students and teacher write together using the overhead projector. Instead of the student writing on a sheet of paper at his desk, he works from a screen at the front of the class. The composing process thus becomes an open dialogue between students and teacher, rather than the usual silent, interior monologue. With communal authorship students are involved in every aspect of the process.

4. Sentence Combining

Research relating composition and transformational grammar has yielded some interesting new insights. It has been shown rather conclusively that practice in combining short sentences enhances "syntactic growth" of young people. Several research studies have shown the value of sentence combining: Kellogg Hunt at Florida State, Donald Bateman and Frank Zidonis at Ohio State, John Mellon at Harvard, and Frank O'Hare at Florida State. The practical application of this research appears in Willian Strong's little book, Sentence Combining: A Composing Book, which contains some excellent activities in sentence combining.

5. Conceptual Theory of Rhetoric

The relationship between rhetorical structures and the human thought processes is described in a book published just this Spring by Winthrop Press: Frank D'Angelo's A Conceptual Theory of Rhetoric. Those who have read this work have been deeply impressed with the direction D'Angelo has taken.

6. Revival of Classical Rhetoric

The person who comes to classical rhetoric is like one who sees for the first time a magnificent range of mountains, peak rising upon peak, valley extending past valley. The only problem is that as you plunge in to explore the range, it is so easy to get lost. In other words, the explorer needs a roadmap through classical rhetoric. Once through Corbett, the explorer can then evaluate and synthesize the contributions of Isocrates or Aristotle or Quintilian or Cicero or other giants from antiquity.

At the outset I mentioned that teachers of English have many things going for them, but one thing above all else which might bring about literacy in written expression is the development of these new approaches. We now have available to us tools and techniques which were unknown earlier in this century. These new approaches--or new rhetorics as they are sometimes called--have created a genuine renaissance of interest in the teaching of writing. I detect a new enthusiasm, a new sense of purpose, a new dedication which have the potential for revitalizing our present conception of the subject of English.

With these new tools perhaps we can accomplish by the end of the century what our predecessors envisioned at its beginning: widespread literacy in written expression for a majority of our citizens.

Strand D Discussion Session

CREATIVE WRITING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Presenter: Jack Perron
Consultant: Edieann Biesbrock

Dr. Perron's summary:

The theme is "Can teachers cause creativity?" My belief is they can't, but they can cause un-creative writing (by sticking to the traditional textbook). A communication activity precedes--to demonstrate feedback in writing (as opposed to speech). A review of research confirms my own findings: creative-type stimuli result in more production but not increased creativity. Purpose and interest lie at the heart of the matter, but creativity also has a form base, which leads to function. Sentence-combining research has proved the validity of increasing the subordination abilities of children, a basic step in providing alternative pathways for writing. This form base for creativity naturally leads into function, and the result can be creativity. However, it's up to the student. Various methods of stimulating writing, including using it as the integrating ingredient for all elementary education is discussed. The more the student writes, the more chance he has for becoming creative. Teachers should learn all they can about anything and everything involving the writing act--variety sets the environment for continuous writing. Given enough purposeful, interesting writing, the student can cause his own creativity.

In the discussion that followed his presentation, Dr. Perron (University of Georgia) stressed (1) the use of sentence-combining activities and games in a supportive classroom environment and (2) the need of hitting vested interest--a base for students to turn to for a purposeful encounter with writing.

COMPOSITION FOR THE CAREER-ORIENTED STUDENT

Presenters: Nan Flowers, Chloe Dekle

Nan Flowers, Hinesville, Georgia, used a caramate to demonstrate individualized instruction packets prepared through CVAE, Cooperative Vocational Academic Education. Cassettes on filling out job applications and on preparing a resume demonstrated were shown as samples of the uni-paks soon to be published and distrubuted by CVAE Individualized Instructional System. The uni-paks are two of 50 in the System, seven of which are directly related to language arts and five to composition.

Chloe Dekle, Arnold School, Savannah, discussed and demonstrated some ideas for developing general composition skills in vocational students: a collection of pictures of hands used to promote title, character sketches, statements of the value of hands in a trade; a restaurant menu used to introduce foreign words, the value of descriptive writing in student-produced menus; pictures from the Family Man used to prompt title, stories; the newspaper as a storehouse of writing ideas, from creating an editorial page to letters of application; dittoed publication to share student work. Two matters were dominant: (1) very little appropriately oriented teaching material is available, thus forcing the teacher to be creative; (2) vocational students all capable of developing general compositional skills.

General discussion emphasized the necessity of starting with the student in his level of development and moving on from there. The real value of talk, oral communication in any and all forms, was emphasized again and again.

WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Presenter: James H. Barfoot
Consultant: James W. Mathews

James Barfoot, University of Georgia, believes that the task of the composition teacher is to lend practice in (1) how to think logically about literature and (2) how to transpose this analytic approach into expository writing. "However," he said, "this analytic approach may point the way past analysis to a more intuitive consideration of literary art."

He also discussed the value of giving essay rather than multiple choice examinations. Good expository writing should (1) be a "mirror which reflects analytical mind," (2) "expose" or make clear thoughts, and (3) be founded on evidence from work.

Dr. Mathews, West Georgia College, stressed the need to hold the student to a close reading of the work and to support what he says on evidence drawn from the work.

THE LONG-PAPER ASSIGNMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL

Presenters: Barbara Carson, Kathy Wilhelmsen

Summary of presentation by Barbara Carson, University of Georgia:

Introducing the student to the methods of library research is an important value of the long-paper assignment--the research paper--but it is a value lost if the subject leads to research without the use of the library.

In the second place, if the motivation for the research is an assignment, the research paper can become little more than exercise in process, pattern, and footnote form. In fact, a paper may become nothing more than an excuse for the footnotes, and the footnotes may become the purpose for the research.

On the positive side, the use of source material and the requirement for documentation should lead the student to the reason behind footnotes--a proper respect for a writer's ownership of his words and

ideas. On the negative side, misunderstanding may lead to plagiarism. The student may believe that by omitting a word or changing the order of words or paraphrasing he can avoid the necessity for quotation marks and footnotes. Knowing when footnoting is needed and when it is not requires judgment which needs to be developed.

Although some practices connected with the research paper pattern may hurt student writing--mechanical openings, for example, or rigid outlining which may block a creative response to the researched facts--the research-paper writers--the students--like the assignment, according to an informal survey of entering Georgia freshmen. They find it satisfying and rewarding in spite of its "hard work."

Kathy Wilhelmsen, University of Georgia, began her presentation by giving data from a questionnaire given to over 900 high school students. Students were asked what kinds of writing they liked best. One-third said personal writing. Creative writing ranked second. The research paper was the kind liked least.

Basic students, as opposed to superior students, liked the research paper. Other responses seemed to indicate that superior students valued freedom, did not want a structured assignment or interference (marking on the paper?) from the teacher. Some students mentioned specific objections to the research paper: no chance for self-expression, no chance for sharing.

Ms. Wilhelmsen made the following suggestions that teachers might consider in teaching skills required for writing the long paper:

-assign short papers that require specific skills. For instance, a resume of a critical essay, a short explication that requires using quotations from the primary source--properly introduced and footnoted, a report of an interview, with attention to accuracy and completeness, etc.
-have student read one or two carefully selected critical essays or excerpts that focus on a particular work/writer, then explicate a selection agreeing or disagreeing with one or more of the critical comments.
-let students read an article of interest to them, then use the footnotes/bibliography to explore the subject further.
-break down topic into small components, each interesting and rewarding in itself; finally, have student combine information gathered into one long presentation that may be made in whatever mode he chooses--lecture, demonstration, slide/tape, written.

ARTICULATING THE SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY ENGLISH PROGRAM

Presenters: Ondee Ravan, Mary Murphy
Consultant: Alva Sanks

Dr. Ravan, of Georgia Southwestern College, stressed the need of dialogue between college and secondary teachers. Of the students entering Georgia Southwestern 65% said they had not written about literature read in high school; 5% had written one paragraph a week in high school.

Examination of samples of student writing indicates that these are major problems: (1) inability to think logically, (2) lack of opinions and ideas, (3) inability to read critically, (4) inability to write clear, coherent sentences and paragraphs, (5) inability to organize ideas.

Dr. Ravan believes that the study of literature provides opportunities for improvement in all of these skills: thinking, reading, writing, and finally language usage.

Mary Murphy, of Clarke Central High in Athens, began her presentation by pointing out that in recent years much had been done to articulate the various levels in the public school system. Kindergartens smooth the path from home to first grade. The middle school eases the transition from elementary to high school. However, in general, a big gap divides high school and college. She suggested that the 12th grade be revised to provide transition from secondary to post-secondary schooling. Perhaps she said, students who elect advanced composition usually do well in freshman composition.

During the discussion following the presentations, Dr. Colvert, Moderator, described the procedures in freshman English placement at the University of Georgia.

STUDENT CENTERED TEACHING

SANDRA E. GIBBS, Director of Minority Group Affairs
and Special Projects, National Council of Teachers of English

The topic which I have been asked to discuss with you is student-centered teaching. As I thought about it, that topic seemed on initial thought rather odd, if not redundant. Teaching implies students and if students are not at the "center" of what teachers do, then what is? It was while reflecting on the possible answers to this question that I, on second thought, conceded that perhaps the topic was not as redundant or odd as it might have seemed. It is worthwhile to come together in sessions such as this. After all, it is always good to pause and ask ourselves if we are doing what we say we are doing when we do it. What is student-centered teaching; why is it necessary; and how can we strengthen our efforts to concentrate on the importance of each student within the learning environment known as school?

Probably, if we all stopped for a moment to reflect on "a teacher (or some teachers) I have known," we could recall instances where it was fairly obvious that the focus in the classroom was on "the subject" and not on what we as students thought or cared about, even when such thoughts or cares were in relation to what was being taught.

If we take another minute and reverse the roles in our previous thoughts and reflect in some of our own classes, I wonder if we, too, have not at times placed the emphasis on a character's motivation in a certain book or the "rule" for deleting "wh" clauses? Which is not to say that these things are not significant facts, but are they in and of themselves if they exclude the student? If everything we teach is projected as and therefore perceived as "information" which students can not "make it" in life without, then, I believe we have that "information" as the center of learning and not students.

Certainly, there "needs no ghost come from the grave," or from NCTE, to tell you that, trite though the saying is, "times have changed," and vibrations from these changes are felt in students and teachers alike. Educators at all levels, whether beginning teachers or those who have been in the profession for a number of years, must admit that. "schooling ain't what it use to be." It is no longer possible simply to give an assignment and expect or even demand that it be met. In fact, it is not always possible now, to hold the attention of enough students to give the assignment.

There are many reasons for changes in those who are taught. I believe at least some of them stem from student's access to a great deal of information outside of school and from the ways they acquire this information. Because of t.v., movies, radios, and tape recorders, students very often are attuned to a different wave length. They hear,

if you will, "a different drummer." Their eyes, ears, and minds have become accustomed to hearing, if not always assimilating, information in substantially different ways from the ways used in many classrooms. One writer notes that "by age 16, most children will have spent more hours before a t.v. than in a classroom" (Black World, May, 1973, p. 69). While this may be somewhat of an exaggeration, we can agree that many young children, and hence those we get in high schools and colleges, have more than a passing acquaintance with t.v.

In his Understanding Media McLuhan notes that "the t.v. image is of low intensity or definition, and therefore, unlike film it does not afford detailed information; . . . thus the viewer is [forced to become] involved and a participator" (pp. 317-318). McLuhan stresses the "power of the t.v. mosaic to transform American innocence into depth sophistication" (p. 323). In short, because of t.v. and many other technological changes, students are experientially older today. (And t.v. is merely a symbol, since there are social and environmental factors contributing to the experiential aging of youngsters today.) They have experienced more, whether vicariously or for "real." And, as McLuhan reminds us, while "everybody experiences more than he understands . . . it is experience, rather than understanding that influences behavior, . . ." (p. 318).

What this means in relation to students is that the structure of the classroom and often its content are of such "low intensity" (and I use that phrase, differently from McLuhan, in what I perceive as its literal meaning, to suggest lack of interest) that it never even taps their real experiences. Thus they become bored, drop out, or they stay, and in the public schools we have discipline problems.

What we teach about language is generally so far removed from the ways in which Stevie Wonder, the Isley Brothers, Gladys Knight and the Pips or even Olivia Newton-John or Chicago use words that some students never realize that putting words together, that making sentences, that "languaging," to borrow a phrase from Postman and Weingartner's Teaching As A Subversive Activity, can be beautiful. (And somehow I think they need to know, to feel this.) What we teach about character, plot, setting and their interrelationships has some connection with television, movies, and even with some personal situations students encounter, but too frequently such terms remain in the minds of students just that, "terms." Because we fail to move from the familiar to the less familiar, because we tend to define whithout helping students come to "meaning making" (another Postman and Wingartner phrase) on their own, we have moved them off center of the learning course and made "English" the center.

Somewhere along the line, we have forgotten (or maybe too many of us never believed) that "There is no such thing [as "English"] as 'subject matter' in the abstract. 'Subject matter' exists in the minds of perceivers," modified, if you will, by their experiences. (Postman and Weingartner, p. 92).

Student-centered teaching involves focusing in on the student, recognizing that she and he bring something with them to each class. It is finding out what they bring, what they already know, and building on that, adding to it. (Not, please note, attempting to change it in our own fashion though change may come as a matter of course.) Student-centered teaching is helping students analyze their own perceptions. It

is showing them alternatives. I would like to think that there are a number of teachers who do this, but I am also forced to admit that there may be many who do not.

In his Schools Without Failure, William Glasser notes that the "first years of school are critical for success or failure . . . for all children." He further observes that young children, i.e. before school, "have a success identity, regardless of their homes or environments. In school they expect to achieve recognition and, with the faith of the young, they hope also to gain the love and respect of their teachers and classmates. The shattering of this optimistic outlook is the most serious problem of the elementary schools. Whatever their background, children come to school highly receptive to learning" (p. 26). Just think about that statement. All children come to school expecting to learn! (And I tend to think they come to each new class expecting to learn.)

All of us can recall, I am sure, some 3 or 4 year old who talks incessantly, most often in the form of questions, and even some 6 or 7 year old who unflinchingly makes some statement and when asked, "how do you know that?" replies, "My teacher said . . ." (Whatever "teacher says" is right.) I believe, as Glasser suggests, that this enthusiasm in preschoolers and even that in first graders comes from the children's knowledge that they are at the "center," which is to say important to someone--their parents, their teachers, to friends. Each child feels that someone cares about him or her enough to listen to what he or she has and wants to say.

How unfortunate that somewhere during the schooling process this enthusiasm is dampened, if not completely drowned. Too many children stop asking questions, too many no longer share what they have learned in school. In fact, many stop learning--in school. When children no longer "continue to learn at their rapid preschool rate, we may, if we wish," writes Glasser, "blame it on their families, their environment, or their poverty, but we would be much wiser to blame it on their experience in school" (p. 26).

(Parenthetically, let me note that while I agree with most of this statement by Glasser, ideally and, more importantly, realistically to get the most from students, we need the cooperation of home and the schools. But to continue that train of thought would take me into another speech). Nevertheless, we would be wise to rethink the experiences students have in school. Glasser, as do Postman and Weingartner and many other educators, suggest that it is the emphasis on memorization (of facts to be repeated on tests) and the de-emphasis on problem solving, i.e. the lack of motivation which children have to think and to solve their own and new problems, which form the primary, if not the total experiences of children. If this is true, and I am afraid that it may be in too many instances, then are students at the center of what goes on in the schools? Have many simply learned to repeat the facts and do their "thinking" outside of school, and in so doing, failed to learn how to synthesize the two, facts and original thoughts, to solve problems?

Is it possible that in placing a high priority on memorization, that we are saying what you are and what you think is not important? Is it possible that some of our discipline problems come from the de-emphasis

of the student as a person? Since we cannot wave a magic wand and make all teachers in America really love all children--it would be too much of a cultural shock--is it still possible to place students at the center of the learning environment? I prefer to think so! (You see, I don't happen to believe that you have to love all children [which is not to say that you should not try.] But I do feel that you have to like them, respect them and, most of all, examine your own feelings toward them.)

In embracing student-centered teaching we need to remind ourselves of a few basic principles about learning: (All of these were taken from Teaching As A Subversive Activity.)

1. "Whatever is to be learned will remain unlearned if we believe that we cannot learn it or if we perceive it as irrelevant or if the learning situation is perceived as threatening" (p. 148).

If we want children to learn to read, we must help them feel that they can read. If we want them to continue reading, we must give them some choices in what they read in school.

2. "The critical content of any learning experience is the method or process through which the learning occurs, i.e., 'the medium is the message'" (p. 19).

Consequently, if our methods employ threats or stress the subject over the student, the message that we are communicating is that threats are necessary to get people to do what we want and that individuals are not important, the "task" i.e., the subject, is. (It would seem that Haldeman and Erlichmann picked this up somewhere, but it may be unfair to blame the message they got on the schools.)

3. "Learning does not occur with the same intensity [or rate] in any two people" (p. 35).

With the same "lessons" students will get different things. This seems to me one of the main things that we as educators often forget and therefore fret over. We cannot always measure what we think we have taught in the same way with each child. And even when we use different measures for different children, we may find that they fall below our "expectations." Even this, however, does not always mean that we have not taught anything. Sometimes epiphany for students comes much, much later. (And it may come in ways we can never measure.)

4. Learning is not sequential, nor spiral. It is more nearly episodic--cumulative (pp. 30-31).

5. Learning occurs "in relation to what is already known" (p. 62). Each student brings something with him.

6. "There are at least four critical elements in the learning environment. The learner, the teacher, the to-be-learned, and the strategies for learning." Note please that the first of these is the learner; but for "this environment to fulfill its functions, the four elements must serve, complement, and derive from each other" (pp. 51-52).

Thus, in student-centered teaching, while the student is the core, there is still a place for the teacher. Just as it is a contradiction in terms to have teachers and no students so it is to have students and no teachers. We both need, yes, need each other.

What is student-centered teaching? First and foremost, it is respecting each student as a person, which means all of him. It is finding out where she or he is within the frame of whatever "knowledge" we think it important to concentrate on at the time that we have him or her. And if they are beyond what we "feel the need to teach," it is having the good sense to suggest ways they can move on. And if they are behind, it is having the even better sense and patience (or if you do not have that, admitting that too) to work with what's there.

Student-centered teaching is presenting students with options and helping them develop skill in making choices. It is teaching English/language arts because we think it is important, but it is letting kids in on why we think it is important and realizing that our reasons may not coincide with theirs. We do not have to stop teaching proper comma usage but we do have to make an effort to place it within the frame of the student's reality. If it is anything student-centered teaching is being honest about what we teach, which means that we need to examine our own reasons for teaching certain things.

Student-centered teachers respect the language of students, and their ways of communicating. By recognizing students' rights to communicate in their own ways, we free their "hidden resources." It then becomes possible to suggest to students some of the things we find important about our own discipline.

Student-centered teachers make efforts to find out how their students think, to find out what they find relevant. Now we may not agree with what they find important--we do not, I think, have to. But unless we find out what does interest them, we will never know how to make our own subject matter relevant. After all "no one will learn anything he doesn't want to know, and unless an inquiry is perceived as important by the learner, no significant learning will take place" (Postman and Weingartner, p. 52).

Why is student-centered teaching necessary? I suggest that it is because while present day students are in many ways more knowledgeable, unless we concentrate on them and learn how to extend what they already know, show them how to extend their knowledge, they and we, as a result, are lost.

What does one do to become a student-centered teacher? As starters:

1. Read Teaching As A Subversive Activity with an open mind.
2. Read Schools Without Failure.
3. Scan Understanding Media?

But, if you don't have time to read "no more books," ask yourself before each teaching period, if not each day:

1. What do I want the students to learn about (Whatever you are teaching)?
2. Why do I want them to know it?

3. Will such reason be relevant/important to the students? (Of course, you can only guess, but the sheer effort of thinking about what someone else might think may be useful.)

Then ask them (before teaching):

1. What do they already know about (whatever you are teaching)?
2. What (more) would they like to know? (Expect some nothing answers.)

You see, student-centered teaching does not, as its detractors would have us think, mean that we should let students take over the classroom. Nor does it mean that only they can determine what is "right or relevant" for them. To quote again, ad infinitum, Postman and Weingartner "No one has ever said that children themselves are the only, or necessarily the best, source for articulating relevant areas of inquiry" (p. 52). However, student-centered teaching does mean that we have to give students the opportunities to voice what they find relevant. We have to be willing to listen to what they have to say. We have to respect their rights to say certain things.

THE FOXFIRE EXPERIENCE

Presenter: B. Eliot Wigginton

Eliot Wigginton, of Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, showed a movie that gave the audience an understanding of the intrinsic value of the Foxfire experience to the students involved, and--incidentally--to the school and to the community.

Wigginton's presentation sparked thoughtful discussion and probing questions. Some of the topics discussed were: getting started with a magazine, making the endeavor part of the curriculum, moving from information (interviews) to stories/many stories, importance of learning by doing and becoming involved.

The question of translating the Foxfire experience to an urban area was raised. Wigginton replied that students anywhere need to have their world opened up to them. They need to know what kind of people make up their community, what they do, how they feel about their jobs and their way of life. Teachers have learned from Foxfire that the value of folklore is not necessarily to preserve old ways but to show students how to function in a community. English is communication--touching one another--and need not be fossilized by curriculum guides, syllabi, book lists, or texts. To the students involved the magazine telling of local history and heritage is a by-product. The real value of the experience to them is evident in their poise, in their pride of workmanship, and in their feelings of self-worth and sensitivity to others.

FILM AND NON-VERBAL MEDIA

Presenters: Dan Ward, Vicki Challancin
Consultants: E.A. Peyroux, Juanita Skelton

Dan Ward, of Cedar Shoals High, Athens, began the session by telling how he became involved in teaching filming. He used handouts illustrative of activities he used to help students learn terminology and techniques. As he described the methods used, he stopped to show short films that illustrated the different types of films students are capable of making.

Vicki Challancin, a graduate student, gave very valuable information about film sources other than the State Department Film Library. She discussed ways of using short films/portions of long films as stimulus for classroom talk and writing. Ms. Challancin also made available an annotated bibliography of books and articles that would be helpful to the teacher interested in teaching or using media in the classroom.

TEACHING FOR CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Presenter: Genelle Morain

Summary of presentation by Dr. Morain, University of Georgia:

Today's classroom is a microcosm of society with students representing a variety of racial, ethnic, religious, and social sub-groups. Teachers must be aware of the differences in outlook and attitude which are present within the class. This holds particularly true for language teachers. Of all the learning activities which take place in the school, those involving the use of language are most closely linked to the emotions. A student can reel off an algebraic formula, mix liquids in a test tube, or reassemble a carburetor without involving himself emotionally. He cannot separate emotion from language production. Any teacher who works with students and the communication skills must therefore become sensitive to factors in the environment which influence mood and attitude. If there are predictable patterns of action or reaction based on cultural expectations, a teacher should be aware of them. A course designed to increase cross-cultural understanding can sensitize the teacher to significant differences.

Such a course would include a discussion of ingroup/outgroup attitudes and the stereotypes and cliches which they nuture. It would include a study of non-verbal behavior--the gestures, eye contact patterns, and modes of distancing which vary subtly across cultures and effect interpersonal communication to a surprising degree. Attention would be focused on the need for visual literacy, so that signs and designs which are "read" correctly by members of a cultural in-group are not mis-read by outsiders. An awareness of the rôle folklore plays within cultures would also be stressed. This includes a knowledge of traditional beliefs as they are expressed in proverbs and sayings, an understanding of in-group humor, familiarity with the genres of oral literature, and an acquaintance with folk heroes and villains as depicted in legend and song.

A course in cross-cultural understanding cannot produce a sociologist or an anthropologist. It can help a teacher become open to differences and able to establish a classroom climate where language can grow.

STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Presenters: Mary Creamer, Donna Ware
Consultant: Jean Fortson

Summary of presentation by Dr. Creamer, of West Georgia College:

Student Centered teaching is based on the tenet that the student learns best as an active participant. Other psychological aspects which necessitate more active involvement are (1) significant learning is acquired through doing and is self initiated; (2) significant learning takes place when material is relevant; (3) the most valuable thing to learn is the process of learning.

Signs which indicate that a classroom is student centered include (1) less teacher talk and domination; (2) less destructive criticism and emphasis on failure; (3) children are given responsibility and freedom to work; (4) they are appreciated as individuals; (5) goals are clearly defined and needed structure is understood.

Even though there is no "answer" to the problems in education, several methods offer possibilities of opening up the reading-language arts classroom. These consider learning contacts, language experience approved, individualized reading and learning centers.

Dr. Creamer distributed a handout entitled "Organize To Open Up Language Opportunities" which presented a brief review of key points in the philosophy of a language experience approach and outlined some fundamental requirements of planning and organization.

Donna Ware, of Clarke County Schools, described her method of working, her materials and strategies. She said the room should invite exploration and stimulate discussion--"to start his mind ticking." However, she warned, too much material is confusing and makes it difficult for a child to settle down to one task.

Her materials were varied and flexible enough to allow for much individualization. Using contracts as one way of clarifying goals, developing independence in working on goals, and evaluating achievements, her students were involved in such activities as these: writing and producing their own plays; writing poems and putting them to music; taping stories--their own were more interesting than those in their reading books; playing games, both commercial and teacher-made.

The involvement and independence of children in a well organized student-centered classroom is gratifying, making the extra effort rewarding. The teacher in such a situation must be open minded, a good listener, and very flexible.

STUDENT-CENTERED TEACHING IN AN ELECTIVE QUARTER PROGRAM

Presenter: Barbara Mathis
Consultant: Amy Pace

Barbara Mathis, English/Language Arts Advisor, State Department of Education, discussed the trends toward elective quarter programs in the high schools of the state. She provided handouts prepared by the State Department: "Quarter System Curriculum-Language Arts, Grades 7-12" sets forth the goals of the language curriculum and makes suggestions about planning, organizing, and implementing the quarter system; another handout, "Sample Course Offerings" suggests a language arts program that correlates with the nine strands of the State Curriculum Guide.

In the discussion that followed the presentation both the advantages and the disadvantages of elective quarter plans were discussed. Dr. Pace, the consultant, pointed out the distinction between the on-file curriculum and the real curriculum that an individual learner experiences. The first is static, fixed; the second, dynamic, ever changing.

Obviously it would not be feasible for the State Department to do more than suggest the broad guidelines for a curriculum. No standard curriculum would do for all or even most schools. In each school teachers, students, parents, and administrators need to be continuously involved in the propess of curriculum development--planning, evolving, experimenting, and evaluating. In such a context the curriculum will reflect the goals, interests, and needs of various segments of the community. It will be unique and responsive to the community. It may never be neatly bound because it is always in the process of becoming.

Without the cohesiveness and continuity fostered by such a context, the real curriculum--no mater what its pattern of organization--will be fragmented, courses tend to be textbound and unresponsive to students' needs and interests. Even an elective quarter program can be "old wine in new bottles."

SHORT FILMS FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM

Presenters: Dan Ward, Vicki Challancin

This presentation was delightful--a continuous showing of short films that could be used in a variety of ways. Dr. Dan Ward, Cedar Shoals High, Athens, and Vicki Challancin, University graduate student, had assembled an impressive array of films and equipment and had prepared an annotated list of the films shown.

The following films were shown:

- Flight: A tranquil and artistic view of gliders in flight (The National Film Board of Canada).
- Is It Always Right to Be Right: A parable told by Orson Welles which highlights the diversity in our society using animation and live action (The University of Georgia Film Library).
- Mosaic: A Norman McLaren film in which dots, colors and sound form a visual auditory mosaic (The National Film Board of Canada).
- Boomsville: An animated overview of the growth of cities from the first explorers to North America to the exploration of the planets (Learning Corporation of America).
- Delicieuse Catastrophe: Just come and see this one; then you try to describe it (Films Incorporated).
- A Unicorn In The Garden: An animated version of Thurber's light hearted fable (Learning Corporation of America).
- Abandoned: A strong documentary comment totally without dialogue on the problems of junked autos (Films Incorporated).
- Carrousel: A dream like sequence in which carousel horses come to life (The National Film Board of Canada).
- Meta Data: A flowing series of lines which in shaping and reshaping suggest the origins and development of man (Films Incorporated).
- Spaghetti Tree: A cultural farce in travelogue style (The University of Georgia Library).
- Marble: A child's fantasy adventures with a very special marble (Films Incorporated).
- Blinkety Blank: The adventures of Norman McLaren's blinkety blank bird (National Film Board of Canada).
- Pas De Deux: Norman McLaren's unique and artistic representative of a pas de deux (dance for two) (Learning Corporation of America).

ETV AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Presenters: Mary Charles Roberts, Ralph Crandall

Mary Charles Roberts and Ralph Crandall, from the Division of Educational Media Services, State Department of Education, presented portions of available ETV programs. During the showing they interspersed explanations and suggestion about how classroom teachers could use these programs in various subject fields.

There was much interest in state level plans to make film--and particularly film from commercial companies--available to systems equipped to make their own video cassettes.

The following programs were shown:

Series: A Matter of Fact
Program: It Will Happen Again

Series: Witches of Salem
Program: Salem

Series: Short Story Showcase
Program: The Lottery

Series: Designs for English: Literature
Program: Twelve Angry Men

Series: A Matter of Fact
Program: Two Women in a Violent Time

Series: The Jackson Years
Program: Toward Civil War

Series: Short Story Showcase
Program: The Lady or the Tiger

Series: Designs for English: Literature
Program: Ozymandias, Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds, Scribe, and Nothing Gold Can Stay

For each series there is an instructor's manual. Information about the material and plans for scheduling can be obtained from the local media center.

The following television stations are owned by the Georgia Department of Education:

WABW-TV, Channel 14, Pelham
WACS-TV, Channel 25, Parrott
WCES-TV, Channel 20, Wrens

A Friday Morning Feature

BRING 'n' BRAG

A new feature of the '75 Conference was an array of teacher/student produced materials that was displayed in the auditorium from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Friday. Conferees were invited to examine the materials and talk to the teachers who had developed them.

The following list gives some idea of how varied and valuable the materials were:

Learning Centers:

Syllabication and Language games for Jr. High students--Peggy Seawright, Hall County Schools.

Reading, Writing, Listening and Imagination Skills Using Poetic and Technical Language for basic students at the high school level--Lynn Fortuna and Angelia Moore, graduate students, University of Georgia.

A variety of language centers for various grade levels produced by students of Warren Combs, University of Georgia.

A sentence Clothes Line and other Language activities for elementary students--Delores Ward, Clarke County Schools.

A collection of pictures for use as Composition stimuli and a collection of materials for creating ads and cartoons--Shirley Priest, graduate student, University of Georgia.

Teacher Made Materials:

"An Experience with Nature": A slide-tape presentation of the poetry of Robert Frost-- Philip Gillis, Gainesville City Schools.

Student Made Materials:

Poetry and masks created by elementary students--Moria Jordan, Muscogee County Schools.

Student Publications: (like Foxfire)

Folk and Kinfolk by the students of Sarah Skinner, Waverly Hall, Georgia.

Cracklin' by the students of Duane Pitts, Valdosta City Schools.

WCLP-TV, Channel 18, Chatsworth
WDCO-TV, Channel 15, Cochran
WJSP-TV, Channel 28, Warm Springs
WVAN-TV, Channel 9, Pembroke
WXGA-TV, Channel 8, Waycross

——POP CULTURE AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS——

Presenters: Dan Kirby, Jerry Sparks

"The English teacher, caught in the razor edge interface between the Gutenberg explosion and the electronic implosion must, if he is going to teach effectively, be willing (as McLuhan was himself) to study their students' popular culture to set up a more meaningful dialogue."

-comment made by McLuhan on the CBC Telescope program on July 12, 1967

McLuhan's words, which greeted the attenders of this media session on a billboard at the door, pretty well summarize the presenters' position. To offer the audience a chance to begin their study of their students' popular culture, Dr. Jerry Sparks, University of Georgia, gave a quick mini-course in pop culture, prefaced by Bob Dylan singing "The Times They Area A Changin'" and a three minute history of America called "An American Time Capsule."

Dr. Dan Kirby, University of Georgia, then discussed the meaning of popular culture as opposed to both "high" culture (the elite) and "low" culture (folk) and suggested that the latter two often blend into the popular, mass culture in the advertising world and in such phenomena as "rock opera." He also suggested that a study of the "Pop Hero" would aid one's understanding of mass culture.

Trying to understand popular culture need not--must not--lead to abandonment of standards and precedents. The only pose more exasperating than despising all forms of popular culture is extolling them all. To an elitist critic, popular art never reaches the profundity and subtlety of "private" artists; by their standards, they are obviously right. Popular art says relax; private art says stretch. Popular art tends to be neither complicated nor profound; private art, to be both. Yet popular culture, with its many forms, reflects attitudes and anxieties of most people; sometimes it reflects them very well, indeed.

Who, after all, has the right to prescribe what is "good" or "great?" Aren't relativity and tolerance required in cultural as well as in moral or political judgments? Isn't it better that different cultural segments try to understand instead of condemn one another? (from PARAMETERS OF POPULAR CULTURE. Marshall Fishwick, Bowling Green University Popular Press: Bowling Green, Ohio. pp. 1-2.)

REFLECTIONS ON YOUR CONFERENCE

SANDRA E. GIBBS, NCTE Representative

How nice it would be if we could all enter a corner of each other's minds and really see how we feel about this wonderful conference. And it has been that hasn't it? Wonderful because of the very hard work of the people on the Advisory Planning Committee. And of course because of people like you out there--the participants. You, of course, have made "Your Conference."

My reflections on this conference? No, I prefer to think that these are our reflections because, while we can not enter each other's minds, the way we feel is reflected in our eyes, in our smiles, and in that round of applause we just gave.

This has been an intellectually challenging conference which has probed some of the questions to which those in the profession must seek answers. We have heard some things with which we agree and some with which we disagree, but, in both instances, we have been prompted to think.

The most controversial topics have been those which have included comments on "The Students' Right to Their Own Language." I would urge you to read the background to the statement carefully and not just react to the title. Teachers are not being told that they have no rights. Rather, we are being advised to broaden our knowledge about language and language speakers.

The most rewarding aspects of the conference have been the opportunities for teachers at all levels to listen to each other and to share ideas. There has been a lot of interaction--useful dialogue--so that each of us can carry something away.

This conference has sought ways to close the division between literature and all of the language skills. The discussions have shown that we realize that we can no longer continue to fragment the components of our profession. For whatever we call ourselves--literature teachers, language arts, composition, critics, English--the fact is that we are all engaged in teaching language skills, in showing students ways they can extend their knowledge about language.

In your discussion sessions, in the various strands, you have sought the most effective ways possible for making all students' encounters with you intellectually and personally rewarding. There has been a strong emphasis on individualization and creative activities much as film, drama, and non-verbal skills. You have made efforts to find out ways of incorporating such things in your classes.

I think the tone was set for a productive conference when Katie Letcher Lyle encouraged us to bare some of the skeletons in the English/language arts curricula. And that is what we must do. We must face our profession and what we are doing in it and with it. We must be honest with ourselves and our students. I think that you who have participated in this conference realize this.

At a time when salaries are being frozen, faculties being reduced, and communities are increasingly questioning what goes on in classrooms, it is significant that we have gathered and engaged in dialogue on the teaching of English and the language arts. Our profession is an important one, and the most important part of it is that it deals with communication. If we remember that there is always room for change and growth in communication, we will find our experiences with students and with our colleagues much more rewarding.

I hope that you will continue to be forward looking and willing to meet in summer conferences such as this so that others may see that Georgia English/language arts teachers are constantly seeking ways to help themselves and their students become more knowledgeable about language.

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

Mary J. Tingle, University of Georgia

This summary of the Conference is highly subjective in its emphases and its tone; it is based upon your notes on your reactions and upon my observations and impressions.

The structure of the conference seems to have been satisfactory, providing as it did opportunities for participants to follow one topic throughout the conference or to vary according to interests. The "flea market" of materials displayed from different schools, the textbook exhibits provided by publishers, and new films from the State Department of Education were especially interesting. Requests for changes in the program included suggestions for the addition of sessions on the school newspaper, literary publications, and annuals.

Two special participants contributed much to the conference through their presentation of ideas that suggested and coordinated much of the thinking evidenced in the sessions. Katie Letcher Lyle, author of I Will Go Barefoot All Summer for You, using her small son's interest in "skellingtons" to provide a term, emphasized the need for anything done with language to come from deep inside the person where the"skellington" is. Sandra E. Gibson, from the National Council of Teachers of English, presented the concept of student-centered teaching in a forceful manner. Both continued to add their competencies to sessions throughout the conference.

As I listened to discussions in the group sessions and in informal meetings about what constitutes good teaching, about what has worked in classrooms, and about basic beliefs underlying practices, I was aware that the ideas were not new, that they have been talked about over and over again.

Recurring notions that surfaced from the discussions were such as (1) when a student knows that he has been successful in a learning situation, he has confidence to attempt further learning, (2) students are the focal points in teaching, and teachers have to look at their students before they know what and how to teach, (3) teaching is a multi-faced process and requires multi-faceted procedures, (4) an interchange of ideas through oral discussion and sharing of written communications increases perception, provides direction, and creates enthusiasm for individual work, (5) the teaching of the integrity of the language and integrity in the use of the language is the work of the English teacher.

All of these ideas have been in the educational forum for so long that they seem trite - and they are trite so long as they are only intellectualized and verbalized. The exciting aspect of this

conference lay in the active acceptance and enthusiastic satisfaction derived from their application to classroom procedures. There was a forward looking, outgoing approach to teaching that has been developing throughout the life of this conference and promises that teachers are finding that their abilities are quite sufficient to turn the "ideal" into practice.

Each year the conference is "the best." Next year's will, I am sure, not break the trend. We'll see you all then.

LOOKING FORWARD

James M. Brewbaker, GCTE President

At our opening session, I suggested, in effect, that each of us would get out of this conference what we put into it. The people here, in my opinion, were to be the conference's most important resource, and our collective ability to reach out and get in touch with everyone else would be what would make this day and a half together extraordinary. Because of all the good, positive things I've heard and all the good, positive feelings I've absorbed, I'm convinced that reaching out and getting in touch has been our major activity here. It wasn't on the program, of course, but it happened just the same. Through reaching out, many of you have found a tentative solution to a problem you face as an English teacher, others have found a sympathetic audience that listened to that pet idea you've been wanting to share, and yet others have found new friends, new connections, a hand to grasp or a face to look forward to seeing again next year. All this convinces me that ours was an exceptional conference this year, the best yet.

But my topic is "Looking Forward," so looking forward is what I shall do. There is one idea I'd like you to leave here with today: your success as a classroom teacher and the success of the organized profession of English language arts teachers in Georgia depends to a great extent on your willingness to reach out and get in touch--just as we have done here--both in the classroom and in your profession. This is a simple idea, but one I'm convinced we fail to put into practice when we need to most.

Imagine an English language arts classroom in which the group--teacher and students--has been activated to the point that growth like we have seen here is taking place almost every day. Can you see it? Kids coming to kids, dealing with real problems, sharing, building, growing, connecting--all with language as the unifying force, the glue, the catalyst that makes it all work. Have you ever worked in a classroom like that, where "Englishing" (not English) is the process and the needs and interests of students are the content? If not, recall your experience at this conference. By breaking down barriers, by structuring your classroom so that it is people-centered and not thing-centered, you can have five growth-nuturing communities a day. English classes, to be sure, but so much more.

Now that your imagine is finely tuned, let's try one more fantasy, perhaps even more outlandish. This time imagine, if you can, an organization like GCTE which, all over the state, does the same kind of thing we've done here. This imaginary group, over three thousand members strong, comprises a community extending from Rome to Valdosta, from Enigma to Hinesville, from Augusta to Columbus. Growth is its guiding force. Unity is its hallmark--English and language arts

teachers dealing with common problems, educating decision makers and the public about what is needed to make language growth a reality for Georgia children and adolescents, rising up to handle forces that threaten our freedom to teach as professionals. Imagine a profession of doers, not "done to's," organized English teachers characterized by action and suggestions, not reaction and complaint. Reaching out, getting in touch--these are our key to a more vital Council in Georgia. Organized English teachers, to be sure, but so much more.

So, to repeat myself sermon-fashion, what I am looking forward to in English language arts classrooms and in the Georgia Council of Teachers of English is the same degree of human connectedness we've experienced here. Because I've seen it here, because I've seen it in English classes--though not nearly enough, and because I've seen professional groups rise above the red tape to become powerful voices for their members, I know it can happen in your classroom and in your professional organization, GCTE. Your officers are ready to make it happen are you?

The Fifth Annual Conference

on The Teaching of the English Language Arts

July 15-16, 1976

The University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Athens

Planning Committee for 1976 Conference

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