Acclaimed authors, educators, mentors, and friends Leila Christenbury and Ken Lindblom invite you to reconnect with the joy of teaching as together you explore:

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- Applying Ethical and Critical Thinking to the Tools Used for Composition
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**Pamela Doiley**  
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Call for Manuscripts

About English Journal

English Journal is the award-winning NCTE journal of ideas for English language arts teachers in junior and senior high schools and middle schools. It presents the teaching of writing and reading, literature, and language arts, and includes information on how teachers are applying practices, research, and multimodal literacies in their classrooms.

English Journal is a practitioner-based publication in the discipline of English language arts. (EJ) is published as an annual volume with issues appearing in September, November, January, March, May, and July.

English Journal is refereed, and virtually all manuscripts are read by three outside reviewers who are teachers and teacher educators. We try to reach a decision on each article within five months. The decision on manuscripts submitted in response to a specific call for manuscripts will be made after the call deadline.

Prospective contributors should obtain a copy of the Statement on Gender and Language from the NCTE website at www.ncte.org/positions/statements/genderfairspeak.

Submission Guidelines

- Manuscripts should be double-spaced throughout (including quotations and Works Cited page), with standard margins. Please save copies of anything you send us. We cannot return any materials.
- In general, manuscripts for articles should be no more than 15 double-spaced, typed pages in length (2,500 to 4,000 words including citations). Number all pages of the manuscript.
- Use in-text documentation by 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.
- Provide a statement guaranteeing that the manuscript has not been published or submitted elsewhere.
- Ensure that the manuscript conforms to the NCTE Statement on Gender and Language (see address above).

Submit all manuscripts through the English Journal Editorial Manager site at www.editorialmanager.com/ncteaj. Questions can be sent to Englishjournal@ncte.org.

Comedy and Humor

Submission Deadline: July 15, 2019
Publication Date: March 2020

I love mediocre people. The ones who try their hardest to make something beautiful, something great, something that someone will remember and talk about when they're gone—and they come up short. And not by a little bit. By a lot. They're my people. We laugh at them, but you really have no choice in this life but to believe with all your heart that you're extraordinary. You have to hold this conviction against all evidence to the contrary.

— Jeff Zentner, Rayne and Delilah's Midnite Matinee

Comedy and humor can make a life bearable and entertaining as one experiences various moments or key events. This is the case for many teachers and students in the English classroom as they approach language arts for understanding. A literary character can make reading and learning more dynamic with some laughs and wit developed by the author. For instance, Delia in Zentner's young adult literature novel surmises the meanings of mediocrity, but the extraordinary can also change one's perspective on life, as she comes to realize.

In the book Humor Writing: Activities for the English Classroom, Bruce A. Goebel proposes a classroom rule on humor and also making fun of high school culture: “No humor shared in class may target specific individuals in this school district, with the exception of your being allowed to make fun of yourself.” This happens to be the case for Delia in Zentner's novel.

For this issue of the journal, the editors invite narratives about comedy and humor in the English classroom. In particular, we are interested in ideas and stories about reading literature that brings humor and lightheartedness for students and teachers. What characters connect with students and your own teaching practices such as through humor and laughter in selected literary works, dramatic comedy, or comic drama? When have you used humor writing that, later, permitted students to experience language humor, funny stories and essays, light verse, parody, or satire, among other forms? How do moments of jeu d'esprit unfold and keep students reading and writing, including multimodal literacies, texts, and techniques? Which elements of comedy and humor—from the classics to contemporary texts—sustain readers and thinkers in the English classroom?

Mentors and Models

Submission Deadline: September 15, 2019
Publication Date: May 2020

Each step creates a broader and more recognizable path.


Crafting an enchanting teaching practice requires serious effort. It invites us to continuously improve, adapt, and reinvent our instructional approaches and compels us to respond to shifting expectations for schools and classrooms. It's work that can be, at once, taxing and exhilarating. Mentors and models can be critical to our growth as teachers, and taking charge of that growth often involves searching for the people and ideas that align best with our philosophies and values and reinforce our finest instincts. Sometimes, though, we need to lose our balance a bit, accept a challenge, experiment with an idea that doesn't, at first, fit exactly right. In those moments, it is especially important to begin with a model, a framework that we can rely on for support and for inspiration.

For this issue of the journal, the editors invite narratives about the mentors and models you have selected to help you grow as an English teacher. In particular, we are interested in stories about the ideas you have found in English Journal that have made their way into your classroom. Which articles from past issues have encouraged you to try a new strategy in your classroom? Are there writers and scholars whose ideas you continually return to for inspiration? When have you experimented with a new idea that fell flat and how did you recover? What literature selections have challenged your repertoire of teaching strategies and what sources did you consult for guidance? How have your students served as mentors for your teaching practice?
GENEAL INTEREST
May submit any time

We publish articles of general interest as space is available and in each July’s issue. 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. EJ readers appreciate articles that show real teachers and students 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 in a future issue of English Journal. We welcome essays of 1,000 to 1,500 words, as well as inquiries regarding possible subjects. Indicate that you are submitting an essay for the Speaking My Mind feature when you upload the document to the Editorial Manager.

POETRY
Editors: Peter Elliott and Alexa Garvoille
Peter Elliott, The John Cooper School, Woodlands, Texas
Alexa Garvoille, MFA Program, Creative Writing, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia

“To live in this world / you must be able / to do three things: / to love what is mortal; / to hold it / against your bones knowing / your life depends on it; / and, when the time comes to let it go, / to let it go.” These words from Mary Oliver’s poem “In Blackwater Woods” speak not only to how to live in this world but also to how we learn and teach. As teachers, we hold against our bones so much that our lives depend on—helping a student, learning a difficult concept, speaking up for justice, or reading a favorite text—but then must learn to let go. In the pages of English Journal, we look to publish well-crafted poems that connect our readers to topics central to English education: the impact of reading and writing on young people, poems that connect our readers to topics central to English education: the impact of reading and writing on young people, words and language, classroom stories, and reflections on teaching and learning. Poetry reminds us, as educators, how to live in this world.

Submit your work by emailing an attachment to englishjournalpoetry@gmail.com. Use the subject line “Poetry Submission for Review.” The first page of the attached document should be a cover sheet that includes your name, address, email, and a two-sentence biographical sketch. In your bio, include how long you have been a member of NCTE, if applicable, and a publishable contact email. Following the cover sheet, include from one to five original poems in the same document. Though we welcome work of any length, shorter pieces (thirty lines and under) often work best for the journal. Poems must be original and not previously published. Simultaneous submissions are welcome, though writers must immediately withdraw from consideration any poems that are to be published elsewhere by contacting the editors via email.

Poets whose work is published will receive two complimentary copies of the issue in which their work appears. Additional inquiries about poetry submissions may be directed to the editors at englishjournalpoetry@gmail.com. We look forward to reading and celebrating your work.

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
Beyond Binary Gender Identities
Column Editor: sj Miller
Secondary Literacy Specialist,
Secondary English Teacher, and Curriculum Administrator
Monte del Sol Charter School
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Contemporary youth express gender identity in powerful and dynamic ways—in and out of school. Gender identity, the internal sense of how someone feels or experiences their gender, is constantly evolving and shifting, expanding the boundaries of language use and performance. As English teachers, it is our responsibility to center the lives of our students in our classrooms and schools in caring, respectful, and equitable ways. This responsibility includes advocating for students who question and contest cultural expectations of masculinity and femininity. It also includes ensuring that they are valued in all aspects of school and see themselves reflected in curricula, instructional choices, and educational policies. Currently, gender identity narratives are practically absent from the texts taught in high school English classrooms, and there are gaps in school policies that enumerate protections or validate multiple gender identities. We can change this together. The only pressing question is How? This column invites writers to share the stories of how they recognize and affirm myriad gender identities in their classrooms and their schools and to offer concrete and creative suggestions for developing remarkably responsive language arts instruction. We also welcome stories of effort and struggle because we can learn from reflecting on both the challenges and triumphs of changing our thinking. A range of narratives that describe lessons, assignments, and educational practices that question and critique entrenched ideas about gender identity is necessary to address the kind of insensitivity that characterizes most educational settings. We have all been taught the “appropriate” social expectations for gender and gender identity, but by examining the effects of that instruction, working diligently to reject the gender identity binary, and being willing to learn from and support our students in their ever-evolving and dynamic expressions of gender identity, we can strengthen our schools and communities.

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to sj Miller at sosefit@aol.com. Submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as attachments.

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.
According to hopemonger Shane Lopez, hope is the belief that the future will be better than the present and that we, as individuals and communities, have the power to create that better future. In his research, Lopez found that all youth have the capacity for hope, but only one in two school-age youth report feeling hopeful about their futures. His findings suggest there may be a “hope gap,” which is also present in our educational systems. English teachers have a role to play in helping to mediate that gap, and many are already doing so. As a framework, hope is a harbinger of possibility, the spine of agency, and a reason to strive. As a learning trait, it provides an important scaffold for academic progress and success. The more we inspire our students to envision the possibilities and pathways of their lives—through the literature and writing approaches we teach, the discussions we facilitate, and the assignments we design—the more we offer them hope.

This Books-in-Action column features essays that consider the ways in which various professional resources help ELA teachers put hope into action in the classroom. It invites writers to focus on the how of hope as they discuss recent publications that help us reimagine our teaching practices. Rather than traditional book reviews, essays should, instead, embed the writers’ reviews within narratives that describe how the ideas in books can be translated into curricular approaches that inspire our students to see their futures as hopeful. We especially welcome submissions that explore questions about the cultural and institutional practices that contribute to the “hope gap” and then offer creative suggestions for mediating that gap.

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Nicole Sieben at siebenn@oldwestbury.edu. Submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as attachments.

Critical Global Literacies
Column Editor: Bogum Yoon
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Joel Spring, who writes prolifically about American education and globalization, has noted that we live in an era in which “nothing is static.” Across the globe, nations, economies, and governing structures face incessant change, competition, and disruption. The dynamic social forces that undergird globalization spotlight its reliance on interdependence and intercultural awareness. The development of critical literacy practices that focus on global perspectives is central to preparing students to navigate this increasingly interconnected world. As English teachers, we might ask ourselves, “How do we invite our students to become socially responsible and critically conscious global citizens?”

Reading and writing activities that promote global awareness and cross-cultural understanding are important, but they need to be coupled with an emphasis on critical consciousness. A critical lens is fundamental if we are to be successful in opening an intellectual space for discussions of what it means to live in a world in which cultural boundaries are shrinking because of human migration, market practices, and advances in technologies.

This column invites essays that focus on global perspectives as an integral part of the secondary English curriculum. Topics that we are particularly interested in, but not limited to, include instructional frameworks that English teachers can use in the classroom to promote students’ global thinking and cross-cultural awareness with a critical stance; case studies that show how English teachers develop students’ critical global perspectives through various materials, including global literature; and instructional practices that demonstrate how English teachers can bring the world to the classroom.

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Bogum Yoon at byoon@binghamton.edu. Submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as attachments.

From Campus to Classroom
Column Editor: Marshall George
Oshan Professor of Clinical Practice
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Hunter College, CUNY
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Preservice teachers, practicum students, and teaching interns view the familiar landscape of the secondary English classroom from a different vantage point. Their current learning experiences—in and outside of the classroom—offer opportunities to rethink understandings of their content, their future students, and their development as English teachers. By sharing their perspectives as they grapple with the complexities of ELA education, they extend and diversify the professional conversations while fostering their own growth as reflective practitioners. Their insights have the power to provoke veteran teachers and teacher educators to think differently, as well, revisiting familiar assignments, reconsidering current perspectives, and reexamining long-held beliefs about teaching and learning.

This column seeks to share the viewpoints of those poised to enter the classroom as they consider the nature of teaching and learning the English language arts. We invite preservice teachers and interns to contribute thoughtful first-person essays about navigating the theory and practice of ELA teaching as they interact with students and teaching colleagues. Essays may address any topic and may be coauthored with fellow preservice teachers, cooperating teachers, university supervisors, or professors. Authors might address such questions as, Why is the ELA content I will soon teach viable for twenty-first-century students?; How do I engage with issues of justice, equality, and diversity, in and outside of the ELA classroom?; and What do I consider the most pressing issues facing soon-to-be teachers? Essays grounded in the theory of ELA pedagogy are of particular interest.

Original submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as an electronic Word file to Marshall George at mg2003@hunter.cuny.edu. Inquiries about potential topics are welcomed and encouraged.
This column invites writers to consider how creative writing—in and outside of the classroom—can engage students as writers, thinkers, and activists. Each column will be a snapshot of a range of creative writing pedagogies and practices that *English Journal* readers will be able to implement in their classrooms in various teaching contexts. Submissions may include work by creative writing teachers as well as collaborative writing with visiting writers and poets. How have you adopted creative writing to include students’ backgrounds? How are communities—in and outside of school—part of creative writing assignments? How have you introduced creative writing to examine social justice literacies? In what ways has your creative writing curriculum evolved in response to curriculum mandates, changing expectations from school districts, and pressures connected to schooling?

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Crag Hill at crag.a.hill@ou.edu. Submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as attachments.

**Teaching Shakespeare**

**Column Editors:** Laura B. Turchi and Ann C. Christensen

Laura B. Turchi, Assistant Professor, College of Education
Ann C. Christensen, Associate Professor, Department of English
University of Houston
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Shakespeare’s plays, staples of the secondary English curriculum, are both “difficult” and rich in opportunity. This column asks about and offers ways in to Shakespeare’s works beyond starting with act 1, scene 1. It also serves as a forum for teachers to share instructional activities, innovative lessons, and useful tools they have developed to help students enter a Shakespearean text and dig deep. How do you assist students with Elizabethan English verse, promote their interest in complicated characters, or relate their worlds to the social worlds depicted in the plays?

Writers for the column should consider how the strategies they discuss are relevant to those teaching struggling readers and emergent English learners, as well as those teaching students with advanced literacy skills. We are especially seeking classroom narratives that push against equating a Shakespeare play with a summary of plot and characters or with watching the film version. We invite stories that illustrate the value of attending to language, movement, staging, and expression and that cast studying a Shakespeare text as an opportunity for students to explore identity and perform their understanding in innovative and multimodal ways. To complement these stories, we welcome classroom and student videos, podcasts, and other Shakespeare-inspired creations as posts to our “Teaching Shakespeare” group on NCTE Connects.

Questions to consider might include, When you teach Shakespeare plays, which scenes work best “on your feet”? What film clips pop for discussion?; or How do you guide your students to use images, dictionary definitions, and period sources to complicate a reading of “Moot” for *Othello*, or the Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice*, or Aaron in *Titus*?

Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Laura B.Turchi at lturchi@uh.edu or Ann C. Christensen at achrist@uh.edu. Submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as attachments.

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**Journeys Inward**

**Column Editor:** Mary Ellen Dakin

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In *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life*, Parker J. Palmer asserts that teaching is composed of three essential knowledge bases: knowledge of our subject, knowledge of our students, and knowledge of ourselves. “Who is the self who teaches?” he asks; the search for answers to this question has the potential to transform our classrooms and our lives. English teachers work at the crossroads of the epic and the everyday. We wander with our students through the shifting terrains of literature, and we sometimes find that the texts we teach and the conversations they provoke challenge us to explore our own “inner landscapes.” These moments urge us to consider the kind of teacher we have been and also the kind of teacher we are becoming.

This column invites writers to craft authentic nonfiction narratives of self-discovery, redirection, and renewal. When have you seen your own life reflected in the literature you teach and paused to ponder the implications? What specific events, situations, texts, classes, or ideas challenged the teacher within and sent you on a journey toward some greater understanding of your subject, your students, your world, and yourself? Tell us the story of that journey. We are especially interested in lively, personal writing that shares specific classroom moments that inspired introspection, challenged your thinking, and pushed you to consider how who you are influences how you teach. We welcome submissions that showcase voice, sensory details, dialogue, and dynamic characterizations that encourage readers to reflect on their own teaching journeys.

Inquiries and submissions should be directed to Mary Ellen Dakin at maryellendakin@gmail.com. Submissions of 1,500–1,800 words should be sent as attachments.

**Teaching Creative Writing**

**Column Editor:** Crag Hill

Associate Professor of English Education
Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education
University of Oklahoma
crag.a.hill@ou.edu

Creative writing can engage writers with all levels of the writing experience. In fact, creative writers produce work that speaks to us. What have you developed to help students enter a Shakespearean text and dig deep? How do you assist students with Elizabethan English verse, promote their interest in complicated characters, or relate their worlds to the social worlds depicted in the plays?

Writers for the column should consider how the strategies they discuss are relevant to those teaching struggling readers and emergent English learners, as well as those teaching students with advanced literacy skills. We are especially seeking classroom narratives that push against equating a Shakespeare play with a summary of plot and characters or with watching the film version. We invite stories that illustrate the value of attending to language, movement, staging, and expression and that cast studying a Shakespeare text as an opportunity for students to explore identity and perform their understanding in innovative and multimodal ways. To complement these stories, we welcome classroom and student videos, podcasts, and other Shakespeare-inspired creations as posts to our “Teaching Shakespeare” group on NCTE Connects.

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Inquiries, submissions, or suggestions for future columns should be directed to Laura B.Turchi at lturchi@uh.edu or Ann C. Christensen at achrist@uh.edu. Submissions of 1,000–1,200 words should be sent as attachments.