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We seek researched-based articles that investigate and consider the professional journeys of English teachers as they move from novice to expert status.

A Whole New Ballgame: Sports and Culture in the English Classroom
Deadline: January 15, 2014
Publication Date: September 2014
Guest Editors: Alan Brown and Chris Crowe

Love sports or hate them, it’s hard to deny their prominence in American society and their popularity with 21st-century adolescents. Interscholastic athletics in particular can play a significant role in the overall culture of a school and have a substantial impact on students’ daily lives. Despite this influence, the topic of sports in society is often absent from the professional conversations of English teachers, an exclusion that could prove to be a missed opportunity. This issue will examine the possibilities for both utilizing and critiquing the culture of sports as a means of increasing student engagement and promoting student learning in the English classroom. Within this context, we seek manuscripts that explore the intersection of literacy, sport, culture, and society, and we encourage column submissions devoted to this same theme.

A number of important questions guide this issue: What connections or disconnections exist between the perceived physical nature of athletics and the mental nature of academics? What real-world associations have you made between sports and the English curriculum? How can sports-related texts (e.g., young adult literature, canonical literature, graphic novels, poetry, nonfiction, magazines, newspapers) be integrated into the academic culture of an English class? How have you promoted the teaching of 21st-century skills through the use of sports-related media, film, and technology? What possibilities exist for interdisciplinary (e.g., historical, political, scientific, social) connections to sports across content areas? How have you engaged students in critical dialogue about our societal emphasis on sports? How can we extend the definition of sport to be more inclusive for students of diverse cultures, races, genders, ethnicities, and abilities? How can an examination of sports culture open the door to discussions of other cultures that exist in school and society?

The Standards Movement: A Recent History
Deadline: March 15, 2014
Publication Date: November 2014

For better or for worse, today’s educational culture is dominated by the effects of standards, standardization, and high-stakes testing. To the novice educator, it may seem as if this is the norm—that, in a sense, it has always been this way. But the reform movement we are witnessing today has been in the making for decades: from the first state-level tests administered in the 1970s, to the development of state standards in the 1980s and 1990s, to the implementation of the testing requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), to the linking of student performance and teacher evaluation spawned by Race to the Top (RTTT), to the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, public education has been moving inexorably toward standards and standardization.

We seek articles that reveal—from personal or historical perspectives—the experiences of educators who have struggled, and are still struggling, with the impact of the standards movement.
Call for Manuscripts, continued

What can you contribute to a better understanding of the standards movement? How has the standards movement affected you and your students? What are your earliest recollections of the movement? Were you involved in the early state testing activities and, if so, how did those experiences affect your teaching? How did the adoption of your state’s standards change your classroom practices in terms of content and pedagogy? Did your curriculum narrow or expand? How has the testing system in your state and school district changed since NCLB and RTTT? Have there been tangible benefits from the standardization of the curriculum? What, if anything, has been lost in the standards movement? Do the Common Core State Standards represent a solution or a problem? What are your experiences over the years with high-stakes testing? Have they helped your students meet the prescribed standards? How have those tests changed the way you teach? How have they changed your relationships with your students?

General Interest
May submit any time

We publish articles of general interest as space is available. You may submit manuscripts on any topic that will appeal to EJ readers. Remember that EJ articles foreground classroom practice and contextualize it in sound research and theory. As you know, EJ readers appreciate articles that show real students and teachers in real classrooms engaged in authentic teaching and learning. Regular manuscript guidelines regarding length and style apply.

Speaking My Mind

We invite you to speak out on an issue that concerns you about English language arts teaching and learning. If your essay is published, it will appear with your photo in a future issue of English Journal. We welcome essays of 1,000 to 1,500 words, as well as inquiries regarding possible subjects.

Original Photography

Teacher photographs of classroom scenes and individual students are welcome. Photographs may be sent as 8” × 10” black-and-white glossies or as an electronic file in a standard image format at 300 dpi. Photos should be accompanied by complete identification: teacher/photographer’s name, location of scene, and date photograph was taken. If faces are clearly visible, names of those photographed should be included, along with their statement of permission for the photograph to be reproduced in EJ.

Original Cartoons

Cartoons should depict scenes or ideas potentially amusing to English language arts teachers. Line drawings in black ink should be submitted on 8½” × 11” unlined paper and be signed by the artist.

Columns and Column Editors

Carpe Librum: Seize the (YA) Book
Editor: Pauline Skowron Schmidt

“The stories we love best live in us forever.”—J. K. Rowling

“We shouldn’t teach great books; we should teach a love of reading.”—B. F. Skinner

This column hopes to serve as a space dedicated to conversation about young adult literature. This genre of literature is unique; award-winners in this field push boundaries and make us uncomfortable . . . just like adolescents sometimes do. I hope to celebrate adolescents, their reading, and their experiences by reviewing the texts that engage them. I also hope readers will share their expertise about YA lit.

Continuous Becoming: Moving toward Mastery
Editors: Victoria P. Hankey and Dawn L. Ryan

Mastery in teaching is not a destination; it is a principle that guides professionals toward continuous improvement. Good teaching is never static. In this dynamic profession, educators are responsible for meeting the needs of students whose futures are yet to be defined. The best teachers never stop being students themselves, and each teacher’s professional journey is unique. The common thread is the guidance we can offer one another.

Learning to teach well begins with the desire to make a difference for students. That desire often gets lost in the realities of classroom life. There is no roadmap to mastery.

This column invites novices, veterans, and everyone in between to share significant experiences that have enhanced their craft. What has made you a better teacher? How do you stay invested? How do you project professionalism in this era of high scrutiny? What professional options exist for growth, leadership, and advancement in education? How do you cultivate relationships to obtain the support you need?

The goal is to offer suggestions, ideas, and experiences to help teachers discover their own roadmaps toward mastery. Please send submissions of 1,200–2,000 words to Victoria Hankey@bvsd.org. Inquiries and suggestions for future columns are also welcome.

Cover to Cover: Professional Texts That Guide Practice
Editor: Jeanette Toomer

This column invites book reviews from writers, researchers, and educators on how minds—of teachers and students—can be opened by books and reading. Reviews that consider literacy instruction practices from classroom teachers and community educators are welcome. The editor seeks book reviews that explore successful reading and writing programs as well as practices for inservice teachers and for students.

This column also invites reviews of multicultural and bilingual books and curriculum programs that seek to address the needs of English Language Learners. Our over to over initiative aims to reach out to all racial, ethnic, and cultural groups to report on effective literacy instruction, differentiation strategies, and ways to improve learning and achievement for students across the curriculum.

Questions to consider for submissions include the following: What books have informed teaching and learning of literacy practices? What texts have helped me become a more culturally responsive educator? What texts and models have strengthened my professional knowledge of instruction and assessment?
Submissions should be 800–1,200 words and must include full bibliographic reference information of the text reviewed. Send submissions and queries to Jeanette Toomer at jtoomer@dramadiscoveryandlearning.com.

Disabling Assumptions
Editor: Patricia A. Dunn

This column seeks submissions addressing how a disability studies perspective in English language arts can address disabling assumptions and make our society more inclusive for everyone. The interdisciplinary field of disability studies explores assumptions about disability in our society. It examines how society sometimes constructs architectural or attitudinal barriers that exclude people with disabilities. Stairs disable people who use wheelchairs. Ramps and elevators bypass the stairs that are the true disablers. Like stairs, some teaching practices inadvertently construct barriers to learners who are deaf or blind, or who are on the autism spectrum, or who learn differently. This column will explore teaching practices that can work like ramps and elevators to provide better access to all.

In an English class, a disability studies perspective would help teachers and students pose more critical questions about stereotypical depictions of characters with disabilities. It would help us select texts that show well-developed characters with agency and voice. It would listen to the voices of people with disabilities, encouraging literary, artistic, or other productions. It would help us design research projects, assessments, and modes of delivery that allow more students to live up to their full potential.

We invite readers to address questions such as these: What texts are you reading that depict characters with disabilities living well-rounded lives? How can disability-themed material help all students explore how students with disability are excluded or seen as “other” in the classroom or schoolyard? (This exploration is not merely to invoke sympathy or pity for “them,” but instead to help students and teachers see disability as a “normal” part of the human condition.) How can classic or canonical texts that depict stereotypical characters be resisted or questioned so that these stereotypes are not re-inscribed? What are the stories of teachers with disabilities? To paraphrase the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines, what are some multiple ways of engaging students, representing material, or having students produce a variety of texts?

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Patricia A. Dunn at Patricia.Dunn@stonybrook.edu. Submissions of 800–1,200 words should be sent as an attachment.

Envisioning Assessment
Editor: Jed Hopkins

Practices, done in the name of assessment, have made an undeniable impact on the work of teachers and the way students experience school.

Imagine a different world!

This column invites us to explore the roles assessment might be playing in the “bureaucratization” of our education system and entertain an ideal educational world where assessment is supportive of education; where teachers and departments are not pressured to teach to the test; where the crafting of assessment is understood to be creative, useful, productive, and owned equally by students, parents, and teachers; and where the default form of assessment is always authentic.

What would such schooling and teaching look like? What situations embody or threaten such an ideal? Can assessment be dialogical—a truly mutual experience for students and teachers? Can we help students to be responsible for assessing their own learning? How can we prevent the potential for toxic effects of standardized assessment (or any form of assessment, for that matter)?

This column invites discussion and a sharing of experiences, real or imagined, that might help us collectively take back the educational meaning and potential of assessment; to start to understand it less as a science (for accountability and sorting) and more as an art (for promoting human and humane possibilities).

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, Jed Hopkins, at jhopkins@edgewood.edu. Contributors are encouraged to query the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process.

Lingua Anglia: Bridging Language and Learners
Editor: Pamela J. Hickey

As teachers and students, we bring the languages of our communities into schools. However, the language of academics, professions, and power and access is Standard English. As our student populations continue to grow in cultural and linguistic diversity, it is imperative that we find meaningful, equitable, and culturally relevant ways to support all students in their acquisition of Standard English. Research demonstrates that effective teachers value students’ home languages and welcome them as a bridge to Standard English development.

As we move forward into this linguistically rich and diverse world, we are all learners. There is much we can learn from our students, including those who speak languages or language varieties other than Standard English. Additionally, as English teachers we are all teachers of language. This column provides a forum to explore questions such as, How do diverse classrooms affect English language learning for all students? What kinds of reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities can bridge the gap between home language and Standard English? How can language learning be culturally responsive and academically challenging?

This column seeks to discuss critical, transformative, and powerful ways to support students’ acquisition of Standard English. Narratives, discussions of epiphany and teacher-learning, and culturally relevant and critical suggestions for Standard English support are welcome.

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email, subject heading: Lingua Anglia, to Pamela J. Hickey @newpaltz.edu. Contributors are encouraged to query the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process.

Poetry
Editor: Nancy C. Krim

In Lu-Chi’s Wen Fu: The Art of Writing, the first arts poetica of China, we find this: “When the vein of Jade is revealed in the rock, / the whole mountain glistens.” In his poem “Juggler,” Richard Wilbur writes: “It takes a sky-blue juggler with five red balls / To shake our gravity up.” Finally, scribbling inside a cell in Bedlam, Christopher Smart gave us: “For echo is the soul of the voice exciting itself in hollow places.”
Poets who teach, teachers who write, students are all invited to submit well-crafted poems to *EJ*. Choose those that seem a fit, either explicitly or implicitly, with announced themes of upcoming issues. We welcome new voices. We do not consider previously published poems or simultaneous submissions.

Send by email attachment, for blind review, up to five poems with only phone number and initials on the page. In your email message, include brief biographical information. Poets whose work is published will receive two copies of the issue in which their work appears. Send submissions to ejpoetry2013@gmail.com. Send correspondence to Nancy Krim at nckrim6m@gmail.com.

Soft(a)ware in the English Classroom
Editor: Tom Liam Lynch

Over the last decade, software has become ubiquitous in both our personal and professional lives. More and more, we share, shop, work, and learn in online spaces. Software powers these spaces.

In schools, emphasis has been placed on using data systems to track student achievement, to expand online courses, and to leverage new devices in instruction. Software powers these spaces as well.

Though we don’t often talk about it explicitly, we are all empowered and encumbered by software in our everyday lives. Given the cultural ubiquity of software (and the ever-increasing political encouragement it is receiving), we need to talk openly and critically about the ways software affects our lives as teachers, administrators, and learners.

This column is devoted to identifying the ways in which our teaching and learning lives are influenced by software. We focus on a single question: How does software both enable and inhibit our professional practices? Each column will offer a vignette based on readers’ professional experiences with software as well as a critical look at what the software enables and inhibits.

Contributors are encouraged to contact the column editor and share drafts of column ideas as part of the submission process. Please submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, Tom Liam Lynch, at tom@tomliamlynch.org.

Speaking Truth to Power
Editor: P. L. Thomas

“If education cannot do everything, there is something fundamental that it can do. In other words, if education is not the key to social transformation, neither is it simply meant to reproduce the dominant ideology. . . . The freedom that moves us, that makes us take risks, is being subjugated to a process of standardization of formulas, models against which we are evaluated. . . . We are speaking of that invisible power of alienating domestication, which attains a degree of extraordinary efficiency in what I have been calling the bureaucratizing of the mind” (110–11). (Freire, 1998, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*)

This column seeks to explore the experiences and possibilities that arise when educators speak Truth to power. It is also intended to be an avenue for teachers to speak Truth to power through teacher narratives about the “the bureaucratizing of the mind,” about best practice in critical literacy against scripted and tested literacy, and about creating classrooms that invite students to discover, embrace, and develop their own voices and empowerment.

Submit an electronic Word file attached to your email to the column editor, P. L. Thomas, at paul.thomas@furman.edu.

2013 NCTE Election Results

In NCTE’s 2013 elections, College Section member Douglas Hesse, University of Denver, Colorado, was chosen vice president. Hesse will take office during the NCTE Annual Convention in November.

The Secondary Section also elected new members. Elected to a four-year term on the Steering Committee was Courtney Morgan, Skyline High School, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Elected to the 2013–2014 Nominating Committee were Bonnee Breese, Overbrook High School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, chair; William L. Bass, Parkway School District, St. Louis, Missouri; and Rudy Sharpe, Lancaster Country Day School, Pennsylvania.

See the NCTE website for additional 2013 election results and details on submitting nominations for the 2014 elections (http://www.ncte.org/volunteer/elections).