

A “Red Hot” NHCTE 25th Annual Fall Luncheon

By Elizabeth H. Juster, *NHCTE Executive Board*

At the 25th annual NHCTE fall luncheon, the brilliance of the red hot autumn leaves could hardly match Joanne O'Connor's presentation entitled “Red Hot Reading”. O'Connor a seventeen year teaching veteran who has been an English teacher, a special education teacher and is now a reading specialist at Pinkerton Academy, conveyed her message with an enthusiasm that was contagious.

O'Connor's approach to reading reflects her experiences as an English teacher. When she visits a classroom, it's not time for the classroom teacher to step out for a cup of coffee. Her content-driven approach to literacy coaching involves all members of the learning community—teachers, students and reading specialists.

Although O'Connor's methods were tailored for high school, they reflect best-practice methods that could be adapted to many other grade-levels.

If you have the opportunity to attend a reading strategies workshop conducted by O'Connor, don't miss it. I guarantee you'll walk away with many new ideas (and some refreshing takes on old ideas) to make reading for you and your students a “red hot” experience.



Visit our web-page for a fall luncheon slide-show:
http://www.nhcte.org/fall_luncheon.htm



Enjoy a Night of Books

Love yourself this Valentine's Day! Give yourself a night out with like-minded people who enjoy books and laughter and a lingering glass of wine. Those are the treats in store for you when you join other English teachers and their guests at the fifth annual Winter Book Chat for Book Lovers. Mark your calendar now: Thursday, February 7, 2008, from 6:00-7:30. The event takes place at Gibson's Bookstore, 27 South Main Street, Concord, NH. Owner Michael Hermann presents an array of books for consideration and invites audience participation and on-the-spot reviews. Watch for an email reminder closer to the date.

Out & About: “First-Time Attendance at NCTE Yields Ideas and Inspiration”

by John Bouton, *NHCTE Executive Board*

As a first-time NCTE convention visitor, I was drawn to New York to take the pulse of our profession. As I explained to my colleagues at school, I don't want to be the last man standing with a copy of *The Great Gatsby* in my hand for English class while everyone else is reading e-books and writing blogs. Knowing that incorporating technology and more international voices into our college preparatory curriculum will prove important, I sought a blend of workshops focusing on the fundamentals of language, writing, and technology. Here are some highlights.

The Grammar Goddesses lived up to their advance billing as denizens of Olympus. Modeling the classical pedagogies of engaging, motivating, demonstrating, practicing, and applying, these veteran teachers emphasized teaching grammar in the context of writing, which they qualified as being for real purposes and real audiences. They reminded us that “Playing the game is not just practice – give [students] the chance to be in the game by publishing.” Their encouraging sending on book reviews to *Teen Ink* and other periodicals was made easier by their practice of maintaining a file box with magazine titles so that students can prepare their work for publication. I also admired their technique of eliciting headlines and news stories from students' reading. Cathy Greenwood and Ruth Townsend Story offer materials at www.thegrammargoddesses.com.

“Blogging Connections” was also worthwhile for the teachers' ability to promote students' intertextual connections through writing and responding to each other on web logs. Focused on the mechanics of setting up class blogs that protect students' identities, the team from South Brunswick High School in New Jersey described their varying experiences with their 9-12 English students' online interactions with one another. Target skills included embedding quotations and responding clearly to questions. Noting that assessment rubrics still needed to be developed for their classes, these teachers focused on students' completion of authentic communications. They extolled blogs as being wonderful ways to engage everyone, particularly those students who need a bit more processing time than the rough and tumble process of class discussion typically allows.

The highlight of my convention was Barry Gilmore's presentation, “Revision as an Opportunity, Not a Chore.” Using a

table computer with stylus, the Tennessee-based teacher elicited our reactions to problems in a college essay that a student had prepared, then showed us her revisions over four drafts. Emphasizing targeted drafts, Gilmore taught us how to get better writing while grading faster. He urged teachers to evaluate a first draft on “big picture” ideas, then encourage revision to a more focused series of drafts. His website, www.BarryGilmore.com, has a bevy of lesson plans from all his books, including his newest, *Is It Done Yet? Teaching Adolescents the Art of Revision*.

“The Grammar Goddesses lived up to their advance billing as denizens of Olympus.”

In addition to these and other useful workshops, I was also inspired through my encounters with three contemporary legends. Hearing Jonathan Kozol decry “the miserable mania of obsessive testing” in his keynote remarks was surpassed only by meeting Laurie Halse Anderson and talking with her about *Speak*, a YA novel that is about depression, not rape, she insists. The most inspiring moment, though, occurred when I slipped away late Thursday

afternoon to see the documentary *Pete Seeger: The Power of Song*. As I wrote in my journal that evening in the West Village, “Here is someone who has devoted his life to justice and bringing people together. Whether it was Vietnam, writing new verses for ‘We Shall Overcome,’ or building a huge sloop for Clearwater to inspire the cleanup of the Hudson River, Seeger was an icon who gave voice to the concerns of the 20th century.” Ultimately, returning to New York City as an English teacher allowed me to feel the strangeness of returning to “somewhere i have never traveled, gladly beyond...”

Out & About, our newest column, provides NHCTE members with the opportunity to share experiences and insights gained while attending an NCTE Convention, an NHCTE event, graduate school, workshops, lectures and more! Go to www.nhcte.org/call_for_submissions.htm for submission guidelines.



News from the Department of Education



Certification Standards

Educators representing middle and high schools, and higher education are currently reviewing and making recommendations for revisions to the certification standards for English language arts teachers for grades 5-8 and 5-12. The meetings will be held throughout the fall months. The documents will be available for public input once a draft has been completed. Please contact lstimson@ed.state.nh.us or 271.2035.

Reading and Writing Crosswalks have been developed to explain the changes in coding to the English language arts framework. These changes were made to align the reading and writing codes with mathematics, science and social studies. Changes were made to the coding **ONLY** and do not affect the intent or the language of the standards. The crosswalks are posted on the English language arts site of the DOE website.

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/ELA/ELA.htm>

Sample **High School Course Competencies** have been developed by members of the New Hampshire Council of Teachers of English. Sample lessons for American Literature and a template for future development are posted on the English language arts web site.

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/ELA/ELA.htm>

NH Literacy Action Plan for the 21st Century

The NH Literacy Task Force has produced a PreK-16 Literacy Action Plan for the 21st Century. The entire document with appendices can be found on the DOE website.

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/School%20Improvement/literacy.htm>

Each school in NH received a copy of the Literacy Plan, a CD, and six professional resources selected especially to assist in the implementation of a comprehensive literacy program. The texts are: *The Literacy Principal*, by Booth and Rowsell; *Subjects Matter*, by Daniels and Zemelman; *Best Practice Third Edition*, by Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde; *Learning by Doing*, by Dufour, Dufour, Eaker, & Many; *Creating a Culture of Literacy: A Guide for Middle and High School Principals*, NASSP; and *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas*, by Billmeyer & Barton. In addition to above texts, each school received a DVD prepared by the NH Parent Information Center.

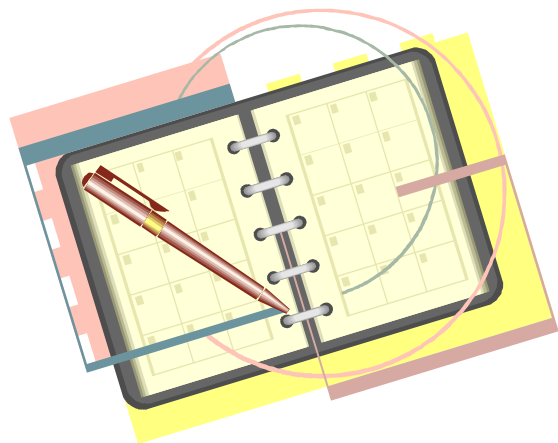
For more information contact Deb Wiswell, 271-3828, dwiswell@ed.state.nh.us or Linda Stimson, 271-2035, lstimson@ed.state.nh.us.

NECAP Assessment

NECAP Practice Tests and Resource materials with accompanying student responses are available on the English language arts web page.

<http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/ELA/ELA.htm>

An application to serve on the teacher committees to review the assessment for grades 3-8 and 11 can be found at <http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/curriculum/documents/2007%20application%20for%20statewide%20testing%20>



Upcoming NHCTE Events...

Winter Book Chat for Book Lovers
Thursday, February 7, 2008

Annual Spring Conference
Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Lesson Exchange: Creating Support for Academic Discourse

by Mary Nyhan, NHCTE Executive Board

This lesson works with any piece of literature. I recently used it with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Great Expectations*. One class was college preparatory, one class was Advanced Placement. This lesson could be used after reading a selection in class or after students have completed a reading assignment for homework. It facilitates student and group discussion instead of teacher-directed discussion.

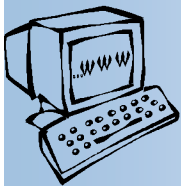
Student Name: _____
Teacher Name: _____
Course Name: _____
Date: _____

Great Expectations, Chapters 44-47

1. Journal Entry: Sometimes the truth hurts, but most of the time knowing the truth is still necessary. Your comments? Your experiences?
2. In the following space, summarize the story and themes of Great Expectations Chapters 44-47. There is limited space for a reason.
3. Now, gather with your partner and share your summary. Between the two of you, choose the information that must remain in your one "group" summary.
4. The third step is to find ten quotations in the chapters that read alone, would give that same summary. Write the quotes and page numbers on the lines provided below.
5. Now go back and pick the ONE quote that is essential to the section. (I know this is difficult, but you can do it!)
Must Have Quote:
6. In the space provided, draw the theme or action taking place in the "must have quote."

The first two steps help to "warm up" students. When students meet with their partners and they pick the quotations, I go around making sure they are having conversations about not only the quote they are picking or not picking, but also about why that particular passage is important. When the pairs have finished the worksheet, each pair presents some passages to the class, and the drawings are put on the board. By the time the activity is complete, they have directed meaningful discussion about the chapters, and I have been able to step back to give them their voice. This activity works very well, and it also gives them a "hard copy" of discussion and the passages that are important to their understanding of the text and the meaning as a whole.

Editor's Note: The above lesson provided spaces/lines for student responses where appropriate. Due to space concerns, those spaces/lines have been deleted from this copy.



We're only a click away -
www.nhcte.org

The Lesson Exchange is a regular column where NHCTE members have the opportunity to share lesson plans, classroom activities and more! To discover previous submissions or submit your own idea, go to: http://www.nhcte.org/lesson_exchange.htm

Pair the Standards

by Carolyn Cicciu, *SLATE Representative & NHCTE Executive Board Member*

SLATE, Support for the Learning and Teaching of English, seeks to influence public attitudes and policy decisions affecting the teaching of English language arts at local, state, and national levels; implements and publicizes the policies adopted by NCTE; and serves as NCTE's intellectual freedom network. All NCTE members are members of SLATE, which represents the commitment of caring English language arts teachers to their intellectual leadership and professional knowledge to make a difference in decisions affecting their classrooms and students.

In its role as educator, SLATE keeps its members informed of curriculum updates and challenges as teachers strive to create vibrant learning communities. It may have been a while since the membership perused the NCTE / IRA Standards for the English Language Arts. They are succinct and accessible and may provide a useful evaluation tool as teachers reflect on the success and failures of the year.

The vision guiding these standards is that all students must have the opportunities and resources to develop the language skills they need to pursue life's goals and to participate fully as informed, productive members of society. These standards encourage the development of curriculum and instruction that make productive use of the emerging literacy abilities that children bring to school. Furthermore, the standards provide ample room for the innovation and creativity essential to teaching and learning. Although presented here in an edited list, the standards are not distinct and separable; they are, in fact, interrelated and should be considered as a whole. Feel free to check this site for the complete text. (<http://www.ncte.org/about/over/standards/I10846.htm>)

- Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace.
- Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres.
- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.
- Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively.
- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they

write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

- Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
- Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources.
 - Students use a variety of technological and information resources to gather and synthesize information.
 - Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.
 - Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.
 - Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.

In addition to the English language arts teachers' focus on the standards of the subject, the state of New Hampshire now also requires that teachers incorporate technology instruction in their lesson presentations. Students must become "technologically fluent and able to use technology to solve problems with various sources of information, create new representations of their knowledge, and enhance their learning through the diverse strategies afforded by technology." (*Learning and Leading with Technology* March 2007, p. 15)

The technology foundation standards for students are divided into six broad categories. These categories provide a framework for linking performance indicators within the Profiles for Technology Literate Students to the standards. Teachers can use these standards and profiles as guidelines for planning technology-based activities in which students achieve success in learning, communication, and life skills. Clearly, there is a close association between the English language arts skills and the goals of technology integra-

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Voices of New Teachers

by Carolyn Cicciu, NHCTE Executive Board

School is always an exciting place for a teacher who loves what she does. For one who has undergone a career change and can draw comparisons, it is even more special and rewarding. That's what Lynn DiZazzo of Hollis Brookline Middle School would tell you. What she finds most exciting is seeing the final writing piece or the cumulative project and being wowed by the results. For a new teacher, it is always difficult to determine if all students are "getting" it. Even with rephrasing and modeling, class discussion and demonstration, can a teacher ever be sure that even the quietest of students or the most rowdy, really grasped the concept, understood the task, saw the application, and interpreted the challenge creatively when they take off on their own to produce a product? That's what Lynn always wonders, but then, she says, "It's so cool when the results reveal thoughtful students focused on unique presentations and writing that they are proud to share."

"For a new teacher, it is always difficult to determine if all students are 'getting' it."

The biggest challenge for Lynn, and for all of us English teachers I dare say, is the grading. With a journalism background, Lynn's impulse is to over-edit. What she finds helpful is creating a rubric that hones in on a limited number of essentials related to the content and mechanics upon which the students are focused for mastery. She also provides students with a checklist to help them revise and edit their own work before the final draft and submission. She stresses directions and explains to students that this is life skill, not just one to use in a particular class.

In light of all the correcting, would another subject have been as appealing as English to teach? No, she believes she could not teach math, for instance, with the same passion. As a reader, writer, and creator herself, preparing the les-

sons, this first time around, is as much fun as the teaching. For instance, Lynn enjoys the surprises in a story that she had not read in years but needed to reread before the students' exposure to it. She enjoys the search for resources. It's all fun!

At Hollis Brookline Middle School, Lynn has an array of help surrounding her if and when she requires it. From her team, she learns procedures and the solutions to day-to-day, nuts and bolts problems that arise. They are also helpful in giving suggestions for dealing with parents, using the grading program, and correlating assignments among the group so as not to overburden students. Their planning together demonstrates how well skills that one teacher emphasizes in one discipline can be applied in another. They are a source of encouragement, praise, and levity—and the providers of sustenance; word has it they have the best snacks at their team meetings! The other seventh grade English teacher, located in the room right next door to Lynn's classroom, serves as a collaborator, and the two teachers are laying out their year around the same units, teaching strategies, lesson "hooks," assignments and projects. They share resources and process how well lessons are going. The middle school has an established mentor program, too. Lynn's mentor provides the opportunity to process her planned lessons, ask about ways to introduce a new concept, and learn about the district, state, and national curriculum standards. All is fair game with a mentor—another pair of ears to listen to concerns and offer suggestions. Even her husband has gotten on the bandwagon, asking that he be allowed to do some grading and enjoying the student writing pieces Lynn shares.

SLATE (continued from page 5)

tion. <http://cnets.iste.org/students/s_stands.html>

Technology Foundation Standards for Students

- Basic operations and concepts
- Social, ethical, and human issues
- Technology productivity tools
- Technology communications tools
- Technology research tools
- Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools

Teachers of English language arts, no less than everyone

else, are left with the challenge of determining whether and how best to integrate the constantly shifting world of technology into their classrooms. Creating a partnership is the most beneficial tactic. Why not begin with the NCTE suggested lesson found on the organization's website: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=328 for starters?



Achievement Awards in Writing

by Marcia Goodnow, *NHCTE Executive Board*

The New Hampshire Council of Teachers of English is pleased to announce the 2007 Achievement Award in Writing winners. They are: Hyomi Carty, Keene High School; Alexandra McKinney and Ellen Stuart, Londonderry High School; and Matthew Paulson, Manchester Central High School.

The Achievement Awards in Writing is a school-based writing program established to encourage students in their writing and to recognize publicly some of the finest young writers in the nation. Students submit a piece of prepared writing deemed to be their finest work, and write an extemporaneous essay on a topic supplied by the NCTE. Winners receive certificates for superior writing that can be included in their college application process. In addition, names of the winners are posted on the NCTE website together with the names of their schools.

To nominate students—juniors who will graduate in 2009—for this year’s Achievement Awards in Writing, email a request for forms to aa@ncte.org or write to their 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801-1096 address. Nominations must be postmarked by February 1, 2008.

And congratulations to Hyomi, Alexandra, Ellen, Matthew, their respective schools and English teachers!

The Guest Speaker Next Door

by Amanda Klimowicz-Cabeza, *Reading Specialist, Londonderry High School*

What is effective teaching? Enhanced learning? What are resources? When I speak the words, I think very rigidly as though trained by ink-blots to respond: organization... field trips... technology... But what about the field trip down the hall? Why is it that I have yet to ask an art teacher work with me on visualization to help with reading comprehension? A history teacher to prepare my class for piece of historical fiction? A music teacher to help me to create a “Gatsby” party mood for a writing prompt? It baffles me as much as my need for the parking spot closest to the entrance... at the gym.

Is it really a time or a planning thing? When we see a willing resource in the form of brilliant teacher in the faculty lounge, what is holding us back? The reality is that if we can get through the “nitty gritty” of planning, the results surpass anything any one teacher could do on his or her own. I have some amazing colleagues who worked together on a graphic novel project (an art teacher, special education case manager, and English teacher). I was astounded with the results reported not only from the teacher’s perspective, but from those of the students as well! The project took much longer than initially planned, but with some collaboration, the teachers together helped hone the skills -thus saving valuable curriculum time and losing nothing in the end.

So be bold! Ask another teacher about working together. You’ll probably be pleased not only with the result, but with the process and relationships that develop through the experience.

Registration Form New Hampshire Council of Teachers of English Spring Conference-April 1, 2008

Name _____ School _____

Mailing Address _____ Email Address _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Conference Fees if post-marked before March 10, 2008

Current Members: \$75.00
To extend current membership add: \$10.00

Non-members: \$85.00
To become a member add: \$10.00

Interns/Student Teachers: \$35.00
(includes membership)

Total Enclosed: _____

Registrations received after 3/10: \$100.00
Walk-in Fee: \$100.00

Make checks payable to: **NHCTE**
Please mail registration to:

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Winnacunnet High School
1 Alumni Drive
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“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson
US essayist & poet (1803 - 1882)

Call for Manuscripts

Do you have a lesson or activity that you would like to share? Have you read an interesting book that you would like to review or have you discovered some valuable resources on the world wide web? We welcome your submissions!

Submission Guidelines

- Submit manuscripts via e-mail as an attached file.
- Manuscripts in MS Word are preferred. Authors using other word processing programs must save the file as Word for Windows.
- All manuscripts should be written in Times New Roman size 12. Be aware that graphics, tables and other formatting may not be in a compatible file type and may not be reproduced in the newsletter.
- All submissions must be original works that have not been published or submitted elsewhere.

- When necessary, use in-text documentation, following the current edition of the *MLA Handbook*.
- All submissions must follow the NCTE's "Guidelines for Gender Fair Use of Language" <http://www.ncte.org/pubs/publish/journals/107647.htm>
- Provide editors with the following contact information: Your name, school name and any additional information you feel is necessary.

Note: Your name and school name will be published along with your submission unless you request otherwise.

Send Submissions to:

Meredith Potter, Newsletter Co-Editor
mpotter@litchfieldsd.org

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Fill out this form and send it along with a check for ten dollars to:

Carol Downer, Treasurer NHCTE
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Alumni Drive
Hampton, NH 03842

Name: _____

School Name and Address: _____

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For your ten dollar membership fee, you can enjoy the following benefits:

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- ✓ New Ideas for Your Classroom
- ✓ Reduced membership fees for interns and first-year teachers

New Hampshire Council of Teachers of English

Meredith Potter, Newsletter Co-Editor

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1 Highlander Court
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An organization serving English teachers throughout the state of