DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 371 399 CS 214 405

AUTHOR

Barth, Patte, Ed.

TITLE

Defining the Language Arts.

INSTITUTION

Council for Basic Education, Washington, D.C.

REPORT NO

ISSN-1964984

PUB DATE

Jun 94

NOTE

21p.

AVAILABLE FROM

Council for Basic Education, 1319 F Street, N.W.,

Washington, DC 20004-1152 (\$25 annual

subscription).

PUB TYPE

Collected Works - Serials (022)

JOURNAL CIT

Basic Education; v38 n10 Jun 1994

EDRS PRICE

MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS

*Beginning Teachers; *Bilingual Education;

Definitions; Elementary Secondary Education; English Curriculum; *English Instruction; *Language Arts;

*Professional Recognition; Teacher Attitudes

IDENTIFIERS

New Teachers; Shaker Heights Schools OH; Writing

Development

ABSTRACT

This issue of "Basic Education" presents articles that discuss, respectively, defining the language arts, an agenda for English, the benefits of two languages, a new teacher (presently teaching English in a foreign country) looking ahead, and the Shaker Fellowships awarded by the school district in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Articles in the journal are: (1) "Writing with Nothing to Say" (Patte Barth); (2) "Meaningful English Assessment" (David H. Lynn); (3) "Two Years Later" (Amy Rukea Stempel); (4) "A Bilingual Success Story" (Stephanie Soper); and (5) A Summer for Tender Thought" (Elsa M. Little). (RS)

^{*} Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *

371 399

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Office of Educational Research and Improvement EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve regulduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

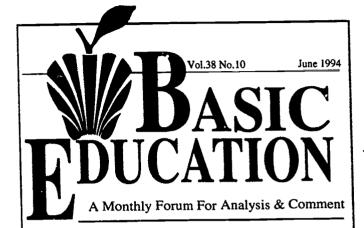
DEFINING THEI ANGUAGE ARTS

New Teacher Looks, Micad.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY GVAILABLE



Patte Barth, Editor

Writing With Nothing to Say	Page	i
Meaningful English Assessment by David H. Lynn	Page	3
Two Years Laterby Amy Rukea Stempel	Page	6
A Bilingual Success Storyby Stephanie Soper	Page	10
A Summer For Tender Thought	Page	13

Funding for guest authors from the New York Times Company Foundation and the W.L. Lyons Brown Foundation.

Basic Education is published monthly, except in July and August, by the Council for Basic Education.

CBE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

F. James Rutherford. Chair;
Mrs. J. William Fulbright. Vice Chair;
Michael Harreld. Treasurer:
Mrs. Talcott Bates. Charles Blitzer.
Emelda Cathcart. Carl J. Dolce, Maxine Frost.
Mrs. Edward B. McMenamin, Huston Simmons.
Loren E. Smith. Mrs. Potter Stewart.
Jacques Barzun, Mrs. Barry Bingham.
Clifton Fadiman, Thomas C. Mendenhall Directors Emeriti.
A. Graham Down. President.

ISSN 1964984

Copyright 1993. The Council for Basic Education



WRITING WITH NOTHING TO SAY

an there still be doubt that writing belongs in every discipline? The drearily mixed results of the most recent national writing assessment should finally sway any remaining skeptics.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) evaluated a representative sample of American students in 1992 for their proficiency at writing for information, narration, and persuasion. What they found were students who were generally writing more than in 1988, the time of the last NAEP writing assessment. The students also showed a basic understanding of writing fundamentals, that is, what kind of response the task required and how it should be structured. At the same time, fewer than one-fifth of all students wrote responses which were "elaborated" or "extensively elaborated" (five and six on the scale respectively with six being the highest). Most troubling, not more than 3 percent were able to write persuasively at the "elaborate" or better level: at tops, only 25 percent wrote "developed" persuasive responses or better. In real terms this means that the majority of our students can craft a paragraph, but can't develop the ideas; can express an opinion, but can't support it with evidence.

This brings to mind a history professor at Hunter College who was said to complain that her freshman "have plenty of attitudes and opinions, but they lack the knowledge to analyze a problem." Despite the increased emphasis on writing in schools, students are still unable to communicate ideas coherently or convincingly in print. It's hardly farfetched to infer from this report that if stuc'ants' writing isn't sufficiently developed, it is probably because their thinking isn't either. Like the Hunter freshmen, they have plenty of attitudes, but lack the knowledge to persuade anyone in writing.

It may seem obvious to those who work daily with the written word, but effective writing will never happen unless the writer, first, has something to say and a specific reason for saying it. Unfortunately, writing is too often taught as something generic, a one-size-fits-all process with parts and steps which, when followed, communicate equally well in all situations. On one hand, many equate good writing with good spelling and punctuation. On the other, it is assumed that if one can convey a personal anecdote, for example, then that skill will transfer to writing about the Monroe Doctrine or the carbon cycle.



Both assumptions place higher value on the form of writing over its substance—with predictably hollow results.

In truth, the so-called "writing process"-writing frequently and with multiple drafts-produces better results where it is emphasized in instruction, as the NAEP data suggest. Nonetheless, the report also shows that students tended to perform better on tasks about issues in which they presumably had a greater vested interest. For example, nearly half of the sample twelfth-graders wrote "elaborate" or better informative responses when asked to discuss a school problem. When attempting to describe a new invention, however, that number plummeted to 6 percent. Across all levels and all tasks in persuasive writing, most of our students produced responses which were "undeveloped" or "minimally developed" (described by NAEP as having "unexplained and undefended" ideas). The writing process is just that—a process. It cannot, compensate for an absence of ideas to communicate. Nor does it substitute for disciplined thinking and enough knowledge to support an argument.

Writing is too often taught as something generic.

Part of the problem with the teaching of writing is territory. Language arts teachers are notoriously custodial about writing, and, in general, their colleagues in other subjects have ceded this responsibility to them. So pervasive is the belief that writing stands alone, that it is not only isolated from its subject-specific purposes outside the English class, it is not necessarily anchored to the study of literature.

Significantly, the NAEP report also shows that, in addition to teaching the writing process, teachers in top-performing schools often assigned writing tasks about literature (a compelling case for which is made by David H. Lynn in this BE). Secondary teachers of the top performers further emphasized quality and coherence with only moderate attention to writing mechanics. Moreover, they demanded more analysis and interpretation from their students.

But schools will need to do more than improve writing in English classrooms alone if American students are to meet high writing standards. Writing must be an integral part of instruction in every subject, each of which has unique requirements for describing, organizing, and arguing ideas and content. Otherwise, students' writing will continue to look right but say nothing.

MEANINGFUL ENGLISH ASSESSMENT

by David H. Lynn

nglish as a subject—one of the principal liberal arts—is under stress and strain as never before. From the elementary years right through graduate school, English has become a grab-bag of different activities that can only be called a "discipline" with a nod and a wink and a fair bit of hokum. This makes assessment all the more challenging. It's critical that we be absolutely clear what we desire students to know and be able to do. The implications will be far reaching.

As humans we are creatures of language in the fullest sense. We understand ourselves, we make sense of our world through language in use: in narratives; in poems; in essays, briefs, and proposals; in action as we read, write, and think. It seems obvious then that we should assess students in how they use language in meaningful tasks. At every level of education, students ought to be able to use language effectively in the following ways appropriate to their grade level:

- 1. They will read a text thoughtfully and be able to express their ideas about it clearly and efficiently.
- 2. They will demonstrate their ability to write by actually writing about critical issues that have engaged their minds.
- 3. They will be familiar—and able to express that familiarity—with works widely believed to be valuable.

Notice how these activities reinforce one another. It is at this level that "English" may become a coherent subject once more. The implications are profound not only for assessment, naturally enough, but for how we organize classes themselves.

Under the large umbrella of English as it currently exists in schools, however, one discovers three fragmented, disconnected activities: the study of literature, composition/language instruction, and creative writing. Increasingly each is jealous of the others. As territory is carved out, separate and distinct, the whole is weakened. Students become bored, confused,



indifferent.

For all too many people, "English" has meant simply instruction in language and writing. Students typically study something called composition, grammar, and writing divorced from the context of purpose and creative or critical thought. Whatever it's called, studying language cut off from the roots of its vitality in literature is stultifying. This is nothing new, of course. Such deadly dull classes have turned students off and away from reading and writing for generations.

If in assessing students we ask them not to fill in bubbles or to give short answers to mechanical questions, but actually to write about a passage before them or to submit longer pieces as parts of a portfolio, then there is precious little reason to organize the teaching of writing as something separate from the study of literature.

Literature courses too will necessarily change. Reading will not be divorced from writing. Poems, stories, essays will be studied as models of writing as well as for their rich meanings. Writing will be both a means and an end in the study of works by great authors.

English as a subject is under stress and strain as never before.

Here we arrive at a further crux: writing and thinking are mutually reinforcing. Writing is only meaningful, is only something other than boring for writer as well as reader, when it is about something that engages the mind and generates new thought. We only truly discover what we think by fashioning thought into language. If at the heart of English is—and I believe must always be—the study of literature, then writing in English classes must engage the stories, poems, essays, and plays that students read.

It makes sense, therefore, that their writing and thinking be assessed precisely in the same terms: in the context of engaging literary texts. The principle can be applied whether in the use of challenging tests, which will include reading substantial passages and then engaging critical questions about them through writing, or in portfolios that will be gathered and shaped over a period of time.

In the same way, creative writing can—should—be folded back as a central activity into the English classroom. This will have a liberating effect as well. Students discover that in order to express themselves creatively through language, they must also write effectively. They will read other writers as models. and they will be interested in how a story or poem works as

well as what it means. Classrooms as workshops of give-andtake will be more collaborative as well as more challenging. Reading, writing, and thinking can only be strengthened when brought together in this way.

The mere mention of the word literature raises the specter that has wearied so many of us in recent years: who decides; what makes it literature; how do we identify those "works widely believed to be valuable"; how would we assess students' familiarity with them?

I for one believe the shadow is disappearing. If anything, the debate over what belongs in the canon and in the classrooms of modern-day America has proved, much to our surprise, invigorating. Long may the debate endure. The classics have not disappeared. The study of literature has only been strengthened by the inclusion of works, new and rediscovered, by women, by Native and African Americans, by Asians and Latinos

This is one area in which the federal government can take the lead, by creating models and lists from which schools may draw. A national perspective will transcend parochialism and bias, but must also allow flexibility and choice. While the collection of scraps of knowledge that make up our cultural heritage smacks somewhat of Casaubon's nightmarish quest in Middlemarch, it surely seems appropriate that our nation foster an ongoing discussion of the texts we value. That very debate will not only shape what books are taught in the classroom; it will strengthen what the proponents of "cultural literacy" maintain is at the heart of their cause: we as a diverse people will be speaking to and learning from each other.

If school districts must choose from a list of works to be read each year, in practice any such list will be provisional. It will change from year to year. That is natural and inevitable—indeed desirable. It does not mean that students will fail to read Shakespeare and Twain. Rather, the deep power and relevance of classic works will come more alive when joined to the contemporary. And Morrison, Silko, and Walcott will rightly be seen as more than "multicultural," as truly great artists in the context of a vibrant tradition of letters.

In short, by identifying what we most value, what we desire students to know and be able to do, and by creating methods of assessment that model and measure the acts of reading, writing, and thinking, we cannot help but strengthen what goes on in the classroom. We may even generate some discipline—in the best sense—for the discipline of English.

David H. Lynn, a CBE senior associate, teaches at Kenyon College and is editor of the Kenyon Review.

TWO YEARS LATER

by Amy Rukea Stempel

Editor's note: As happens to so many young staff members while working at CBE, Amy Rukea Stempel was bitten by the teaching bug. She left our offices two years ago for a mountain top in India where she has been teaching English to international secondary students. During this time, she has been sending occasional articles about her experiences as a novice teacher. What follows is her most recent.

titing here looking out over the plains of South India, it strikes me that I am leaving this place, this Kodaikanal International School. I came with all the idealism that CBE could instill and have taken some hard knocks these past two years-six different preps my first semester (ranging from British literature to creative writing), students who tried my patience, an administration that said one thing and practiced another, and my own idiocy. Not to mention the daily challenge of living on a mountain top in India-water shortages, lack of communication with the outside world, and a dubious power supply, to name a few.

Now I am about to leave and pursue a masters degree on the way to another teaching position. What have I learned? Would I do it again? Would I recommend teaching as a career for young people? The answers are respectively: "More than I once imagined possible"; "Yes"; and "Yes with qualifications."

But first the unqualified "yes." When I put down on paper some of the lessons my students have taught me, it reinforces much of what I already suspected. School is a community of learners—or should be anyway. I hope my students have learned something, but I know that I have. There is something about a place where the mind is in use that energizes and enlivens all who are a part of it. Truth be told, I am filled with immense sadness at the thought of being out of the classroom if only for a year. My reflections on these past two years may be simple, and probably lack profundity, but they are the reflections of someone who loves teaching.

Education is for action and often we forget that. The world can ill afford people who are unable or unwilling to apply their knowledge. Also, when it is made pertinent, students begin to take responsibility for their own learning in a way that surprises even the most cynical.

Education has its own pace and as "coaches" of intellect we have to work with, not against, the pace of our students. This certainly needs to be a highly developed skill for a teacher as each student's pace can differ. Education is fun and empowering. If it is not, you are probably doing it wrong.

Education is not always made up of profound turning points. Usually, it is the little things that work together—an idea left on a table that someone can pick up and reshape and use. Often what students remember from a class and use the most is an alternate viewpoint, a direct answer, or an encouraging word.

Students respect integrity and honesty both in their teachers and in their subjects. Students will bend over backward for someone—or something—who frees them, and not even know it, let alone complain about it.

Education is not always made up of profound turning points.

Discipline is essential—both self-discipline as a teacher and classroom discipline. And frankly, noise levels have nothing to do with classroom discipline. Some of my most successful lessons have been the most chaotic (so have some of my worst). However, it soon becomes obvious when students are engaged and learning. Within reason, I let them follow their interests. Often you, the teacher, learn something as a result.

If discipline is essential, so is flexibility. When a particular method is not working, chuck it. When your students are interested in theme rather than character, let them follow their interests. With proper management, every content area or skill will eventually be covered. Take the time to follow your own interests. Enthusiasm for your subject shows as does enthusiasm for life.

I estimate that it will take four to five years to become a truly competent teacher. If anyone tells you otherwise, they are probably lying. While first-year teachers can function adequately, they are doing so at only a fraction of full capacity. After making it through my second year of teaching, I realize how much I did not know last year and how much I still don't know. What does this say about the way we structure our profession?

Teachers should not be martyrs. While it is easy to fall into the trap of bearing the blame of society, it is not healthy. Teachers are not solely responsible for the individual failures of their students or the world. What they are responsible for is providing an intellectually stimulating and affirming environment—with firm, consistent, and high expectations.

There is no doubt I am an idealist. That is why I am a teacher. However, I would like to think I am a thoughtful idealist. In fact, I spend a great deal of time thinking of how to make schools better, thanks to the solid training of CBE. It seems to me that the following elements can help or hinder the ability of schools or teachers to work well. No doubt education is facing some hard times and solutions are not easy. However, they are possible, if schools are just willing to make the effort.

Most important is a strong and consistent educational vision.

- The most important element of a school is a strong and consistent educational vision. Without a strong educational vision a school is lost. For example, at my international school I have noticed that we have a vision of internationalism but not of education—and it shows. Teachers are often working at cross purposes and have been known to intentionally sabotage each other. We seem to look at each other as threats rather than resources. It is a pathetic state of affairs that will ruin the ethos of a school quickly and completely.
- Similarly, a teacher without a strong educational vision is also lost. A vision or philosophy of education will guide you when making rough decisions as well as when you are putting together a strong program. It is essential, of course, that the teacher's vision and the school's vision are compatible. Otherwise everyone ends up unhappy—students, teachers, and administrators.
- Teachers should be working from coordinated frameworks, not a detailed curriculum. Autonomy and accountability are no less nor more needed in teaching than in any other profession. For example, my department has detailed frameworks for each grade in literature. During tenth grade we do a historical survey of British literature. While being held accountable to teaching within these frameworks, we are free to teach a curriculum of our own design: one teacher may focus on Anglo-Saxon riddles while the other teaches Anglo-Saxon poetry. For their part, departments and schools need to

develop better vertical and horizontal coordination in the frameworks. When this does not happen and each teacher in a department free-lances one's own program, students go from disjointed year to disjointed year never making crucial connections.

As in any profession, accountability and autonomy work in delicate balance. Without this balance, we are lost as educators.

- School as we know it is an anachronism. The more I teach forty-minute periods of literature in isolation from other subjects, the more I chafe against it. For example, existentialism in literature is virtually impossible for an eleventh-grader to understand or appreciate without also understanding what was occurring in Europe before, during, and after World Wars I and II. Art of all types reflects social, cultural, and political events and expectations. Teaching one without the other is like taking a shower without soap.
- The preparation of teachers is crucial, but not in the traditional way. From a secondary school perspective, subject matter is king. If a person desires to teach and is willing to put in the time and use their head, methods will come. This is not to say that a few theory courses and much practice would not help. But I do not believe they are essential. Anyone with interest in doing a good job will take the initiative to find out, read, and educate themselves. Once you know your subject, teaching it becomes a practical art and should be treated as such. Do we train architects without having them design real buildings bound by the real laws of physics?

I have to admit that the work of school is easily the most rewarding of my experiences. However, making the transition from novice to veteran teacher is difficult, even in an ideal setting where teachers share a common vision of schooling. Unfortunately, American public schools typically offer new teachers little time and support for professional growth, not to mention lack a coherent vision. Unless such conditions change, we may find ourselves losing more fledgling teachers than we gain.

Amy Rukea Stempel, a former CBE staff member, has been teaching a Kodaikanal International School in India.



9/Jun

A BILINGUAL SUCCESS STORY

by Stephanie Soper

Washington, D.C. on April 26, you might have stopped by the Dirksen Senate Office Building for Senator Paul Simon's briefing on foreign languages in the elementary schools. You would have been glad you followed your impulse. Business people and educators delivered earnest testimony urging that funding for foreign language education not wither away as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is drafted for reauthorization. And then there were the children.

Standing on tiptoe in front of an overhead projector, third graders—native English speakers—flashed marker pens through the formation of Japanese characters as they computed fractions. In response to quick requests in Japanese from their teacher, they moved translucent manipulative pieces around on the screen as they described in Japanese how different fractions could combine to make a whole. Their ease with fractions was, in its own way, as impressive as their facility with Japanese

四十六二十

In fact, the two skills may not be not unrelated. The students were from Fox Mill Elementary School in Fairfax County. Virginia. They are enrolled in the school's dual-language immersion program in which they study mathematics, science, and health in Japanese, and learn about social studies and language arts in English. In other such programs around the country, students benefit from peer support in their non-native language—classrooms typically have half native-speakers of English, half native-speakers of the target language. In

Fairfax, there are too few native-speakers of Japanese (only three in the program, in fact) for their students to enjoy that support. Some might charge that the students at the hearing do well in mathematics, or in Japanese, because they are being educated in a relatively affluent area, or so close to the Beltway that they benefit from the cutting edge of educated policy. It would probably be more accurate, though, to attribute much of their success to their dual-language, or two-way, bilingual classroom.

A recent report from the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity lends support for this idea and dispels the notion that socioeconomic advantage is a major factor in student achievement, especially in a foreign language. In the midst of passionate conflict over the best way to teach native English speakers a second language and, still more divisively, how best to teach English to children whose native language is something else, this report merits careful reading.

Much of the students' success is due to being in a dual-language classroom.

Two-Way Bilingual Education: A Progress Report on the Amigos Program, describes some effects of the Spanish-English program in the Cambridge, Massachusetts school system. Though Cambridge usually brings to mind Harvard and affluence, most of the nearly 250 school children in the Amigos program are eligible for free or reduced lunch. For the study, researchers measured the performance of first, second, and third grade students for two years on tests of English, Spanish, and mathematics (administered in both English and Spanish). They also tested two control groups: English-only students, and Spanish-speaking students enrolled in a traditional program emphasizing heavy English instruction as preparation for all-English mainstreaming.

Unlike the Fairfax County schools, the schools in the Amigos program divide language instruction not by subject, but by time. Students alternate day to day in Spanish and English, or week to week. However, like the performance of the Fairfax County students in Senator Simon's hearing, the results of the study lend considerable support for dual-language instruction.

The results of the mathematics testing are particularly striking. The Amigos pupils scored higher on mathematics tests than the same-language control groups, regardless of the lan-



guage in which they were tested. That is, when Spanish Amigos and Spanish controls were given mathematics tests in Spanish, the Amigos group always scored higher than the controls. When these two groups were given mathematics tests in English, the same held true, with one exception. When English Amigos and English controls were given English mathematics tests, again the Amigos scored higher. Scores for the English Amigos were also consistently above grade norms when they were tested on mathematics in Spanish.

On English tests of reading, English Amigos were generally higher than the English controls, and especially so at the second grade level. Reading scores for Spanish Amigos were always higher than for Spanish controls when they were tested in English, and higher in most instances even when they were tested in Spanish. In short, the students in the Amigos program appear to be at an advantage in both reading and mathematics when they are compared to their same-language peers. For the Spanish students, this was so whether they were tested in English or Spanish.

It would be unreasonable to attribute all the success of the Amigos program to its dual-language approach. There is a high level of parent participation, as well. The program has been designed by the community, including parents, and parents must choose to send their children to the participating schools. Parents also make recommendations, help define program expectations, serve as workshop presenters—in a word, they are committed. They remain committed because the program works for their children.

Stephanie Soper is a CBE staff member. She is currently assisting the National Standards In Foreign Language Education Project.

Two-Way Bilingual Education: A Progress Report on the Amigos Program by Mary Cazabon, Wallace E. Lambert, and Geoff Hall is available from the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning: 399 Kerr Hall, University of California, Santa Cruz CA 95064, Phone: 408/459-3500, Fax: 408/459-3502.

A SUMMER FOR TENDER THOUGHT

by Elsa M. Little

Delightful task! to rear the tender thought, To teach the young idea how to shoot.

-- James Thomson, 1826

The life of the mind has been nurtured and ideas "taught to shoot" in the Shaker Heights City School District. Shaker Heights, Ohio, through the Shaker Fellowship Program. Combining facets of CBE's national fellowships in the humanities, arts, and sciences, the Shaker Fellowships offer all K-12 faculty the opportunity to compete for nine individual awards each year. Funded by the George Gund Foundation in Cleveland, nine 1993 Fellows have completed their independent studies and nine newly selected 1994 Fellows are embarking on six weeks of self-directed, independent study during summer 1994, followed by the development of curricula during the academic year that has application in the classroom.

Faculty in all curricular areas in Shaker Heights are eligible to compete in the program. There is a requirement to develop a product after the summer study, and developing pedagogy can be a component. Each of the eighteen Fellows receives strong support from the school administration, be it principal, curriculum specialists, or central office staff. The significance of this "given" in Shaker Heights cannot be overstated, since a premium is placed on scholarship, support is given for implementation of alternative curricular ideas (new thematic units, changing classroom schedules, etc.), there is professional recognition and respect, and many battles do not have to be fought.

Love of learning is manifested across the curriculum in Shaker Heights. Of the nine 1993 Shaker Fellows, three taught at Shaker Heights High School — an astronomer, mathematics departmental chair, and librarian; another Fellow taught eighth-grade history in the Shaker Heights Middle School; and the remaining five were classroom teachers, supervised K-4 mathematics, or taught fifth/sixth grade music at four elemen-



13/June

tary schools. Six of the 1994 Fellows teach humanities. American government, biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics at the Shaker Heights High School, while the remaining three are an elementary level science teacher, a speech therapist, and a seventh-grade computer-science instructor.

Even within the disciplines the scope of intellectual pursuit has been wide and varied, as evidenced by four independent studies in mathematics. One Fellow in elementary school studied the qualitative aspects of instructional reform in elementary school mathematics, as represented in the National Council for the Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards, striving to validate the impact of mathematics curricular reform on how children learn. The chair of the high-school mathematics department taught his advanced students how to use hand-held supercalculators to explore sophisticated mathematical models related to government and public policy, including income, taxation, economic indicators, and the national debt. A kindergarten teacher investigated how connections with literature improve mathematical concept development, finding that literacy in mathematics and literature are congruent. She used excellent literature to help children develop understanding in the areas of problem solving, numbers, measurement, geometry, data, and patterns. A sixthgrade teacher explored the study of mathematics in China, Sumer/Babylonia, and Egypt to understand how number systems evolved differently to meet the needs of different societies.

An eighth-grade American history teacher conducted her independent study on the history of medicine in Colonial America, including an internship at Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, working at the apothecary shop, in period costume, in the personage of a midwife. She studied disease transmission and medical practices, and used her award to purchase costumes, medical instruments from the era, and actual medicines from a biological supply house. These included herbs and sample medicinal leeches (\$11 apiece), which no doubt made a permanent impression on the minds of eighth- graders! The independent study branched into a large-scale interdisciplinary project that resulted in a Colonial Day at the school, with faculty and students participating as actors, and building and designing sets from refrigerator boxes.

A 1993 Shaker Fellow, a third/fourth grade teacher, explored the Greek concept of arete, the expectation behind cultural excellence. The reading focused on the most prolific era of the Golden Age (600 - 300 BC), that of Periclean Athens (480 - 430 BC). She traced arete from its Homeric origins of warlike valor to the Platonic notion that arete primarily consists of

four virtues: courage, godliness, righteousness, and prudence. In addition to interweaving these themes throughout her elementary curriculum, this Fellow became recommitted to the notion of excellence.

In April, the Shaker Fellows were honored at a diener in Cleveland, and their descriptions of past and anticipated independent studies were exciting. It became clear that the impact of the program extended beyond the teachers and their own students, as it was reported that other teachers in the Shaker Heights community had commended the Gund Foundation for supporting their faculty. The fellowships were described as "venture capital," providing the seeds for permanent enrichment of the classroom through scholarship and the pursuit of excellence. In the day of the quick-fix blanket solutions, we must remember teacher renewal is never diminished in importance.

Elsa M. Little is the associate director of CBE.

CBE'S NATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS

CBE's national fellowships support the general constituencies of their major funders, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The Independent Study in the Humanities (ISH) Fellowships focus specifically on teacher scholarship based on the view that the reinvigoration of the mind through summer study will ultimately benefit Fellows' students. The preparation of a product is not required as part of the ISH Fellowship, a departure from CBE's other fellowship programs.

The Sci-Mat Fellowships are supported by the NSF Division of Teacher Enhancement, and require science or mathematics teachers to form substantive links with the humanities through independent study. Subsequently, Sci-Mat Fellows design curricular units that implement their summer investigation. The Arts Education Fellowships invite arts educators to acquire knowledge or strengthen skills in visual arts, music, dance, theater, creative writing, and media art, followed by some type of product that directly benefits the classroom. CBE has four d that the Arts Fellowships provide teachers with marvelous opportunities to foster their own creativity as artists.



Fellowship Opportunities*

for
Summer Study

Independent Study in the Humanities for Teachers and Librarians

\$3,200 for Teachers & librarians in the humanities, grades K-12; individual or two-person teams, for

six weeks of study in the humanities. For an application, write: CBE Attn: 95- I P.O. Box 135 Ashton, MD

20861

for Principals

\$2,100 for four weeks of study for principals, grades K-12.

For an application write: CBE, Attn: 95 - P, P.O. Box 135, Ashton, MD 20861

Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities ,and the Esther A. and Joseph Klingenstein Fund, Inc., and the DeWitt Wallace-Readers Digest Fund.

Sci-Mat Fellowships

\$4,900 per team for six weeks of interdisciplinary study and a product dissemination. Teams of a science or a mathematics and humanities teacher, grades 6-12 may apply.

For an application write:

Sci-Mat Fellowships 2506 Buckelew Drive Falls Church, VA 22046

Funded by the National Science Foundation, and the Sega Youth Education & Health Foundation.

Arts Education Fellowships

\$3,000 for teachers in the fine arts, grades K-12, for six weeks of study in their fields.

For an application call: (703) 876-5782 or write: Arts Education Fellowships 2506 Buckelew Drive Falls Church, VA 22046

Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Getty Center for Education in the Arts.

*other qualifications may apply for eligibity.

__1



COUNCIL FOR BASIC EDUCATION

For over thirty years, the Council for Basic Education (CBE) has promoted a curriculum strong in the basic subjects—English, history, geography, mathematics, sciences, foreign languages, and the arts—for all children in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. CBE has historically cast itself as an independent, critical voice for education reform. In recent years, we have further complemented this role by undertaking the design and administration of practical programs to foster better learning through better teaching.

CBE periodicals, the monthly *Basic Education* and the quarterly *Perspective*, provide a regular platform for our advocacy, analysis, and criticism. Our readers nationwide include educators, policymakers, business leaders, and concerned citizens.

	(\$25) Subscriber: one-year subscription to <i>Basic Education</i> .
	(\$40) Member: all the benefits of a Subscriber, PLUS the quarterly <i>Perspective</i> .
	(\$100 or more) Friend: all of the benefits of Membership PLUS invitations to special Friends' events and complimentary copies of special reports.
	Please send me more information about the Friends of the Council for Basic Education.
	Please send me information about specially-priced group memberships.
	I would like to contribute an additional \$to help CBE continue its important work.
	Contributions are tax-deductible.
Na	ıme



City, State, Zip _____

Address _

Telephone _

Occupation -

4. .

Council for Basic Education

1319 F Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20004-1152 (202) 347-4171

20



COUNCIL FOR BASIC EDUCATION 1319 F Street, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20004

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Washington, D.C.
Permit No. 9392

