



CONNECTIONS

FALL 2004 VOLUME 5, ISSUE 2

2004 AETA CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS



OCTOBER 7-8, 2005 AETA CONFERENCE FEATURES GARY SOTO

Gary Soto is the author of ten poetry collections, most notably *New and Selected Poems*, a finalist for the National Book Award.

Soto is one of the youngest poets to appear in *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*. He is the winner of many literary awards, including the Tomás Rivera Prize; fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts; the Hispanic Heritage Foundation Literature Award, the National Education Association Author-Illustrator Civil Rights Award, and the PEN Center West Book Award.

Also a film producer and opera librettist, Soto serves as Young People's Ambassador for several California civic organizations. He lives in Berkeley, CA.

Visit him on the web: <http://www.garysoto.com>

By all accounts, AETA's *Arizona Speaks: Many Voices, Many Views* 2004 Conference was a smashing success. My special thanks to all who made it possible: AETA's Conference Planning Committee, Arizona's teachers and students, publisher representatives, and CGCC staff. Following are snapshots still fresh in my mind's eye:

I saw Laurie Halse Anderson, mother, writer, and kid advocate, inspire us to find our writing and teaching talents and to unfold a precious value — optimism in our youth. I saw teachers share an array of approaches and activities for teaching Anderson's novels. I saw children's picture books used to teach the six traits, and middle school, high school, and college teachers moved and motivated by a student's multi-genre paper. I saw us mingle to jazz and tiramisu, greet old friends and meet new.

I enjoyed our Teachers as Writers Award-winners — and other teachers as writers who shared in the way of the word. I was enamored with soulful, thoughtful, fun-ful pieces at Friday's open mic event.

I heard many voices from the Navajo Nation, Havasu, Fort Huachuca, Yuma, Phoenix, Avondale, Scottsdale, and others.

I heard many views about things such as standardized testing and the merit of teaching literature.

I found a comfortable, collegial atmosphere rich with talk and laughter. I found new ideas from the lesson and idea-share (*thank you, thank you!*). I found college students (*future teachers*) thrilled to be among professionals, overwhelmed by the energy. I found conversation with helpful publisher reps, knowledgeable and concerned about literacy issues. I found a new hero, Tony Romano.

I learned 25+ reading/writing ready-for-Monday ideas (*I've already used two!*), the new Arizona Standards for Writing (*I like them*), and that songs are poetry (*reminder of "Songs of Silence" from long ago*). I learned a great way to "lead" students to literary analysis (*trick 'em when you can!*). And — so much more.

Until I see you all again in Tucson at Conference 2005, may the many voices of students embedded in good books, of joy in your interactions, and of your own fulfillment whisper in your ears.

—Sharon Fagan, 2004
Conference Co-Chair

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FORMER AETA PRESIDENT PASSES AWAY



William "Bill"
Ojala

William T. Ojala, a retired associate professor of English at ASU, died of heart failure on July 16, 2004. He had completed his BA and MA in English at the U of Minnesota, and his PhD in English Education at Florida State U. In 1971 he joined the ASU English Department, serving there until his retirement in December 1998. Bill had a reputation as a energetic and caring student teacher supervisor. He was active in every phase of the ASU English education program, served on several committees of the NCTE, and was president of AETA.

But Bill would have said that his strength was teaching. Bill loved his scholarly life and friends, and he relished teaching above all else. —Alleen Nilsen, Arizona State U, Tempe



THE RIGHT TO READ: FROM THE AETA PRESIDENT

Dear Teachers of English and Language Arts:

What a great conference! Great speakers! Great poets and story tellers! I am still excited about the wonderful sessions and the opportunity to meet one of the foremost YA writers in the country.

For me, the only chilling moment of the conference came when a teacher described a scene where an administrator entered a classroom during a lesson, told the teacher to stop teaching a book he had selected and subsequently disciplined the teacher. This should never happen.

A few weeks before the conference, I received a call for help from an English teacher who was also the appointed advisor to the Gay Straight Alliance club. The teacher was being challenged by a lone parent for attempting to put on a play dealing with homophobic violence—a part of The Laramie Project. As the AETA president, I offered my support. It sounded as if she had done everything correctly including informing the administration.

In cases such as this, I recommend that the teacher (1) obtain a copy from his/her administrator of the district's policies on parent complaints and censorship; (2) assuming that he/she is compliant with these policies, just keep rehearsing and get ready to perform; (3) break off dialog with the hostile parent and let the administration handle that angle; and (4) try to have a colleague/witness at rehearsals. Strong issues can produce bitter enemies and we can not be careless or cavalier in these matters.

It is important to remember that the state of Arizona gives local boards wide authority to determine what books shall be taught. It is a mistake for any teacher to think in terms of slipping something into the program without informing the administration or the board. If you want to include issue-based Young Adult literature in your program, you must make a well supported case. Make it at each level—parent, school administration and school board. Remember that you can't always get everyone to agree to what you want to do, but you usually can get them to listen to you. And you have resources.

Ideally, your colleagues, your department chairperson and school administration are there for you and have experience in dealing with censorship matters. AETA works to provide additional resources in the people that we bring to Arizona, most recently speakers Chris Crutcher and Laurie Halse Anderson.

Our parent organization, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), makes an array of experience and materials available, most notably its position piece on *The Students' Right to Read*. The current edition of NCTE's Committee on the *Right to Read* statement was prepared by Arizona's own Ken Donelson. This statement and the "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work" form are available on the NCTE website at www.ncte.org. The parent review forms make an excellent addition to existing school board policies on censorship.

As English language arts teachers, we are charged with helping students find and strengthen their voices. The education we provide should empower individuals. It is our task to make sure that our students can speak—for their rights, and the rights of others, of which the right to read is one. —LB.



Lee Brown, AETA President

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



A Short History of Women's Suffrage

The following is as depicted in HBO's new movie, *Iron Jawed Angels*. It is a graphic portrayal of the battle women waged in order to secure the right to vote.

The women were innocent and defenseless. By the end of the night, they were barely alive. Forty prison guards wielding clubs and their warden's blessing went on a rampage against the 33 women convicted of "obstructing sidewalk traffic."

They beat Lucy Burn, chained her hands to the cell bars above her head and left her hanging for the night, bleeding and gasping for air. They hurled Dora Lewis into a dark cell, smashed her head against an iron bed and knocked her out cold. Her cellmate, Alice Cosu, thought Lewis was dead and suffered a heart attack.

Additional affidavits describe the guards grabbing, dragging, beating, choking, slamming, pinching, twisting and kicking the women. Thus unfolded the "Night of Terror" on Nov. 15, 1917, when the warden at the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia ordered his guards to teach a lesson to the suffragists because they dared to picket Woodrow Wilson's White House for the right to vote.

For weeks, the women's only water came from an open pail. Their food--all of it colorless slop--was infested with worms. When one of the leaders,

Alice Paul, embarked on a hunger strike, they tied her to a chair, forced a tube down her throat and poured liquid into her until she vomited. She was tortured like this for weeks until word was smuggled out to the press.



It is jarring to watch Woodrow Wilson and his cronies try to persuade a psychiatrist to declare Alice Paul insane so that she could be permanently institutionalized. And it is inspiring to watch the doctor refuse. Alice Paul was strong, he said, and brave. That didn't make her crazy. The doctor admonished the men: "Courage in women is often mistaken for insanity."

After watching, a friend said, the right to vote had become valuable to her "all over again."

—author unknown

Website: <http://www.hbo.com/films/ironjawedangels/>

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS
GET EVERYONE TO
AGREE TO WHAT
YOU WANT TO DO,
BUT YOU USUALLY
CAN GET THEM TO
LISTEN TO YOU.

SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES TO THE *ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN*: NOW ACCEPTING ARTICLES FOR SPRING AND FALL 2005 ISSUES

Juharris@u.arizona.edu
520-458-8278, x2135

COMPOSITION REVISITED

Deadline March 1, 2005

We'd like to update our readers on the most recent trends and issues in teaching composition. What are you doing with computers in writing classes? How have the six-traits guidelines impacted your teaching? What assignments are you using that are the most successful? What works for improving style, usage, and/or grammatical constructions?

What does NOT work? One of the demons of composition teachers is the dread turn-around time. Are there ways to speed up the grading without losing quality in the feedback?

Let us know what you are doing to help produce better writers at any level of education. See submission information at right if you are interested in contributing an article.



—June Harris

YA FICTION IN THE ENGLISH / LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM

Deadline September 1, 2005

Young adult fiction is among the most vital, exciting, and yet, most controversial of literary genres. What YA literature are you using in your classrooms, and how are you using it? Do you pair it with other works of fiction? Have you had difficulty with issues of censorship? How cooperative are parents and administrators in your experience with using young adult literature? What authors do you use, and how do you use them? What books seem to be most popular among student readers?

Let us hear from you as we try to build an issue to offer ideas and support for classroom teachers. For submission guidelines and information, contact:

June Harris, Editor,
Arizona English Bulletin
U of Arizona South
1140 N. Colombo
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635



AEB MANUSCRIPT GUIDELINES

Please submit two (2) copies of your manuscript (typed and double-spaced throughout, including quotations and works cited) and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The *Arizona English Bulletin* uses the MLA style sheet.

You should include an electronic copy of the manuscript in Microsoft Word. Faxed manuscripts will not be accepted. We can, however, accept manuscripts sent as email attachments in Microsoft Word. Be sure to include the author's name, address, school affiliation, and work and home telephone numbers on a cover page.

Manuscripts will be reviewed and replies sent, usually within 6-8 weeks, but occasionally later, depending on the editor's schedule and responsibilities.

Mail manuscripts to June Harris, Univ. of Arizona South, 1140 N Colombo, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635. Authors of published articles will receive two contributor's copies. Compliance with *Arizona English Bulletin* deadlines is appreciated.



—JH

THE REVEALERS: A WEBSITE

Wilhelm, Doug. *The Revealers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. 207 pp / ISBN # 0-374-36255-6 / Genre: Realistic/ problem novel

I want to tell everyone I can think of who might be interested that I've gone online with a new web site for *The Revealers*, my novel about bullying for young adults.

I developed this site (it was a lot of work!) because of the amazing response to this book; teachers, librarians, schools and communities around the country have begun using it to address bullying. It turns out that using a work of fiction can be a very effective way of inviting young peo-

ple to open up about bullying and similar painful experiences.

I spent the summer talking with teachers, librarians, counselors, and others who had made the most striking uses of *The Revealers*, and I put all that information into the new web site. You can find it at: <http://www.the-revealers.com>.

In the site - especially in the section "Using the book: A resource center" you'll find articles about the various ways the book has so far been used to address bullying. Included are specific, downloadable resources: a middle-school study unit that a teacher designed around

the book, discussion questions, learning activities, a school's script for performing the first chapter, a press release for a community read, and access to a Web discussion board.

My task now is to find web sites that might want to link to www.the-revealers.com, along with educator or librarian listservs that might want to know about it.

Do you have any suggestions or ideas? If so, I hope you'll let me know.

—Doug Wilhelm, author
dwilhelm@together.net / phone & fax: 802 773-9070





IN THE TRENCHES: TEACHERS SPEAK

Q: HAVE YOU HAD ANY DIFFICULT OR INTERESTING EXPERIENCES IN DEALING WITH CONTROVERSIAL YA LIT?

A: “Controversial literature? Hum, this is an interesting topic! When I was in college professors always emphasized the fact that English teachers are supposed to introduce students to a broad range of texts. In turn, these texts will help diverse groups of students develop an understanding of a wide range of cultures, ethnic groups, and geographic regions. At the time, this sounded like a simple task, but in reality, it is difficult to accomplish.

My first year teaching I asked both my department chair and the principal if I could teach Laurie Halse Anderson’s book *Speak* and Chris Crutcher’s book *Athletic Shorts*. Here’s the response I received: “Oh, no, we don’t promote the issues those books mention.” The word promote was heavily stressed and I was escorted to a closet that contained “good” books for students to read. In that room I found cartoon versions of most of Shakespeare’s works and books I’ve never even heard of. When I was asked if found anything I wanted to teach my response was, “No, but I know why those books are in the closet.” On a positive note—most of my students found, and read, both of these books in the school library. By the way, they absolutely loved them!”

Vonda Douros, High School Teacher
Show Low High Sch. / Show Low Unified District



NCTE THE RIGHT TO READ

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF OUR COUNTRY FROM THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Where suspicion fills the air and holds scholars in line for fear of their jobs, there can be no exercise of the free intellect. . . . A problem can no longer be pursued with impunity to its edges. Fear stalks the classroom. The teacher is no longer a stimulant to adventurous thinking; she becomes instead a pipe line for safe and sound information. A deadening dogma takes the place of free inquiry. Instruction tends to become sterile; pursuit of knowledge is discouraged; discussion often leaves off where it should begin.

—JUSTICE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS, UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT:
ADLER V. BOARD OF EDUCATION, 1951.

The right to read, like all rights guaranteed or implied within our constitutional tradition, can be used wisely or foolishly. In many ways, education is an effort to improve the quality of choices open to all students. But to deny the freedom of choice in fear that it may be unwisely used is to destroy the freedom itself. For this reason, we respect the right of individuals to be selective in their own reading. But for the same reason, we oppose efforts of individuals or groups to limit the freedom of choice of others or to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

The right of any individual not just to read but to read whatever he or she wants to read is basic to a democratic society. This right is based on an assumption that the educated possess judgment and understanding and can be trusted with the determination of their own actions. In effect, the reader is freed from the bonds of chance. The reader is not limited by birth, geographic location, or time, since reading allows meeting people, debating philosophies, and experiencing events far beyond the narrow confines of an individual’s own existence. www.ncte.org

***Q:** IS AIMS PREPARATION PUSHING LITERATURE STUDY OUT OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM?

***A:** Part II: “I ask students to find an area in their writing to revise for topics we reviewed in the mini-lesson. Most often the topic for the mini-lesson comes from areas of weakness I recognize in the students’ writing or areas they voice they need further modeling. The students and I discuss the writing process for a variety of genres. I have a poster that displays the six genres on the AIMS test and the students know they are expected to have at least two different samples of each in their portfolio by the end of the year; however, I don’t limit the students to those genres. I discuss how on the AIMS they will be

given unlimited time to write, but they will not be able to consult their writing group so they have to rely on their own “inner editor.”

At the beginning of second quarter I build the confidence of the inner editor in each student by having surprise “self-editing” days. I ask the students to use their current writing pieces. I explain that this is a practice “fake testing day” in which we are going to pretend this is the AIMS test and they are to self-edit and revise for publication. I give them the entire class to do this then collect their pieces. The next class period we discuss

what they noticed about themselves as self-editors and how this practice over a period of time may help them.

At the beginning of third quarter I approach this a little differently; once a month I conduct full-blown fake testing days in which I give the students a booklet with prompts similar to what they would receive on AIMS. I explain that this is what the test will be like and we are conducting a “trial run.”

These strategies have created a classroom where writing, reading, sharing, editing, and publishing are expectations that students can grasp with out anxiety related to the test. When they practice on a daily basis students feel prepared and anxiety is lessened on test-day.

Billie Lamkin, Seventh Grade Teacher
Desert Arroyo Middle Sch. / Cave Creek Unified District



*Part I of BILLIE LAMKIN’S response appeared in the Summer 2004 issue of *Connections*; visit us on the web to read it: www.asu.edu/aeta.

VONDA DOUROS is the Eastern Arizona AETA Regional Director. See page 6 in this issue of *Connections* for a news update from her area.

SPRING 2005 Q: THE BILINGUAL CLASSROOM: WHICH YA LIT AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES ARE YOU USING TO REACH BILINGUAL AND ESL STUDENTS?

SEND YOUR ANSWER TO
WENDY.KELLEHER@ASU.EDU



TEACHERS AS WRITERS — A RECAP

OPEN MIC / OPEN HEARTS

On Friday evening, as the sun went down behind the distant Estrella Mountains, we teachers gathered for coffee, dessert, and a chance to share the heart of our work – the words from our hearts. The sides of the welcoming pavilion were open; the night and stars were all around us; and for a little while, the lights and the noise of the city seemed far away.



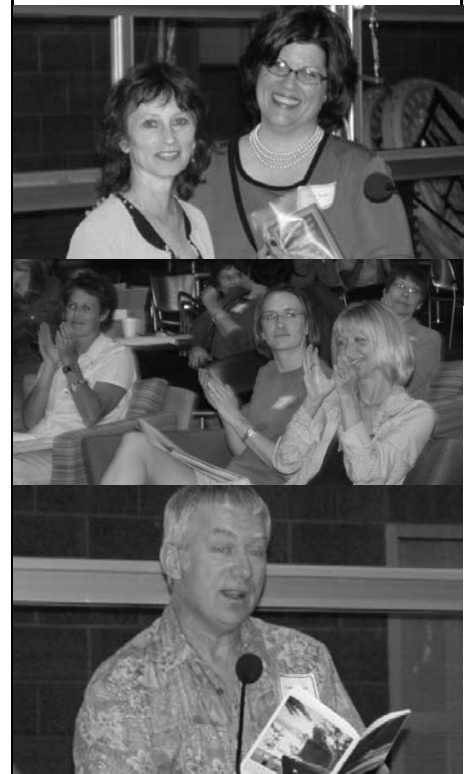
G. Lynn Nelson

The open-mic sharing was a quiet celebration of the essence of our work: human beings using the gift of language to craft meaning out of existence, art out of experience. Over a hundred people gathered, and many chose to come forward and share their writing. As we listened, we were touched and taught by poetry and stories that gave voice to our fears, our losses, our joys – poetry and stories that left us feeling less alone – poetry and stories that reminded us once again what this language-work we do is really all about.

Though the trappings were different and though we did not consciously think about it, surely on this night our bones remembered – remembered gatherings around the fire thousands of years ago, remembered telling stories against the dark and the unknown, remembered looking at each other across the fire and nodding in our knowing.

Yes, our work is that elemental, that essential. So, thanks to those who shared on that special evening – and to those who listened and nodded and applauded in knowing. Keep on. —G. Lynn Nelson, Arizona State University, Tempe

WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



WRITERS . . . AND READERS

AWARD WINNERS



Congratulations to our 2004 Teachers-as-Writers Contest award recipients:

~POETRY~

1st Place — “Schizophrenia”
Mary Setliff, University HS, Tucson

2nd Place — “Unknown Unknowns”
Roger Shanley, Rincon HS, Tucson

3rd Place — “Ode to a Garden Tomato”
Kathi Baron, Flagstaff HS, Flagstaff

~SHORT STORY~

1st Place — “Between the Bones”
William Tecku, Skyline HS, Mesa

2nd Place — “The Summer of 9”
Tonya Boschmann, Anadalucia MS, Phoenix

3rd Place — “Shoe Story”
Lise Spangenthal, Valley View ES, Phoenix

~NONFICTION~

1st Place — “Tumbled Revelations”
Lynn Cuffari, Immaculate Heart MS, Tucson

2nd Place — “Treatment Number Five”
Lori Hart, Cactus Shadows HS, Cave Creek

3rd Place — “Hair Today”
Susan N. Smith, U of Arizona



AN EVENING OF OPEN MIC READINGS

Through the Greater Phoenix Area Writing Project, Dr. G. Lynn Nelson teaches the value of teachers-as-writers by sharing his own beautiful words.

As emcee at the annual AETA Open Mic Night, Lynn once more emphasized that teachers who teach writing need to model it for their students, which requires both courage and commitment.

We gathered in the airy, glass-walled room at the heart of CGCC — winners of the AETA Teachers-as-Writers Contest, student teachers, veteran teachers, university professors — with poems, short stories and essays in shaky hands. One-by-one, we approached the microphone, accustomed to being cheerleaders and editors for our students.

The scholarly observer might comment that this night marked a change of hats, a shift of paradigm: the embodiment of the National Writing Project’s goals. But to those present, it was a night to hear and celebrate the voices of teachers as artists.

AETA’s Open Mic Night once more left me with a feeling of continuing respect for Arizona’s teachers-as-writers and the writing projects and universities statewide that help guarantee that this tradition will continue.

—Mary Setliff, University HS, Tucson

To read the winning entries, please visit us on the web and download the expanded online version of the newsletter: <http://www.asu.edu/aeta>



REFLECTIONS 2004: THE AETA ANNUAL CONFERENCE



AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO FILM IN THE WRITING CLASSROOMS: *THE BREAKFAST CLUB* AND *ALMOST FAMOUS* (DARREN CROVITZ & DAVID PEGRAM)

Arizona State University English Education doctoral students Darren Crovitz and David Pegram presented their own insights and experiences using film in their composition curriculums. In discussing *The Breakfast Club* and *Almost Famous*, Crovitz and Pegram revealed that it can be tempting for educators to (mis)use movies because they like a particular film; they recommend that educators

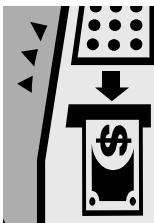
look for films that are more than simple text and that depict perspectives and themes that involve writing. Both films featured in the presentation do just that.

Crovitz uses *The Breakfast Club* as a backdrop for two writing assignments — the personal narrative and the cultural commentary. He draws on the film's themes of imprisonment to liberation, stereotypes to

meaningful dialogue, and writing as punishment to finding one's own voice.

Pegram employs *Almost Famous* to jump start a variety of discussion points and writing assignments in his classroom, including: the writer's craft; archetypal journey; loss of innocence; objectivity vs. subjectivity, trust/distrust, and classification and identity.

—Katie Mason, Arizona State U, Tempe



GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE: MAKING BILINGUAL STUDENTS FEEL PROUD

Arizona State University Drs. Alleen and Don Nilsen and English Education doctoral student Nina Murakami shared strategies for implementing vocabulary instruction that draws on the extra knowledge of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Using both source-based and process-based approaches to teaching vocabulary, they advocated the teaching of a few words well—rather than many words ineffectively—and drawing on the expertise of English language

learners to shed light on the evolution of language.

The process-based approach illustrates how language evolves through various processes; for example, in what Alleen Nilsen calls “initialisms,” various abbreviations become so commonplace in our everyday language that they become vocabulary terms in and of themselves—DVD, ATM, LOL. Many of us use these terms without even recalling what they stand for (Digital Video Disk, Automatic Teller Machine, and Laughing Out

Loud).

The source-based approach depicts how words evolve metaphorically from a source, or root word. To illustrate this point, the presenters displayed posters that depict this evolution of language. For example, one poster showed how the word *manus* (hand) transforms into *manager* (one who handles things), *manufactured* (handmade), and *manual* (handbook).

—Katie Mason, Arizona State U, Tempe



A DRIVE-BY SHARING WITH A TEENAGE GANG (G. LYNN NELSON)

In a powerful presentation that featured the writing of two Young Adult Writing Project (YAWP) participants, Arizona State University Professor Lynn Nelson shared the secret to writing instruction success: before it becomes public, the writing must first be something the writer *cares* about. Unfortunately, Nelson revealed, most teachers skip that part—the *caring*—and go right to the composition and revision of public writing.

Cassie and Helen, two YAWP participants who graced the audience with their prose and poetry, also shared their insights as writers. Cassie said that her participation in YAWP gave her the courage to read her pieces “to the people that mattered.” For example, she read a powerful letter she had written to her father and explained that she was also strong enough to share it with him.

At one point during this session, an 8th grade teacher asked for advice

on how to get the adolescent boys in her class to write about topics more meaningful than cheeseburgers and Tony Hawk. Young adult author Laurie Halse Anderson, who attended this session, explained that sometimes it's appropriate to allow our students the safety of those topics until they've built up their confidence and comfort levels. Yet Cassie pointed out that sometimes students “might need to be pushed” as well.

—Katie Mason, Arizona State U, Tempe



REFLECTIONS 2004: THE AETA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

INFUSING TECHNOLOGY INTO YA LITERATURE (JILL ADAMS)

University of Kansas doctoral student Jill Adams shared valuable insights and resources from her teaching and research to help educators determine the types of technology that enhance their instruction *and* student engagement in learning. In her interactive presentation, Adams encouraged audience members to share their own frustrations and achievements regarding technology and provided a wealth of resources and practical teaching ideas that teachers can immediately implement in their curriculums.

While we typically think of

technology in terms of the number of computers available for student and teacher use, Adams shared a variety of ideas for effectively incorporating other types of technology into instruction, including: critical viewing strategies (which complemented Darren Crovitz and David Pegram's earlier presentation on using film in the writing classroom), audio theater, and video projects. For each of these strategies, Adams provided ready-to-use handouts and instructions for immediate classroom use.

In addition, she described a

variety of ways in which teachers can use computers and the Internet in new ways, including: storyboards (using Inspiration, PowerPoint, or Hyperstudio); innovative PowerPoint presentations (in which students respond to literature, for example, by creating wordless PowerPoint presentations that complement the mood and tone of the oral presentation through visual images or graphics); interactive PowerPoint presentations that "serve as a guide for students as they dig into a text"; and hyperlinked essays.

—Katie Mason, Arizona State U, Tempe



THE SECRET RECIPE: WRITING LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAYS (BRIAN TAYLOR)

Wow, this year's AETA conference rocked! I honestly can't say that I attended one session where I didn't learn something new. However, Brian Taylor's session amazed me. For the past two years I've taught students how to this very type of essay and I must admit, unfortunately, that I was less

then pleased with how the papers were written and how little thought actually went into explaining the quotes from the text.

A week after the conference a friend's daughter asked me how to write a literary response and I provided her with a copy of the graphic organizer I received from

Brain. After she completed this I told her "the secret recipe" and a few days later she came back with a very well written essay that received an "A" from her teacher. Way to go Brian!

—Vonda Douros, Show Low HS, Show Low

"I
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NEW."

NOTES FROM THE KEYNOTE SPEECH: (LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON)

"I see children as blank sheets of paper. I see teenagers as rough drafts. They're always adding details to fit these new personalities. They're putting in new information; they're expanding to fit their larger bodies and their larger sense of self. Then they cut, they contract, they pull back in when they run up against unexpected pain or harshness, they're always polishing these new versions of themselves, trying to see who will stay in control." —Laurie Halse Anderson, *AETA keynote speech*

Saturday's keynote speech at the annual AETA Conference opened with a lusty rendition of an original song written by Laurie Halse Anderson to the tune of "Let it be", then moved quickly to the heart and core of the speaker's message: love teenagers.

Loving teenagers, according to Anderson, means understanding them, accepting them where they are, remembering our own adolescent years as we struggled to establish our own identities.

Teachers are in a unique position

to impact the lives of the adolescents they encounter, as Anderson pointed out in a story about her own life. Seeing and knowing the important role we play as teachers is the key to making a difference.

—Wendy Kelleher, Arizona State U, Tempe

For the complete transcript of Ms. Halse Anderson's speech, please visit us on the web and download the expanded online version of the newsletter (just click on the "newsletter" link once you're there).

⇒ <http://www.asu.edu/aeta>





25 REASONS WHY I WANT TO ATTEND THE NCTE CONFERENCE IN INDIANAPOLIS

"SIGNIFICANCE" — THE NCTE ANNUAL CONVENTION, NOVEMBER 18-23, 2004

I wrote this list and submitted it to my principal with my professional leave request form. It worked and she granted me leave!

—Lisa Ashley, Cottonwood Middle School, Cottonwood

1. It reminds me of why I want to teach.
2. It educates me.
3. It reconnects me to young adult authors I know.
4. It connects me to new young adult authors I don't know.
5. I take home over a hundred books and materials that the students and I can use.
6. I meet veteran and mentor English teachers.
7. I meet newer teachers and we share experiences and challenges.
8. It keeps me in the profession (instead of being one of the 50% of new teachers who leave the profession within their first five years).
9. The energy, creativity, professionalism and intelligence of everyone there inspires me.
10. It re-kindles my passion for the profession
11. I get materials to share with other teachers.
12. It sharpens my focus.
13. It redirects me.
14. It gives me something to look forward to.
15. It was one of my professional goals (when I became a teacher) to go every year for the rest of my life.
16. It gives me new ideas.
17. It helps me weave my curriculum and ideas and books and themes together.
18. It reminds me to be diligent.
19. It allows me to get out into the world.
20. It gives me professional clarity.
21. My students are more motivated to read and write after they see pictures of famous authors with their teacher.
22. I discover new cities.
23. I honor other educators.
24. My registration fees support a great cause.
25. It's fun.

ARIZONA LITERACY TEACHER EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

Mark Your Calendars for the Arizona Literacy Teacher Educators Conference on Saturday, January 22, 2005, 8:30 - 3:30 pm. at Arizona State University, College of Education, Tempe, AZ. This conference is co-sponsored by ASU, U of A, and NAU. Its purpose is to bring together literacy educators, especially those in teacher education and professional development, who teach courses in reading and writing, to share information, network together and learn from each other.

For more information, please contact:

Yetta M. Goodman
Regents Professor Emerita
University of Arizona
email: ygoodman@u.arizona.edu



FROM THE EDITOR



Wendy Kelleher

Meeting many of you and hearing your stories from the classroom reminded me once again that no matter where we live, teachers have the potential to change the world through each student we touch.

Laurie Halse Anderson told us that adolescents are "magical"; I think teachers are, too. How else can we explain what happens every day in our classrooms? It's easy to get discouraged, however, because we grow numb from racing through the myriad details teaching requires. Does that mean magic doesn't happen? I don't think so.

I had the delightful opportunity to watch a former student on television this past weekend. My son called me and said, "Hey, Mom, did you know Nicole Borud is on T.V.? She's competing in 'Top Models'. You have to watch the show!"

I did and there she was — the same kid who hung around with my daughter Cindy, who waited on me at the local truck stop, who sat in my classroom, and performed in my play productions at Minot High School. Watching her, I thought back to all the moments at home, backstage, onstage and in the classroom where we interacted.

Mostly, I thought of the time she came late to makeup call for our final performance of *Macbeth*, and I smelled what I thought was marijuana smoke on her. I ushered her into my office for a "talk"; I was furious that she'd jeopardize this important show.

That night as she sobbed her "out, out, damned spot" monologue, I stood in the back of the theatre and sobbed with her, seeing Lady Macbeth differently than I'd ever seen her. She was a young, beautiful, passionate, terrified and tormented woman-child who'd made choices that seemed right, but in reality, weren't. How like so many of the students we see every day in our classrooms!

Watching Nicole on television reminded me of the gravity of my role as a teacher, guide, and mentor. As Laurie told us in her speech, our students may not remember much from the subjects we teach, but they will remember if we cared about them, and saw them as human beings needing affirmation and direction. They'll also remember whether we were role models for them — and if so, what kind of role models we were. Magic? I'd call it that. Maybe even "miracle."

—Wendy K.



FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTORS: LOCAL AREA RALLYING POINT



PHOENIX-WEST CENTRAL

Brian Taylor
Westview High School
Avondale 85323
623.877.2438 ext 2401
cibtaylor_1@yahoo.com

PHOENIX-SOUTHEAST

Sherrie Davis
Hamilton High School
Chandler 85248
480.830.8566
davissh@chandler.k12.az.us

BUCKEYE

Marissa Lees / Kris Guy
Estrella Foothills High School
Goodyear 85338
623.377.2400
marissam@buhisd.org /
krisg@buhisd.org

Sarah Harrison

Buckeye Union High School
Buckeye 85326
623.386.4423 x 202
sara@netzero.net

COTTONWOOD

Lisa Ashley
Cottonwood Middle School
Cottonwood 86326
928.649.9788
lashley@cocsd.k12.az.us

PAYSON

Kate Moore
Payson High School
Payson 85541
928.468.8778
katemoore@yahoo.com

MESA

Linda Jones
Skyline High School
Mesa 85208
480.890.1949
L-L-Jones@worldnet.att.net

NAVAJO NATION

Shelley Robson
Window Rock District
Fort Defiance 86504
c 602.821.8293
bubblegummachine@msn.com

SALOME

Maureen Eich
Salome High School
Salome 85348
928.859.3453 (school)
928.859.4767 (direct)
meich@salomehs.org

TUCSON

Colleen Rogers
Marana Middle School
Tucson 85653
520.682.4730
C.R.Rogers@maranausd.org

Christine Merrill

Mt. View High School
Tucson 85742
520.579.4400
MVHS@msmerrill.com

NORTHWESTERN AZ

Terri Kaufman
Lake Havasu H.S.
Lake Havasu 86405
928.505.5628
tkaufman@ctaz.com

EASTERN AZ

Vonda Douros
Show Low High School
Show Low 85901
928.537.6200--work
928.242.4498--cell
vondadouros@yahoo.com

⇒ **Eastern AZ update:**

Vonda Douros earned the NCTE Developing Leader Award. She also participated in DIBELS training and helped with the 2004 AETA Conference as Information Station and Lesson Share Coordinator.

AETA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Annual membership is from fall to fall of each year. Back issues of publications will be provided, as available.)

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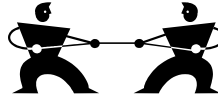
FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Jean Boreen Box 6032 English Department NAU
Flagstaff, AZ, 86011-6032
928.523.6765 Jean.Boreen@NAU.EDU

INTERNET CONNECTIONS



Following are some Web links to help you connect — with other teachers, students, and the larger education community.



Rhetorical Review: <http://www.nnrh.dk/RR/index.html>
“The Electronic Review of Books on the History of Rhetoric”

Gary Soto’s Website: <http://www.garysoto.com/index.html>
Poet, Author, and Keynote Speaker for the 2005 AETA Conference

The Revealers Web: <http://www.the-revealers.com>
See page three (3) for a synopsis of this website’s uses.

AETA Discussion Board: <http://www.asu.edu/english/aeta/>
Visit the AETA site and click on “Discussion Board” link to join and contribute to this ongoing discussion!

Arizona Education Association: <http://www.arizonaea.org/frame.html>
Arizona’s educational advocate for schools, teachers and school staff members.

Online Poetry Anthology: <http://www.heydays.ws/>
A poetry anthology designed for use in senior high schools. Content may be downloaded without cost by teachers and students. All of the poems have been donated gratis by poets or publishers and full acknowledgment is given with links to poets' web sites.

ASU English Dept Events Page: <http://www.asu.edu/english/events/>
Oodles of free and low-cost literary events featuring local and national writers.

NCTE “Inbox”: <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/inbox>
A service providing free, weekly updates of news, views, and ideas.

AETA CONNECTIONS STAFF

Wendy Kelleher, Connections Editor
Arizona State University
PO Box 870302
Tempe, AZ 85287-0302
Phone: 480-242-3034
Fax: 480-965-3451
Email: Wendy.Kelleher@asu.edu

Kristen LaRue, *Connections* Design Editor
Arizona State University
PO Box 870302
Tempe, AZ 85287-0302
Phone: 480-965-7611
Fax: 480-965-3451
Email: Kristen.LaRue@asu.edu

Lee Brown, AETA President
ASUW College of Education
PO Box 37100
Phoenix, AZ 85069-7100
Phone: 602-595-2009
Fax: 602-593-7052
Email: Lee.Brown@asu.edu

WE’RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.ASU.EDU/AETA



ARIZONA ENGLISH TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
c/o Jean Boreen
1285 N. Wakonda St.
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

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