



CONNECTIONS

SUMMER 2004 VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

2004 FALL AETA CONFERENCE



ABOUT LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON

Laurie Halse Anderson is the author of young adult novels, historical fiction and children's picture books.

Ms. Anderson grew up in Syracuse, New York, and now lives in Pennsylvania with her husband and two daughters.

Speak, the 2000 Michael L. Printz Honor Book and 1999 National Book Award finalist, was her first novel. Anderson is also author of *Fever 1793* and the *Wild at Heart* Series, in addition to three picture books: *No Time for Mother's Day*, *Turkey Pox*, and *Ndito Runs*.

"Arizona Speaks: Many Voices, Many Views" is the theme of the 2004 Annual AETA Statewide Conference. This year's gathering features author Laurie Halse Anderson and will take place October 15 - 16, 2004 at Chandler-Gilbert Community College, 2626 East Pecos Road in Chandler, Arizona.

Join us for professional activity in support of excellence in the teaching of English, reading and the language arts. The two-day event celebrates writing, reading, literature and the efforts of educators and students. This conference offers intensive learning in workshops, and an opportunity to interact with our featured author and colleagues from across the state over dinner and light jazz on Friday night.

Bring a piece of your own writing to share at Friday's open mike event hosted by ASU's Dr. Lynn Nelson. Saturday is a full day of publisher exhibits, concurrent sessions on a variety of relevant

topics, lesson and idea sharing, book signing, and prizes!

For conference information and registration, please see page 7 or visit www.asu.edu/aeta or contact one of our conference co-chairs:

Sharon Fagan, 480-732-7124
sharon.fagan@cgcmail.maricopa.edu

Jim Blasingame, Jr., 480-965-6074
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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE	2
<i>AE BULLETIN</i> CALL	3
TEACHERS SPEAK	4
REGIONAL NEWS	6
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE	7

CALL FOR PROPOSALS: AETA CONFERENCE

Proposals for concurrent sessions in all areas concerning the English language arts and Arizona's issues related to them are now being accepted. The **deadline is August 1, 2004**. For more information please visit the AETA website: <http://www.asu.edu/aeta> or contact:

Sharon Fagan, Conference Co-Chair
2486 East Drake Street
Gilbert, AZ 85234
480-732-7124



WELCOME: A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Teachers of English and Language Arts:

On behalf of the executive board of AETA, I would like to welcome you to AETA *Connections* and personally ask you to consider being an active part of our organization. As English language arts teachers, you know that we provide the essential literacy instruction for the students of Arizona. You also know that unlike other subject areas, we teach all of the students of Arizona every school day. We all realize that our work is important, complex and frequently underappreciated. Well, we in AETA appreciate you, care about you, and want to provide the very best support for you.



Lee Brown, AETA President

We are working constantly to create an active community of learning. Through our publications, listserv networks and conferences, we offer all of our members opportunities to share and learn outside the confines of the school day. We have made much needed additions to our website. We are

also pursuing proactive ways to make the AETA voice stronger in the state. However, as always, we are looking for additional ways to provide AETA members the kind of information and knowledge they need. Feel free to e-mail me,

lee.brown@asu.edu, with ideas that you would like the executive board to consider.

I also remind everyone that our 2004 AETA Statewide Conference will be held October 15—16, 2004 at Chandler-Gilbert Community College in Chandler. Conferences are always such a wonderful opportunity to meet with fellow English teachers and "share the wealth" of our profession. You will also have the wonderful opportunity to meet and listen to Laurie Halse Anderson, author of *Speak*. Anderson is a wonderful writer of children's and young adult literature, and an engaging and humorous speaker; two days with her is sure to inform and inspire you. Check the AETA website for more information on the conference and Laurie Halse Anderson.

Finally, let me share how much I look forward to being your president. I sincerely believe that organizations like AETA offer much to those in the profession. I also believe that any organization is only as strong as its membership and am happy to report that our membership is becoming more vocal . . . and not just at meetings. I have heard wonderful stories of members taking leadership positions both in their schools as well as in our organization, and I hope you will take the time to meet some of them both on-line and at our next conference . . . and hopefully become one of those people yourself! Know that you are appreciated by your fellow teachers of English and the Language Arts; we are accomplishing great things for the students in Arizona.

— Lee Brown, AETA President

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



An Invitation to Participate

AEA'S GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACTION AGENDA:

The Arizona Education Association is initiating a citizen movement to organize thousands of teachers, parents, and other citizens who will define a 10 point agenda built on the needs of schools and students and hold our elected officials accountable for doing their part in supporting great public schools for every Arizona child.

HOW EDUCATION VICTORY 2004 WORKS:

1. AEA will initiate hundreds of conversations with teachers, school employees, and citizens. From these conversations, a list of 10 initiatives will form the AEA Great Public Schools Action Agenda; this agenda will provide a basis for conversations with elected officials and candidates. We will seek a covenant among the citizens of Arizona, its teachers, and elected officials and hold each other accountable to it.
2. The conversations will also form a powerful coalition that will organize an early ballot drive that collects thousands of request forms from Education Victory 2004 voters who support the AEA Great Public Schools Action Agenda. Education Victory 2004 participants will be part of a communications network that is informed about elected officials and candidates and their stand on the AEA Great Public Schools Action Agenda.
3. An Education Victory 2004 Rally in October 2004 will attract thousands of citizens to the Arizona State Capitol as a public expression of support for Public Education and the strength behind the voter education network.
4. The early ballot campaign will elect candidates who support the AEA GPS Action Agenda during the 2004 September Primary and November General Election.
5. The Education Victory 2004 network will develop a specific legislative agenda based on the AEA Great Public School for Every Arizona Child Action Agenda and work with supportive legislators during the 2005 session to pass it. For ways to get involved, see website: www.arizonaaea.org.

"WE ARE WORKING
CONSTANTLY TO CREATE
AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY OF
LEARNING."



SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES TO THE *ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN*:
NOW ACCEPTING ARTICLES FOR SPRING 2005 ISSUE
DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2004

BATTLING THE BARD!



Most English teachers have encountered the Shakespeare

Syndrome: The teacher announces that next week the class begins work on *Romeo and Juliet*, and the class groans in unison.

Many teachers, however, have turned the “dread” Shakespeare unit into an experience that is such a pleasure for the students that they vie for turns reading the parts.

How have you addressed the teaching of Shakespeare’s work so that students are engaged? What methods, materials, and innovative techniques have you used to make the works come alive in your classroom? How would you advise new teachers to approach the teaching of Shakespeare so that their students come to love, rather than loathe, their experience with the Bard?

We know there are people out there who are doing wonderful things; we’d like to hear from them.

COMPOSITION REVISITED

We’d like to update our readers on the most recent trends and issues in teaching composition, answering questions like these: 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. For submission guidelines and information, contact:

June Harris, Editor
Arizona English Bulletin
University of Arizona South
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Juharris@u.arizona.edu
520-458-8278, x2135



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.

Manuscripts should be mailed 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.



SPEAK: A BOOK REVIEW

Author of *Writing and Being* and writing professor at ASU Lynn Nelson tells his students that the most important thing to remember when writing is to tell your story. But what happens when telling your story carries a price higher than you feel you can pay, like social condemnation?

This is the price ninth grader Melinda Sordino feels she will have to pay to tell her story, a story of a late night summer party where people who are too young drink too much and find themselves in compromising situations ... like being in a

dark wood with a drunk senior boy who has only one thing on his mind. Melinda loses her virginity to this boy she comes to know as It and the Monster. Andy Evans. Then she does what most young women would do after a rape – call 911. The problem is that she’s at a party with several other underage drinkers, and calling 911 not only brings medical help, it also brings the police. That, and a raid for which Melinda is held personally responsible. The school year starts with Melinda, a social pariah. No one will

speak to her, not even her best friend. She is branded a tattletale, tried and convicted without being allowed to tell her story, to tell what really happened that dark night.

What she doesn’t know is that her story isn’t unique. By the end of Laurie Halse Anderson’s powerful coming of age story, readers (and Melinda) learn that Andy Evans has forced himself on other innocent victims. Halse Anderson’s protagonist finally feels the freedom to *Speak*, the aptly named title of this Printz Award winning book.

—Wendy Kelleher



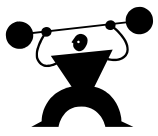
IN THE TRENCHES: TEACHERS SPEAK

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

“Although I am not a supporter of the excessive testing our students are given, I do not believe that AIMS preparation is pushing literature study out of the language arts curriculum. I actually see literature study as a key component to high achievement on the AIMS Test.



Test prep does unfortunately interfere significantly with the time I'd rather allot to literature study, but it does not eliminate it.



By test prep, I am not referring to reviewing the content of the test, but rather to teaching students test taking skills. This is a time consuming process which exemplifies that standardized testing often does not assess the skills the students have, but rather their knowledge of how to take a test.

In my classroom, our literature study helps to prepare the students for all language portions of the AIMS test. I find that small and whole group discussion of shared literature is one of the most effective ways to prepare students. My second graders listen and read for components that make effective writing, which is discussed in detail, and then later used in their own work. They debate specific points in a plot, later going back into the test to find evidence to support their arguments. The students understand that they are reading for meaning and enjoyment. They look forward to discussing their discoveries and observations with classmates.

All of these activities give the students direct experience with the skills needed for the reading comprehension and writing portions of the AIMS test. They are critical experiences for every student, and should never be completely eliminated from the curriculum.”

*Yara Katz, Second Grade Teacher
Wildflower School
Avondale Elementary School District*

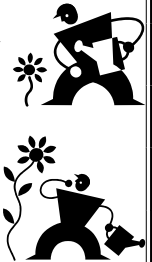
Yara and Billie participated in the 2004 Greater Phoenix Area Writing Project (GPAWP) Summer Institute, along with 30 other teaching professionals, K through post-secondary. The heart of GPAWP is the Summer Institute, which brings together 20 to 30 master teachers who: 1. develop and share their most successful classroom practices; 2. study current theory and research in the teaching of writing; and 3. have time to write and to explore, share, and develop their own writing abilities. Participants in the Summer Institute then return as Teacher Consultants to their districts to conduct inservice programs during the school year.

Part I: “Preparing for the AIMS...when does this begin and how does one encompass all of the requirements of the curriculum without leaving something out? To avoid any more anxiety than is necessary in the classroom I don't put much effort into thinking about *when to begin* or *what to focus on* since a Writing/Reading Workshop approach incorporates all a teacher needs in preparing for the inevitable spring testing time.

I begin preparation for the tests during the first week of school and continue through to the last. On the first day, I introduce students to the six-traits rubric as an instructional resource tool right along with their textbooks, journals, dictionary and writing utensils.

On the second day of class, I draw nine large squares on the whiteboard, label each of them from August to April and present to the students two paths to testing success.

Path One: we write, read, conduct a variety of lessons about all kinds of stuff for the first three quarters without mentioning *the test*, then hammer down and only begin discussing and preparing for *the test* during the fourth quarter...allowing about three weeks to prepare.



OR...Path Two: we participate daily in a Writing/Reading Workshop with a focus on the six traits, a variety of writing/reading genres, and discuss how the daily strategies will be useful on the test. I explain that students have a choice about the topics they write about so they feel ownership of their writing; this builds confidence so that no matter the prompt they randomly receive on the AIMS, they feel confident they will succeed.

My students unanimously opt for Path Two. Within this plan we form writing communities in which students and I write, read, share, edit and publish our writings in class. I teach mini-lessons using short stories as read-alouds or excerpts from longer books to focus on a particular writing area, such as dialog or imagery.”

—CONTINUED IN THE FALL 2004 ISSUE . . .

*Billie Lamkin, Seventh Grade Teacher
Desert Arroyo Middle School
Cave Creek Unified School District*



TEACHERS AS WRITERS CONTEST

ELIGIBILITY

This contest is open to all English language arts teachers at elementary, middle or junior high school, high school, or college levels, and to administrators, curriculum specialists and graduate students in the field.



Current membership in AETA is a requirement for entry. The annual membership fee may accompany submission. Please make checks payable to AETA.

ENTRIES

Entrants are limited to one entry in each of the three categories. NO entrant may receive recognition in more than one category. Entries should comply with maximum length requirements.

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

AWARDS

Up to three awards may be made in each category at the discretion of the judging panel. Judges reserve the right to declare "no winner" in any category in any given year.

Winners will be notified in mid-August about the presentation of the awards at AETA's Annual General Meeting and Statewide Conference.

Winning entries will be published in the professional journal of AETA Arizona English Bulletin.

SUBMISSIONS

1. Two hard copies of the entry, word processed, double spaced (except poetry)

2. Cover page (overleaf)** attached to each copy of the entry.

3. Electronic version saved as a Word document.

Send entry no later than September 5, 2004*** to:

TEACHERS AS WRITERS CONTEST
 c/o Ann Guido
 3556 E. Presido Rd.
 Tucson 85716
 520.327.1036
 aguido@cfsd.k12.az.us

** Download coversheet from www.asu.edu/aeta

***Note revised deadline!

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__ \$35
- One-year individual membership (outside U.S.) • School year 20__ to 20__ \$45
- One-year institution membership (only within U.S.) • School year 20__ to 20__ \$40
- One-year emeritus/student membership • School year 20__ to 20__ \$20
- Two-year individual membership • School years 20__ to 20__ \$60

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:

Jean Boreen
 Box 6032 / English Department / NAU
 Flagstaff, AZ, 86011-6032
 928.523.6765



FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTORS: LOCAL AREA RALLYING POINT

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PAYSON

Kate Moore

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⇒ **Kate Moore** hopes to increase Payson's membership and involvement in AETA this year, beginning with sending the entire high school faculty to the October conference.

MESA

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NAVAJO NATION — none

SALOME

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tkaufman@ctaz.com

SOUTHWESTERN AZ — none

EASTERN AZ

Vonda Douros

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

⇒ **Vonda Douros'** region's plans include: (1) networking with Winslow, Holbrook, Snowflake/Taylor, Pinetop/Lakeside, Whiteriver/Cibique, and Springerville/Eager districts to promote both AETA and the fall conference; and (2) soliciting ideas for the conference lesson- and information-shares.

FROM THE EDITOR



Wendy Kelleher

I hail from the great state of North Dakota, "where the waving wheat sure smells sweet and the wind comes sweeping down the plains"!

You were thinking and humming *Oklahoma!*, right? Actually those lyrics fit my home state much better, so I just change the song to "Noooooorth Dakota, where the ..." Get the idea? They don't even raise much wheat in Oklahoma, for heaven's sake.

North Dakota is a great place to live and work, and I'm proud of my Midwest agricultural heritage. And yes, it IS cold, so I'm really enjoying the weather here in Arizona.

I spent the last ten years teaching high school language arts (like many of you, I taught the gamut, from theatre to journalism to technical writing, as well as all the usual fare). I'm now working on my doctorate at Arizona State University and teaching a variety of language arts classes here.

I keep busy with a number of other grad student activities like writing book reviews for the *ALAN Review*, presenting papers at conferences and participating in workshops.

I'm also very interested in teacher training, both because of my own teaching experiences, and because I passionately believe that teachers are the most important people in society today. I'm an activist in every sense of the word, and I want to see teachers empowered in more than just their own classrooms. But that's for the next issue of *Connections* ... See you at our AETA Fall Conference. —Wendy K.

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR NEWS
AND IMPORTANT STATE AND REGIONAL INFORMATION.



AETA 2004 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AND REGISTRATION

FRIDAY, Oct. 15

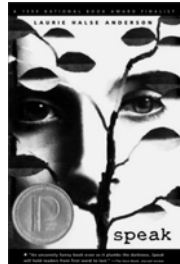
Workshop Topics Include:

- Teaching the Novels of Laurie Halse Anderson
 - Picture Books for Children
 - Writing for Publication
 - Multigenre Projects

Dinner and Jazz

Open mike readings

by Arizona's English language arts teachers



SATURDAY, Oct. 16

Breakfast

Publisher Exhibits

Concurrent sessions

- (Topics TBD)

Lunch

Lesson Share

Certificates of Attendance

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE AETA WEBSITE: WWW.ASU.EDU/AETA

REGISTRATION: (Must be postmarked by October 1;
otherwise, we cannot guarantee your place at the conference sessions or meals.)

Conference Package A (before October 1)	All Friday and Saturday sessions, Saturday breakfast, luncheon, and snack	\$ 95/members \$140/non-members	_____ _____
Conference Package A (after October 1)	All Friday and Saturday sessions, Saturday breakfast, luncheon, and snack	\$100/members \$150/non-members	_____ _____
Conference Package B	Friday workshop	\$ 40/members & nonmembers	_____ _____
Conference Package C	Saturday only	\$ 70/members \$110/nonmembers	_____ _____
Student Registration	All Friday and Saturday sessions, Saturday breakfast, luncheon, and snack	\$ 30/members \$ 50/nonmembers	_____ _____
Membership in AETA		\$ 35 - One year	_____
Student Membership		\$ 20 - One year	_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Please make checks payable to: AETA

MAIL TO:

Jean Boreen, Executive Secretary
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NAU Department of English
Flagstaff, AZ 86011-6032

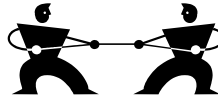
Name _____
Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

INTERNET CONNECTIONS



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



Laurie Halse Anderson: www.writerlady.com

Everything you ever wanted to know about this children's author and her books.

Arizona Education Association (AEA): www.arizonaaea.org

The largest professional organization in Arizona. Formed in 1892, AEA has maintained its leading position in advocating for support of Arizona's public schools, improving the quality of public education through positive change, and improving the professional lives of teachers and school staff members.

GPWP Resources: www.asu.edu/gpawp/links.html

Website of the Greater Phoenix Area Writing Project, based at Arizona State University. Oodles of helpful sites for teachers, students, parents, and education advocates.

Teen Reads.com: www.teenreads.com/authors/au-anderson-laurie.asp

This link from Teen Reads homepage features an interesting interview with Laurie Halse Anderson. Great insights into this powerful author's approach to writing about young adults.

Speak Lesson Plans: www.viterbo.edu/personalpages/faculty/GSmith/LessonPlanforSpeak.htm

Dr. Grant Smith at Viterbo University in Wisconsin assembled a 2-4 week lesson plan using *Speak* as the central text. Lots of useful resources and writing ideas and easily adaptable for a variety of themes and approaches.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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