DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 151 796 CS 203 977

AUTHOR Applebee, Arthur N.
TITLE A Survey of Teaching Conditions in English, 1977.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.; National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 78
CONTRACT 400-75-0029
NOTE 78p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (Stock No. 49502, $2.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Class Size; Composition (Literary); *Educational Trends; *English Curriculum; English Departments; *English Instruction; Questionnaires; *School Surveys; *Senior High Schools; Student Testing; *Teaching Conditions; Teaching Load
IDENTIFIERS National Council of Teachers of English

ABSTRACT

In 1977, to determine current conditions in the teaching of English, a questionnaire was distributed from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) headquarters to a selected sample of secondary schools. Four populations were chosen for study: schools that had participated in a 1968 study, schools that had consistently produced winners in NCTE's Achievement Awards in Writing competition, schools noted for making special efforts to reduce class size in English, and a random sample of schools nationally. This report presents the results obtained from 316 schools (51 percent response rate). Separate chapters describe the data regarding class size, teaching load, and the teaching of composition; the organization of the curriculum; the English department; and testing in English. The final chapter summarizes results from the national sample and considers some of the differences in the other groups of schools. A copy of the questionnaire is included. (GW)

A Survey of Teaching Conditions in English, 1977

Arthur N. Applebee
National Council of Teachers of English

ERIC ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communications Skills

NCTE National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801

NCTE Stock Number 49502

Published 1978

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills
and National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Applebee, Arthur N
A survey of teaching conditions in English, 1977
Prepared under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English.
Bibliography: p.
1. English language—Study and teaching (Secondary)—United States. I. National Council of Teachers of English. II. Title.
LB1631.A6 420'.7'1273 78-4963
ISBN 0-8141-4950-2

Contents

List of Tables

Acknowledgments

The impetus for this study came from Robert F. Hogan, NCTE Executive Director. Roger K. Applebee, Robert Beck, Lowell S. Coats, Edmund J. Farrell, John C. Maxwell, Zora Rashkis, James R. Squire, Jonathan Swift, and Robert Squires each read and reacted in detail to early versions of the questionnaire used. To each of them, my thanks for the time they took from already busy schedules.

1 Introduction to the Survey

Background

The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a series of studies of conditions in the teaching of English. Arno Jewett's (1958) survey of 285 courses of study was the first major attempt to provide a systematic description of conditions nationally since Dora V. Smith's major investigation, published in 1932. Jewett's review was followed by four other studies: J. N. Hook's (1961) questionnaire study of English departments in schools that had produced winners in the NCTE Achievement Awards program; two reports from the Committee on National Interest (Squire, 1961, 1964), synthesizing previous findings as well as reporting results from surveys of their own; and finally James Squire and Roger Applebee's (1968) National Study of High School English programs, a two-and-a-half year study of schools selected for their outstanding programs in English.

These studies provided fairly comprehensive information about what teachers of English were doing, as well as about how conditions and approaches in "outstanding" schools differed from those in more typical or "average" schools. It was a period of concern with an "academic" model for the English curriculum, a period that emphasized special programs for the academically talented, the tripod of language, literature, and composition, and the "discipline" of English. But the late 1960s and early 1970s were years of tremendous stress and change, for schools as well as for the nation. Traditional assumptions were challenged by the traumas of Vietnam and Watergate, by the vocal and sometimes violent protests of minority groups, by the special stresses of life in deteriorating inner cities, and, finally, by tightened budgets and dwindling school enrollments.

These and other forces combined to alter the nature of the professional dialogue about the teaching of English. Instead of a high school course borrowing heavily from the techniques and approaches of the college classroom, teachers began to write about elective programs, classroom drama, small group discussion, about

lessons on sexism and racism, about "making it relevant," and about "public doublespeak" and the language of deception. In another part of their professional lives, teachers became more involved in union activities, and occasionally in teachers' strikes.

There are then many reasons to expect that conditions have changed since the last round of studies of the high school English curriculum, but because there have been no systematic follow-up studies or new national surveys, we know very little about the extent to which conditions in the schools parallel the changes that have been reflected in the professional literature.

Survey Design

What then is the condition of English? To begin to trace the changes that have been occurring, a questionnaire survey, entirely supported by the National Council of Teachers of English, was conducted from NCTE headquarters during the spring of 1977. Because teaching load has emerged as a major concern of NCTE members (see Chapter 2), the survey focused primarily on teaching load and teaching conditions. It also provided an opportunity to obtain at least some information on a number of other areas of concern to the Council, including the preparation and continuing education of teachers of English, the supervision and coordination of instruction, the use of standardized tests, and the organization of the English curriculum.

After the general focus of the survey had been determined, instruments used in previous studies (Squire and Applebee, 1968; Hook, 1961; Squire, 1964) were reviewed for questions which could be used or adapted. Where possible, original wording was maintained. In order to gain as much information as possible from a limited number of questionnaires, the instrument was designed to be completed by department heads rather than by individual teachers; this necessitated changes in the wording of a number of the questions. A preliminary version of the questionnaire was circulated to a number of individuals who had conducted earlier surveys or who were active in the NCTE Conference for Secondary School English Department Chairs; they were asked to complete the questionnaire for their own schools where appropriate, as well as to comment upon the questions. Their reactions were taken into account in preparing the final, four-page questionnaire (Appendix C). The questionnaire was constructed so that the first two pages could be used separately as a survey focusing more specifically on teaching load.

Sample Selection

Samples were selected to allow comparisons with earlier surveys of schools nationally as well as with surveys of schools that have met with unusual success in their English programs. Four populations were chosen for study: schools in Squire and Applebee's (1968) study; schools which had consistently produced winners in NCTE's Achievement Awards in Writing competition; schools which had been named to the NCTE Honor Rolls of schools making outstanding efforts to reduce class size in English; and secondary schools nationally.

Squire and Applebee Schools

Between 1963 and 1965, James Squire and Roger Applebee studied a sample of 116 public secondary schools selected for "outstanding" programs in English. The selection criteria for half of the schools included having had one or more winners in the NCTE Achievement Awards competition during at least four of the previous five years; the other half were chosen on the basis of recommendations from national and state experts in the teaching of English. Analyses indicated that programs and conditions in the two samples did not differ significantly from one another; the final report pools results from the two groups. Of the original 116 schools, 8 had closed or consolidated, leaving 108 schools for the follow-up study.

Achievement Awards Schools

The NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing program has been recognizing high school juniors for excellence in writing for some twenty years. Entrants are nominated by their English teachers; they are judged on the basis of (1) an impromptu theme written under controlled conditions and (2) a sample of their best writing. Over 7,000 high school juniors from the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and American schools abroad compete; the number of winners allowed in each state is equal to the number of the state's representatives in Congress. In sampling schools which had consistently had winners, the criterion from the Squire and Applebee study was used: 150 schools had had at least one winner in four of the previous five competitions. (Unlike the Squire and Applebee survey, this sample contained a number of private and parochial schools.) Of the 150, 17 had been part of the Squire and Applebee study, leaving 133 to be separately studied.

Honor Roll Schools

At the 1961 convention, the NCTE Board of Directors recommended the development of a national Honor Roll of Schools Reducing Teaching Load in English. Council leaders, district administrators, and state superintendents of public instruction distributed nomination forms, leading to an initial Honor Roll (1962) of 89 schools; a supplement listing 50 more schools was published the following year. At the 1966 convention the question of an Honor Roll arose again, and a similar list of 100 schools was published the following year. Of these, 60 had appeared on the 1962–63 Honor Roll and 40 were newly listed.

Although the selection criteria were flexible enough to accommodate different modes of organization of instruction, a major consideration in drawing up the lists was that the schools should conform to the Council's policy on teacher load, which at that time asserted that the overall assignment for a high school teacher of English should be limited to the equivalent of four classes of not more than twenty-five students per class.

Of the 179 individual schools on the Honor Rolls, 16 were also part of the Squire and Applebee or Achievement Awards samples, and 23 had closed or consolidated, leaving 140 to be separately followed up in 1977. (These included a number of independent and parochial schools, as well as some junior high schools.)

Random Sample

The three samples described above were all selected because of some unusual aspect of their program. Results from them are difficult to interpret without some indication of how they compare to schools in general. To provide at least a rough baseline for such comparisons, a small national sample was also surveyed. For this sample, a nonoverlapping list of 240 schools was randomly drawn from a mailing list of all secondary schools nationally, which NCTE maintains for the Achievement Awards in Writing program. This list includes public, private, and parochial secondary schools, but does not include schools which do not teach the senior high school grades.

Procedures

In early March 1977, a preliminary letter was sent to department heads in each of the schools to be sampled. This letter described the

survey and the reasons it was being conducted, said the questionnaire would arrive one week later, and asked that time be set aside to complete it. One week later, the questionnaire was mailed with a postpaid reply envelope; the covering letter also offered to send a free copy of either of two Council pamphlets to teachers returning the questionnaire. Four weeks after that a follow-up letter was sent to nonrespondents, together with a copy of the questionnaire and a second reply envelope.

Identical covering letters were sent to all four samples; the letters did not indicate that special attention was being paid to Squire and Applebee, Achievement Awards, or Honor Roll schools, in order to avoid biasing the responses. Honor Roll schools, about which earlier information is limited to teaching load, received only the first two pages of the four-page questionnaire.

Response Rates

All replies received within nine weeks of the mailing of the preliminary letter were analyzed. Table 1 summarizes response rates for the four samples. Of the 621 schools surveyed, 316 (51 percent) returned their questionnaires before the cutoff date. (Another 5 schools returned questionnaires after the cutoff date; 2 replied by letter without completing the questionnaire.) As would be expected, response rates varied with the degree of commitment

Table 1

Response Rates

Sample	Number of schools sampled	Number of questionnaires completed	Percent of response rate
Squire and Applebee	108	63	58.3
Achievement Awards	133	86	64.7
Honor Roll	140	71	50.7
Random	240	96	40.0
Northeast	178	87	48.9
Central	200	117	58.5
Southeast	113	55	48.7
West	130	57	43.8
All	621	316	50.9

to NCTE: the best response was obtained from schools with winners in the Achievement Awards in Writing program (65 percent); the lowest rate was obtained from the random sample (40 percent).

To examine the extent to which responses were representative of the various regions of the U.S., the states were divided into Northeast, Central, Southeast, and West, using the divisions used by the National Assessment in their analyses (Appendix B). Schools in the Central region, closest to NCTE headquarters geographically, had the highest response rate (59 percent); schools in the West had the lowest (44 percent).

Response rates for the present study were neither unusually good nor unusually poor. By way of comparison, we can note that Hook's (1961) survey of schools with Achievement Awards winners during either of the first two years of the program had approximately a 90 percent response rate; the Committee on National Interest's (Squire, 1964) survey of a random sample of schools had a 25 percent rate of response.

Sample Descriptions

The 316 schools which replied to the questionnaire included 11 independent schools, 8 parochial schools, and 6 junior high schools. Since these samples were too small to allow meaningful inferences about conditions, these schools were dropped from the main analyses. This left as the primary sample 291 public secondary schools including the senior high school grades. (Since department heads sometimes omitted individual items on the questionnaire, the number of responses varied from question to question and will be indicated for each set of tabled results.)

Table 2 summarizes data from a variety of questions related to general characteristics of the schools in the four samples. It is clear that the schools in the random sample differed in a number of ways from those in the other three samples. In contrast to the Honor Roll, Squire and Applebee, and Achievement Awards schools, the schools in the random sample had a smaller proportion of students with parents in professional, managerial, skilled, or semi-skilled occupations; had a lower percentage of students going on to junior or four-year colleges; were more likely to be located in small town or rural areas; paid their teachers lower salaries; and had smaller total enrollments and smaller graduating classes. Put more simply, the data suggest the familiar finding that one of the major factors

distinguishing "outstanding" schools from schools in general is the relatively privileged socioeconomic status of their communities.

Data from the National Center for Education Statistics indicate that 18 percent of the U.S. public secondary schools are in the Northeast, 31 percent in the Central region, 24 percent in the Southeast, and 27 percent in the West (Foster and Carpenter, 1976; Table 9). In the Squire and Applebee, Achievement Awards, and random samples, the regions were represented in proportions

Table 2

Sample Characteristics: Public High Schools[a]

Item	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
Mean percent of professional, managerial, skilled or semi-skilled	76.9 (59)	83.8 (74)	76.0 (61)	42.3 (85)
Mean percent of white pupils	75.4 (62)	87.7 (77)	86.5 (59)	86.6 (87)
Mean percent going on to junior or four-year college	59.3 (53)	64.6 (71)	57.1 (56)	42.6 (84)
Percent in:	(63)	(78)	(62)	(88)
large cities (200,000+)	30.2	17.9	1.6	5.7
medium cities (25,000+)	39.7	30.8	14.5	8.0
suburban areas	23.8	37.2	53.2	13.6
small town or rural	6.3	11.5	29.0	69.3
other	0.0	2.6	1.6	3.4
Percent from:	(63)	(78)	(62)	(88)
Northeast	15.9	19.2	50.0	21.6
Central	41.3	37.2	37.1	38.6
Southeast	19.0	24.4	4.8	20.5
West	23.8	19.2	8.1	19.3
Maximum salary, full-time English teachers	$17,530 (61)	$18,611 (72)	$18,779 (57)	$15,395 (69)
Minimum salary, full-time English teachers	$ 9,422 (62)	$ 9,598 (69)	$ 9,578 (56)	$ 8,757 (72)
Number of students	1,933 (63)	1,990 (78)	1,313 (61)	959 (88)
Number in last year's graduating class	464 (60)	569 (75)	340 (61)	187 (87)

[a]Figures in parentheses indicate number of schools responding.

differing only slightly from these national figures: the West tended to be slightly underrepresented and the Central states, overrepresented. (This was primarily a result of differences in response rates; see Table 1.) Reflecting the erratic geographical distribution of the original lists. Honor Roll schools came disproportionately from Northeastern states (50 percent) with correspondingly low representation in the Southeast (5 percent) and West (8 percent).

As already noted, schools in the random sample tended to be smaller than in the other three groups; indeed these schools were, on the average, less than half the size of the Squire and Applebee or Achievement Awards schools. Previous studies have found that school size tends to be related to class load and teaching conditions: large schools tend to have larger classes, small schools to have smaller ones. Preliminary analyses of the data in the present study indicated that a similar relationship obtained: mean number of students per teacher correlated .32 ($n = 266$) with school size. Because of this, the samples were further divided on the basis of school size into those with fewer than 500 students, those with 500 to 2499, and those with 2500 or more. (The division was chosen to insure that conditions within each group of schools would be as similar as possible.) Table 3 summarizes the resulting frequencies; only medium-sized schools were well-represented in all four of the samples. Though results from large and small schools will also be reported, they must be interpreted with caution.

Table 3

Sample Sizes: Public High Schools

Sample	School enrollment			
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	All
Squire and Applebee	0	57	6	63
Achievement Awards	0	63	15	78
Honor Roll	7	52	3	62
Random	36	45	7	88
All	43	217	31	291

2 Class Size, Teaching Load, and the Teaching of Composition

Background

During the spring of 1976, the NCTE/SLATE Steering Committee on Social and Political Concerns asked NCTE members to identify the most important issues facing the profession. "Teaching load in English and [in] the language arts" emerged as the highest priority among the nearly 3,000 teachers who responded. Yet in spite of this concern, we know very little about current loads for teachers of English. Daniel Fader, in his tenth anniversary edition of *Hooked on Books* (1976), asserted that "the figure of thirty percent is a restrained estimate of the average rise in class size throughout the United States. Though I think forty percent may be nearer the true figure (from 25 students in 1950 to 35 students in 1975), I accept the conservative estimate that teachers who once had 25 students in their class now have thirty-three" (p. 6).

In a time of tight school budgets, Fader's comments ring true; yet statistics from the National Center for Educational Statistics indicate that, considering all subject areas and public school grade levels, pupil-teacher ratios have fallen from 28 students per teacher in the fall of 1954 to 20 in the fall of 1975 (Foster and Carpenter, 1976; p. 4). Though there are always large discrepancies between actual class size and school-wide teacher-pupil estimates, one would at least expect Fader and the National Center for Education Statistics to agree about whether loads are going up or down.

Official NCTE policy, adopted at the November 1976 Board of Directors meeting, recommends that full-time secondary school teachers of English be assigned a load of not more than 100 students. This policy parallels the older recommendation of no more than four classes per day of approximately 25 students per class.

It was against this background of official policy and contrasting reports of conditions that questions about teaching load and teaching conditions were incorporated into the present survey.

Table 4

Number of Classes Taught

Periods in day and classes taught	Percent of schools			
	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
Five or fewer periods				
Four or fewer classes	3.4	1.3	3.4	2.4
Five classes	0.0	3.9	0.0	2.4
Six periods				
Four or fewer classes	10.2	6.6	11.9	0.0
Five classes	33.9	38.2	22.0	25.0
Six classes	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.1
Seven periods				
Four or fewer classes	3.4	3.9	3.4	3.6
Five classes	28.8	9.2	18.6	26.2
Six classes	0.0	2.6	1.7	16.7
Eight or more periods				
Four or fewer classes	1.7	13.2	10.2	3.6
Five classes	16.7	19.7	27.1	11.9
Six classes	1.7	1.3	1.7	1.2
All				
Four or fewer classes	18.6	25.0	28.8	9.5
Five classes	79.7	71.1	67.8	65.5
Six classes	1.7	3.9	3.4	25.0
Number of schools	59	76	59	84

Table 5

Size of Tenth and Twelfth Grade English Classes

Class size	Percent of schools			
	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
below 16	5.3	4.5	9.6	6.0
16 to 20	13.9	12.1	13.3	15.4
21 to 25	25.5	31.0	33.6	19.7
26 to 30	38.2	37.4	29.7	28.7
31 to 35	12.6	11.8	8.6	24.0
36 to 40	4.2	3.1	5.4	6.2
above 40	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0
Number of classes	2835	3835	2000	1967
Number of schools	63	78	62	88

Information was sought about the number of classes taught each day, the number of pupils per class, and the mean number of pupils per teacher, as well as about out-of-class and extracurricular responsibilities of the English department. Since discussions of teaching load in English have most often been presented in the context of the teaching of composition, relationships between load and selected aspects of composition instruction were also investigated.

Teaching Loads

In general, schools are still a long way from achieving the goal of four classes per day. Department heads were asked to indicate how many of their full-time teachers of English were assigned more than four classes. In the random sample, 91.3 percent of the 632 teachers reported on taught more than four classes per day. Conditions were somewhat better in the other three samples, but even in the Honor Roll schools, where loads were lightest, 64.8 percent of the 764 teachers taught more than four classes per day.

Table 4 summarizes results from a related series of questions, in which department heads reported typical teaching assignments and number of periods in the school day. From these responses, it is clear that a secondary school English teacher usually meets five classes in a six- or seven-period day; fully a quarter of the schools in the random sample expected their teachers to meet with six classes per day. Most schools schedule 50- or 55-minute periods (27 and 35 percent, respectively, in the random sample); pooling samples, 90 percent of the department heads reported that typical class periods lasted between 40 and 55 minutes.

Size of Tenth and Twelfth Grade Classes

Department heads were also asked to indicate the number of English classes with enrollments that fell within specified ranges. Table 5 summarizes the results for tenth and twelfth grade classes combined. In the random sample, 30 percent of the classes had more than 30 students; 59 percent exceeded the 25-per-class criterion. Again, conditions were slightly better in the three samples selected for their outstanding programs, but even in the Honor Roll schools some 44 percent of the tenth and twelfth grade English classes had more than 25 students.

In short, a typical secondary school English teacher can expect to teach five classes in a six- or seven-period day, with 26 to 30 students per class.

Students Taught Daily

Department heads' estimates of the total number of students taught were nonetheless slightly lower than the 130 to 150 students per day that those figures might suggest. Another question asked about the average number of students taught daily by full-time teachers of English. If we take into account the fact that in a large school the figure reported by the department head describes conditions affecting more teachers and students than does the figure reported by the head of a small department, the best estimate of the load of the average English teacher in this survey is 127 students per day. Detailed results for all four samples are summarized in Table 6.

Teaching loads are in general lighter in the Squire and Applebee, Achievement Awards, and Honor Roll schools. Loads also tend to be directly related to school size: the larger the school, the higher the load is likely to be. Pupil load appears to have been particularly low in the small schools in the random sample; this seems to be a result of the constraints of very small total enrollments rather than of a conscious effort to keep class size down. In medium and large schools in the random sample, where teaching load more directly

Table 6

Average Number of Students Taught Per Day by Full-Time English Teacher[a]

Sample	School enrollment			All
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	
Squire and Applebee	(0)[b]	116.1 (759)	129.9 (126)	118.0
Achievement Awards	(0)	118.4 (781)	116.8 (413)	117.9
Honor Roll	117.2 (17)	109.7 (620)	110.3 (99)	110.0
Random	95.5 (64)	125.0 (287)	143.1 (160)	127.0
All	100.0	116.3	123.3	
Number of teachers	81	2447	798	
Number of schools	33	183	30	

[a] Based on department heads' reports.
[b] Figures in parentheses indicate number of teachers.

reflects administrative and budgetary decisions, the teachers had noticeably larger loads.

Large schools which have consistently produced winners in the Achievement Awards in Writing competition seem to have resisted the general large-school trend toward higher teaching loads. Although loads in these schools were still about seventeen students higher than NCTE recommendations, they were comparable with those in smaller Achievement Awards schools.

Collective Bargaining

Department heads in 28 percent of the schools in the random sample indicated that loads were governed by collective bargaining agreements, although the likelihood of such agreements varied sharply with school size (Table 7). Large schools were much more likely to have collective bargaining agreements than were small schools. In the random sample these agreements made no special provisions for teachers of English, though special provisions were reported by 15 percent of the Honor Roll schools, 8 percent of the Squire and Applebee schools, and 7 percent of the Achievement Awards schools.

It is legitimate to ask what effect such provisions actually have on teaching load; but in a status survey, the interpretation of relationships between contracts and reported loads is uncertain. Does one expect to find such contract provisions in schools where

Table 7

Percent of Schools with Collective Bargaining Agreements Related to Teaching Load[a]

Sample	School enrollment			All
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	
Squire and Applebee	(0)	47.3 (55)	66.7 (6)	49.2
Achievement Awards	(0)	39.7 (58)	46.7 (15)	41.0
Honor Roll	50.0 (6)	60.8 (51)	66.7 (3)	60.0
Random	18.2 (33)	28.6 (42)	71.4 (7)	28.0

[a]Figures in parentheses represent number of schools.

conditions are bad, forcing teachers to bargain for lighter loads? Or would one expect that, because there are contract provisions related to load, load in such schools should be lighter than in schools in general? In the present survey there was, in fact, little evident difference in loads in schools with and without collective bargaining agreements. Table 8 pools results from the four samples, and suggests that, with the possible exception of very small schools, teaching loads are essentially the same. How much worse loads might have been without the agreements, however, cannot be determined from the data.

Some Comparisons

The data from this survey suggest that teaching loads are in general lighter than Fader's bleak estimates, but we still need to ask how they compare with those from earlier studies. The figures suggest that, no matter how conditions may have fluctuated in the intervening years, the lot of the typical secondary school English teacher today is not a great deal different than in the early 1960s. To recall the earlier studies, in the spring of 1963 NCTE obtained questionnaire responses from over 7,000 teachers, and concluded that the typical classroom teacher taught five English classes in a six-period day, and met 125 to 150 students (Squire, 1964). Fifty-five percent of the teachers met more than 125 students a day, a figure which is essentially unchanged at 50 percent in 1977. In the schools in the Squire and Applebee study, teachers reported average loads of 130 students per day in 1963–65; these same schools reported a decrease to 118 in the spring of 1977. The

Table 8

Mean Daily Teaching Load in Schools with and Schools without Collective Bargaining Agreements[a]

Agreements related to load?	School enrollment		
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499
Yes	104.5	117.1	124.9
Number of schools	8	77	18
No	95.7	118.1	124.6
Number of schools	22	98	12

[a] Combined results from Squire and Applebee, Achievement Awards, Honor Roll, and Random samples.

number of teachers meeting four or fewer classes per day had also decreased, however, from 41 percent in the original survey to 27 percent in 1977.

The Honor Roll schools are something of a special case: originally singled out for having made an unusual effort to improve teaching load in English, they might be expected to have increased loads for their teachers during the intervening years even if conditions nationally had improved. The changes, summarized in Table 9, indicate that, in spite of the fifteen years since the first Honor Roll was compiled, loads in these schools are still markedly better than in schools in general. If individual schools rather than average figures are considered, 29 percent of the schools from the 1962–63 Honor Roll and 46 percent of those from the 1967 Honor Roll could still meet NCTE's recommended load of 100 students per teacher.

Although the average teaching load has remained fairly constant, that average conceals many teachers carrying much heavier loads. Another question in the current survey asked the department head to indicate the maximum number of students taught by any full-time English teacher. These figures are reported in Table 10. In the random sample, 43 percent of the schools had at least one

Table 9

Average Daily Teaching Load in Honor Roll Schools[a]

Sample	1962–63	1967
Small schools	101.7 (*9*)[b]	91.7 (*3*)
Medium-size schools	112.4 (*38*)	107.2 (*42*)
Large schools	113.8 (*4*)	115.0 (*3*)
All	110.6 (*51*)	106.1 (*48*)
Load at time of Honor Roll	102.7 (*139*)	100.0[c] (*100*)

[a]These figures include independent and parochial schools, junior high schools, and schools which had winners of Achievement Awards in Writing or which were part of the Squire and Applebee study. These have been added in order to allow comparisons with the original samples, which also included them.

[b]Figures in parentheses indicate the number of schools represented.

[c]The average load was not reported in 1967, but one of the selection criteria was that teachers be assigned not more than 100 students per day.

teacher teaching 150 or more students. Comparable levels were reported for schools in the Squire and Applebee and the Achievement Awards samples.

Table 10

Maximum Daily Pupil Load

Maximum pupil load	Percent of schools			
	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
100 or fewer	5.5	1.6	8.7	17.0
101–125	23.6	25.0	43.5	17.0
126–149	25.5	35.9	37.0	22.6
150 or more	45.5	37.5	10.9	43.4
Number of schools	55	64	46	53

Other Aspects of Load

The number of students taught each day is of course only a very crude estimate of a teacher's workload. The extent and nature of support services within a school, the motivation of the students, parental cooperation, community pressures, the organization of the English program, the type of facilities—these and many other factors may lighten or increase the teacher's load. Although many of these factors could not be investigated in an already-lengthy questionnaire, a few issues directly related to the responsibilities of the English teacher were investigated further.

Table 11 summarizes results from a series of questions about selected activities for which English teachers have often taken responsibility. Responses from the department heads indicated that in the great majority of schools, English teachers were responsible for the school yearbook, for the school newspaper, and for speech and drama clubs, as well as for such general duties as chaperoning, patrolling corridors, and monitoring lunchrooms. Achievement Awards schools appeared somewhat less likely than schools nationally to assign teachers the non-instructional responsibilities represented by corridor duty, lunch duty, and chaperoning.

In those cases where extra duties were regularly assigned, department heads were asked to indicate whether the teachers received extra pay for the assignment. In the majority of schools in all four samples, yearbook and newspaper both carried extra pay; corridor, lunch, and chaperoning duties usually did not.

As part of another series of questions, department heads were asked about study hall assignments. In 52 percent of schools in the random sample, English teachers were "occasionally" or "often" assigned study halls in addition to their regular teaching assignments. Honor Roll schools were more likely to assign study halls (64 percent) than were the schools in the other samples; Achievement Awards schools were least likely to assign them (35 percent).

When the Honor Rolls of schools reducing class size in English were issued in 1962-63 and again in 1967, the accompanying statement listed a number of actions which schools could take to reduce the load of the English teacher. These included reducing the number of separate preparations for each English teacher to no more than one or two by assigning classes studying similar content; employing outside theme readers to assist in evaluating and correcting student papers; scheduling English classes on a rotation basis so that a teacher with five classes would meet each for only four hours weekly; providing double periods of English, thereby reducing the total number of student contacts and increasing the time available for teacher-student conferences; and reducing responsibility for supervising out-of-class activities such as speech, drama, and journalism.

Table 11

Out-of-Class Responsibilities of English Teachers

Responsibilities		Percent of schools: Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
Yearbook	paid	63.5	56.4	70.5	55.7
	unpaid	15.9	16.7	4.9	17.0
Newspaper	paid	63.5	56.4	67.2	51.1
	unpaid	23.8	23.1	8.2	30.7
Speech or drama clubs	paid	58.7	57.1	73.8	43.2
	unpaid	30.2	24.7	14.8	37.5
Student Council	paid	15.9	24.4	32.8	22.7
	unpaid	30.2	15.4	9.8	15.9
Corridor duty	paid	4.8	0.0	3.3	2.3
	unpaid	55.6	48.7	60.7	64.8
Lunch duty	paid	7.9	5.1	8.2	8.0
	unpaid	44.4	39.7	45.9	51.1
Chaperoning	paid	14.3	19.2	24.6	21.6
	unpaid	50.8	39.7	37.7	51.1
Number of schools		63	78[a]	61	88

[a]N = 77 for speech or drama clubs.

When the status of these suggestions was investigated in the current survey, the responses suggested that very few schools have attempted to reduce load in these ways. As we have just seen, out-of-class responsibilities are still very much a part of the load of the English teacher, although now they usually entail extra pay. (Many schools which have eliminated these responsibilities have done so by making yearbook and newspaper production special elective classes open to interested students; they thus become part of the normal teaching load rather than after-school extras.)

Number of Preparations

Department heads' reports indicated that in the random sample, 81 percent of high school English teachers had more than two preparations per day. In the Achievement Awards and Squire and Applebee schools, conditions were somewhat better, though the majority of teachers still had more than two preparations (56 and 57 percent, respectively). This aspect of load appears to favor larger schools, where there is more likelihood of parallel classes and hence more opportunity for parallel teaching assignments. In the random sample, all of the teachers in small schools had more than two preparations per day; in large schools, the comparable figure was 62 percent.

In many schools, however, reducing workload through parallel assignments is no longer feasible. Numerous English departments have replaced parallel classes of English I, English II, English III, and English IV with a multiplicity of electives, each requiring separate and often extensive preparation. Data on such courses are reported in Chapter 3.

Scheduling of Classes

Double-period English classes and rotated four-day-a-week scheduling would seem well-suited for such programs, but the evidence suggests that these options are little used. In the random sample, tenth and twelfth grade classes normally met five days a week in 97 percent of the schools surveyed. Only the Honor Roll sample contained many schools using such alternative patterns of scheduling classes: 18 percent of them reported classes which met fewer than five days a week. Double-period English classes appeared even less frequently: they were reported in only 2 percent of the schools in the random sample, and in only 3 percent of the schools from the NCTE Honor Rolls.

Lay Readers

The provision of lay readers or other paraprofessionals to help in the tenth grade English program was reported in 15 percent of the schools in the random sample; for twelfth grade programs in the same schools, the figure was 17 percent. Figures from the Squire and Applebee and Achievement Awards schools were roughly comparable, though for the Honor Roll sample they were lower (at 10 and 7 percent for tenth and twelfth grades, respectively). Compared with earlier surveys, there has been a slight increase since the early 1960s. In the 1963 national interest survey, such help was reported by only 7 percent of the teachers (Squire, 1964). In schools in Squire and Applebee's study, however, the use of paraprofessional help seems to have continued at a fairly constant level. In the original survey, observers reported some form of paraprofessional help in 20 percent of the schools; virtually identical results were obtained in the 1977 survey.

Figures based on the mere presence of a program in a school, however, provide a misleading picture of the importance of the program in the education of most students. Table 12 provides a

Table 12

Percent of Students Affected by Lay Readers or Other Paraprofessionals

Percent of students affected		Percent of schools			
		Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
0	grade 10	78.3	81.8	90.2	84.7
	grade 12	82.0	81.8	93.3	83.5
1 to 25	grade 10	11.7	9.1	8.2	14.1
	grade 12	9.8	9.1	6.7	15.3
26 to 50	grade 10	3.3	3.9	0.0	0.0
	grade 12	1.6	3.9	0.0	0.0
51 to 75	grade 10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	grade 12	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
76 to 99	grade 10	1.7	2.6	1.6	1.2
	grade 12	1.6	2.6	0.0	1.2
100	grade 10	5.0	2.6	0.0	0.0
	grade 12	4.9	2.6	0.0	0.0
Number of schools	grade 10	60	77	61	85
	grade 12	61	77	60	85

detailed summary of department heads' reports on the extent to which lay reader or other paraprofessional help was in use in their schools. Figures from the random sample are typical of the other three groups: although paraprofessional help was available for tenth grade English programs in only 15 percent of the schools, even in these schools the program usually affected no more than a quarter of the students.

The Teaching of Composition

Ever since the work of the influential and sometimes controversial Hopkins' Committee on the Labor and Cost of the Teaching of English, appointed in 1909 by the Modern Language Association, consideration of teaching load has usually been related to instruction in composition. Effective teaching of writing requires time: time to talk with students about their work, time to read it carefully, time to write careful comments rather than merely to assign a letter grade. William Dusel's (1955) study, carried out for the California Council of Teachers of English, has been widely quoted and illustrates the close relationship between load and effective teaching of composition. Dusel asked 430 experienced teachers to mark a one-page typed composition just as they would their own students' papers, and to record exactly how much time they took, working as rapidly as possible, to read, mark, and grade the paper. The marked papers were later sorted into those which were simply marked to assign a grade, those marked to indicate faults, those marked to correct or edit, and those marked to teach writing and thinking. The time needed for these types of marking ranged from 3.5 minutes for simply assigning a grade to a 250-word paper, to 8.6 minutes for marking which would teach writing and thinking. Assuming one such paper per student per week, a teacher with a load of 125 students, marking to teach writing and thinking, would have to spend nearly 18 hours marking papers; even with the Council's recommended load of 100 students, paper grading would require 14 hours; teachers with loads of 150 students would require nearly 22 hours. (We should note that Dusel's relatively short, carefully typed samples provide a conservative estimate of the time needed.)

With classes to teach, activities to supervise, and lessons to plan, few teachers can give that much time to composition instruction. The simplest solution is obvious: by assigning a grade instead of marking to teach writing and thinking, the teacher with 150 students can reduce his or her marking time from 22 hours to just

over 9. When loads are high, the shift from careful evaluation to superficial grading may be the only alternative if regular writing is to be required at all.

The present study looked briefly at a few practices related to the teaching of composition in the Achievement Awards, Squire and Applebee, and randomly selected schools; Honor Roll schools were not included in this phase of the investigation. Composition instruction was part of all but a few specialized English courses in virtually all schools surveyed. In 90 percent or more of the schools, department heads reported that some of a student's writing would be corrected for mechanical errors, assigned a grade, discussed in teacher-pupil conferences, commented on for organization or strategy, and rewritten by the student. In over 80 percent, some of it would be read by other pupils. In just over 55 percent, some of the writing students were expected to do would be private, not read at all by the teacher (as in student journal or diary writing).

In responding to this section of the questionnaire, department heads were asked to indicate what proportion of a student's writing would be treated in any of these ways, using a specified set of ranges. Results are summarized in Table 13. Here it is evident that private writing and the sharing of writing were relatively occasional activities, occurring for 1 to 25 percent of a student's writing if they occurred at all. Student-teacher conferences were used with a higher proportion of each student's writing, though fewer than a third of the schools were able to discuss more than half of a student's writing in such conferences.

In all samples, department heads typically reported that over three-fourths of a student's papers would be corrected for mechanical errors, assigned a grade, and commented on for organization and strategy (Dusel's method of marking to teach thinking and writing), though the latter was somewhat less frequent than the other two types of marking. A significant proportion would then be rewritten by the pupils.

How much these reported practices reflect the type of instruction the department head would like to encourage rather than the type of instruction actually occurring on a day to day basis is impossible to tell. A number of respondents added marginal notes indicating the difficulty of answering this question for their department as a whole, or pointing out that they did as much as they could in the time available.

Results in Table 13 suggest that at the global level measured by these questions, there is considerable uniformity among the three samples of schools. Minor differences appear between Achievement

Awards and the random samples in the amount of rewriting encouraged and in the use of comments on organization and strategy. For grade 10, 78 percent of the department heads in the Achievement Awards schools reported that such comments could be expected with over half of a student's writing, compared to 63 percent of the department heads in the random sample. The comparable figures for grade 12 were 83 and 72 percent, respectively.

Table 13

Selected Techniques in Teaching Writing—Grades 10 and 12

Techniques	Percent of writing affected	Percent of schools					
		Squire and Applebee		Achievement Awards		Random	
		10	12	10	12	10	12
1. Private writing, not read by the teacher (e.g., journals)	0	33	43	39	44	43	44
	1 to 25	61	52	60	52	52	52
	26 to 50	4	4	1	3	4	2
	51 to 75	2	2	0	0	1	0
	over 75	0	0	0	1	0	1
2. Writing read by other students	0	9	3	10	14	19	13
	1 to 25	70	70	76	64	61	60
	26 to 50	16	21	13	21	18	20
	51 to 75	4	5	1	1	2	2
	over 75	2	2	0	0	0	5
3. Corrections for mechanical errors	0	4	3	0	0	1	1
	1 to 25	4	2	1	0	4	2
	26 to 50	7	5	9	10	10	10
	51 to 75	16	21	19	19	23	19
	over 75	70	69	71	71	63	68
4. Assigned a grade	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
	1 to 25	0	0	1	1	5	4
	26 to 50	0	0	8	6	2	2
	51 to 75	27	25	12	10	19	23
	over 75	71	74	80	82	74	74
5. Discussed in teacher-pupil conferences	0	4	0	1	0	7	4
	1 to 25	44	47	34	31	40	32
	26 to 50	25	22	36	34	24	30
	51 to 75	19	21	21	23	21	20
	over 75	9	10	8	12	7	14
6. Commented on for organization or strategy	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
	1 to 25	9	7	7	4	11	11
	26 to 50	15	13	16	13	21	17
	51 to 75	20	13	25	21	20	24
	over 75	56	68	53	62	43	48

Table 13—*Continued*

Techniques	Percent of writing affected	Percent of schools					
		Squire and Applebee		Achievement Awards		Random	
		10	12	10	12	10	12
7. Rewritten by the pupil	0	2	2	0	1	11	7
	1 to 25	40	29	34	31	38	36
	26 to 50	31	40	39	42	28	31
	51 to 75	9	9	19	16	16	11
	over 75	18	20	8	10	6	15
Number of schools		57[a]	58[b]	78[c]	78[d]	84[e]	84[f]

[a] N = 56 for technique 4 and 55 for techniques 6 and 7.
[b] N = 57 for technique 4, 56 for technique 6, and 55 for technique 7.
[c] N = 77 for techniques 1 and 6, 76 for technique 5, and 74 for technique 7.
[d] N = 77 for techniques 1 and 6, 77 for technique 5, and 74 for technique 7.
[e] N = 81 for technique 7.
[f] N = 82 for technique 7.

Association with Teaching Load

If we exclude for the moment the use of private writing, the various practices in Table 13 taken together provide a rough measure of the total attention to writing. This measure* shows an interesting relationship to total load, as measured by the number of students taught each day. In both the Squire and Applebee and the Achievement Awards samples, there is a statistically significant association between attention to writing and typical teaching load, both reported by the department head on widely separated questions. (The correlation between the two measures was −.35 [n = 49] for the Squire and Applebee sample and −.31 [n = 64] for the Achievement Awards schools.) In other words, in schools where loads were higher, less attention was being given to writing—at least in terms of department heads' estimates both of load and of practices in the teaching of writing. In the random sample, however, no such association was found (r = .01, n = 64). It is unclear why this association between load and attention to writing should be apparent in two independent samples of outstanding schools and should not appear at all in the random sample. It may

*In computing this score, ratings on each of the 12 questions (6 practices at grade 10 and 6 at grade 12) were recoded into equal interval scales (0–25, 26–50, 51–75, and 76–100) and summed. On the resulting scale, which had a theoretical range of 12 to 48, the average for the random sample was 30.5, slightly lower than Squire and Applebee and Achievement Awards means of 31.6 and 31.9, respectively.

be that systematic writing instruction is so much a departmental concern in the outstanding schools that when extra time becomes available, it is used for writing, while in the random sample the amount of attention may be more a matter of the individual teacher's enthusiasm and interest. But that is only one among many possible explanations of an intriguing result that deserves further investigation.

Department heads were also asked how often, during a four-week period, students were expected to write themes for their English classes; answers to study questions, notes, and the like were excluded. Department heads in the random sample reported that themes were required somewhat more frequently than did those from schools with winners in the Achievement Awards in Writing competitions. At grade 10, reported means for a four-week period were 3.3, 2.6, and 3.3 for the Squire and Applebee, Achievement Awards, and random samples, respectively. At grade 12, the means were 3.7, 2.9, and 4.5 for the same schools.

In all samples, there was a slight increase in the frequency of writing between grades 10 and 12, but the fact that the Achievement Awards schools seem to require less writing is surprising. It may be that each piece of work is given more attention, and more reworking, and hence that fewer separate themes are undertaken. Or it may be that the results are an artifact of the question used: this was another question that provoked an unusual number of marginal comments about the difficulty of responding for colleagues. (There were also some inconsistencies in responses that suggested that some department heads may have responded with data for one week rather than for four.) Correlations between amount of writing and teaching load were not significant, though they were in the same direction as those reported for total attention to writing: low negative correlations for the Achievement Awards and Squire and Applebee schools at both 10th and 12th grades; low positive correlations for the schools in the random sample.

The Future

The data which we have been discussing were gathered at one point in time. They could represent conditions that have begun to improve after a period of tightening budgets, or conditions that are about to become much worse. To gather some information about the direction of change, department heads were asked whether, in general, English teachers' overall load was higher, about the same,

or lower than in the previous year, and whether load next year was expected to be higher, about the same, or lower than the load this year.

Combining results from the two questions (Table 14), 40 percent of the schools in the random sample reported that loads had increased or were increasing; only 9 percent indicated that loads had decreased or were decreasing. Results from the Achievement Awards and Honor Roll samples were virtually identical. Though the data suggest that over the longer term, conditions may have been reasonably stable, clearly over the shorter term they are again getting worse.

When its final report was published in 1923 under the sponsorship of NCTE, the Hopkins' committee argued that effective teaching of composition required that it be treated as a laboratory subject, with teacher loads equivalent to those that would be expected in a laboratory situation. (Council policy at that time, influenced by earlier reports from the committee, recommended loads of no more than 80 students.) The committee's survey of conditions, taken in the period 1909–1911, found that secondary school English teachers reported an average of 128.6 students each. After analyzing data related to typical writing assignments and marking times, they concluded that the average number of students assigned to a single teacher was two-and-a-half times the

Table 14

Trends in Teaching Loads

Trends indicated	Percent of schools			
	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
Loads increasing				
This year compared with last	19.0	25.6	27.4	22.7
Next year compared with this	30.2	21.8	24.2	30.7
Either year	39.7	35.9	40.3	39.8
Loads decreasing				
This year compared with last	15.9	6.4	3.2	8.0
Next year compared with this	7.9	5.1	4.8	1.1
Either year	23.8	10.3	8.1	9.1
Number of schools	63	78	62	88

proper amount for "full efficiency," and went on to wonder if the public:

> . . . may eventually, however remote the day, be willing to make the necessary and reasonable addition to its present ineffective outlay for the teaching of English expression, if thereby it may ensure the desired return. The recipe for Best English contains at least two principal ingredients—a capable teacher and a pupil assignment within his capacity. Neither can be left out; but it is a simple matter to add the one that is missing, and so to give the capable teacher a chance to teach (p. 37).

Some fifty-four years after their final report was published, we still have not been given the missing ingredient, and the recipe no longer seems so simple.

3 The Organization of the Curriculum

Background

Except for a brief glance at the teaching of composition (Chapter 2), the present survey did not attempt to look at methods and activities in secondary school English classes. That is a different and very large subject in itself. (For a look at some recent developments, see Gillis, 1977.) The survey did examine, however, a number of factors related to the organization of the program as a whole: such questions as the number of semesters of English required for graduation, the status of elective courses, and special provisions for remedial or for gifted students. Such organizational factors provide the context within which the specific program of study will be developed; some of them, such as elective programs, can have a profound effect upon the nature of the courses offered (Hillocks, 1972).

Graduation Requirements

In 1959, the National Education Association reported that high schools throughout the country were requiring an average of 3.6 to 3.8 years of English for graduation, and that the trend to four full years was increasing. In the present study, the average was 3.4 in the random sample, with comparable requirements in the other three groups surveyed (3.4 to 3.6 years). Only 54.1 percent of the schools in the random sample required four years of English for graduation. The figures suggest that the upward trend in the graduation requirement has stopped, and may even have begun to reverse itself.

Elective Programs

The elective curriculum was one of the most widespread, and widely debated, innovations of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Electives per se are not new; the twelfth grade course has been elective in many schools for a long time, simply because four years of English is not a universal requirement for graduation. That sort of elective, however, was as much a matter of separating college-bound from noncollege-bound students; it reinforced rather than undermined the traditional curriculum.

The electives of the 1960s were presented as an alternative to the sequence of English I, II, III, and IV, which had remained essentially unchanged in format if not in content since about 1900. The exact shape of the elective program varied from school to school, sometimes involving a totally elective program in which teachers could offer virtually whatever courses they wished, and students could sample among them with little concern for scope or sequence in their program. In others, electives were "phased" or "graded" to insure a cumulative, if somewhat idiosyncratic, program for all students. In still others, electives were coupled with changes in patterns of scheduling to produce minicourses, modular schedules, and modification of the traditional pattern for the school day.

Data reported in the previous chapter suggest that wholesale changes in scheduling patterns have largely been abandoned; in all

Table 15

Percent of Students in Elective Programs—Grades 10 and 12

Percent of students in program		Percent of schools			
		Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
0	grade 10	37.3	32.9	45.0	48.2
	grade 12	11.7	5.3	6.7	22.4
1 to 25	grade 10	22.0	26.3	13.3	17.6
	grade 12	5.0	14.5	8.3	22.4
26 to 50	grade 10	6.8	10.5	6.7	3.5
	grade 12	10.0	13.2	5.0	1.2
51 to 75	grade 10	1.7	2.6	3.3	2.4
	grade 12	5.0	5.3	6.7	2.4
76 to 99	grade 10	8.5	6.6	8.3	9.4
	grade 12	18.3	19.7	13.3	15.3
100	grade 10	23.7	21.1	23.3	18.8
	grade 12	50.0	42.1	60.0	36.5
Number of schools		59[a]	76	60	85

[a] N = 60 for grade 12.

but a handful of schools, students attend English classes five days a week, in single-period classes of 40 to 55 minutes in length.

Elective programs themselves, however, are quite widespread. Table 15 summarizes department heads' reports about the involvement of tenth and twelfth grade students in electives.

Looking first at the random sample: 78 percent of the schools have elective programs involving at least some of their twelfth grade students; over 50 percent of the schools have extensive programs involving at least three-quarters of their seniors. At the tenth grade level elective programs are less pervasive. Although present in over half of the schools in the random sample, extensive programs involving more than three-quarters of the students were reported by only 28 percent of the department heads.

In the Achievement Awards, Squire and Applebee, and Honor Roll schools, elective programs were even more widespread, though again with a marked difference between the patterns of organization at tenth and twelfth grade levels.

Some indication of the magnitude of the change implied in these figures can be obtained by considering the discussion of elective programs found in the Squire and Applebee study, conducted between 1963 and 1965, and reported in 1968. They found virtually no evidence of elective programs in the 116 schools in their study; indeed, they found it necessary to add an additional 19 schools with "experimental" programs in order to discuss "English by Choice" at all.

Elective courses were also viewed by the schools in the present survey as one of the most significant changes that had taken place in their programs. In addition to precoded questions, the questionnaire distributed to department heads included a few sections where general comments were solicited. In one, respondents were asked what they considered to be the most significant changes in their programs over the last five years, and the changes they expected in the near future. Some 403 separate comments were obtained in response to these questions; over a third (36 percent) were concerned with elective courses. The general impression emerging from these comments is that most schools are entering a phase of reconceptualizing their elective curriculum, imposing somewhat more order—and constraints—upon it. A few schools in the survey had abandoned or were abandoning electives, but for most it was a matter of weeding out unsuccessful courses, providing a better system of guidance for students, and adding new courses in response to the back-to-the-basics movement and minimal competency requirements. The following comments are typical:

—[We have completed] reorganization of 10th to 12th elective program into levels based on student writing competency.

—Declining enrollment is necessitating a change in our 11th and 12th electives program. Additionally, we're seeing a real need for more concentration on applied writing skills. Currently consideration is being given to revamping the program to include a semester of required grammar and composition rather than a quarter. (In both junior and senior years.)

—We instituted electives for juniors and seniors, have since retrenched so that they are for seniors only, or second courses for juniors.

—This is our fifth year in phase-electives. We have seen a marked increase in the number of students taking extra courses.

—We attempted an elective program in Grade 10 English for two years. We did an evaluation of the program last spring and could see no distinct improvement in English skills; therefore, we returned to the regular class program this year.

—Three years ago, we went to an elective program involving grades 10–12. We have evaluated the program the last two years, adding or cancelling courses as needed.

—[We instituted] a modified elective program in which composition instruction is built into all English offerings.

—We added an elective program which was popular at first but is now nearly equal to the sequential year long courses in enrollment. We are returning to a common program for all 10th graders. We are offering fewer electives each term to retain the courses and allow teachers to have a reasonable number of preparations.

—We went to a phase-elective program 6 years ago and have added and deleted courses through the years. We intend to continue the program.

—After investing heavily in a widely diversified elective program, we have begun to narrow our activities and to coordinate courses. Students now have restrictions placed on the number of media and other peripheral courses they can take for English credit.

—[There has been a] move to a more basic, "competency base" curriculum, after five years of guided electives.

—The totally elective program has been changed to include required courses during the sophomore year. These courses include general background for all students in grammar, composition, and literature. More emphasis will be placed on composition skills in the future.

Heterogeneous Grouping and Ungraded Classes

When elective programs have been discussed, they have often been paired with heterogeneous grouping and ungraded classes. Both

have a long history. The one-room schoolhouse was of necessity both ungraded and heterogeneously grouped, at least to the extent that everyone was taught by the same teacher in the same classroom. As classes grew, separation into age-grade groupings was one of the first divisions made. Other types of grouping gained emphasis during the 1920s and 1930s, as ways both to individualize instruction and to make education more "efficient" (Applebee, 1974).

Squire and Applebee (1968) reported that "an overwhelming majority of schools in this Study try to accommodate differences in student ability through three- and four-track programs which classify students into below average, average, above average, or college bound sections" (p. 222). They also found, however, that while this system often led to excellent teaching for superior students, programs for the lower tracks were far less successful. Their findings were part of a general reaction against ability grouping that emerged during the sixties, as the effects of tracking on the self-image and educational opportunity of the lower tracks began to emerge from a variety of studies. Elective programs, with groupings at least ostensibly based on interests rather than abilities, offered one way out of this problem. Ungraded classes, where common interests were allowed to run across age levels, had a similar effect.

Department heads' reports on both heterogeneous grouping and ungraded classes are summarized in Table 16. Heterogeneous grouping has been widely adopted at both tenth and twelfth grade levels, in the random sample and in the three special samples surveyed in this study. Such patterns are marginally less prominent

Table 16

Heterogeneous Grouping and Ungraded Classes—Grades 10 and 12

Sample		Percent of schools			
		Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
Heterogeneous grouping	grade 10	73.3	73.7	78.0	75.3
	grade 12	83.6	80.3	86.2	81.2
Ungraded classes	grade 10	33.3	41.6	31.7	24.7
	grade 12	44.3	47.4	32.2	27.1
Number of schools		60[a]	76	59[b]	85

[a] N = 61 for grade 12.
[b] N = 58 for heterogeneous grouping, grade 12; 60 for ungraded classes, grade 10.

in tenth than in twelfth grade, paralleling to some extent the differences in the prevalence of the elective curriculum. (As we will see later in this chapter, department heads considered "heterogeneous" grouping compatible with special classes for remedial or for gifted students.)

Ungraded classes were far less popular. They were reported in approximately one-quarter of the schools in the random sample, and in one-third to one-half of the remaining schools. Again, ungraded programs were slightly more likely for twelfth than for tenth grade, apparently partly as a result of junior-senior elective programs. Unlike heterogeneous grouping, however, which was usually adopted for the majority of the students at a given grade level, ungraded classes were introduced in a more limited way. At the twelfth grade level, for example, only 11.8 percent of the schools in the random sample reported extensive programs (affecting 76 percent or more of their seniors); even in the Achievement Awards schools, only 18.4 percent reported extensive use of ungraded classes.

Provisions for Remedial and for Gifted Students

Department heads' reports on provisions for remedial and for gifted students are summarized in Table 17. Since ability to provide special programs is related to school size, the figures are given separately for schools with under 500, 500 to 2499, and over 2499 students.

The results indicate that such special classes are fairly widespread in all but the smallest schools. In small schools in the random sample, special classes for gifted students are rarely provided at the tenth grade level, and are provided in only 22 percent of the schools at the twelfth grade level. Over half of the medium-sized schools and 83 percent of the large schools reported providing such classes. In all of the samples, special classes for gifted students were more likely at the senior than at the sophomore level, reflecting advanced placement and senior honors programs in which younger students are not involved.

Special classes for remedial students were provided even more frequently. Even the small schools in the random sample reported such classes 50 percent of the time; the proportions were higher in larger schools.

Comparisons between the random sample and the three other groups suggest that provisions for either gifted or remedial classes

Table 17

Percent of Schools with Classes for Gifted and for Remedial Students—Grades 10 and 12

Technique		School enrollment: Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	All
Classes for gifted					
Squire and Applebee	grade 10	(0)[a]	74.1 (54)	40.0 (5)	71.2
	grade 12	(0)	83.9 (56)	60.0 (5)	82.0
Achievement Awards	grade 10	(0)	71.0 (62)	100.0 (15)	74.7
	grade 12	(0)	82.0 (61)	100.0 (15)	85.5
Honor Roll	grade 10	28.6 (7)	68.6 (51)	66.7 (3)	63.9
	grade 12	42.9 (7)	78.0 (50)	66.7 (3)	73.3
Random	grade 10	2.8 (36)	51.2 (43)	66.7 (6)	31.8
	grade 12	22.2 (36)	58.1 (43)	83.3 (6)	44.7
Classes for remedial					
Squire and Applebee	grade 10	(0)	100.0 (55)	80.0 (5)	98.3
	grade 12	(6)	89.3 (56)	80.0 (5)	86.9
Achievement Awards	grade 10	(0)	91.8 (61)	100.0 (15)	93.4
	grade 12	(0)	85.0 (60)	100.0 (15)	88.0
Honor Roll	grade 10	71.4 (7)	88.2 (51)	66.7 (3)	85.2
	grade 12	71.4 (7)	85.7 (49)	66.7 (8)	83.1
Random	grade 10	52.8 (36)	83.7 (43)	83.3 (6)	70.6
	grade 12	50.0 (36)	72.1 (43)	100.0 (6)	64.7

[a] Figures in parentheses represent number of schools.

were more likely in the schools selected because of some "outstanding" characteristic in their English program. Seventy-five percent of the Achievement Awards schools had special classes for the gifted even at the tenth grade level; 93 percent reported special classes for tenth grade remedial students. Results from the Squire and Applebee schools were similar.

When NCTE surveyed high school English teachers in 1963, teachers reported that 44.8 percent of their schools had English classes for slow students, and 41.1 percent had English classes for gifted students. On separate questions, 27 percent reported Advanced Placement classes and 41 percent reported classes in remedial reading (Squire, 164; p. 64). Results from the present survey suggest that provisions for the gifted remained fairly constant over the 14 years between the two surveys, but that provisions for remedial instruction increased substantially.

Relationships among Program Characteristics

The extent to which program characteristics are interrelated is also of some interest. To explore this, Table 18 compares elective and nonelective English programs with respect to the four other characteristics discussed so far, pooling the samples. Some 84 percent of the elective programs surveyed were heterogeneously grouped, and between 41 and 49 percent involved at least some ungraded classes. Nonelective programs were less likely to be heterogeneously grouped, and very unlikely to be ungraded. Special classes for remedial students were provided in 83 to 90 percent of the elective programs; special classes for gifted students were

Table 18

Relationship of Program Characteristics to Elective Programs—Grades 10 and 12

Characteristics		Percent of schools		Number responding	
		Elective	Nonelective		
Heterogeneous grouping	grade 10	83.5	62.8	164	113
	grade 12	84.4	70.6	243	34
Ungraded classes	grade 10	49.1	9.6	165	114
	grade 12	41.4	8.8	244	34
Remedial classes	grade 10	90.3	79.1	165	115
	grade 12	82.8	58.8	244	34
Gifted classes	grade 10	68.9	46.1	164	115
	grade 12	75.1	35.3	245	34

offered in from 69 to 75 percent (depending upon the grade level considered). Both types were markedly less likely in nonelective programs.

Relationships between reports of heterogeneous grouping and of special classes for gifted and for remedial students were also examined. The most interesting aspect of these analyses was that they demonstrated that department heads considered the majority of their classes to be heterogeneously grouped, even after both gifted and remedial students had been placed into special classes. At the twelfth grade level, for example, of those claiming heterogeneous grouping in their schools, 70 percent also reported classes for gifted students and 80 percent reported classes for remedial students. These proportions were roughly comparable to those reported by schools which did not have heterogeneous grouping (67 and 83 percent for gifted and remedial classes, respectively).

Special Teaching Methods

Department heads were also asked about three other approaches that have received considerable attention in the professional literature: small group work, team teaching, and programmed instruction. Responses for all three are summarized in Table 19.

Small group work has obviously gained wide acceptance in the teaching of English. In the random sample, approximately three-quarters of the schools reported small group work at both tenth and twelfth grade levels; figures from the other three samples were the same or higher. Comparisons with earlier studies would suggest that this represents a major shift since the 1960s. In NCTE's 1963 survey, only 15.2 percent of the high school teachers surveyed reported using small group work in the teaching of English (Squire, 1964). (The Squire and Applebee study (1968), which was able to observe actual classroom practice, found that only 1.7 percent of total teaching time in English involved group work; those figures cannot be compared directly with the present results, since department heads were not asked how much teaching time small group work involved—simply whether it occurred at all.)

Team teaching, which received much attention during the 1960s, was reported by 19 percent of the schools in the random sample. In the Achievement Awards and Squire and Applebee schools, team teaching was more frequent; it reached a high of 39 percent for twelfth grade in Achievement Awards schools. These levels of use seem to have changed little since the early 1960s. Teachers in the 1963 NCTE survey reported team teaching 10 percent of the time

(versus 19 percent now). In the "outstanding" schools studied by Squire and Applebee in 1962-63, "any" use of team teaching was reported 35 percent of the time (versus 36 percent now).

Programmed instruction received at least some use in 22 to 29 percent of the schools in the present survey. This is somewhat higher than the 11.8 percent reported by teachers in the 1963 NCTE survey, and approximately the same as that reported in the Squire and Applebee study (29 percent).

For small group work, department heads' reports indicated wide variation in levels of usage within a school; on the scale used on the questionnaire, about as many respondents indicated such instruction affected 76 to 99 percent of the students as indicated that it affected 1 to 25 percent. For both programmed instruction and team teaching, however, department heads who reported the approach in use at all almost always indicated that it affected only 1 to 25 percent of the students in the school. Marginal comments added by a few department heads suggested that this reflected a differentiation of techniques with different ability levels: programmed materials in remedial classes, team teaching of special interdisciplinary courses for advanced, gifted students. The suggestion echoes Squire and Applebee's (1968) finding that work with slow learners often relied on highly mechanical activities, with interesting work reserved for better students.

Table 19

Percent of Schools Using Special Teaching Methods —Grades 10 and 12

Methods used		Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Honor Roll	Random
Small group work	grade 10	83.3 (60)[a]	76.7 (73)	73.3 (60)	73.5 (83)
	grade 12	85.2 (61)	79.5 (73)	78.0 (59)	75.9 (83)
Team teaching	grade 10	30.0 (60)	36.4 (77)	14.8 (61)	18.8 (85)
	grade 12	36.1 (61)	39.0 (77)	23.3 (60)	18.8 (85)
Programmed instruction	grade 10	28.8 (59)	27.6 (76)	24.6 (61)	27.1 (85)
	grade 12	25.0 (60)	28.9 (76)	21.7 (60)	24.7 (85)

[a]Figures in parentheses represent number of schools.

4 The English Department

Background

NCTE has long taken an interest in improving the quality of instruction in English through improving teachers' initial and continuing education, methods of supervising their teaching, and methods of coordinating the curriculum—approaches which, taken together, can be seen as an attempt to improve the quality of the English department.

In 1915, *English Journal* published the results of a survey of teacher preparation carried out by a Council committee chaired by Franklin T. Baker of Teachers College, Columbia University. Of the 329 high school teachers of English whose responses were tabulated, 89 percent had a college degree, and fully 28 percent reported a masters or higher degree. These degrees were based on a "full course" of English in 68 percent of the cases, and an "ordinary course" in 27 percent of the cases. In succeeding years, NCTE's concern with teacher education found many other expressions—in reports of exemplary programs, in formal and less formal guidelines for teacher preparation, in convention programs and special publications, and in other surveys. The history of this concern has been discussed in some detail by Alfred Grommon (1968), as part of the background for the "Guidelines for the Preparation of Teachers of English" that resulted from the English Teacher Preparation Study (ETPS) sponsored jointly by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the Modern Language Association of America.

The Guidelines were developed during a period of intense search for an academic model for English instruction, and were themselves representative of the "sense of profession" that accompanied that search. There was a strong feeling among professional leaders that both preservice and continuing education needed to be strengthened—a case that was argued boldly in the companion publications from the NCTE Committee on National Interest

(Squire, 1961, 1964). A survey conducted while preparing the second National Interest report again asked about highest degrees and found that although 35 percent had a masters degree or higher, only 51 percent of the teachers who were assigned to teach junior or senior high school English classes reported an undergraduate major in the subject; over a quarter could not report even a minor in English.

The educational scene has changed considerably since the mid 1960s, and the ETPS Guidelines have themselves recently been superseded by a new statement prepared by the NCTE Standing Committee on Teacher Preparation and Certification (Larson, 1976). The present survey contained a number of questions designed to obtain better information on teacher preparation and teacher continuing education. Honor Roll schools (which received only the first two pages of the questionnaire) were not included in this part of the study.

Teacher Preparation

The proportion of teachers of English who have undergraduate majors in the subject provides a rough measure of teachers' preparation in the subject they teach. Table 20 summarizes department heads' reports on the teachers in their departments, and compares the results from each sample with earlier studies of

Table 20

Percent of Teachers Having Undergraduate English Majors and Minors

Sample	Number of teachers	English degree		
		Major	Minor	Neither
Squire and Applebee				
1963–65	1331	71.8	18.4	9.8
1977	921	88.7	10.1	1.2
Achievement Awards				
1961	5466	75.9	20.3	3.8
1977	1353	89.7	9.2	1.1
Committee on National Interest				
1963	8544	50.5	22.6	26.9
Random				
1977	569	84.4	14.1	1.6

similar groups. The studies include the original schools in the Squire and Applebee (1968) study carried out between 1963 and 1965; 746 schools which had had winners during either of the first two years of the Achievement Awards competition, surveyed by Hook (1961) in the spring of 1960; and a large national sample of junior and senior high English teachers surveyed by the Committee on National Interest in 1963 (Squire, 1964). Although the composition of the samples varies from study to study, the data do allow at least an estimate of trends.

The results in the present survey indicate that the vast majority of full-time teachers of English have undergraduate majors in English, and most of the remainder have at least a minor in the subject. There is very little difference in this respect between the random sample, the schools resurveyed from the Squire and Applebee study, and the Achievement Awards schools: from 84 to 90 percent of the full-time teachers of English had majored in English; only about 1.5 percent did not have at least a minor in the subject.

These figures represent a considerable improvement over the figures from earlier years. Teachers of English are in general trained in the subject they teach, though the present survey did not explore the extent to which the emphases in that preparation paralleled those suggested by the NCTE Committee on Teacher Preparation and Certification (Larson, 1976); neither did it probe teachers' estimates of the adequacy of their training.

During the 1960s, teachers in both the Hook and the Squire and Applebee surveys seemed to be considerably better prepared than their peers in the random sample studied by the Committee on National Interest. In the present survey, though the proportion of English majors in the superior schools was greater than in similar schools during the 1960s, the improvement in schools in general has been great enough to eliminate any gap between them.

The picture is somewhat different, however, if we look at the highest degrees held rather than at undergraduate majors. Again, the level of preparation in all three of the samples in the current survey was higher than in the earlier studies. The proportion of teachers with a masters or higher degree had risen from 35 percent in the National Interest survey to 51 percent in the present random sample; from 52 to 67 percent in Achievement Awards schools; and from 51 to 67 percent in the Squire and Applebee schools. The same figures also make it clear that, on this measure, the teachers in the superior schools were noticeably better prepared than their peers in the random sample (Table 21).

Continuing Education

The recent statement from the NCTE Committee on Teacher Preparation and Certification notes that

> This statement, like the Guidelines before it, takes for granted that the education of teachers of English (or any field) is a continuing, lifelong process. No prospective teacher can attain, through an undergraduate teacher-training program or even a program leading to permanent certification, the qualifications we identify. Therefore, teachers should not consider their preparation ended when they receive their permanent certificates and tenure in their jobs. (Larson, 1976; p.v)

To provide some information on the extent to which teachers in service were continuing their education, department heads were also asked to indicate the number of full-time English teachers who, within the past year, had completed a college course or had voluntarily attended local, state, or national meetings of English teachers. The results are summarized and contrasted with earlier studies in Table 22.

According to the department heads, 29 percent of the English teachers in the schools in the random sample had completed an English course and 26 percent had completed an education course within the past year. It is not possible to determine from the data reported whether many teachers had taken both an English and an education course or whether 55 percent had taken one or the other.

Table 21

Highest Degrees Obtained by Teachers

Degree[a]	Percent of teachers		
	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Random
Doctorate	0.8	1.7	0.5
Masters plus hours	35.8	38.4	28.8
Masters	30.5	26.7	21.4
Bachelors	32.8	33.2	49.3
Number of teachers	947	1379	608
Number of schools	61	78	82

[a] In the earlier surveys, this question was asked in a slightly different form and the data cannot be broken down for category-by-category comparisons. Those comparisons which are possible are discussed in the text.

Table 22

Percent of Teachers Participating in a Continuing Education Activity within the Previous Year

Sample	Number of		Course		Meetings of English teachers		
	Teachers	Schools	English	Education	Local or regional	State	National
Squire and Applebee							
1963–65	1331	116	32.4	27.3	61.4	39.5	10.7
1977	830	56	20.7	19.2	31.0	14.9	5.9
Achievement Awards							
1977	1281	76	27.3	18.5	31.4	18.4	9.6
Committee on National Interest							
1963	7417	(n/a)	32.8	35.3	63.7	37.8	8.2
Random							
1977	606	85	29.4	25.9	31.8	11.4	1.3

That teachers who have already obtained a higher degree have less incentive to pursue such formal course work seems obvious, and this effect is reflected in a number of ways in the data. In the random sample, teachers surveyed in 1977 were more likely to have a masters or other higher degree than were their counterparts in 1963; they were also somewhat less likely to have completed any formal course work within the past year. Similarly, in the Squire and Applebee and the Achievement Awards schools in 1977, where a higher percentage of teachers already held a masters degree, teachers were less likely to have taken further course work than were teachers in the random sample. A simple discrepancy existed between the Squire and Applebee schools and the random National Interest sample during the early 1960s.

If the incentive for formal course work is decreasing as teachers' overall level of preparation rises, then other forms of continuing education become increasingly important to professional growth and development. One means is participation in local, state, and national meetings of English teachers. Yet responses to the present survey suggest that here the situation is considerably worse than during the 1960s. In the National Interest study in 1963, 64 percent of teachers nationally reported that they had attended a local or regional meeting not required by their school or district (Squire, 1964); in 1977 the figure for the random sample was only 32 percent. Attendance at state and national meetings also dropped. Trends were similar for teachers in the Squire and Applebee sample and in Achievement Awards schools, though levels of attendance at state and national meetings were somewhat higher for these schools than for the random sample.

Supervision of Instruction

If teachers are making less use of opportunities for continuing education outside of the school, then their school English department becomes increasingly important as the source of professional growth, as well as of a coordinated and balanced program of instruction throughout the senior high school years. Indeed, when Squire and Applebee (1968) surveyed schools with outstanding programs in English, they found that the quality of departmental leadership was among the special strengths of the schools in their study. In the present study, a number of questions dealt with the role of the department head and others in supervision and curriculum development.

When department head is more than a titular position, it usually involves a form of supervision of instruction. Table 23 summarizes data related to the relative roles of the principal, the department head, and others in supervising the work of teachers of English. As one would expect, these roles vary considerably with the size of the school: as the schools get larger, the department head is more likely to have a major role in supervision, and the principal is less likely to be directly involved. In the majority of the smallest schools surveyed (those with fewer than 500 students), no one had a major responsibility for the supervision of instruction.

Apart from that, it is also clear that there was a major difference between the superior schools and the random sample. The department head had a major role in supervision in only 17 percent of schools in the random sample, but in 47 percent of the Achievement Awards schools. The involvement of the principal did not show a similar variation among the three groups, suggesting that (as in the original Squire and Applebee study) strong *departmental* leadership is one of the characteristics of schools with superior programs in English.

Table 23

Major Responsibility for Supervision of Instruction

Sample	Percent of schools			
	School enrollment			All
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	
Squire and Applebee	(0)[a]	(57)	(5)	
Principal		45.6	40.0	45.2
Department head		42.1	60.0	43.5
Others[b]		7.0	20.0	8.1
Achievement Awards	(0)	(66)	(12)	
Principal		50.0	50.0	50.0
Department head		37.9	100.0	47.4
Others		6.1	16.7	7.7
Random	(35)	(45)	(7)	
Principal	37.1	46.7	28.6	41.4
Department head	0.0	22.2	71.4	17.2
Others	0.0	6.7	0.0	3.4

[a] Figures in parentheses indicate number of schools.
[b] Includes city and county supervisors of English, and state departments of education.

Released Time

One of the best indices of the role and status of the department head is the amount of released time provided for supervisory and administrative duties. Results, summarized in Table 24, parallel those already discussed. Over three-fourths of the department heads in the superior schools received released time for their duties, compared with only 28 percent of the department heads in the random sample of schools nationally. This situation seems to have changed very little over the past 10 to 12 years: at the time of the Squire and Applebee study, 82 percent received released time (compared with 77 percent in the same schools now), while a 1964 questionnaire survey found that the national figure was approximately 22 percent (compared with 28 percent in the present survey) (Ruggless, 1965).

Data on the *amount* of released time parallel results in Table 24. If a department head in a medium or small-sized school gets any released time, it is usually 5 or 10 class periods (that is, one or two classes per week); in the large school, it may involve 10, 15, or even more periods; in a few cases, department heads reported having only administrative responsibilities and doing no teaching at all.

Coordinating the Curriculum

In addition to the leadership provided by the department head, the majority of English departments rely upon some form of written curriculum materials to help coordinate the high school curriculum.

Table 24

Percent of Department Heads Receiving Released Time

Sample	School enrollment			All
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	
Squire and Applebee		76.8	80.0	77.0
Achievement Awards		73.0	93.3	76.9
Random	8.8	34.1	85.7	28.2
Number of schools				
Squire and Applebee	0	56	5	
Achievement Awards	0	63	15	
Random	34	44	7	

Table 25 summarizes responses to a question which asked department heads to indicate the primary means of such coordination in their schools.

The data suggest that there is considerable diversity in the nature and quantity of curriculum material available. Some 57 percent of the schools in the random sample had a curriculum bulletin of some type, though in small schools the figure fell to only 29 percent. Correspondingly, 31 percent of the schools in the random sample reported that there were *no* written materials at all. In small schools this was the typical situation: 57 percent reported relying on "faculty interaction" or "individual teacher planning" as the sole source of coordination in the high school English curriculum.

The lack of systematic structure which this implies is most evident in contrast with schools which have consistently had winners in the Achievement Awards in Writing competition. Fully 74 percent of these schools reported providing a curriculum bulletin, usually an extensive one including goals, grade objectives, reading lists, teaching approaches, and other resources. Only 10 percent relied solely upon faculty interaction or on planning by the individual teacher.

Sources of Written Curriculum Materials and Guides

Table 26 summarizes department heads' reports of the extent to which various people or groups were involved in the development of such written curriculum materials. The trends we have noted on other questions related to curriculum and supervision continue: compared with schools which have consistently produced outstanding students, schools in the random sample were less involved in curriculum development. Only the relatively universal involvement of teachers in the department and the relatively equivalent involvement of the state department were exceptions to this trend. Small schools were also much less likely than larger ones to provide or take advantage of materials developed at any of these levels.

The figures in Table 26 are based on reports of *any* involvement in curriculum development, and change somewhat if reports of *major* involvement are considered instead. The contrast between the random sample and the Achievement Awards schools remains, as does that between small schools and larger ones. The role of high school students in curriculum development changes considerably, however. While more than half of the schools in all three samples report students have some role in the development of the curriculum, the role is a minor one in all but 4 percent of the random

Table 25

Means of Coordinating the Curriculum

Method	Sample	Percent of schools			
		School enrollment			
		Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	All
Curriculum bulletin with general statement of goals, objectives, and philosophy	Squire and Applebee		12.5	20.0	13.1
	Achievement Awards		7.9	0.0	6.4
	Random	14.3	17.8	0.0	14.9
Above, plus grade-by-grade objectives or content	Squire and Applebee		33.9	0.0	31.1
	Achievement Awards		23.8	13.3	21.8
	Random	5.7	35.6	42.9	24.1
Curriculum resource bulletin with goals, grade objectives, reading lists, teachings approaches and other resources	Squire and Applebee		35.7	20.0	34.4
	Achievement Awards		41.3	66.7	46.2
	Random	8.6	20.0	57.1	18.4
Department and students develop course outlines	Squire and Applebee		10.7	0.0	9.8
	Achievement Awards		7.9	6.7	7.7
	Random	0.0	6.7	0.0	3.4
No written guide, but much faculty interaction and awareness	Squire and Applebee		3.6	20.0	4.9
	Achievement Awards		11.1	6.7	10.3
	Random	20.0	11.1	0.0	13.8
All planning done by individual teacher	Squire and Applebee		1.8	20.0	3.3
	Achievement Awards		0.0	0.0	0.0
	Random	37.1	4.4	0.0	17.2
Other	Squire and Applebee		1.8	20.0	3.3
	Achievement Awards		7.9	6.7	7.7
	Random	14.3	4.4	0.0	8.0

Table 26

Sources Involved in the Development of Written Curriculum Materials

Sources	Sample	Percent of schools			
		School enrollment			
		Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	All
Department head	Squire and Applebee		96.5	100.0	96.8
	Achievement Awards		96.7	93.3	96.1
	Random	52.0	81.0	100.0	73.0
English teachers	Squire and Applebee		96.5	100.0	96.8
	Achievement Awards		98.4	100.0	98.7
	Random	76.0	95.2	100.0	98.2
Students	Squire and Applebee		52.6	60.0	53.2
	Achievement Awards		65.6	46.7	61.8
	Random	40.0	59.5	42.9	51.4
City or district	Squire and Applebee		68.4	40.0	66.1
	Achievement Awards		57.4	40.0	53.9
	Random	32.0	43.9	57.1	41.1
State department	Squire and Applebee		39.6	60.0	40.3
	Achievement Awards		44.3	33.3	42.1
	Random	40.0	51.2	42.9	46.6
Number of schools	Squire and Applebee		57	5	
	Achievement Awards		61	15	
	Random	25	42[a]	7	

[a]N = 41 for city or district and for state department.

sample, 7 percent of the Achievement Awards schools, and 5 percent of the Squire and Applebee schools. Where the schools do report a role for students, whether major or minor, it apparently reflects the popularity of the elective curriculum (discussed in Chapter 3), and the consequent involvement of students in determining what offerings are interesting.

Teacher Turnover

Complicating any attempt to coordinate instruction in English is the yearly change in staffing patterns. In the present study, such problems were relatively minor in most schools. The typical English department studied had only one new staff member at the beginning of the academic year; only about a third of these new staff members were new to teaching. Table 27 summarizes results for all full-time teachers of English in the various samples. Fourteen percent of the teachers in the random sample were in a new school at the beginning of the academic year; 6 percent were in their first year of teaching. Both figures were lower in the Squire and Applebee and the Achievement Awards schools, where there was less staff movement.

Table 27

Teacher Turnover

Status of faculty	Percent of full-time teachers			
	School enrollment			
	Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	All
Squire and Applebee				
New to school		7.9	6.9	7.8
New to teaching		2.3	2.9	2.4
Achievement Awards				
New to school		7.7	5.7	7.1
New to teaching		2.3	2.3	2.3
Random				
New to school	29.6	11.1	11.9	13.5
New to teaching	9.9	5.4	6.9	6.3
Number of teachers				
Squire and Applebee	0	809	102	
Achievement Awards	0	882	436	
Random	71	370	160	

Small schools in the random sample had the least stable staffing patterns. Of the 71 teachers in schools with fewer than 500 pupils, 30 percent had been at their present school for less than one year, and 10 percent were in their first year of teaching. Thus the schools that are least likely to have a strong departmental structure to support teachers are also the schools in which turnover rates would suggest some structure is necessary to insure a continuous and systematic program of instruction.

Conclusion

The data reported here are probably at least in part a reflection of change in the political and economic climate. The 1960s were a time of optimism and expansion of educational programs; they were followed by a period of economic recession coupled with falling school enrollments and sharp public criticism of educational programs. Budget curtailments and falling enrollments have combined to turn the teacher shortage of ten years ago into a teacher surplus. There are fewer new jobs and less movement from one job to another.

While the general level of preparation of teachers of English seems to have improved, their continuing education, at least as measured in this study, seems to have worsened. Again, much of this is probably a reflection of budgetary restraints, which act both to restrict resources for workshops and conferences and to curtail the curriculum change generated by such activities. Yet such constraints, while making it more difficult for schools and colleges to encourage a high standard of continuing education, do not reduce the necessity for such programs. Neither do the difficulties in coordinating instruction in small schools where turnover is high provide an excuse for the lack of such coordination.

5 Testing in English

Background

In both the popular and the educational press, standardized testing has been hotly debated over the past few years. Advocates have turned to tests as a way to insure high standards in the classroom, "accountability" for teachers, and "minimal competencies" for graduates; opponents have warned that testing programs can misrepresent the goals of education, mislabel students, and misjudge innovative programs. The words have been strong and tempers high; the arguments have led to a long series of publications from various educational organizations, editorials in the popular press, and even a call for a moratorium on the use of standardized intelligence and achievement tests by the National Education Association.

Yet in the midst of all the argument, we have little knowledge of the extent to which the national debate about testing has had any impact on the individual teacher and school. The present study was not designed to provide extensive information on testing in English, but it did include a few questions designed to sample departmental practices and attitudes toward testing.

Attitudes toward Standardized Tests

Results from five questions assessing attitudes toward standardized tests are summarized in Table 28. In general, the results were not affected by either school size or group membership (Squire and Applebee, Achievement Awards, or randomly sampled schools).

The English department heads who completed the questionnaire split fairly evenly in their judgments of whether tests provide a "good general measure" of student progress; a substantial proportion (32 percent in the Achievement Awards schools, 41 percent in the random sample) used the neutral midpoint of the scale. Very few teachers were firm in their responses; even those who did

answer yes or no qualified their answers. (Responses were made on 5-point scales; in Table 28 the two positive and two negative scale points are combined as yes and no.)

If department heads are unsure about tests as a "good general measure," there is less uncertainty about whether tests reflect the specific content of the curriculum. On this question "no" had a clear plurality in both the Achievement Awards and random samples, and a large majority in the Squire and Applebee schools. Perhaps because department heads do not see the tests as reflecting the specific content of the curriculum, there is also a fairly well established consensus that tests do not help keep teaching responsive to student needs.

One of the most frequent criticisms of standardized testing programs has been that they distort the curriculum, either by leading some teachers to teach directly to the test or by imposing constraints on what will be taught. Department heads in the present survey seemed unimpressed by either of these arguments: in the

Table 28

Attitudes toward Standardized Tests

Item	Response	Percent of schools		
		Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Random
Tests provide a good general measure of student progress	yes	26.5	34.1	31.8
	no	26.5	34.1	27.3
Tests reflect the specific content of the curriculum	yes	8.8	25.0	25.0
	no	61.8	47.5	40.9
Tests lead some teachers to teach to the test	yes	26.5	17.1	18.6
	no	76.5	63.4	58.1
Tests constrain the curriculum in undesirable ways	yes	17.6	14.6	9.1
	no	70.6	70.7	77.3
Tests help keep teaching responsive to student needs	yes	11.8	26.8	16.3
	no	50.0	31.7	55.8
Number of schools		34[a]	41[b]	44[c]

[a] N = 31 for the last item.
[b] N = 40 for the second item.
[c] N = 43 for the third and last items.

random sample, fewer than 20 percent thought teachers might be led to teach to the test, and under 10 percent felt that the curriculum might be constrained in undesireable ways. Proportions in the other two samples were similar. (Unlike the responses on the question about tests as a general measure of student progress, teachers' attitudes were firm on these items; the majority gave firm yes or no responses rather than relying on qualified or neutral responses.)

The overall picture that emerges, then, is one of fairly well defined but to some extent conflicting specific attitudes, leading to overall uncertainty about the values of standardized tests. The majority of department heads did report that standardized tests were sometimes used with all students at a given grade level. Again, results did not vary significantly with school size or with sample: 68 percent of the random sample, and 71 percent of both the Squire and Applebee and Achievement Awards schools reported at least sometimes using standardized tests in this way.

Competency Testing

In many areas of the country, the concern with "basic skills" has led to attempts to develop minimal competency exams to insure that a student has obtained the "necessary" levels of proficiency in school subjects. Like other aspects of testing, these exams have been attacked for the damage they could do to both programs and students, but legislatures and schools boards concerned about falling standards have nonetheless mandated such testing programs in some areas.

In the present study, a quarter of the schools in the random sample reported sometimes using locally developed competency tests in their English program; 37 percent reported that state-wide competency tests were in use (Table 29). (The question concerned with competency testing prompted an unusual number of marginal notes, usually on the order of "Not yet, but they are coming" or "Starting next year"; such programs may be becoming more widespread than the tabled data suggest.)

Most departments seem to have avoided becoming locked into the use of results on such tests to determine promotion or graduation. Results summarized in Table 29 indicate that in the random sample, only 7 percent of the schools used standardized or other external tests to determine promotion, and only 9 percent used them as a criterion for graduation or the award of a diploma. The percentage in the Achievement Awards schools was nearly 20

Table 29

Use of Competency Exams

Type and extent used	Percent of schools		
	Squire and Applebee	Achievement Awards	Random
Locally developed	39.7	44.2	25.3
State-wide	17.5	30.8	36.8
Either of the above	47.6	55.8	42.5
For promotion in any of the high school grades	6.3	5.1	7.0
As criterion for graduation or diploma	9.5	19.2	9.2
Number of schools	63	77[a]	87[b]

[a]N = 78 for the questions on state wide exams, promotion, and graduation criteria.
[b]N = 86 for the question on promotion.

Table 30

Construction and Use of Final Exams

Sample	Exam construction	Percent of use			
		School enrollment			All
		Under 500	500–2499	Over 2499	
Squire and Applebee	teacher only		96.5	100.0	96.8
	department participation		31.6	16.7	30.2
Achievement Awards	teacher only		98.4	93.3	97.4
	department participation		46.0	73.3	51.3
Random	teacher only	88.6	97.8	100.0	94.3
	department participation	17.1	28.9	71.4	27.6
Number of schools	Squire and Applebee	0	57	6	
	Achievement Awards	0	63	15	
	Random	35	45	7	

percent, however, reflecting a number of schools where diplomas (though usually not graduation) were tied to demonstration of mastery of specified skills.

Final Exams

The one type of testing which is virtually universal is the "final exam" at the end of each course or semester. Such examinations are developed by the teachers to assess progress in the specific courses which have been offered; they are usually also closely tied to reports to parents and to school records of student achievement.

Two questions in the present survey asked about the uses of such examinations, noting particularly the extent to which the department as a whole, as well as the individual teacher, was involved in their construction. Table 30 summarizes the results.

Virtually all of the schools surveyed made at least some use of final exams constructed solely by the individual teacher. Such exams were reported by 94 percent of the department heads in the random sample, and by even higher percentages in the Squire and Applebee and Achievement Awards schools. Results concerning departmental involvement in final exams are more interesting. As might be expected, small schools were less likely to have "departmental" exams. There was also more use of departmental exams in the Achievement Awards schools than in the other samples. This is consistent with the other indications of a stronger departmental organization and departmental concern for the curriculum in the schools which have consistently produced outstanding students in English. It is also consistent with a similar figure (42 percent) reported by Squire and Applebee (1968) in their earlier survey of outstanding schools.

6 Summary and Conclusions

Overview

Questionnaires were sent to department heads in 621 American secondary schools during the spring of 1977. Of these, useable responses were obtained from 316, or 51 percent. Because few responses were obtained from junior high, parochial, or independent schools, analyses concentrated upon public high schools including grades 10 through 12.

The 621 schools were sampled from four populations: the 116 schools in Squire and Applebee's (1968) main study, originally surveyed between 1963 and 1965; schools which had consistently produced winners in NCTE's Achievement Awards in Writing Competition; schools from NCTE's 1962–63 and 1967 Honor Rolls of schools making special efforts to reduce class size in English; and a random sample of schools nationally.

In reviewing the findings, we will look first at results from the random sample and then consider some of the differences in the other groups of schools.

Teaching Loads

Responses indicated that the typical secondary school English teacher could expect to meet five classes in a six- or seven-period day, with 26 to 30 students per class. Fully a quarter are expected to meet six classes per day. Compared with the surveys during the early and mid 1960s, teaching loads have remained fairly constant. Department heads' reports on changes during the last two years, however, suggest that, over the short term, loads may be getting heavier.

Teachers of English are also expected to be responsible for such activities as yearbook, school newspaper, and speech or drama clubs; as well as to share responsibility for chaperoning, corridor duty, and lunchroom supervision. Few schools are apparently attempting to reduce loads through such practices as double-

period or four-day-a-week scheduling of classes, or by reducing the number of separate preparations expected. Between 15 and 17 percent of the schools reported that lay readers or other paraprofessionals were available to assist with instruction in English, but such programs affect only a small proportion of the students in each school.

Organization of the Curriculum

The major change in the structure of the curriculum in the past 10 to 15 years has been the widespread adoption of elective programs. Some 78 percent of the schools reported elective programs at the twelfth grade level; over 50 percent reported extensive elective programs involving over three-quarters of their senior students. Electives were less widespread at the tenth grade level: though over half of the schools reported such programs, only 28 percent had electives which involved over three-quarters of their sophomore students. Responses to open-ended questions suggested that the elective program is entering a period of weeding and sifting, with more structure and guidance for students, reduction in the number of courses, and the elimination of weaker offerings.

Accompanying and probably in part a result of the elective programs, heterogeneous grouping was widely reported; department heads' concept of "heterogeneous," however, allowed them to apply the term to programs which also provided special classes for gifted and for remedial students. Some 45 percent of the schools reported classes for the gifted; 71 percent had special remedial classes. Ungraded classes, which have also been discussed in connection with an elective curriculum, were less popular, occurring in about one-quarter of the schools.

Among the specific instructional approaches, small group work has shown the greatest gains since the 1960s. Such techniques were reportedly being used to some extent in three-fourths of the schools. Team teaching (in 19 percent) and programmed instruction (in a quarter of the schools) have been much less widely accepted.

The English Department

All but 1.5 percent of the full-time teachers of English in the schools surveyed had at least an undergraduate minor in the subject they were teaching; the majority had majored in English.

Some 51 percent had obtained a masters or higher degree. Both of these figures indicate that teachers today are better prepared than were their counterparts surveyed in the early 1960s.

Continuing education, to the extent measured in the present survey, has declined, perhaps in response to curtailed school budgets. Compared with the earlier studies, fewer teachers reported completing college English or education courses within the past year, and fewer had attended local, regional, state, or national meetings of English teachers.

Department heads report playing a major role in the supervision of instruction in only 17 percent of the schools, though 28 percent report receiving at least some released time for their administrative and supervisory duties. Nearly 70 percent of the schools had some written materials to help coordinate instruction; in 57 percent, this took the form of a relatively extensive curriculum bulletin (or bulletins).

Testing in English

Department heads' reports indicate fairly well-defined but to some extent conflicting attitudes toward standardized testing, leading to overall uncertainty as to whether such tests offer "a good general measure" of student progress. They reject both the idea that tests distort or constrain the curriculum unduly and the idea that tests help keep teaching responsive to student needs. Some 68 percent of the schools used standardized tests to some degree with all of the students at a specified grade level.

Forty-three percent of the schools have instituted competency exams for some of their students; state developed exams were reported more frequently than locally developed ones. Over 90 percent of the schools reported that they have been able to avoid using such exams as the criterion for graduation or promotion.

The type of testing which is virtually universal is the final or semester course exam. Usually this is constructed by the individual teacher, but 28 percent of the schools sometimes use exams which are at least in part departmental.

Consistent Winners of Achievement Awards in Writing

The schools which have produced winners in the NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing competition in at least four of the previous five years differed in a number of ways from the random

sample. Demographically, they tended to be larger, which may be simply an artifact of the selection procedure (larger schools have more students eligible to compete, and hence more chances at winning). They also tend to be located in communities of relatively privileged socioeconomic status.

In general, teaching conditions in the Achievement Awards schools were better than in the random sample. Class loads were lighter, preparations fewer, and teachers somewhat less likely to be given such non-instructional responsibilities as corridor duty, lunchroom supervision, or chaperoning. Although large schools in general had heavier teaching loads than small ones, the larger schools in the Achievement Awards sample seem to have resisted this trend; their teaching loads were no greater than those in other Achievement Awards schools.

One of the most interesting findings in this sample was a significant relationship between average teaching load and department heads' reports of the total attention given to composition instruction: the higher the load, the less attention reported. A similar association was found in the schools resurveyed from the Squire and Applebee study, though not in the random sample. The most likely interpretation is that writing instruction is of high priority in these schools, and therefore attention to writing increases when lighter loads make more time for such instruction available. In the random sample, on the other hand, writing may not have as high a priority, and the extra time available because of lighter loads may be used in other ways. But this is only one possible interpretation of a finding that deserves further study.

Although there was considerable uniformity among the samples in their approaches to writing instruction, the Achievement Awards schools did report giving slightly more attention to comments about organization and strategy, and required more rewriting of student papers.

The elective curriculum had been adopted by virtually all (95 percent) of the Achievement Awards schools for their twelfth grade pupils, and by 67 percent of the schools at the tenth grade level. They were also more likely to provide special classes for both gifted and remedial students.

The teachers in these schools were more likely to have a masters or higher degree, and somewhat more likely to have attended state or national meetings of English teachers within the past year. Their department heads were more likely to have major supervisory responsibilities, and to receive released time to carry out

these responsiblities. All but about 10 percent had written curriculum materials to provide further coordination and structure to the program, in addition to departmental leadership. The department head, the students, and the district were all more likely to have been involved in the development of these materials than was the case in the random sample.

Overall, the picture that emerges of the Achievement Awards schools is one of a strong English department with active leadership by the department head, well-prepared staff, and a thoroughly organized curriculum developed through cooperative effort.

Honor Roll Schools

The schools selected for the 1962–63 and 1967 NCTE Honor Rolls of schools reducing class size in English contained a disproportionate number of small-town or rural schools, and of schools from the Northeast part of the country. Conditions in these schools, although their average class sizes have risen since the Honor Rolls were published, are still noticeably better than in schools in the random sample. Fully 46 percent of the schools from the 1967 Honor Roll and 29 percent from the 1962–63 Honor Roll still meet the NCTE criterion of 100 pupils per teacher per day.

Squire and Applebee Schools

The schools resurveyed from the Squire and Applebee (1968) study seem to have done quite well in maintaining their programs over the approximately thirteen years since the original study. In most of the analyses, conditions in these schools were very similar to those in the Achievement Awards schools (which were selected on criteria used in the selection of the original Squire and Applebee sample); indeed, seventeen of the schools in the original sample would still have qualified for the present study of consistent Achievement Awards winners.

This is not to say that conditions have not changed, simply that as a result of the changes that have occurred, these schools remain more similar to the current sample of "outstanding" schools than to the random sample of schools nationally. Changes that were found include the spread of the elective curriculum and of heterogeneous grouping, the emergence of group work as an accepted classroom approach, and improvement in the level of teacher preparation.

Teaching loads have remained about the same, as has the tendency for these schools to be characterized by strong departmental leadership and well-organized programs of study in English.

Small Schools

Conditions in small schools (under 500 pupils) in the present survey differed considerably from those in the remainder of the sample. The number of students taught each day tended to be lower, often as a direct result of limited enrollments; the number of separate preparations necessary each day was correspondingly higher. Such schools were also less likely to be able to provide special classes for their gifted or their remedial students.

The most worrisome aspect in the small school English programs was the lack of any method of providing continuity and structure. At the time of the survey, 30 percent of the full-time teachers of English were new to their schools; 11 percent were in their first year of teaching. Yet the majority of responses indicated that nobody was responsible for supervising the teaching of English, and 57 percent reported that there were no written curriculum guides or similar materials available. Although the lack of coordination in the curriculum of a small school will affect fewer pupils than in a large one, that does not lessen the plight of the teachers and students involved.

A Last Word

The responses to the questionnaire give at least a tentative portrait of conditions under which English was being taught in the spring of 1977. The picture that emerges indicates a fair degree of congruence between theory, as expressed in contemporary educational literature, and practice, as reflected in department heads' descriptions of their programs. The major exceptions are that teaching conditions have not deteriorated in the way that harried teachers may sometimes feel, and that innovative practices may be less widespread than the amount of space devoted to them in the literature might suggest. Both elective programs and small group work, for example, which received considerable attention several years ago, are now quite widely accepted—and the attention given them in the journals is considerably less than it once was. (Electives, under attack as one cause of declining academic standards,

may soon be the focus of a different sort of attention, at least in the popular press.)

At the end of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to comment on changes over the last five years, and those foreseen in the near future. Space was limited, and came at the end of an already lengthy questionnaire, but their brief comments still give a sense of the direction programs are taking. A selection discussing electives was given earlier, so further comments on that subject will not be included. It seems right that, after taking time from busy schedules to respond to the questionnaire, the teachers themselves should have the last word. A representative (though not random) selection of their comments follows:

—A return to "sequential" philosophy.

—Better organization; uniformity of instruction; increasing emphasis on composition.

—A systems approach of delineating objectives and measuring them.

—Additional quarter courses at the senior level designed to prepare students in areas of need as they focus on definite college/career plans.

—I see a deterioration of spirit of teachers of English—their concentration upon contracts and their strong move toward "doing your own thing" as opposed to syllabus mandates and needs of students.

—Introduction of a composition program. Introduction of a grammar program.

—As teachers are retired, English teachers must take a 5th class instead of hiring a teacher.

—Because our graduates have endorsed our English curriculum we have not made major changes nor do we anticipate any. Experience has proved we seem to be effective.

—We have been attempting to weed out all the contemporary "garbage" that during the past decade has found its way into the English curriculum.

—In a way, we are still trying to reconcile our rather amorphous ideals with the all-too-realistic needs (and willingness) of our students. We are constantly looking for a clearer way to organize our teaching of writing.

—I foresee a more traditional approach.

—Implementation of a writing lab, expansion of our reading program, movement toward competency testing.

—Will introduce a "competency writing" course for all 11th graders in September—reading competency looms in near future.

—The most important change is a required course in usage, punctuation, and vocabulary at the sophomore level.

—We are using more pre/post testing. That will continue as statewide assessment comes to this state.

—Emphasis on discussion skills.

—Expansion. We have several new alternative programs in our school, all of which include English in the program.

—We are moving toward the instructor-oriented, 40-minute class period.

—BASICS—(whether we like it or not).

—Programs designed to accommodate early graduation.

—Competency exams!

—We are planning to use experimental minicourses next year.

—A more coordinated developmental program from grades 9–11.

—Reduction in course offerings and a bit more return to basic or traditional approaches. Greater awareness of the "non-student" and his or her effect on students and curriculum.

—More writing.

Appendix A
Nonsexist Language—What Progress?

Concern with women's rights has had as one facet the fostering of the use of nonsexist language. NCTE, for example, works under a mandate from the 1975 convention to avoid sexist terms in its publications and activities.

The present survey did not look directly at the extent to which this concern has influenced schools and school programs. More by accident than design, the format of the questionnaire did provide at least a sidelight on such matters. The envelopes and covering letters for the survey were addressed to the English department chairperson. The questionnaire itself had a space for the person actually filling out the form to give his or her title. After an angry letter from a woman who wished to be called chair "man" rather than "person," the titles which respondents listed for themselves were tabulated as to whether they were masculine (chairman), feminine (chairwoman), or neuter (department head, chair, English supervisor). The results were similar within all four samples: 63 percent of the men used a title with a masculine root; 33 percent used a neutral title. Of the women, 42 percent used a title with a masculine root, less than 1 percent (only 1 respondent) used a title with a feminine root (chairwoman), and 57 percent adopted a neutral term. Interpretation of results here is hazardous. It seems reasonable to suggest, however, that habits of language use are deep seated and change slowly.

Appendix B
Regions of the United States

Southeast	*West*	*Central*	*Northeast*
Alabama	Alaska	Illinois	Connecticut
Arkansas	Arizona	Indiana	Delaware
Florida	California	Iowa	District of Columbia
Georgia	Colorado	Kansas	Maine
Kentucky	Hawaii	Michigan	Maryland
Louisiana	Idaho	Minnesota	Massachusetts
Mississippi	Montana	Missouri	New Hampshire
North Carolina	Nevada	Nebraska	New Jersey
South Carolina	New Mexico	North Dakota	New York
Tennessee	Oklahoma	Ohio	Pennsylvania
Virginia	Oregon	South Dakota	Rhode Island
West Virginia	Texas	Wisconsin	Vermont
	Utah		
	Washington		
	Wyoming		

From National Assessment of Educational Progress (1972); p. 14.

Appendix C
The Questionnaire

In 1977, to determine current conditions in the teaching of English, a questionnaire was designed and distributed from the National Council of Teachers of English headquarters to a selected sample of schools. That questionnaire is reproduced on the following four pages. To obtain as much information as possible with a limited number of queries, department heads were asked to complete the survey, rather than individual teachers. Wording of the questions, whenever possible, was retained from previous surveys (Squire and Applebee, 1968; Hook, 1961; and Squire, 1964) so that valid comparisons of results could be made.

Your name_____ Position _____

School Address _____

Please answer in the space below

PART ONE School Description

Enter in the spaces at the right the numbers corresponding to the items which best describe your school.

1 public 2 independent 3 parochial

1 senior h s. 2 junior h.s 3 junior/senior h s.

1 large city (200,000 +) 2 medium city (25,000 to 200,000) 3 suburban
4 small town or rural 5 other (specify)

Approximate occupational profile of students' families

- professional and managerial ____ %
- highly skilled ____ %
- semi-skilled & minor white collar ____ %
- rural or agricultural ____ %
- unskilled or slightly skilled ____ %

Approximate ethnic representation in student body.

- white ____ %
- black ____ %
- Spanish-surnamed ____ %
- other ____ %

Total number of students in school this year _____ students

Size of last year's graduating class _____ graduates

Proportion of last year's graduates going on: to 2-year colleges ____ %
to 4-year colleges ____ %

Semesters of senior high school English required for graduation (out of 8 possible). _____ semesters

Salaries paid by your school to fully-qualified English teachers (both B A and higher degrees), excluding allowances for special responsibilities

$ _____ maximum
$ _____ minimum

PART TWO Teaching Load

Number of teachers in English department

____ full-time
____ part-time

Average number of classes per day assigned each full-time English teacher ____ classes

Number of full-time teachers in the English department assigned more than four classes per day (including classes in other subjects) ____ teachers

Number of full-time English teachers having more than 2 different preparations (more than 2 grade levels or 2 courses) per day. ____ teachers

Total number of students taught daily by each full-time English teacher

____ average
____ minimum
____ maximum

Number of English classes with the following enrollments

(Leave blank for grade-levels not taught in your school)

	grade 8	grade 10	grade 12
above 40			
36-40			
31-35			
26-30			
21-25			
16-20			
below 16			

Please return your completed questionnaire to Arthur N Applebee, National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, Illinois 61801

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

What effect, if any, do collective bargaining agreements have on your teaching load in English classes? (Enter number at right.)
1 no agreements related to load
2 agreements govern load but make no special provision for English instruction
3 agreements govern load, with special provision for English ____

What is the pupil-teacher ratio usually reported by the school administration? ____ pupils/teacher

On what basis is that ratio calculated? (Enter number at right.)
1 all certified personnel (e.g., including librarians, counselors)
2 certified teachers only ____
3 other (please specify)

How many days a week does each English class usually meet? (leave blank for grade levels which do not apply)
in grade 8 ____ days
in grade 10 ____ days
in grade 12 ____ days

Of these, how many usually involve double-period English classes?
in grade 8 ____ days
in grade 10 ____ days
in grade 12 ____ days

What is the average length of single class periods? ____ minutes

Number of instructional periods in the school day. ____ periods

Proportion of students taking more than 1 English course
in grade 8 ____ %
in grade 10 ____ %
in grade 12 ____ %

Indicate in the spaces to the right whether, in addition to their regular classes, English teachers are never (0), rarely (1), occasionally (2), or often (3):
0 never
1 rarely
2 occasionally
3 often

assigned a study hall	____
timetabled for a preparation period	____
assigned other duties during regular class periods (please specify at left)	____

Indicate at the right whether the following out of class responsibilities are never assigned to English teachers (0), assigned with extra pay (1), or assigned without extra pay (2)
0 not assigned
1 paid
2 unpaid

yearbook	____
newspaper	____
speech or drama clubs	____
student council	____
corridor duty	____
lunch duty	____
chaperoning	____
other (please specify at left)	____

Approximately what proportion of your students are affected by each of the following techniques sometimes used in the teaching of English? (Please use the scale indicated to answer at the right.)
0 none
1 1%-25%
2 26%-50%
3 51%-75%
4 76%-99%
5 all

	grade 8	grade 10	grade 12
elective programs	____	____	____
classes for gifted pupils	____	____	____
classes for remedial pupils	____	____	____
heterogeneous grouping	____	____	____
ungraded classes	____	____	____
lay readers or other paraprofessionals	____	____	____
team teaching	____	____	____
programmed learning	____	____	____
small group work	____	____	____

English teachers' overall load this year, compared with last year
1 higher 2 about the same 3 lower ____

Load expected next year, compared with this year
1 higher 2 about the same 3 lower ____

If there has been an increase in class size in recent years, please describe briefly the factors that have led to it. If class sizes are low, what factors in the school and community help to keep them that way?

(Continue on new page)

PART THREE The English Department

Highest degrees held by full-time English teachers:

doctorate	_____ teachers
Master + hours	_____ teachers
Masters	_____ teachers
bachelors	_____ teachers

Number of full-time English teachers with

undergraduate major in English	_____ teachers
undergraduate minor in English	_____ teachers
neither of the above	_____ teachers

Number of full-time English teachers who within the last year

completed a college English course	_____ teachers
completed a college Education course	_____ teachers
attended a local or regional meeting of English teachers (not school or district)	_____ teachers
attended state meeting of English teachers	_____ teachers
attended national meeting of English teachers	_____ teachers

How many full-time English teachers were new to your department at the beginning of this academic year? _____ teachers

Of these, how many were in their first year of teaching? _____ teachers

Are teachers regularly supervised in their work (including classroom visits)?
0 no 1 yes _____

If there is regular supervision, indicate at the right whether each of the following plays no role (0), a minor role (1), or a major role (2).

0 no role
1 minor
2 major

department head	_____
principal or other administrator	_____
city language arts supervisor	_____
county or district supervisor	_____
state department of education	_____
other (specify at left)	_____

How many released periods each week are given to the English department head for supervisory and administrative responsibilities? _____ periods

What, if anything, is used to coordinate the curriculum? Select *one* and enter number at right:

1 Curriculum bulletin containing general statement of goals, objectives, and philosophy.
2 The above, plus grade-by-grade list of objectives or content.
3 Curriculum resource bulletin including goals, grade objectives, reading lists, teaching approaches, and other resources. _____
4 No written guide but much faculty interaction and awareness
5 Department and students develop course outlines
6 Other (please specify)
7 None of the above: all planning is done by the individual teacher.

If written curriculum bulletins, course outlines, or other materials are available, indicate whether each of the following plays no role (0), a minor role (1), or a major role (2) in their development.

0 no role
1 minor role
2 major role

department head	_____
teachers in the department	_____
students	_____
city or district	_____
state	_____
other (specify at left)	_____

PART FOUR Evaluating Student Progress

Indicate whether each of the following methods of evaluating student progress is never used (0) by your department, sometimes used (1), or regularly used (2).

0 never	final exams constructed in whole or part by the dept	____
1 sometimes	final exams constructed solely by individual teacher	____
2 regularly	standardized tests administered to all students in a given grade	____
	competency tests developed locally	____
	competency tests developed state-wide	____

Are scores from standardized tests or minimal competency exams used as a criterion for graduation or diploma?

0 no 1 yes ____

Are standardized or other external tests used to determine promotion or nonpromotion in any of the high school grades?

0 no 1 yes ____

If yes, briefly describe the tests and grade levels at which they are used

If standardized tests are used, indicate on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (very much) the extent to which you feel that they

0 not at all	provide a good general measure of student progress?	____
1	reflect the specific content of your curriculum?	____
2	lead some teachers to teach to the test?	____
3	constrain the curriculum in undesirable ways?	____
4 very much	help keep teaching responsive to student needs?	____

PART FIVE The Teaching of Writing

Indicate in the space to the right whether instruction in written composition is a part of

1 all English courses
2 specialized writing courses only ____
3 all except a few specialized courses

In a four-week period, approximately how many times will students be asked to write "themes" of various sorts for their English classes (excluding notes, rough drafts, exercises, and brief answers to study questions)?

in grade 10	____
in grade 12	____

Please use the scale below to indicate the approximate extent to which the writing a pupil does for English will be:

		grade 10	grade 12
0 none	private, not read by the teacher (e g , journals)	____	____
1 1%-25%	read by other students	____	____
2 26%-50%	corrected for mechanical errors	____	____
3 51%-75%	assigned a grade	____	____
4 76%-99%	discussed in teacher-student conferences	____	____
5 all	commented on for organization or strategy	____	____
	rewritten by pupil	____	____

Describe briefly the most important changes in your English program during the last 5 years.

What changes do you foresee in the near future?

If your school has had winners of NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing during the last 5 years, to what do you attribute your success in educating these outstanding students?

Bibliography

Applebee, Arthur N. *Tradition and Reform in the Teaching of English: A History.* Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1974.

Baker, Franklin T. (Chair). "Preparation of High-School Teachers of English," *English Journal* 4:5 (1915), 323-32.

Dusel, William J. "Determining an Efficient Teaching Load in English," *Illinois English Bulletin* 43:1 (October 1955).

English Teacher Preparation Study, "Guidelines for the Preparation of Teachers of English—1968," *English Journal* 57:4 (1968), 528-36.

Fader, Daniel, with James Duggins, Tom Finn, and Elton McNeil. *The New Hooked on Books.* New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1976, p. 6.

Foster, Betty J., and Judi M. Carpenter. *Statistics of Public Elementary and Secondary Day Schools, Fall 1975.* Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1976.

Gillis, Candida. "The English Classroom 1977: A Report on the EJ Readership Survey," *English Journal* 66:6 (September 1977), 20–26.

Grommon, Alfred H. "A History of the Preparation of Teachers of English," *English Journal* 57:4 (1968), 484-524.

Hillocks, George, Jr. *Alternatives in English: A Critical Appraisal of Elective Programs.* Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1972.

Hook, J. N. "Characteristics of Award-Winning High Schools," *English Journal* 50:1 (1961), 9–15.

Hopkins, Edwin M. (Chair). *The Labor and Cost of the Teaching of English in Colleges and Secondary Schools with Especial Reference to English Composition.* 16th ed. Chicago, Illinois: NCTE, 1923.

Jewett, Arno. *English Language Arts in American High Schools.* U.S. Office of Education Bulletin 1958, no. 13. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1959.

Larson, Richard. (Chair). *A Statement on the Preparation of Teachers of English and the Language Arts.* Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1976.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. *Reading and Literature: General Information Yearbook.* Denver, Colorado: Education Commission of the States, 1972.

National Council of Teachers of English. Honor Roll of Schools Reducing Teaching Load in English. Champaign, Illinois, 1962. Offprint.

———. Additions to the Honor Roll of Schools Reducing Teaching Load in English. Champaign, Illinois, Fall 1963. Offprint.

_____. Honor Roll of Schools Reducing Teaching Load in English. Champaign, Illinois, 1967. Offprint.

Ruggless, Charles B. "The Nominal High School English Department Chairman," *English Journal* 54:5 (1965), 374–78.

Smith, Dora V. *Instruction in English.* Bureau of Education Bulletin 1932, no. 17. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1933.

Squire, James R. (Chair). *The National Interest and the Teaching of English.* Champaign, Illinois: NCTE, 1961.

Squire, James R. (Chair). *The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English.* Champaign, Illinois: NCTE, 1964.

Squire, James R., and Roger K. Applebee. *High School English Instruction Today.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968.