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Making Curriculum Pop

Developing Literacies in All Content Areas
Pam Goble and Ryan R. Goble

Does your curriculum sit quietly on its hands? Or does it pop like a cool tie, a great tune, or fireworks on a summer night? This extraordinary book will help it do the latter . . . and will help you approach your teaching with an enthusiastic and collaborative spirit like never before.

Inside you’ll discover a flexible, research-based, step-by-step approach to designing vibrant curriculum in all content areas. This approach integrates literacies across media, including both print and nonprint texts, such as:

- books, websites, and blogs
- film, TV, and video games
- music and podcasts
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- architecture and landscape

Students form cooperative learning groups to evaluate texts from various perspectives:

- How would a Web master map the events in the movie Rescue Dawn?
- How would an economist explain the variables affecting family and community life in Kit Kittredge?
- What observations would a cartographer make about the design of a Frank Lloyd Wright school?

Finally, they show and share their thinking using unique graphic organizers aligned to the Common Core and other standards. Additionally, you’ll find suggestions for modifying and extending each learning experience to satisfy the unique needs of your classroom.

Digital content includes over fifty unique graphic organizers, student samples, correlations to Common Core State Standards, and more.

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WARNING: With this book in hand, your curriculum may never sit still again!
As readers of all ages increasingly turn to the Internet and a variety of electronic devices for both informational and leisure reading, teachers need to reconsider not just who and what teens read but where and how they read as well. Having ready access to digital tools and texts doesn’t mean that middle and high school students are automatically thoughtful, adept readers. So how can we help adolescents become critical readers in a digital age?

Using NCTE’s policy research brief *Reading Instruction for All Students* as both guide and sounding board, experienced teacher-researchers Kristen Hawley Turner and Troy Hicks took their questions about adolescent reading practices to a dozen middle and high school classrooms. In this book, they report on their interviews and survey data from visits with hundreds of teens, which led to the development of their model of Connected Reading: “Digital tools, used mindfully, enable connections. Digital reading is connected reading.” They argue that we must teach adolescents how to read digital texts effectively, not simply expect that teens can read them because they know how to use digital tools. Turner and Hicks offer practical tips by highlighting classroom practices that engage students in reading and thinking with both print and digital texts, thus encouraging reading instruction that reaches all students.
Many of our young students come to school with vast experience in the digital world but too often use digital tools in limited ways because they view technology as merely another form of entertainment. Educators William L. Bass II and Franki Sibberson believe that teachers can help students recognize their expertise in out-of-school digital reading and extend it into the world of school. For this to happen, we need to redefine reading to include digital reading and texts, learn how to support digital reading in the classroom, and embed digital tools throughout the elementary and middle school curriculum.

Bass, a technology coordinator, and Sibberson, a third-grade teacher, invite us to consider what is essential in integrating technology into the classroom, focusing especially on authenticity, intentionality, and connectedness. They explore the experiences readers must have in order to navigate the digital texts they will encounter, as well as the kinds of lessons we must develop to enhance those experiences. Always advocating for sound literacy practice and drawing on the NCTE Policy Research Brief Reading Instruction for All Students, they lead from experience—both theirs and that of other classroom teachers, grades 3–8.
Call for Manuscripts

Submit all manuscripts to Julie Gorlewski and David Gorlewski, Coeditors, through the English Journal Editorial Manager at http://www.editorialmanager.com/ncteej/. Questions can be sent to Englishjournal@ncte.org.

Submission Guidelines

- Manuscripts should be double-spaced throughout (including quotations, endnotes, and works cited), with standard margins. Please save copies of anything you send us. We cannot return any materials to authors.
- In general, manuscripts for articles should be no more than 10 to 15 double-spaced, typed pages in length (approximately 2,500 to 3,750 words including citations).
- Provide a statement guaranteeing that the manuscript has not been published or submitted elsewhere.
- Ensure that the manuscript conforms to the NCTE Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language. (See address below.)
- Number all pages.
- Use in-text documentation, following the current edition of the MLA Handbook. Where applicable, a list of works cited and any other bibliographic information should also follow MLA style.

English Journal is refereed, and virtually all manuscripts are read by two or more outside reviewers. We will attempt to reach a decision on each article within five months. The decision on pieces submitted in response to a specific call for manuscripts will be made after the call deadline.

Prospective contributors should obtain a copy of the Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language from the NCTE website at http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/genderfairuseoflang.

“Beyond the Dream”: Black Textual Expressivities between the World and Me

Guest Editor: David E. Kirkland, with Julie Gorlewski and David Gorlewski
Submission Deadline: July 15, 2016
Publication Date: March 2017

That was a moment, a joyous moment, beyond The Dream—a moment imbued by a power more gorgeous than any voting rights bill. This power, this black power, originates in a view of the American galaxy taken from a dark and essential planet.

—Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me

At one level we are witnessing what Cornel West calls “a democratic awakening,” the unique union of rights groups with poor and vulnerable people who are asking the right kinds of questions and demanding immediate answers. At another level, too many people are fast asleep, entranced (and sometimes deeply hypnotized) by what Ta-Nehisi Coates calls The Dream, “the enemy of all art, courageous thinking, and honest writing” (p. 30). On the other side of The Dream—in the midst of a humanistic arousal—Black textual expressivities, borne online through social media and other platforms of dissemination, have given Black youth language to lead the democratic awakening. This language offers opportunities to arouse the masses lulled into complacency by the sedating rhetorics of racial mythologies—chiefly post-racialism.

This same moment has given us teachers of English language arts cause to search for the higher consciousness that provokes our practice. It reminds us that our nation, though filled with the promises of progress, continues its deep disregard for Black lives and Black life. A few looming examples of our current state of inequity include the massive use of state power to incarcerate hundreds of thousands of Black and Brown bodies; the de facto legalization of murder against the Children of the Rainbow; chronic and mass underemployment; devastated, wasted, and occupied communities; and heightened state surveillance. For Black lives to matter, for Black life to endure, the structures supporting oppression must be dismantled. To dismantle them, we need a revolution in English language arts classrooms. This revolution must be powerful as the systems that sustain human suffering, systems that maintain a deeply entrenched racial caste.

This special issue seeks to reimagine English language arts teaching, measuring the work of English language arts teachers on scales of human rights. How might English language arts classrooms help move students beyond The Dream? To describe and critique the logics, structures, and realities of racial caste and other systems of disparity defined by race, how might English language arts teachers use Black textual expressivities—the many textual forms that express substances of Black life as they come to value and reveal Black lives? Texts, here, are broadly defined, situated across a field of sensual potentialities—visual and aural, written and inscribed, read and listened to.

Teachers, researchers, activists, and public intellectuals are encouraged to contribute manuscripts of 2,500–3,750 words, written to an audience of secondary educators, addressing questions of Black textual expression in English language arts. Black textualities, like Black bodies, are contested in American classrooms, complicated by competing interests that wrestle daily for an ethical place in the consciousness of English language arts. However, in English language arts classrooms, Black textualities have the power to move our assumptions about past beliefs that strip away Black humanity. They can also bring us closer to those complex narratives of people that build humanity and nurture sensitivities that abolish internal and external contracts of bigotry and violence. Through such textualities, English language arts teaching takes on a new meaning. Here, it means instructing the mind as well as the heart. It means teaching for justice, which is always and only about teaching (to) love.

Please direct questions about this issue to David E. Kirkland (davidekirkland@gmail.com).

Textual Revolution: Reading and Writing the Word and the World

Submission Deadline: September 15, 2016
Publication Date: May 2017

This issue will explore how changes in text, media, and education policy influence the daily lives of students and teachers—and, more importantly, how teachers and students can be active participants in these processes of change. Too often, reform is imposed without input from those most involved in its implementation and most influenced by its ultimate effects. Too often, answers are provided before questions are thoughtfully posed. In this issue, we invite teachers to contribute to the development of language, learning, and schools.

Educators know that the small, concrete daily interactions of people have the potential to create revolution. The question is, How do we shift from being pawns in a large system to being active participants in transformational processes that represent the promise of education? Literacy—that is, making meaning from text—is a collaborative endeavor that requires a
commitment to meaningful transformation based on critical reflection. Therefore, we propose that Reflection + Evolution = Revolution.

Texts reflect society in that they are continuously evolving. This evolution is inevitable, even welcome, and tends to be incremental. The idea of “continuous improvement” often associated with classroom practice is a form of evolution. Revolution, by contrast, is a daunting, comprehensive concept, analogous to the field of education and large-scale reform. This issue challenges teachers to provide examples of how they and their students shift from passive evolution to active revolution. Questions that submissions might consider include the following: How do students enact and reveal changes in text, in media, and in language? How can interacting with text contribute to the development of learners as engaged participants in social change? In what ways do reading, writing, speaking, and listening in secondary English reflect and construct the worlds we inhabit? How can students, teachers, and texts intersect to interrupt existing structures? What texts can change the world, and how?

As we experience and shape contemporary changes in texts, we wish to explore how educators and students can interact with and compose texts to create a better world. In this issue, we invite authors to help us discover how changes in language, society, and youth culture can help us reimagine classrooms that focus on human development, relationships, and justice.

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" x 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" x 11" unlined paper and be signed by the artist.

Columns and Column Editors
Book Reviews
Editor: Ken Lindblom

Professional texts offer practitioners cutting-edge information. Whether focusing on pedagogical innovation, current research, or the implications of a new educational policy, these texts have the potential to provide insights, perspectives, and, often, contexts for the rapidly changing field of education. This column, titled “Book Reviews,” will accept reviews of professional texts related to teaching, educational theory, or educational policy. In general, reviews of fiction, memoir, and biography will not be accepted.

Reviews should give a brief summary of the text’s purposes and make critical commentary on its strengths and weaknesses—all with an eye to the needs of English teachers. Reviews should consist of 500 to 1,500 words. Aspiring reviewers should email Ken Lindblom at kenneth.lindblom@stonybrook.edu before writing reviews to eliminate the chance of duplicate reviews.

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

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

How can we use YA literature to inspire our students to read? What YA books link particularly well with required content—in English classrooms and across disciplines? Which YA title do you wish was “required reading” for all high school English teachers? Which YA texts can help teachers as we seek to connect students with the “right” book at the “right” time?

Submissions to this column are welcome. Contributors can submit a review (750-word maximum) or suggest a YA book to add to our never-ending pile! Please send submissions as attachments to Pauline Skowron Schmidt at pschmidt@wcupa.edu.

Continuous Becoming: Moving toward Mastery
Editor: Victoria P. Hankey

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.

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 reinscribed? 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.

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 at phickey@towson.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 War Fox: The Art of Writing, the first Ars poetica of China, we find this: “When the vein of Jade is revealed in the rock, / the whole mountain glitters.” 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 epoetry2013@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**  
Editors: P. L. Thomas and Christian Z. Goering

“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 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 P. L. Thomas at paul.thomas@furman.edu.

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**Under Discussion: Teaching Speaking and Listening**  
Editor: Lisa M. Barker

Classroom discussion, when effectively facilitated, invites students to deepen their understanding of literature; practice powerful social norms; enhance skills such as listening, building on others’ ideas, tactfully disagreeing, and taking turns; and orally craft arguments that may carry over into their writing. Orchestrating conversation is at the heart of teaching English. It’s also hard work. Leading whole-class discussion requires teachers to balance careful preparation with nimble, in-the-moment improvisation based on students’ contributions. Since facilitating discussion is a challenging aspect of our teaching craft, we must lean on each other for insights.

This column seeks to provide a forum for leaning on each other to investigate and improve the quality of our discussion leadership. What do you *do before* discussion to prepare yourself and your students? What kinds of texts do you use to anchor discussion? How do you teach the speaking and listening skills needed for a productive discussion? What strategies and moves do you use *during* discussion to facilitate talk? What do you *do after* discussion to help students improve the quality of future conversations and build on their understanding in concrete ways? How do you study and learn from your own facilitation?

This column invites you to share your discussion-related experiences through stories, studies, arguments, and explanations of tools and resources.

Send submissions of 1,200–1,800 words as an electronic Word file attached to your email with the subject heading “EJ Under Discussion” to Lisa M. Barker at lbarker@towson.edu. Inquiries, ideas, and suggestions for future columns are welcome.