As NCTE Executive Director Emily Kirkpatrick shared in her September “Field Notes” column (see link below), NCTE members are actively contributing new ideas and insights on the ways education shapes the future for all students. NCTE is bringing this new energy to our organization!

We’re happy to announce that NCTE is now ready to launch a new look and feel for our organization. The rebrand is reflective of our members and what all of you have been telling us NCTE is and should be. This is energizing and exciting work. At every step of the way, it has been inspired by and grounded in your stories, ideas, and input.

Every day, NCTE members are turning the page—making tomorrow greater than today, writing new chapters for students’ futures and, by extension, for NCTE. We’re thrilled to be on this journey with you.

http://www.ncte.org/community/fieldnotes

WITH YOUR HELP, NCTE IS MOVING FORWARD.

WE INVITE YOU TO SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO EMILY AT FIELDNOTES@NCTE.ORG

What do you want to know about or contribute to our new directions?

What issues and ideas do you think we should be focusing on?

How are the changes at NCTE affecting the work you do?
Words matter, and our ability to use them to express ourselves is a unique quality of being human.

NCTE has a new website dedicated to the importance of writing. WhyIWrite.us is a showcase for stories that illustrate why people from all walks of life put words to paper or screen.

To complement this effort, we’ve launched a podcast series featuring interviews with writers, authors, bloggers, graphic novelists, songwriters, and more who share their unique perspectives on the power of the written word.

We would love to hear about why YOU write. Please share your story with us at http://whyiwrite.us/.

LISTEN and SUBSCRIBE to the Why I Write podcast available at podcast.ncte.org.
CULTIVATING THE CHANGE-MAKERS WE WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD.

A YEAR-LONG WEB SEMINAR SERIES

9.01.16  Exploring Intersections between Digital and Disciplinary Literacy
          M. Manderino & J. Castek

9.23.16  Connecting College and Career Readiness Standards to Authentic Learning Opportunities
          T. Perry, R. Leonard, & M. James

11.1.16  Honoring Student Voice in the Early Childhood Classroom: Dramatic Play, Stories, and Story Acting
          C. Llerena, H. Yoon, J. Gainer, & N. Valdez-Gainer

12.6.16  Reading Closely and the Common Core: Making Teaching Meaningful Again
          S. Brown Wessling

1.18.17  What’s So Critical about Critical Literacy in the Early Childhood Classroom?
          S. L. Osorio, R. Gilmore, & R. Price Gardner

2.23.17  Critical Literacy at the Intersections of Sport & Society
          A. Brown & L. Rodesiler

3.30.17  Making Room for the Personal: A New Vision for Reading Assessment
          J. Buehler

4.19.17  Toward a Culturally Responsive Inquiry Curriculum in Early Childhood Classrooms
          T. Tropp Laman, J. Henderson, M. Myer, K. Epps, S. McCormack, & K. Whitmore

5.23.17  Connecting with Intention
          F. Sibberson & W. Bass, II

6.15.17  Confidence in Community Literacies: Bilingual Writers Reading the World
          S. Alvarez

LIVE EVENTS FREE FOR NCTE MEMBERS: ncte.org/seminars
TEACHING READING WITH YA LITERATURE: COMPLEX TEXTS, COMPLEX LIVES

By Jennifer Buehler

Develop your own version of YA pedagogy and a vision for teaching YA lit in the middle and secondary classroom!

Jennifer Buehler knows young adult literature. A teacher educator, former high school teacher, and host of ReadWriteThink.org’s Text Messages podcast, she has shared her enthusiasm for this vibrant literature with thousands of teachers and adolescents.

In this new book, Buehler explores the three core elements of a YA pedagogy with proven success in practice:

1. a classroom that cultivates reading community;
2. a teacher who serves as book matchmaker and guide; and
3. tasks that foster complexity, agency, and autonomy in teen readers.

Principles in Practice

Buy the book today!
http://bit.ly/ReadingYALit

Member Price: $24.95
Nonmember Price: $33.95
eBook: $21.95 member
$29.95 nonmember
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.

Death in the English Classroom
Submission Deadline: March 15, 2017
Publication Date: November 2017

Teachers and learners live in the physical and metaphysical worlds. Our existence is, in part, defined by mortality. The knowledge of the fragility of life affects how we think, what we feel, and how we engage with the materiality of texts. Our experiences of life and death influence the stories we tell about each other, ourselves, and the worlds we inhabit.

In schools, and in English classes especially, death lives. It permeates the texts we teach and the texts our students read—both fiction and nonfiction. And because the membranes that separate our classrooms from the world are porous, death enters our classrooms through the lives of learners. Students experience loss of loved ones, and they bring these losses into school. As teachers, we bring such losses to our classrooms as well. Moreover, shared losses affect us; we must together cope with tragedies such as 9/11, school shootings, and the death of members of our own communities. Collective grief can bring us together or drive us apart.

As English teachers, our affinity for language facilitates understanding; we relate to the physical and metaphysical world through words. In this issue, we explore how death enters English classrooms, and how words, texts, and learning communities work together to cope, to grieve, and to grow together as humans. Questions we might consider include: What texts bring death into your classroom in ways that resonate for you and your students? How has death entered your classroom, and what effects did its presence have? In what ways have the physical and the metaphysical intersected with texts to support the construction of meaning?

We invite submissions in which authors share their experiences and engage with scholarly literature to extend the conversation about death in English classrooms.

The Essence of Improvement: Leadership in English Language Arts Instruction
Submission Deadline: July 15, 2017
Publication Date: March 2018

John Quincy Adams wrote, “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” Leadership, then, does not necessarily stem from those who hold titles or positions of authority; and if what Adams says is true, then anyone can be a leader. Though he made this statement in the early 19th century, current educational research focusing on school improvement supports his belief. As we look back at nearly 40 years of school reform efforts, it is clear that there is no “cookie cutter” approach to improving the teaching and learning process; that there is no set of “best practices” that can be uniformly applied to all children in all schools. What has emerged from the literature on school reform is the indispensable role of leadership; and that leadership may come from traditional sources such as a school district superintendent or a building principal. However, when tracing the success of a school, research has found that leadership may come from, for example, a department chair, a teacher, a reading specialist, a curriculum coordinator, a content area specialist, or even a parent group.

We invite you to share experiences related to the improvement of English language arts instruction on a broad basis (beyond a single classroom); experiences that had an impact on, for example, an entire grade level, department, school building, or school district. While crafting your manuscript, consider these questions: What grade level, department level, or school district level curricular issues/concerns needed to be addressed? How were these issues/concerns identified? What efforts had been made in the past to address the issues/concerns? How did leadership emerge? How was the leadership able to forge a consensus on what needed to be done to address the issue/concern? What steps were taken to achieve administrative, faculty, staff, and parental support? How was “success” measured?

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 1,300 words, as well as inquiries regarding possible subjects.
Original Cartoons
Cartoons should depict scenes or ideas potentially amusing to English language arts teachers. Line drawings in black ink should be submitted on 8 1/2” × 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
“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 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 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.

**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: Lauren Gatti*

In his book *Poetry as Insurgent Art*, Lawrence Ferlinghetti instructs us to “Decide if a poem is a question or a declaration, a meditation or an outcry.” There are so many things I love about this imperative, but one thing I love most is the idea that underpins his conception of poetry: poems are relational in nature. Their existence implies that there is a world and a situation that must receive them. My poem-as-question invites you to wonder. My poem-as-declaration invites you to agree or disagree. My poem-as-meditation invites you to reflect and contemplate. And my poem-as-outcry invites you to be outraged or indignant, even. For Ferlinghetti, therefore, poems are invitations to experience your reality, or at least to entertain it as a thing worth entertaining.

Teaching makes for a particularly lively and complicated reality. Anyone reading this understands the dizzying array of emotions and experiences we have in our classrooms and school libraries, on the track or in the auditorium. This intense and lovely day-to-day keeps us doing the work of teaching and learning. *English Journal* invites you to write and submit poetry that probes or declares or contemplates or screams some important aspect of this work. We seek well-crafted poems that fit—implicitly or explicitly—with the announced theme of upcoming issues. We do not consider previously published poems or simultaneous submissions.

Send up to five original poems by email attachment to epoetry2016@gmail.com. To ensure anonymous review, please make sure that the only identifying information on each submission is the author’s phone number and initials (and please write this as a header or footer to ensure that each page of your submission has that information). In your email message, please include a brief biographical sketch. Poets whose work is published will receive two complimentary copies of the issue in which their work appears. Please direct all correspondence to Lauren Gatti at lgatti2@unl.edu. Thank you, and we look forward to reading your poetry!

**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.

**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.

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**NCTE Promising Researcher Award Competition**

in Recognition of Bernard O’Donnell

The 2017 Promising Researcher Award Competition is open to individuals who have completed dissertations, theses, or initial, independent studies after their dissertations between December 1, 2014 and January 31, 2017. Studies entered into competition should be related to the teaching of English or the language arts (e.g., language development, literature, composition, teacher education/professional development, linguistics, etc.), and should have employed a recognized research approach (e.g., historical, ethnographic, interpretive, experimental, etc.). In recognition of the fact that the field has changed in recent years, the Standing Committee on Research invites entries from a variety of scholarly perspectives.

Candidates must submit a manuscript based on their research. Manuscripts should be written in format, style, and length appropriate for submission to a research journal such as Research in the Teaching of English, College Composition and Communication, Curriculum Inquiry, Teaching and Teacher Education, or Anthropology and Education Quarterly. Manuscripts normally range between 25 and 50 double-spaced pages.

Manuscripts can be sent to NCTE, Promising Researcher Award Competition, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1010, Attention: Linda Walters-Moore, or can be emailed to researchfoundation@ncte.org. Manuscripts must be received on or before March 1, 2017.

For more complete information on manuscript preparation and submission, please visit http://www.ncte.org/second/awards/pra.