



CONNECTIONS

SPRING 2007 VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

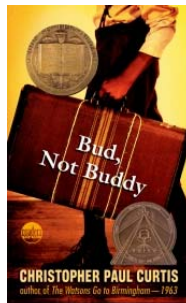
CHRISTOPHER PAUL CURTIS AND BEVERLY CHIN SPECIAL GUESTS FOR 2007 FALL AETA CONFERENCE



Begin making plans to attend this year's AETA Conference at the beautiful ASU Polytechnic campus, just a few minutes south of the new Loop 202 in Gilbert. Past NCTE president Beverly Chin joins us again as our keynote speaker and Christopher Paul Curtis joins us as our featured author.

Curtis's most well known YA novel *Bud, Not Buddy* won the Newberry Medal and the Coretta Scott King Medal, among many other honors. More recently Mr. Curtis published *Bucking the Sarge* and *Mr. Chickee's Funny Money*. His first novel, *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*, also won many awards, among them a Newberry Honor and a Coretta Scott King Honor. Christopher Paul Curtis hails from Flint,

Michigan, where he worked in the automotive industry. He attended the University of Michigan, Flint while working at Fisher Body Flint Plant 1. He began writing essays and novels while going to college and now writes full time. Christopher Paul Curtis and his wife, Kay, have two children and live in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. He will be speaking on Friday night of the conference and will be attending and speaking at several breakout sessions throughout the weekend.



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR 2007 FALL AETA CONFERENCE

Email or send proposals by April 30 to
Jean.Boreen@nau.edu

Include:

- 1. Presenter's information:** Include name, title and affiliation, mailing address, all contact info (phone, cell, email)
- 2. Session title and designation:** Writing, Reading/Lit, Spec Topic, General Primary, Inter/Middle, Jr-Sr High, College
- 3. Extended Description of Session:** 50 minute sessions. Describe in 2-3 paragraphs.
- 4. Abbreviated description of session for the Conference Program:** 4-5 lines summarizing your session.
- 5. Presentation Needs:** Meeting room will have overhead projectors. List specific needs or requests such as room set-up, computer projection, audio-visual or technology access.

MAKE YOUR CONNECTIONS ...

WHAT: FALL AETA CONFERENCE

WHEN: OCTOBER 5 & 6, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

WHERE: ASU POLYTECHNIC CAMPUS

WHO: YOU, THE LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS OF ARIZONA

WHY: Facing the challenges of keeping teaching, learning and thinking alive in classrooms across America requires perseverance, creativity, a sense of humor and a voice loud (and united) enough to be heard. If we as teachers are going to help our students make sense of it all, we need to be positive and aggressive, standing together to deal with critical issues in our classrooms. Attending state conferences is one avenue we can take to do just that — CONNECT. We need each other.

HOW: To register, call Dr. Jean Boreen at NAU, Phone number (928) 523-6765 or go online to <http://www.asu.edu/aeta/> and click on *Conference*.



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In the next issue of *Connections*, we'd like to hear more of your "On the lighter side" stories from the classroom. Email your stories to wendy.kelleher@asu.edu or david.peggram@asu.edu



FROM THE AETA PRESIDENT



Dear Friends in English Education,

First of all, I would like to congratulate all of the *Connections* staff, Kristen Larue, David Pegram, and especially the editor Wendy Kelleher for our publication's national first place award for an NCTE affiliate newsletter. It seems inadequate to call *Connections* a newsletter, and perhaps more accurate to call it a mini-professional journal, considering all the wonderful information about English education events in Arizona and around the nation, and all the resources *Connections* provides. The quality of this publication is only exceeded by the enthusiasm of its editor, and it was a joy to stand in for Wendy, David and Kristen to receive the award at the NCTE Affiliate Breakfast in Nashville, 2006.

Connections is just one of the many ways the Arizona English Teachers' Association exists to serve you, to provide you with a forum for expressing your thoughts and feelings about this great vocation of ours, and to provide resources to help you. Among and across all of us, we have great collective experience and wisdom, including the answers to many teaching issues and problems, and the AETA is a forum for sharing this knowledge and experience. Our state organization provides a means to share effective teaching approaches, meaningful literature, useful activities, insightful professional books, and the many treasures we all have discovered over the course of our careers.

We ought to have a good time together, too, and that should include attending the state conference. Our **2007 AETA Conference** will be held at ASU Polytechnic

Campus in Gilbert, AZ, on October 5 and 6. Our featured author will be Christopher Paul Curtis, Newberry Award and Coretta Scott King Award winner and winner of too many other awards to list. Our keynote address, Teaching Writing and Grammar in Context, will be delivered by Dr. Beverly Ann Chin, Past President of the National Council of Teachers of English; Program Consultant for GLENCOE LITERATURE: THE READER'S CHOICE; and Editorial Director/Lead Content Advisor for "Teaching Multicultural Literature" and "The Expanding Canon," professional development video programs produced by Annenberg Media; president of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The complete program for the AETA conference will be available on our AETA website: www.asu.edu/AETA

Our conference chairs this year are ASU doctoral candidates and Phoenix secondary education teachers Kathy Deakin and Tricia Sindel-Arlington. They are joined by co-chairs Bette Bergeron, Deb Molina-Walters, and Dr. Duane Roen on the Polytechnic Campus.

Finally, I want to thank all of you for everything you do for kids, everything you do to make the world a better place, and for the countless hours you put in at your vocation in life. Never underestimate the influence you have in the world as teachers. Every day, in ways you won't always know, you help young people make sense of their lives through the literature they read, the discussions they have, the writing they do and the way that you honor and treat them as priceless individuals. I am proud to know you.

— Jim Blasingame, President of AETA,
Associate Professor, Department of English, Arizona State University

NCTE AFFILIATE NEWSLETTERS ARE HONORED

Newsletters are a vital link for affiliates. The [Affiliate Newsletter Award](#), established in 1992, is designed to recognize those newsletters which are outstanding. Entries for the award were newsletters published at least three regularly scheduled times during the year from May 2005 through the program deadline of May 1, 2006. Nancy Kampfe, Region 4 Representative to the NCTE Standing Committee on Affiliates, chaired the review committee for this award.

The winner of the NCTE Affiliate Newsletter Award is CONNECTIONS: News of the Arizona English Teachers' Association, edited by Wendy C. Kelleher and Kristen LaRue, Arizona State University, Tempe, and published by the [Arizona English Teachers' Association](#).

Honorable mentions went to *NYSEC News*, edited by John Harmon, Skaneateles Central School, and published by the [New York State English Council](#); and the *OCTELA Newsletter*, edited by Ruth McClain, Columbus, and published by the [Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts](#).

The entries were judged by a committee of independent judges. The judges were impressed with the overall quality and variety of the newsletter submissions which were rated for pertinent content, consistency and timelines, effective writing, a clear and accurately defined purpose for the publication, a format which aids the reader in locating information and is easy to read, and professional graphics.





TEACHERS AS WRITERS CONTEST



THE CONTEST

This contest is open to all English language arts teachers, from elementary through college, as well as to administrators, curriculum specialists and graduate students. Current membership in AETA is a requirement for entry—please see the AETA website for details: www.asu.edu/AETA Entrants may submit one entry in any of the following categories:

- Poetry (120 lines)
- Short story (3,000 words)
- Nonfiction prose (3,000 words)

AWARDS

3 winners (1 from each category) will be awarded a \$100 cash prize.

SUBMISSIONS

E-mail submissions:

Make a cover page with your name, the genre, title and address, then Double space (except poetry) entry. ATTACH as Microsoft Word document. Write AETA T/WCONTEST in subject line.

Mail-in submissions: Make a cover page with your name, the genre, title and address.

Send two hard copies of the entry, typed, double-spaced (except poetry) w/ cover page attached to both copies. Save on a disk or cd with entry saved as a Microsoft Word document. Send submissions to: Kelly O'Rourke
374 E. Corrine Dr. Scottsdale, AZ 85260
Korourke@peoplepc.com



AETA TEACHERS: ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



CAMPING IN THE CLASSROOM

I spent one year teaching middle school Language Arts for a K-12 charter school in Phoenix, where the focus for learning is hands-on engagement with materials. During a short story unit, I was struck with an innovative approach to storytelling. I asked my students to write a scary story since it was October and Halloween was right around the corner. The kids looked at me like I had asked them to diagram sentences. I was surprised by their resistance since books like *Goosebumps* had lately become all the rage. I further explained that I wanted them to tell a spooky story like the kind you tell around a campfire.

Now, even the students who initially understood my instructions were confused. I asked the students to raise their hands if they had ever told stories around a campfire. Only 2-3 hands were raised. "How many of you have ever been camping?" Again, just a few students raised their hands. I couldn't believe it! I considered camping to be one of the most important pastimes of my childhood.

I switched gears and gave the students an example of a scary story by turning off the lights and modeling the telling of a scary story. I asked the students to try their hand at writing their own scary story using movies and other stories they have read for examples.

On the day the stories were due, I arrived at school earlier than normal to set up our campfire. I rolled brown butcher paper into three logs. Then I took orange and yellow butcher paper and bunched it up placing a flashlight in the middle. The paper took on an ominous glow. All desks and chairs were moved out of the way so students could take a seat around the campfire. We passed around a few bags of marshmallows so the students could snack while listening to the stories. It took two class periods but each student had the opportunity to tell their spooky story by the campfire, holding a flashlight for dramatic effect. It is by far, one of my favorite moments in teaching.

—Corinne McCawley, ASU Doctoral student



The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes honors outstanding young leaders who have made a significant positive difference to people and our planet.

Each year, the **Barron Prize** selects ten winners nationwide. Half of the winners have focused on helping their communities and fellow beings; half have focused on protecting the health and sustainability of the environment. Nominations are made by teachers, librarians, civic or religious leaders, among others.

The **Barron Prize** relies on thoughtful adults to identify and nominate children from the diverse communities in which they live. The Prize accepts nominations on an annual basis and distributes \$2,000 awards every fall. To nominate a young person, the adult nominator must submit a fully-completed nomination packet and references form (received in the Prize office by April 30). For Nomination forms, go to

Barrhttp://www.barronprize.org/nominate/to_nominate.html



FROM THE EDITOR (AND EOWYN)

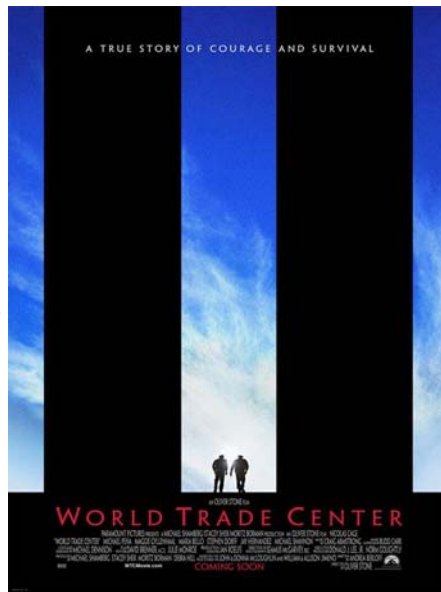


After a long, stressful summer and fall I can finally say, WHEW!!! Did it!!!! Within the same month I finished my doctorate and became a grandmother. Can you believe it? To be honest, I cannot really say which delights me more — being called ‘Dr. Kelleher’ or ‘Nana.’ I have a feeling ‘Nana’ is going to mean more to me as the days pass and as my little Eowyn utters those first, precious words to the loving family surrounding her.

And as Eowyn grows and changes, I have a new appreciation for **VISUAL RHETORIC**, the subject we’ve decided to cover in this issue of *Connections*. As each new picture of my granddaughter makes its way across cyberspace and onto my desktop, I understand yet again the power of a picture to move the human heart. My eyes well with tears and my throat constricts every single time I look again at that wonderful bundle of pink and those clear, bright eyes looking so trusting, so fragile, so vulnerable. Those pictures make me yearn in a way I never would have expected to walk out of my classroom, hop on a plane, and head right back to Tulsa, Oklahoma, and gather her into my arms.

I can remember other pictures, too, that have elicited strong emotion. The 2006 summer movie, *World Trade Center*, drew on much of the emotion felt five years ago and made more intense by the many pictures on the news and in the media. Sitting in my classroom that awful morning, and seeing the second tower hit then crumble in a mass of smoke and flame, the tears flowed down my face. My students sat in shocked silence, hardly believing that such a thing could be possible. These pictures continue to bring back that sense of disbelief and horror.

Such is the power of visual rhetoric. Several teachers have written sensitive articles about their use of the visual in their classrooms and we’re proud to feature their stories in this issue of *Connections*.



SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:

Attn: Wendy Kelleher
ASU Department of English
PO Box 870302

Tempe, AZ 85287-0302

or email to: Wendy.Kelleher@asu.edu



NWP

NWP Interactive

THE NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT

is the premier effort to improve writing in America. Through its professional development model, NWP builds the leadership, programs, and research needed for teachers to help their students become successful writers and learners.

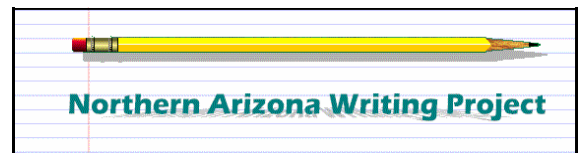
Every student deserves a highly skilled teacher of writing. To that end, each of the 195 NWP sites conducts an annual summer institute, attended by the most experienced teachers in the area. Together, these teachers prepare for leadership roles by demonstrating their most effective practices, studying research, and improving their knowledge of writing by writing themselves.

After the institute, writing project teachers conduct project-sponsored programs in their own schools and in neighboring schools and districts, with two purposes: developing teacher knowledge and leadership in their home communities and putting this knowledge and leadership to work to improve student achievement.



SOUTHERN ARIZONA WRITING PROJECT SAWP

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NORTHERN ARIZONA WRITING PROJECT NAWP

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Website: <http://www.nau.edu/english/nawp>



NEW TEACHERS ASK . . .

I'm a first-year teacher hired midterm at an area middle school. I inherited a group of students from a classroom that had zero classroom management. The kids ran the class, not the teacher. I'm maintaining a consistent schedule so far to make the transition a bit easier, but some days are better than others. The classes are very small, which is pretty cool because I'm able to get to know the kids well.

My head hurts today. Today was rough—I have a dilemma I'm trying to solve. My 4/5 hour class, the particularly difficult one, has a boy who no one in the class likes. They dislike him so much it borders on abuse. I feel horrible for the kid, but at the same time he brings some of it on himself by tattling, trying desperately to be the teacher's pet, and thinking he knows every answer. It's that whole "which came first, the chicken or the egg?" dilemma. Do the kids hate him (and it's really, truly hate) because of his personality and behavior, or does he act that way to compensate for their cruelty?

Today was very bad for him. I had three students in time-out because of their treatment to this kid. I asked him to stay after class to come up with some sort of way to make the situation more bearable. It seemed like a good conversation, and then he started crying. It broke my heart. Unfortunately, in today's educational climate, it seems like you can't hug students, so I offered him a Kleenex and a bottle of water and let him cry. I'm going to see if I can move him into my 2/3 hour class, and in the meantime, I'm moving his seat and he's going to try not to react to things they say.

Sam, the other language arts teacher on my team, says I have to maintain distance, but it's hard. Is that a quality of a new teacher or just my personality or maybe both? I don't know, but I'm exhausted and feeling a bit discouraged today. Do you have any words of advice?

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS FOR THE *ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN*: NOW ACCEPTING ARTICLES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

TEACHING TO THE STUDENT: DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

Deadline: May 15, 2007

USING VISUAL MEDIA IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM

Deadline: September 15, 2007

GUIDELINES

Submit two (2) copies of your manuscript (typed and double-spaced including quotations and Works Cited: MLA) and a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Include an electronic copy of the manuscript in MS Word. Faxed manuscripts will not be accepted. We can, however, accept manuscripts sent as email *attachments* in MS 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 editors' schedule and responsibilities. Authors of published articles will receive two contributor's copies. Compliance with *Arizona English Bulletin* deadlines is appreciated.

AND CONNECTIONS ANSWERS . . .

YA literature is filled with kids like the one you're working with—it seems like every school year there's at least one "Owen Meany" (if you've ever read the book *A Prayer for Owen Meany*). Richard Adams also had a character like that in *Watership Down* (Fiver). The smaller kid in Rodman Philbrook's *Max the Mighty* also reminds me of this same character. There's always one misfit kid whom everyone hates. And I, too, don't know which came first, the kid's behavior or the Pack's tormenting. Guess that doesn't really matter.

You're right to sit down and talk to the kid to determine what's going on. Sometimes the kid really IS bringing it on himself, so that's where I start—behavior modification for him. He has to learn that certain types of behavior that stimulate certain responses from the Pack, no matter what age or environment. Role play to practice Pack-friendly responses. Get the kid to make wiser behavior choices (instead of antagonizing the Pack). Some teachers chart the student's behavior and award stars or stickers on the chart for when he makes wise behavior choices (you have to watch closely throughout the day). Keep meeting with the kid after school for a few weeks, maybe once or twice a week. I've heard of teachers who kept a chip jar for such things - kids could put a chip in the jar every time they made a right behavior choice and they lost a chip every time they made a wrong choice. That's the stage of cognitive development they're in, and they need to SEE the consequences.

You're absolutely right to make it very clear that you won't tolerate the "pack's" mistreatments. Pack mentality is very much the problem in a school, and kids will get on the bandwagon even if they don't agree with the behavior.

Moving the kid to another hour is a smart choice. Give him a fresh start with a new group of kids. Sometimes a class is just a "mean class," hard as that is to accept. He needs a new start with a nicer group of kids. Maybe before you move him, have a talk with the group and explain the situation. Wouldn't hurt to show clips of *10 Ways* or *Mean Girls* or movies like that, so they are more aware of the dynamics of "group-think" and "Pack attacks." Columbine happened because of a couple of kids, just like this kid, who grew up and got fed up with the Pack's tormenting.

And to Sam? 'Maintain distance' and you'll stop changing lives. No teacher who ever made a difference in the world 'maintained her distance.' That's the cost of being a GREAT teacher. There's heartbreak and headache and week-end agonizing, but the payoff is in the changed lives you will see the rest of your career.

Connections Readers, if you have a classroom question or dilemma for which you'd like some feedback, let us know. Email Connections at wendy.kelleher@asu.edu

MAIL AEB MANUSCRIPTS TO:

DR. SANDRA RAYMOND

BOX 6032

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

FLAGSTAFF, AZ, 86011-6032

Sandra.raymond@nau.edu



BOREEN'S BOOKSHELF

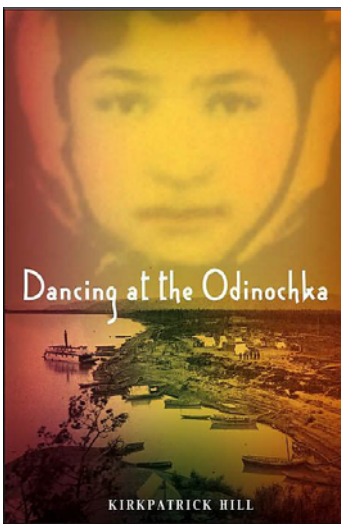
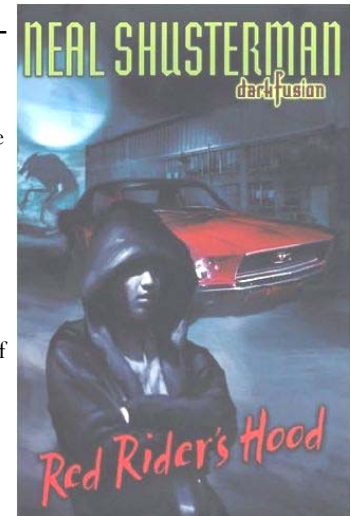


Neal Shusterman. *Red Rider's Hood*. (2005). Dutton Children's Books, Ages 12 to 15, \$15.99. ISBN: 0-525-47562-1

One of the books in Shusterman's "Dark Fusion" series, this one takes the fairy tale of "Red Riding Hood" and gives it a unique twist. In this case, Red Rider is a young man of mixed cultural heritage whose grandparents used to be werewolf hunters. Red finds himself pulled into the crossfire when the current group of wolves, under the leadership of Cedric Soames, attack Red's grandmother and steals his red Mustang.

Determined to bring down Cedric and his band, Red infiltrates the group and proves himself as a potential candidate for becoming a werewolf. At first disgusted by Cedric and his gang, Red wonders if he has the stomach to stick with his plan. But as he gets to know the members of the gang, he finds his loyalties shifting. Red begins to understand how difficult it is to turn one's back on the offer of power from a charismatic leader, even when one knows how evil and perverse that leader, in the form of Cedric, really is. And as he gets caught up in Cedric's goals, he finds himself questioning his grandmother's take on the gang and its history.

This is one of those solid fantasies that will spark the imagination of teen readers. I did appreciate Shusterman giving his readers very human characters in that many of them were doing what they considered the best for their own families and friends, even though it forced them to face ethical dilemmas. Nevertheless, by the end of the book, the "evil" characters have taken their place in the darkness and force others to make their decisions one way or the other, and the book has a satisfying ending that will certainly surprise.



Kirkpatrick Hill. *Dancing at the Odinochka*. (2005). NY: Margaret McElderry Books, Ages 9 to 14, \$15.95. ISBN: 0-689-87388-3

This book is the story of Erinia Pavaloff and her life at a Russian trading post—an odinochka. Set around 1855, this novel provides young readers a glimpse into a child's life in Alaska before Alaska was ceded to the United States. Erinia's father is half-Russian, half Indian while her mother is full-blood Athabascan. Living with her parents, brothers, and friends at the Nulato odinochka, Erinia's life is full of meeting new people, learning new skills, and finding out about the history of her family and the cultures that influence her life. Adventure enters Erinia's life when four members of the American Western Union Telegraph men arrive to and use the odinochka as a base for their work setting up the telegraph. During this time, Erinia learns English and the telegraph men and her father discuss the politics of the time period, an eye opener for readers who probably know very little about the relations between Russia and the U.S.

But their work comes to naught when Russian America (Alaska) is sold to the United States, and Erinia and her family face an uncertain future as their trading post becomes the property of the Alaska Commercial company. The final chapters of the book deals with the murder of one of the family's friends and a cultural response to that killing, and in reading the postscript, the reader finds out that it is this story—provided as a five page manuscript from Erinia herself when she was an adult--that guides this book. I had mixed feelings about the way the author chose to present the story; the history of Alaska told through the eyes of a child is very compelling, although there is not a great deal of tension throughout the bulk of the book. The tension erupts in the final chapters, and is less Erinia's story than her friend's; in that sense, this text comes off as two stories. However, it's a solid offering and one many young readers will enjoy. It would be great in a humanities course.



"ANY KID WHO HAS TWO PARENTS WHO CARE ABOUT HIM AND A HOUSEFUL OF BOOKS ISN'T POOR."

SAM LEVENSON



FALL 2006 AETA CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS

WINNERS OF 2006 TEACHERS AS WRITERS CONTEST



Sarah Greco

Teachers as Writers program coordinator Kelly O'Rourke had the honor of awarding certificates to the winners of this year's Teachers as Writers Contest. Recent ASU graduate Sarah Greco took first place in the Short Story category with "The Image of Etan Whittaker," a haunting tale about a man with a penchant for mirrors. Short Story Honoree went to David Pegram, Assistant Editor of Connections, with his poignant look at a young friend's funeral, "River City." Holly Batsell of Sandra Day O'Connor High School won the Nonfiction Prose first place prize for "Teacher's Little Helper," an autobiographical examination of the pros and cons of caffeine in a busy teacher's world. Tricia Parker's nostalgic memories of kids too big for high school won the Nonfiction Prose Honoree Award in "Do You Hate Your Parents?"



David Pegram

The final category, Poetry, stimulated a large response from AETA members. Deborah O'Doud, AETA presenter and Metro

Tech High School teacher, won the first place position with a SLAM poem inspired by several of her students, "What Are You Feeding These Kids?" Bill Tecku, one of last year's winners, took the Poetry Honoree position with a CB chatter piece entitled "Road Jazz."

Lynn Nelson hosted the Open Mic gathering where authors read aloud their award-winning entries.



G. Lynn Nelson, MC



Kelly O'Rourke and Tricia Parker



Deborah O'Doud



Jack Gantos and Jessica Mallone



Bill Tecku



Jean Boreen and James Blasingame



MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH NCTE, ALAN

ALAN: THE ASSEMBLY ON LITERATURE FOR ADOLESCENTS

Founded in November 1973, ALAN is made up of teachers, authors, librarians, publishers, teacher educators and their students, and others who are particularly interested in the area of young adult literature. ALAN is self-governing, holds its annual meetings and creates its program during the NCTE Annual Convention in November.



The ALAN Review, published 3X each year (fall, winter, and spring) with a current circulation of 2,500. The ALAN Review contains articles on YA literature and its teaching, interviews with authors, reports on publishing trends, a section of 32 reviews of new books for adolescents, extensive bibliographies, and ALAN memberships.

ALAN's lively two-day program at NCTE's Annual Convention features speakers who are well-known teachers and writers. Also on the program are panels, group discussions, and coffees. In addition, the popular ALAN breakfast offers a speaker who is a major author of adolescent literature.

Each year, ALAN recognizes an outstanding individual in the field of adolescent Literature with its prestigious ALAN Award and another individual who has given extraordinary service to ALAN with the Hipple Award. Members are invited to nominate any scholar, YA author, librarian, teacher, or publishing professional who meets the criteria for each award.

**TO JOIN, EMAIL
JEAN.BOREEN@NAU.EDU WHO
IS OFFERING A FREE BOOK TO
NEW MEMBERS**

Membership is open to anyone interested in literature for adolescents. Members of ALAN need not be members of NCTE.

Membership includes a subscription to *The ALAN Review*, and individual members have voting privileges.

INDIVIDUAL (\$20/YEAR)

INSTITUTIONAL (\$30/YEAR)

STUDENT (\$10.00/YEAR)

NCTE National Council of Teachers of English

The Professional Home of the English Language Arts Community

With resources on early literacy, writing, reading instruction, ESL, and preparing your students for standardized tests without "teaching to the test," The National Council of Teachers of English has the solutions you need to support you in your classroom, career, and community.

Resources, Strategies, Lesson Plans, and Membership information available online at www.ncte.org or call (877) 369-6283.



ASU GATHERS AT NCTE CONVENTION

A respectable ASU and NAU contingency traveled to Nashville, TN, for the 2006 NCTE Convention and ALAN Conference, presenting at sessions for both NCTE and ALAN. Pictured here is a portion of the group. From left to right: Jim Blasingame, Don Nilsen, Aaron Levy, David Pegram, April Branon, Sheryl Rinkol, Jeannie Levy, Anjanette Darrington, Elle Wolterbeck, Corrine McCawley, and Alleen Nilsen. Photo by Don Nilsen.



IN THE TRENCHES: VISUAL RHETORIC IN THE CLASSROOM



A couple of weeks ago, following a teacher in-service about Advanced Placement coursework, I approached my principal about the prospect of teaching AP Art History. I could sense his hesitation in responding: "I would have to offer it up to the Art department first." Having taken several art history courses in college and consequently using several different works of art in my English classroom helped me to recognize that art history involved more than the study of

strokes on canvas, it was persuasion.

Art has been my solace over the years. When my students have difficulty understanding symbolism, extended metaphor, imagery, and hyperbolic language, Andy Warhol comes to the rescue. When my students cannot seem to grasp the finer points of grammar, Norman Rockwell teaches action verbs more vividly than I could ever dream. And when my students struggle with the connection between J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* and Burns' poem, "George Tooker's Lost Highway" lights up the screen and not only establishes the association, but also illustrates Holden's heroic journey to preserve innocence.

These past two weeks, my ELL classroom has been a writing workshop. My students and I have been busy organizing, writing, and revisiting the persuasive essay. Suffice it to say that trying to get second language learners to think abstractly, not to mention matter-of-factly, is nothing short of a challenge further manifested in their writing. I could not get them to see every piece of writing, no matter

what the paradigm, as an argument. And while I consciously try to preserve the integrity of my class by not "teaching to the test," persuasion is an element they simply must learn. Having exhausted several other methods, I returned to my favorite venue: art. Last Friday, I projected George Tooker's painting "Government Bureau" onto the overhead screen. I chose this particular painting for several reasons. I wanted my students to look beyond the obvious to determine exactly what it was Tooker was trying to prove. The individual's struggle with an anonymous, indifferent bureaucracy is a common theme in Tooker's work and one with which I thought my students could identify.

First, I had them analyze the elements of color, depth, and angle. Then I had them tell me the story of the painting; what was happening and to whom was it happening? Their analysis and reading of the painting spurred an interesting discussion about their own experiences with bureaucracy and the "government worker." The sterility, the absence of human emotion evidenced in the painting kindled similar memories for my students. In fact, this painting segued into Hinton's, *The Outsiders* and the feeling of being trapped alone inside oneself.

In retrospect, art enables me to articulate the difficulty of abstraction. And while I wholeheartedly respect the art teacher's job, a course in art history is more grounded in the humanities. The art teacher may teach technique, but the English teacher teaches the message, the power, the persuasion.



VOICES IN THE VILLAGE: TEACHER/ACTION RESEARCH AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2007

First Annual All-Arizona Teacher/Action Research Conference at the University of Arizona
Co-Sponsored by Southern Arizona Writing Project and
the Sunnyside Unified School District Career Ladder Office

This conference will bring together the many teacher and action researchers across Arizona, drawing on all disciplines, K-16. This will be an opportunity to learn from the research conducted in our classrooms, share our findings, seek common agendas, and lay the groundwork for future communication and alliances.

Keynote Speaker: Gerald Campano, PhD, Assistant Professor of Language Education at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. He is the author of *Immigrant Students and Literacy: Reading, Writing and Remembering*, published by Teacher's College Press. A former classroom teacher, his research and teaching interests focus on practitioner inquiry, (im)migrant identities in the context of schooling, and new literacies.

Concurrent Sessions will feature teacher and action researchers who will present their work in a variety of formats, such as roundtables, panel discussions, and round tables.

For more information, go to the website:

<http://sawp.web.arizona.edu/TeacherResearchConference.htm>



AETA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

One-year individual membership (within U.S.)	• School year 20__ to 20__	\$45
One-year individual membership (outside U.S.)	• School year 20__ to 20__	\$75
One-year emeritus/student membership	• School year 20__ to 20__	\$20

Name: _____

School Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone (H): _____ Phone (W): _____

Email: _____ FAX: _____

Area of Interest (circle one): K-6 4-8 9-12 Post-secondary

FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION, CONTACT:

DR. JEAN BOREEN

WEBPAGE: [HTTP://JAN.UCC.NAU.EDU/~JMB5/](http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jmb5/)

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JEAN.BOREEN@NAU.EDU



ARE YOU A MEMBER OF AETA?

WHAT IS AETA?

The Arizona English Teachers Association serves as a professional network of English language arts educators across Arizona. It is the state affiliate of the national network,

the National Council of Teachers of English. The primary function of AETA is to foster policies, standards, and goals of NCTE among Arizona's educators of communication skills, language arts, and English from kindergarten through college/university levels. To this aim, it is AETA's goal to serve these teachers by narrowing the national focus to the needs, interests, and goals of Arizona teachers and students.

All AETA business, functions, and special events exist to enhance the quality of English language arts teaching in Arizona by:

- * DISSEMINATING information pertinent to local issues, concerns, and successes;
- * ENCOURAGING professional activity among teachers in all regions of the state;
- * GENERATING interest in students' and teachers' special achievements; and
- * ORGANIZING statewide and regional "outreach" activities and inservice opportunities.

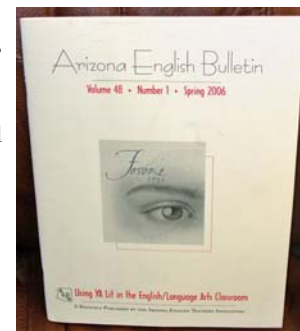
VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

[HTTP://WWW.ASU.EDU/AETA/](http://www.asu.edu/AETA/)

BENEFITS OF AETA MEMBERSHIP

Active membership in professional organizations empowers educators. It is a means for getting voices heard and for sharing the fun and frustrations of teaching. In an effort to address the needs of the diverse population that AETA serves, the following are provided as benefits of membership:

1. 4 issues of *Connections*, the AETA newsletter, an informal publication of news, events, and information of concern to Arizona teachers;
2. 2 issues of the *Arizona English Bulletin*, the professional journal of AETA which provides professional reading on a variety of themes, from both theoretical and practical points of view;
3. The opportunity to attend state and regional in-service activities, including "outreach" mini-conferences, professional presentations, and the annual statewide conference
4. Contact with teachers with special areas of interest and expertise through a professional network; and
5. Liaison efforts with the Arizona state legislature and Department of Education

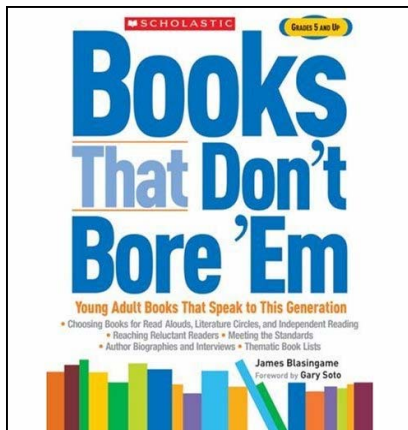


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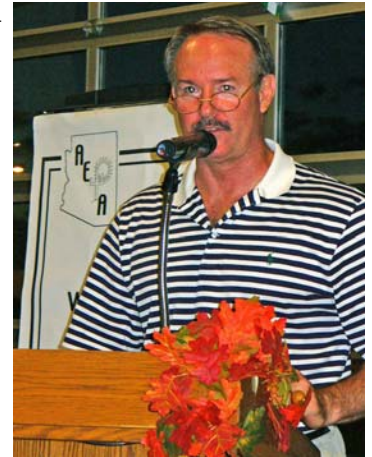


ASU PROFESSOR JAMES BLASINGAME PUBLISHES NEW BOOK



Searching for an accessible guide to the plethora of YA literature now available? Look no further.

ASU professor and resident expert on YA lit, Dr. James Blasingame helps teachers understand the power and purpose of young adult literature in his new book *Books That Don't Bore "Em"*. He also presents instructional strategies proven to facilitate students' interactions with texts—and promote higher order thinking skills. You'll find annotated lists—organized by theme, topic, genre, reading level, and more—of the best young adult books as well as fascinating interviews with 30 of today's most popular YA authors. This is a valuable resource for both elementary and secondary teachers. *Books That Don't Bore "Em"* is published by Scholastic and features a forward by Poet, playwright and novelist Gary Soto, AETA 2006 Conference featured author.



YOU AND YOUR CLASS ARE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN A SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2007

Attend our Teaching Shakespeare Symposium and/or have your class take part in a "play-in-scenes" production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

TEACHING SHAKESPEARE SYMPOSIUM

TIME: 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

LOCATION: ASU's Tempe campus

REGISTRATION FEE: \$50 (lunch included)

The symposium will feature presentations and workshops on: using stage history and performance in the classroom, handling "touchy topics" in Shakespeare (such as race, religion, and sexuality), teaching Shakespeare's stage combat, making Shakespeare accessible to students, and more. Presenters will include distinguished ASU faculty. To register, please e-mail your name and school affiliation to bradley.ryner@asu.edu.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM IN SCENES

TIME 12:30 pm - 4:00 pm

LOCATION: ASU's Tempe campus

SIGNUP BY: March 5

Give your students the opportunity to experience Shakespeare hands-on! Volunteer classes will be assigned one scene (or more) from the play. The students will then be responsible for casting the roles, finding props and costumes, and directing the scene. When they arrive on April 23, the students will perform their scenes in succession to create an entire play. Preparing the scene will give students the opportunity to work very closely with Shakespeare's text, and watching the play-in-scenes will give them a taste of the wide variety of possible production choices. Even if students haven't studied *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, this will be a fantastic introduction to the play! Certificates of recognition will be given out for outstanding scenes in a variety of categories.

TO SIGNUP, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE E-MAIL BRADLEY.RYNER@ASU.EDU

Participants in either event are also encouraged to attend Shakespeare's Multi-media Birthday Celebration, a celebration of Shakespeare through film clips, live performances, recited poetry, and music at 5:00-7:00 Monday evening in the Lattie F. Coor Building.



FALL 2006 AETA CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS: THANKS FROM THE CHAIR, SHARON FAGAN

I am delayed in sending this formal thank you to all of you who helped make our 2006 Conference a success. In terms of numbers in attendance and positive evaluations, it was a success! I am grateful for the energy all of us expend to not

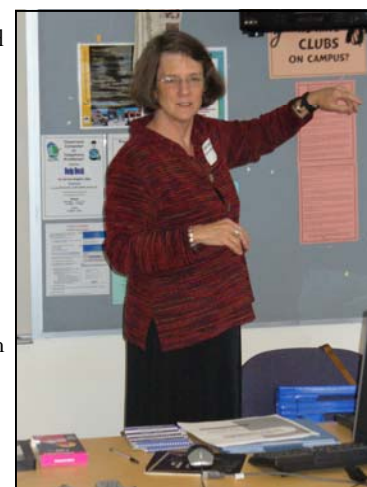


only maintain AETA as a state affiliate, but to build it and regenerate it from year to year to represent the very best of the teaching of English language arts that Arizona has to offer. For this, and for what each of us does in our own classrooms,

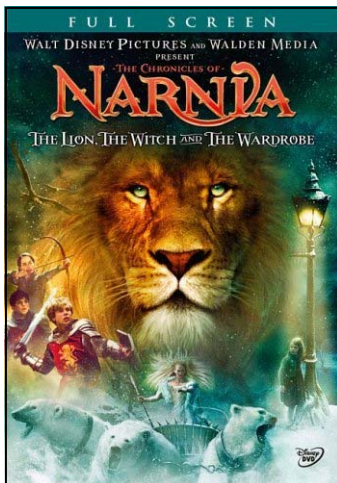
with our own students and with our colleagues and co-workers, I am proud. I found myself saying to a colleague just this week, "I get from AETA much more than I give." I am always inspired by you all. I would be remiss if I did not publicly thank folks for their efforts, energy, and dedication to the success of this event. As we so frequently remind ourselves, a state conference cannot be successful if handled by only a few. It does take the hard work of everyone dedicated to it and to AETA. I recognize and appreciate the dedication and hard work of each Executive Committee member ... A public thanks to all of you! I have had the pleasure of chairing AETA's conference about 10 times, I think. (I no longer count anything too carefully....) Each of those conferences has been

a success, each its own event, and each a moment of pride for AETA. However, I will not be chairing another. AETA is welcome to return to CGCC and I will gladly assist as a subcommittee worker, but others must step up. New blood is needed to keep us and the organization fresh, revitalized, and new.

—Sharon Fagan, C-G CC



MEDIA LITERACY: NOT JUST A FAIRYTALE



With so many media services available to educators today, many teachers find themselves puzzling over just how to use these new technologies—if at all—in their lesson plans. ASU's Anjanette Darrington and Lisa Arter shed some light on this subject with their Oct 7th presentation "From Narnia to Shrek's Swamp: Approaches to Using Media in the Classroom." The first part of this presentation centered around a research project by Darrington, in which she studied the effects of film adaptation on fifth grade students' interpretations of *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*. After reading the book, the students were asked to draw pictures of their favorite characters and comment on their favorite scenes. The students repeated these activities after viewing the popular movie; suddenly, the students' drawings closely resembled the film's actors, and the old favorite book scenes gave way to the movie's fast-paced battle sequences. Darrington found this somewhat disturbing, but she also noted that the movie helped clarify things the students had found confusing in the text.

The second part of the presentation expanded on the idea that students are more likely to comprehend ideas they can *see* as well as hear and read; Arter presented a lesson in which scenes from the film *Shrek* were used to teach students the concept of parody. The moral of the all of this is clear: media can be extremely helpful in the classroom, but we, as teachers, must be sure to implement it properly. Film should not be used as a filler activity, but as a stepping stone to further understanding of a concept or storyline. Students must not take a film adaptation of literature as the last word; they must be encouraged to think critically, ask questions, and draw their own conclusions. Media is big part of our students' lives, and will eventually find its way into the classroom. We must make sure to be an active audience.

—Sarah Greco, ASU graduate





NILSEN WINS TED HIPPLE SERVICE AWARD 2006

The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of the National Council of Teachers of English (ALAN) was pleased to announce the 2006 recipient of the Ted Hipple Service Award, Alleen Pace Nilsen, Professor of English, at Arizona State University.

Dr. Nilsen has been a long time supporter, tireless promoter, and superior teacher of Young Adult Literature. As one of the founding members of ALAN, first editor and creator of *The ALAN Review*, past ALAN president, winner of the ALAN Award, co-author of *Literature for Today's Young Adults* and winner of the Arbuthnot Award for excellence in teaching and promotion of children's and young adult literature, Dr. Nilsen's service to our community has been instrumental in raising the status of the genres of children's and young adult literature both nationally and internationally. Dr. Nilsen accepted the award at the ALAN Breakfast in Nashville, Tennessee, this past fall.



LESSON IDEA: STUDENTS LEARN TO DECIPHER VISUAL MESSAGES AS WELL AS VERBAL MESSAGES IN ADVERTISEMENTS



"Romans, countrymen, and lovers, hear me for my cause, and be silent that you may hear... Censure me in your wisdom, and awake your senses, that you may the better judge."
The Tragedy of Julius Caesar, Act 3, Scene 2

In this famous Shakespearean passage, Brutus alludes to the intimate connection between sense experience and good judgment—the more *awake* we are to what we hear, touch, taste, smell and see the better our judgments will be about such experiences.

We awaken our senses when we *attend* to them, that is, when we pay deliberate attention to what we are experiencing at a given moment. A wine connoisseur, for example, must attend to her sense of taste and smell if she is to distinguish between an angular wine and a supple one. Similarly, an umpire in a baseball game must attend to his sense of sight if he is to decide whether a pitch is a strike or a ball. In each case, it is the person's ability to attend to a particular sense experience that allows them to make good judgments in their respective field.

In an age of television, magazines, billboards, movies, cell phones, iPods, and computers, the ability to attend to one's sense of sight, in particular, is a skill that is becoming increasingly important for all people to have. Whether at home or in the public, we are constantly inundated with visual images that carry ideological messages—messages that are communicated far more subtly, and are often far more

powerful, than those transmitted by written or spoken words. As frequent targets of these visual images and the messages they convey, it is vital that today's youth learn how to attend to their sense of sight so that they can interpret these messages and make sound judgments about them.

With this in mind, I recently implemented a lesson on visual rhetoric with a class of high school juniors. For this lesson, I brought in several advertisements that I found in popular magazines aimed at different demographics (e.g. Vogue, Rollingstone, Teen, Fitness, Time). After discussing the concept of visual rhetoric with the students and walking through a few steps to help them analyze their ads, I broke the students into groups of four, gave each group an ad, and had them discuss *what* message(s) they believed the ad was trying to communicate and *how* it was doing so. The groups then had to develop their own ads in which they tried to communicate a message that was contrary to that of the magazine ad they had dissected.

This is one of many simple and engaging activities that can be implemented in the classroom to help students learn how to attend to their sense of sight while, at the same time, helping them recognize the value-laden messages within the visual images they are bombarded with on a daily basis. In a world where communication is becoming increasingly visually based, it is vital that we as English teachers equip our students with skills that will allow them to not only read printed text, but will allow them to read visual text as well- that they may the better judge.

—Peter Nelson, Greenway High School

WE ARE CONSTANTLY INUNDATED WITH VISUAL IMAGES THAT CARRY IDEOLOGICAL MESSAGES— MESSAGES THAT ARE COMMUNICATED FAR MORE SUBTLY, AND ARE OFTEN FAR MORE POWERFUL, THAN THOSE TRANSMITTED BY WRITTEN OR SPOKEN WORDS.

INTERNET CONNECTIONS



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

[Anne Frank House](http://www.annefrank.org/content.asp?pid=1&lid=1&setlanguage=2)

[<http://www.annefrank.org/content.asp?pid=1&lid=1&setlanguage=2>]

[Asia For Educators](http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/)

[<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/>]

[Civics Online: Envisioning the Democratic Community](http://www.civics-online.org)

[<http://www.civics-online.org>]

[Digital History](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu)

[<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>]

[Discovering Lewis and Clark](http://www.lewis-clark.org)

[<http://www.lewis-clark.org>]

[The Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/)

[<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>]

[Great Websites for Kids](http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/greatwebsites/greatwebsiteskids.htm)

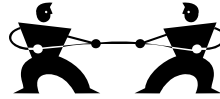
[<http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/greatwebsites/greatwebsiteskids.htm>]

Updated FREE web site for teachers

[<http://free.ed.gov>] It has tons of great sources for all subject areas---I especially think the social studies sources are great!

MYSPACE.COM: <http://www.myspace.com/>

To browse around the site, simply click on the Browse menu at the top of the home page. The search tool can be used to narrow a search of My Space users. Enter your town's postal code. This will display all users within that area and within a five-mile radius around that town's zip code.



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