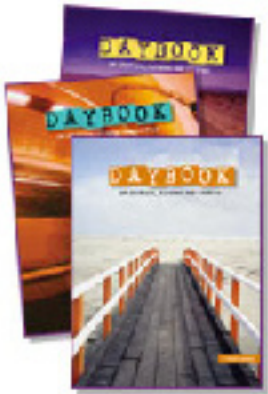
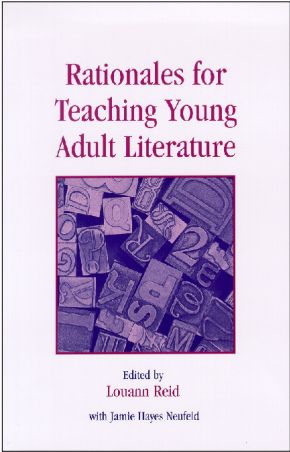


# Teachers Writing for Publication: Tips from a Teacher, Author, and Editor



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# Writing for Publication: Ideas and Advice



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### A Dozen Tips

1. Teach with an inquiring mind.
2. Keep a teaching log.
3. Set writing goals for yourself.
4. Maintain a file of ideas for possible articles.
5. Form or join a writing group.
6. Read journals, especially those you want to write for.
7. Consider classroom activities and conference presentations as sources of articles.
8. Target the journals for your article, considering readership, acceptance rate, reputation, and your publishing goals.
9. Know the readers.
10. Write for themed issues.
11. Revise and resubmit if invited to do so.
12. Learn from rejections; celebrate successes.

### Credits

“Teach with an inquiring mind” is a phrase I picked up from friend and colleague Cindy O’Donnell-Allen. In addition, ideas for this list come from my experience and two useful publications:

Dobie, Ann. “Tips for Publishing: Bringing Classroom Practices, Reflections, and Research to Print.” July 2004. Teacher Inquiry Communities Network. National Writing Project. Accessed March 2008 <http://www.writingproject.org/cs/nwpp/print/nwpr/1949>.

Henson, Kenneth T. “Writing for Publication: Steps to Excellence.” *Phi Delta Kappan* June 2007: 781–86.

### Prepare

#### Dream, Imagine, Plan

- > What do you want to write about? Or, if you are responding to a Call for Manuscripts (CFM), what aspect of the call will you address? (subject)
- > Who is your intended audience? (audience)
- > What do you want the readers to know, learn, or understand as a result of reading your article? (purpose)
- > List your likely main points or main sections. If you typically outline, go ahead and do a rough outline. (development)

#### Search for Publications

- > What do you like to read?
- > Spend half a day in a library, flipping through current publications that interest you and that might match your subject.
- > Do an Internet search with your subject and target audience as key words and see what journals you find.
- > Get a list of state affiliate journals from your professional organization, if there are such journals in your field. The National Council of Teachers of English does have state affiliates that publish journals.
- > Consider writing short pieces rather than full-length articles. It is often easier to get them published. In *English Journal*, for example, the acceptance rate is 15 to 20% for articles, but closer to 60% for features such as “Speaking My Mind,” “Teacher to Teacher,” and “Snapshots.” Column editors also accept manuscripts. Features run about 1,000 to 1,500 words, except for “Teacher to Teacher,” which is just 300.

## Analyze the Publications

- > Select three to five that seem to match your subject, audience, and purpose.
- > Make notes on the following:
  - o Average length of articles (in number of words)
  - o Number of citations (if any)
  - o Language level (scholarly, academic, conversational)
  - o Typical subjects of articles
  - o Grade levels targeted
  - o Who reviews manuscripts—peers, an editorial board, the editors? Is it blind reviewed, peer reviewed, or other?
  - o Other
- > For the most promising journals, try to determine acceptance rate and percentage of themed issues. Seek out their Information for Authors, either in the journal or online.
- > Target one journal (such as *English Journal*) or one type of journal with common characteristics (such as state affiliate journals).
- > If the journal accepts queries, you might want to contact the editor before writing your article, asking if he or she is interested in an article on the subject you've identified.

## Write (and Rewrite) Your Article

- > Use your plan to match the requirements of the selected publication.
- > If you are writing for a CFM, be sure that your article clearly addresses one or more aspects of that call.
- > Remember your audience. Readers expect a well-written article free of mechanical and usage errors. While the editor can help you address language conventions if your manuscript is accepted, you will increase your chances of acceptance if you do most of this work *before* submitting the manuscript. Do whatever it takes (several revisions, asking friends to proofread, setting the manuscript aside for a week before looking at it again) to make sure you make a good first impression.
- > Be sure the final draft is in the correct style. Most journals will use APA, MLA, or Chicago. If you

have few citations, you might want to use an Internet site to convert them from one style to another. If you have several, you might invest in an inexpensive program to take care of this for you.

## Send It to (Preferably) One Journal at a Time

- > Carefully read and reread the submission requirements. Look for
  - o number of copies and whether those are disk, hard copy, or both
  - o possibility of electronic submission
  - o a statement about where your name goes—separate title page or on the manuscript
  - o other manuscript preparation notes
  - o preferred type of word processing program
  - o a statement about including postage if you want the manuscript returned
  - o a required statement that the piece is not being submitted elsewhere and has never been published
  - o length of time for decision
  - o deadline—if there is a date, is it a postmark deadline or a receipt deadline?
- > Write a cover letter. Include brief information about how your manuscript fits the CFM or the subject of the article and why you think the editors and readers will be interested, your background (just enough to establish your credibility), and contact information.
- > Prepare a well-organized package and include enough postage. You don't create a great impression if it arrives postage due!

## Wait, Wait, Wait. Write Another Article While You're Waiting.

- > From the research you've done, you will know approximately how long editors take to make a decision. After that time period, it would be OK to contact the editor. Before that, it's an irritant.
- > If you're serious about getting published, you will need to be ready to try, try, try again. You could either come up with something completely new or you could rewrite your article for a different audience.

## What Happens While You're Waiting (or How a Manuscript Becomes a Publication)

The process at *English Journal* seems fairly typical of other journal publishers, in my experience.

- > Manuscripts arrive and are logged in.
- > The editor reviews all manuscripts to determine suitability for review. Those that are not suitable are put in the “reject” file and a letter goes out after the deadline for the CFM or sooner if it's a “general” manuscript.
- > Manuscripts suitable for review are sent as an email attachment to two or three reviewers.
- > Reviewers have about two weeks to read and review. They submit their reviews to an online reviewing form.
- > When all reviews come back, the editor begins selecting manuscripts for the issue. Selection considerations include
  - o quality of manuscript
  - o fit for *English Journal*
  - o amount of revision necessary
  - o variety for the issue
    - \* aspects of the CFM addressed (subject of the article)
    - \* gender of author
    - \* teaching level of author
    - \* length of the article
- > Once a manuscript is selected, the production process begins.
  - o The author receives an acceptance packet that includes a legal form called a “Consent to Publish.” The packet also includes all forms needed to obtain permission from students or others quoted in the article.
  - o The *EJ* editor sends the author an edited manuscript with requests for clarification, cuts, further information or details, and so on. The author has about two weeks to return the revision.
  - o Before it is printed, the article is fact-checked to be sure that all quotations are correct and that all citations are accurate. It is proofread four times by three people each time in the *English Journal* office and proofread at least

two times more by two or more people at NCTE headquarters.

- o Other

The article appears eight months after the CFM deadline. The author receives two complimentary copies and, possibly, fame and glory.

## Calls for Manuscripts

Editors of several NCTE affiliate and assembly publications have announced calls for manuscripts for issues on a variety of themes. The following list gives the publication name, sponsor, issue date, theme, submission deadline, and contact person information.

**Note:** Calls for manuscripts for NCTE journals can be found at <http://www.ncte.org/pubs/publish/journals>. Calls for manuscripts for NCTE books can be found at <http://www.ncte.org/pubs/books/call>.

*California English*, California Association of Teachers of English, <http://www.cateweb.org/>

*The English Record*, The New York State English Council, <http://www.nysecteach.org>

*NYSEC Monograph*, The New York State English Council, October 2008, “Social Literacy and Classroom Communities,” manuscript deadline **June 1, 2008**. <http://www.nysecteach.org>

*Nebraska English Journal*, Nebraska English Language Arts Council, Contact Clark Kolterman, Seward High School, 532 Northern Heights, Seward, NE 68434; [clark.kolterman@connectseward.org](mailto:clark.kolterman@connectseward.org).

*Kentucky English Bulletin*, Kentucky Council of Teachers of English/Language Arts, <http://www.kcte.org/keb/index.html>

*Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning (JAEPL)*, Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning, <http://www.sworps.utk.edu/aepl/JAEPL/Default.htm>

*OJELA*, Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, <http://www.octela.org/newoctela/newojelaintro.html>



*Oregon English Journal*, Oregon Council of Teachers of English, <http://www.octe.org/publications.html>

*The ALAN Review*, Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE, Fall 2008, “How Will Life Be in 2053? Visions of the Future in Young Adult Literature,” May 15, 2008, [http://alan-ya.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=41&Itemid=26](http://alan-ya.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=41&Itemid=26)

*WILLA*, Women in Literacy and Life Assembly, Fall 2008, no specific theme, May 30, 2008, <http://www.willa.us>

*Illinois English Bulletin*, Illinois Association of Teachers of English, no specific issue, no specific theme, submissions accepted at any time, <http://www.englishilstu.edu/iate/publications/bulletin.shtml>

*Statement*, Colorado Language Arts Society, <http://www.clas.us>

## ESL.net

“Would you like to see your lesson plans published on everythingESL.net? This is a chance to share your best thematic units with your colleagues. Read this article to help you prepare your lesson plan for publication. Ideas for lesson plan topics are included.

Publishing on the Internet requires a different approach than writing plans for a college course or writing in your lesson plan book. You need to be specific about what books you use and what resources you have found. These resources should be linked to an Internet source where they can be bought.

If you’d like to see your plans published on everythingESL.net, download the lesson plan template and fill it out. Send it to [judie@everythingESL.net](mailto:judie@everythingESL.net) and wait to see your work on the Internet. [http://www.everythingsl.net/lessons/publish\\_less\\_plans\\_67133.php](http://www.everythingsl.net/lessons/publish_less_plans_67133.php)”

## Education World

“Welcome to Education World’s Lesson Plan Submittal page. Thank you for your interest in contributing to our collection and for sharing your lesson plans with teachers around the globe. Please carefully read the guidelines below before submitting your lesson plan.

- > Education World evaluates all lesson plans submitted for quality and appropriateness.
- > All lesson plans are copy-edited before being posted to the site.
- > Lesson plans provided within this collection are for individual classroom and non-profit educational use only.
- > Education World reserves the right to publish a summary of each lesson plan in our lesson plan newsletter. That newsletter is emailed to a long list of subscribers.
- > A one-time \$50 honorarium will be paid to the submitter of any lesson plan that is highlighted on Education World’s homepage (<http://www.educationworld.com>). Some lessons are selected randomly; others are selected because they connect to a timely curriculum topic. All lessons selected are from those deemed by Education World editors to be among the best lessons submitted.”

[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_tsl/submit.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_tsl/submit.shtml)

## Publish Your Lesson Plans Online

Link to an article from *TechLearning* about how to publish online. Many possibilities are highlighted and the writing guidelines for writing for *Educators’ eZine* are similar to the guidelines you’ll find elsewhere. <http://www.techlearning.com/story/showArticle.php?articleID=14700421>

## National Science Teachers Association

**Literacy: November 2008**

*Manuscript Deadline: May 1, 2008*

Each year, *Science and Children* presents an issue about the connections of science with literacy skills. Since literacy has been a key issue in the national testing arena, teachers appreciate the chance to hone literacy skills while teaching science. We have published many articles on establishing links of science to literacy. We will continue this tradition and would especially welcome manuscripts that describe connections of process—how are processes used to read or write literacy connected and enhanced by similar processes in science? <http://www.nsta.org/publications/call-sc.aspx>

## Selected Print Publications, with Publication Information and Sources of Ideas

books with Claggett and Vinz were invited

invited prospectus

prospectus submitted to NCTE

invited by editor, approved by NCTE editorial board

invited

NCTE call for manuscripts for this one and the next one

Rick and I had worked together in Douglas County on a project he led, and we wrote this article specifically for this journal.

I was invited to write this.

Ruth knew that I was teaching YA lit. at CSU and invited me to join her on this.

### Books

- Claggett, Fran, Louann Reid, and Ruth Vinz. *Daybook of Critical Reading and Writing*. Grades 6–9, American and World Literature. Wilmington: Great Source Education Group, 2007, 2008.
- Reid, Louann with Jamie Hayes Neufeld, eds. *Rationales for Teaching Young Adult Literature*. Portland: Calendar Islands, 1999.
- Reid, Louann, and Jeffrey N. Golub. *Reflective Activities: Helping Students Connect with Texts*. Classroom Practices in Teaching English, Vol 30. Urbana: NCTE, 1999.
- Claggett, Fran, Louann Reid, and Ruth Vinz. *Learning the Landscape: Inquiry-Based Activities for Comprehending and Composing*. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1996. AND *Recasting the Text: Inquiry-Based Activities for Comprehending and Composing*. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook Heinemann, 1996.

### Chapters in Edited Books

- Reid, Louann. "Teaching Grammar in Contexts for Writing." *Teaching Writing: Craft, Art, Genre*. ed. Fran Claggett. Urbana: NCTE, 2005. 136–151.
- Reid, Louann and Jeff Golub. "An Interactive Approach to Composition Instruction." *Composition and Resistance*. Ed. Michael Blitz and Mark Hurlbert. Portsmouth: Heinemann Boynton/Cook, 1991: 82–91.
- Reid, Louann. "'You See Their Interselves': Small Group Discussion of Poetry." Talking to Learn. *Classroom Practices in Teaching English*, Vol. 24. Ed. Patricia Phelan. Urbana: NCTE, 1989: 8–12.
- Reid, Louann. "Physical Poetry." *IdeasPLUS*, 7. Urbana: NCTE, 1989: 11–12.

### Articles in Refereed Journals

- VanDeWeghe, Richard, and Louann Reid. "Reading the Classroom as Text: Perspectives on Classroom Inquiry." *English Education* 32.2 (January 2000): 127–140.
- Reid, Louann. "Fighting Fixity in Teacher Education." *English Education* 31.1 (October 1998): 45–47. (Invited response to Reilly's "Difficult Flows and Waves: Unfixing Beliefs in a Grade 8 Language Arts Literacy Class.")
- Reid, Louann, and Ruth Cline. "Our Repressed Reading Additions: Teachers and Young Adult Series Books." *English Journal* 86.3 (March 1997): 68–72.

call for manuscripts, from my teaching at CSU

These were all submitted in response to calls for manuscripts and they all came from my high school and junior high school teaching.

I answered a call for manuscripts for this one.

Someone invited me to write this review.

I had written a report that I then sent to ERIC and PDK found it there.

The editor invited me to write this.

First a conference presentation, the editor saw it, liked it, and asked us to write an article.

answered a call for manuscripts; conference presentation first

co-authored, from our teaching, call for manuscripts from teaching high school speech classes; sent unsolicited

call for manuscripts; two activities from my teaching

call for manuscripts; activities from our teaching

Reid, Louann. "When Reader Response Doesn't Work." *Virginia English Bulletin* 44.2 (Fall 1994): 87–91.

Reid, Louann. "Cultivating Student Expertise," part of a symposium, "Making Small Groups Work." *English Journal* 83.3 (March 1994): 59–60.

Reid, Louann, and Richard VanDeWeghe. "Thoughtful Communities: Classroom Research in Higher Literacy." *English Journal* 83.1 (January 1994): 21–26.

Golub, Jeff, and Louann Reid. "Activities for an 'Interactive' Classroom." *English Journal* 78.4 (April 1989): 43–48.

Reid, Louann. "The Roundtable: How Do You Provide for the Effective Use of Small Groups?" Reply published in *English Journal* 76.6 (October 1987): 80.

#### Articles in Other Professional Journals

"Realizing the Promise of Block Scheduling through Effective Staff Development." *English Leadership Quarterly* 23.1 (August 2000): 8–11.

Review of the book *Learning Literature in an Era of Change: Innovations in Teaching. Academic Writing*. 24 Aug. 2000. [http://aw.colostate.edu/reviews/hickey\\_reiss\\_2000.htm](http://aw.colostate.edu/reviews/hickey_reiss_2000.htm).

"The Perceived Effects of Block Scheduling on the Teaching of English." Rpt. in David J. Flinders, Ed., *Block Scheduling: Restructuring the School Day*. Hot Topics Series. Phi Delta Kappa International, 1999.

"A Few Recommended Books for Young Adults Interested in Learning about Other Cultures." *Educational Leadership Quarterly* 17.2 (May 1995): 10–11.

with Linda Vereline. "Critical Thinking in Response to Literature." *Washington English Journal* 10.2 (Spring 1988): 38–41.

"Critical Thinking in Response to Literature." *Arizona English Bulletin* 30.1 (Fall 1987): 11–14.

with JoAnne Rehberg. "Doing What Comes Naturally—Naturally!" *The Speech Communication Teacher* 1.3 (Spring 1987): 1–2.

"Reducing Communication Apprehension in the High School." *The Ohio Speech Journal* 20 (1982–83): 68–73.

"Liar's Lexicon." *Connecticut English Journal* 12.2 (Spring 1981): 5.

"Symbolism Made Simple." *Connecticut English Journal* 12.2 (Spring 1981): 58–60.

with JoAnne Rehberg. "Speech Anxiety: How to Help Students Overcome It." *Connecticut English Journal* 11.1 (Fall 1979): 1–6.

# Behind the Scenes with Reviewers

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### Editor's Notes

#### The Big Picture

Your manuscript review provides me with important advice regarding the potential for publication of an article in *English Journal*. Through you, we maintain the high standards of the journal, address the interests of the audience, and offer a public forum for teachers and others who wish to write.

Final selection of a manuscript for a particular issue depends not only on positive reviews but also on the space available in the issue and on the fit of a given article for the overall publication. I will aim for a variety of topics, perspectives, and authors in a single issue, so it is possible that all reviewers of a particular manuscript would advise “accept,” but I would have to hold the manuscript for a later issue or return it to the author. We ultimately publish only about 10% of the material we receive.

#### The Details

If you have been reviewing for a while, you may have a favorite way of working. If you are new to reviewing for *English Journal*, I offer the following suggestions:

Read the manuscript once to get a sense of the whole.

Write a few sentences summarizing the article. You might be surprised at how different people can read the same article and come up with divergent summaries. Having your summary will help me know how to advise the author about making his or her point clear from the beginning. You can include the summary in either box—“for the author” or “for the editor.”

Go back over the manuscript with pen or pencil in hand, marking questions or concerns.

Write your review. Save it on your computer before completing the online form. The form does not automatically save text as you input it, so you might

want to cut and paste from your word processing program.

If you are advising that we accept the article, give a few reasons supporting your decision and make revision or editing suggestions. If you would like to make more extensive comments on the text itself, you have two options. You may mark your hard copy of the manuscript and send that to us in the US mail. Or, if you are working in Word, you can use the “track changes” and “comment” features. Then, save the manuscript file with a different name and return it to us via email. In either instance, please tell us in the “comments for the editor only” section of the online reviewing form that you are sending the manuscript or a file so that we know to watch for it to arrive separately. We can help you with the commenting feature if you want to learn it; do not hesitate to ask questions.

We will seldom be able to give the author of a rejected manuscript lengthy reviews or revision suggestions. Thus, if you're rejecting an article, a few notes on your reasons will be sufficient. If you can think of another journal that would be more appropriate for the piece, please include that information.

When you include comments in the box “for the author,” you are giving us permission to share those comments with the author. If you do not want to say anything different to the editor than you do to the author, just fill in the text box for the author.

#### Final Notes

If, for any reason, you are not comfortable evaluating a particular manuscript, please let us know immediately so that we can send it to a different reviewer. If you think you know the author and feel that you cannot provide a fair reading of the piece, let us know that, too, so that we can reassign the review.

I truly appreciate your assistance with the journal. Please contact Julia Innes or me with any questions or concerns at [Englishj@lamar.colostate.edu](mailto:Englishj@lamar.colostate.edu).

Louann





## English Journal Reviewer Response Form

Reviewer Number

Reviewer Name

Manuscript Title

**Please note: This electronic form does not automatically save your review. To avoid losing your work due to electronic glitches, you may want to write and save your comments as a word-processed file, then cut and paste them into this form.**

[Editor's Notes](#) Click here for suggestions and guidelines on reviewing manuscripts for *English Journal*. This page opens in a new window. To return to the reviewer form, close the window.

### Reviewer Recommendation

- Accept this manuscript.
- Accept this manuscript with revisions (noted elsewhere).
- Reject this manuscript.

### Manuscript Rating

1. The subject is interesting to secondary or middle school English language arts teachers.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

2. The content adds significantly to what we already know about this subject.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

3. The writer demonstrates an understanding of effective teaching practices.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

4. The writer provides sufficient background for novices to teaching or to the subject.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

5. The article reflects sound research or recent scholarship.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

6. The article is the appropriate length.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

7. The article is well written and clearly organized.

## The Review Process

English Journal Reviewer Form

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

8. The article is likely to have lasting value to educators.

strongly agree     agree     no opinion     disagree     strongly disagree

Comments or suggestions that you want to share only with Louann

Comments or suggestions for the author

(By including comments in this section, the reviewer agrees to allow *English Journal* to share these comments with the writer. The reviewer's name will not be used.)

Click to submit review. An acknowledgment should replace this page.

<http://ejreview.colostate.edu/> (2 of 3)11/13/2007 9:11:48 AM

# Writing for *English Journal*

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### Manuscripts after January 1, 2008

Note: *English Journal* will have a new editor beginning with the September 2008 issue. After January 1, 2008, send manuscripts to

Ken Lindblom, Editor  
*English Journal*  
Department of English  
English\_Journal@notes.cc.sunysb.edu

### Submission Guidelines

- > Manuscripts should be sent by email as an attachment to English\_Journal@notes.cc.sunysb.edu. Manuscripts should be double-spaced throughout (including quotations, endnotes, and works cited), with standard margins. Word 2000 or later is preferred. Authors using Macintosh software should save their work as Word for Windows. Paper submissions should be sent only when email is impossible. 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 ten to fifteen double-spaced, typed pages in length (approximately 2,500 to 3,750 words).
  - > 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.
- > List your name, address, school affiliation, telephone number, and email address on the title page only, not on the manuscript. Receipt of manuscripts will be acknowledged by email, when possible, or by mail.

*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 three 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 Web site at <http://www.ncte.org/pubs/journals/ej/write/107647.htm>.

### Themed Issues

#### Living Authors

Postmark Deadline: May 15, 2008  
Publication Date: January 15, 2009

The study of literature is even more exciting when the author is still alive and writing. The work is contemporary and likely responds, in some way, to current affairs. Students and teachers can have fun guessing about authors' next books. More exciting still is that students can write to living authors or even meet them in person to discuss their work. Of course, students are themselves living authors, writing their own texts inside and outside English classes. Teachers can spark excitement among even reluctant readers by engaging them as legitimate writers. For this issue, we welcome manuscripts dealing with any aspect of teaching and learning about living authors. What current authors do you most enjoy teaching and why? How do you incorporate the fact that the authors are still alive and

writing into your assignments? How do students react to reading living authors as opposed to reading much older works? What assignments have you designed that treat students creatively as authentic authors of fiction or nonfiction? Where and how have your students “published” their writing for a real audience from which they have gotten real feedback?

#### Sexual Orientation and Gender Variance

Postmark deadline: July 15, 2008

Publication date: March 2009

Guest Editors: Paula Ressler and Becca Chase  
Illinois State University

As English teachers responsible for all students’ learning, teaching about LGBT issues is central to our success. Educators from John Dewey to Gloria Ladson-Billings emphasize that good teachers need to get to know their students, yet we find that in most educational settings lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, genderqueer, those questioning their sexual orientations and gendered identities, and family members of LGBT people feel they must hide these aspects of themselves or face negative consequences. For those trying to balance sexual orientation and gender identity and expression with race and other marginalized identities, the struggle for voice and acceptance can be even more complicated.

How can you enrich learning and build community by helping to bring the voices of students representing all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions into the classroom conversation? How do new and experienced English teachers address sexual orientation, gender variances, and intersecting identities? How have you helped students better understand people whose sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions differ from their own? How have you worked with texts by new and YA authors featuring LGBT themes or characters? How have you worked with canonical authors whose identities or works can be read through a “queer” lens? How do you create safe opportunities for students to research, write about, and discuss these issues? What other actions do we take outside the English classroom to affect professional development, school safety policies, responses to censorship, and legislation?

We invite manuscripts exploring these or other

related questions. Paula Ressler, guest editor, is willing to discuss ideas with authors; she may be reached at [pressle@ilstu.edu](mailto:pressle@ilstu.edu).

#### Authentic Learning and Teaching: Developing Real-World Skills

Deadline: September 15, 2008

Publication Date: May 2009

Some believe classrooms are safe spaces in which students are sheltered from the politics, competition, and general chaos of the real world. Further, standardized exams, scripted curricula, and traditional assignments often focus students on artificial tasks that are only loosely connected with the kinds of literacy activities students will be required to do after high school.

This issue of *EJ* is an opportunity to share assignments you have created to help students develop the kinds of knowledge and skills they will need for the world beyond school. Some might write about service-learning projects in which students have begun a community campaign, composed informational Web sites, or published in editorial pages. Other teachers may write about how they have sent students to interview professionals in a variety of fields to explore how reading and writing are required skills. Others may write about authentic assignments that require students to write for real audiences, real purposes, and in real contexts. Still others may define “real-world skills” as the social skills that even most adults have not mastered. Some teachers have developed units on cooperation and collaboration, enhancing students’ abilities to work together, to draw on each other’s talents, and to engage in conflict resolution when necessary. This issue welcomes all articles on real-world assignments in English class. Please be open about shortcomings in real-world curricula; when one writes for real, the consequences are real as well, and we can learn as much from our shortcomings as from our successes.

#### For the Fun of It!

Deadline: November 15, 2008

Publication Date: July 2009

Do you remember what attracted you to the field of English? Was it your escapist forays into other lands through reading? Dreams of writing the next Great

American Novel? Fascination with famous speakers who moved the world with their words? Deepening your appreciation of classic films? Whiling away the hours with a dog-eared comic book or pop novel? Indulging your ego with your own angst-ridden poetry? Playing your favorite songs again and again to hear and appreciate every word? Creating a famous Web site? You're lucky. Now that you teach English, you get to indulge these pleasures with your students and call it work.

Since people learn best through play, there is an argument to be made that all teaching and learning should be fun. What do you teach that you and your students find to be a great deal of fun? Please, no *Jeopardy!*-style test reviews or mnemonic devices for naming the parts of speech. For this issue, we seek enjoyable, creative assignments that engage students in genuinely high-level learning in any area of English language arts.

#### Teachers Set Free: Folger Education and Other Revolutionary Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare

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Shakespeare education underwent a sea change in the 1980s through the work of the Folger Shakespeare Library's Teaching Shakespeare Institutes for secondary

teachers. Then in 1993, the Folger's Shakespeare Set Free editions spread the performance-based approach of those institutes to teachers across the country.

This issue of *English Journal* looks at the current and future state of Shakespeare education. Why is Shakespeare still a fundamental component of English and Theater curricula? What plays besides the Big 4 (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet*) work for your students? What innovative ways have you incorporated performance in your class? How have you integrated technology into a Shakespeare unit? How do you use video in teaching Shakespeare? How do you teach Shakespeare to younger students or to students with learning disabilities? What outside sources—print and nonprint—do you use with Shakespeare? What original writing assignments have you designed to work with Shakespeare? Is there value in having students memorize passages? How do you manage to balance teaching Shakespeare with the demands of standardized testing? To what extent does Shakespeare fit into today's multicultural, globalized landscape?

#### General Interest

May be submitted at 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.