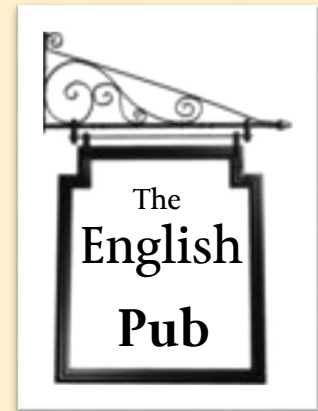


# The English Pub

## ACTELA Newsletter

Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts



### Letter from the President

ACTELA Board members were recently asked to consider the following writing prompt:

**The month of April includes the celebration of Easter Sunday. Awareness of religious diversity is important in our classrooms. On what occasion were you given the opportunity to come face-to-face with religious diversity, and how did you respond?**

Their answers begin on page two. If you have additional ideas, share them with our readers by emailing the newsletter editor **Dr Kay J. Walter**.

#### Dear ACTELA Members,

As the pollen begins to clear and the world around us is in full bloom, I hope we can find time to reflect on the things that bring us all closer together. Since the prompt for this month focused on religious diversity, I couldn't help but think about the burning of Notre Dame. As the world watched this majestic and symbolic building go up in flames, it was amazing to see how many people shared a sense of heartbreak with the Parisians. Even those who may not consider themselves religious felt an overwhelming sadness as the spire fell and the roof collapsed. Notre Dame is not just a symbol of religion but one of great architecture.



While events such as this bring melancholy, they also bring us together and highlight the fact that we are all much more connected than we realize. It may be that we share the same interest or hobbies, enjoy the same books, have a common sports team that we cheer for, share a love for animals, or perhaps we have a shared experience. Whatever it is that brings us together, we should always look for ways that we are alike and human instead of looking at the ways we are different. Whatever it is that makes you feel connected with the world and others around you, cherish it, nurture it, and never let it go.

**Sunny Styles-Foster,**  
**ACTELA President**

#### Inside this issue:

Board Replies	2
Growing Writers	4
Growing Readers	8
Publication Updates	14
NCTE News	15
Announcements	16
Upcoming Events	22
Conference Reports	25
Global Perspective	32

### Let's Keep in Touch!

Visit our website: [www.actela.weebly.com](http://www.actela.weebly.com)  
and LIKE our newsletter!

Email our editor: [walter@uamont.edu](mailto:walter@uamont.edu)

or Friend us on Facebook:

Arkansas Council of Teachers of  
English Language Arts





- In years past I taught the novel *Things Fall Apart* and this book introduced students to Africa, a culture students had no real experience with beyond what they had seen in movies. The book does a great job in presenting an unbiased look at the positive/negative of both the Western/Christian and African/polytheistic worlds, and that neutrality allowed my students to sympathize with a religion and culture nothing like their own. Many times this would facilitate discussion about students' own religions and times they felt their faiths had been misrepresented. One student spoke up and talked about how as a Mormon in Arkansas there were many misconceptions about his faith, and he wanted the people in his school/community to understand that the Mormon faith IS Christian. He and his family ARE Christians just as they are Mormons and it facilitated a great discussion! I had never considered this before since I too had little experience with the Mormon faith, and spent my life living in a place where the majority of the people I encountered had the same faith as my own. I miss teaching this book, and I hope I get to teach it again one day; there are so many fun things you can do in the classroom when studying this book. Since I had mainly seniors when I taught this, as the final project I had the students put on a festival for the elementary kids at their local school. (I teach to many schools via distance learning). This festival would include reading African folk tales to the younger students, bringing traditional foods to taste, acting out a scene from the book, making a traditional African musical instrument, and possibly looking at their farming techniques. The festivals always went over well and allowed the students to bring diversity to other students, and it really doesn't get any better than that!

*Cindy Green*, Language Arts Instructor, Virtual Arkansas

- Teaching American Literature, I frequently come up against my students' assumptions about religion. Interestingly enough, the first occasion is when

we look at the American Puritans, since they generally share the premises that my students have grown up with but draw quite different conclusions from those premises. Students want to reject the Puritans' fairly impeccable logic but hold on to their assumptions. Then we look at Benjamin Franklin's rationalist approach to religion and end with writers such as Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, and Whitman, who approach religion from widely divergent perspectives that seem quite radical to most students. My strategy is to represent each perspective as sympathetically as I can, emphasizing the ways in which each perspective makes sense within the historical and cultural context. I do the same when I teach World Literature and introduce students to such perspectives as Buddhism, Taoism, and Islam. I find that emphasizing the strengths of divergent religious viewpoints generally leads most students to respond sympathetically to each tradition.

*Conrad Shumaker*, Professor of English, UCA

- When I taught high school literature, I really wanted to use my courses as opportunities for my students to see beyond themselves as much as possible. As part of this effort, my 11th grade research paper prompt was to identify a world landmark somewhere in the world and argue why that landmark should be preserved for future study. As we saw just this month with the fire at Notre Dame, many of our world's most historic structures are at risk to natural disasters and accidents. We would start our research on the UNESCO website, and I always encouraged my students to choose landmarks they didn't already know a lot about. This, in many cases, led them to temples, churches, and other landmarks of religious significance. In the process of their research, students would end up learning about religious history and culture very different from their own lived experience, and it helped to create in them a new appreciation for the values of Islam, Buddhism, and various forms of Christianity. I think guiding student inquiry in this way can help encourage lifelong learning and open-mindedness.

*Jessica Herring Watson*, Clinical Instructor I, UCA

- I was raised in a Christian interdenominational house of worship, [Paul's Union Church in La Marque, Texas](#). As the first mission built in the area on the Gulf Coast, it was approved for attendance by all denominations. It is no longer an active church but now is a historical landmark, complete with an official informational marker. I was in grade school when I first learned there were religious faiths that diverged from my own upbringing. I think faith and mercy are qualities which should highlight our human commonalities rather than spotlighting our differences. As a teacher I often find myself telling my students the Bible stories I learned as a child because so much of the literature I teach assumes a working knowledge of them in addition to Shakespeare and Greco-Roman mythology. I love my students and want to reinforce their educational foundations. In my classroom, faith, hope, and love flourish. Whatever our religious beliefs, skepticisms, or denials, faith, hope, and love are powerful forces to strengthen education and to shape us all into the finest learners and teachers we can become.

*Kay J. Walter*, Professor of English, UAM

# Growing Writers

by

## Grover Welch

Newport Special School District—High School

---

Over lunch with a friend, I was asked about writing. Specifically, how do I get students to turn in good work? My colleague was desperate. He had been working all year toward a paper that would represent what his students had really learned. Research-based, the paper was the culmination of all his teaching. It was a big assignment, and students were strained to get everything done. On top of that, he had been dealing with some really bad first drafts.

His frustration was not surprising. I was familiar with the refrain and sympathized with him. In fact, most English teachers are bemoaning the lack of development in their writing classes. Teachers blame everything from the generational conflicts students face to the bad curriculum. In my case, the opposite is true. My students have shown deep growth and development in their writing this year. How? My whole process for growing students into writers is rooted in how I had learned to write.

My earliest experience with writing was watching my grandmother hand write newspaper articles. I was maybe ten when I first tried



writing with her. She would assign me a task to mimic whatever newspaper assignment she had. I remember that once she was assigned to interview a local development company in my small town. She took me along and gave me an assignment. My assignment was to write a story about the employees at the company. While she interviewed the boss, I carried on a long question-answer session with a secretary and planner.

At home, we both took out our notebooks at opposite ends of the table and wrote. Her first rule was to freewrite as much as possible. Then, make a list of words special to the article. Once that list was created we began planning our writing. I would later learn in school about the outline, but the process my grandmother and I used seemed less formal. We were writing, together. It was special and significant, a positive experience that strongly supported my growth as a writer, but more importantly it was educational.

After thinking about how I had learned, I knew I had to adopt a similar approach in the classroom. I read Penny Kittle’s book *Write Beside Them*. In



Grover’s students draw inspiration from the world around them while composing.



They learn that writing is an activity they can use to make sense of their ideas, and they encourage one another to get thoughts into words on paper.

my class we write a lot, and never without a purpose. The first lesson I can teach kids is that “writing without a purpose is only for you.” We develop a reason to write. It can be to better our understanding of the characters, to compare the use of language, or to

discover deeper meaning. One thing that I make sure of, it's not just writing for a grade. We do not write for grades. Grades are motivation killers. They force anxiety into a process already filled with dread and apprehension. Though a grade is ultimately assigned, it is never the purpose for writing.

From day one, I delete the phrase, "Write an Essay." I replace it with, "let us see if we can write this out." Much like my grandmother, I sit with my students and write. We discuss writing on equal terms, share ideas, and develop writing together. I can even attest that my writing is growing every time.

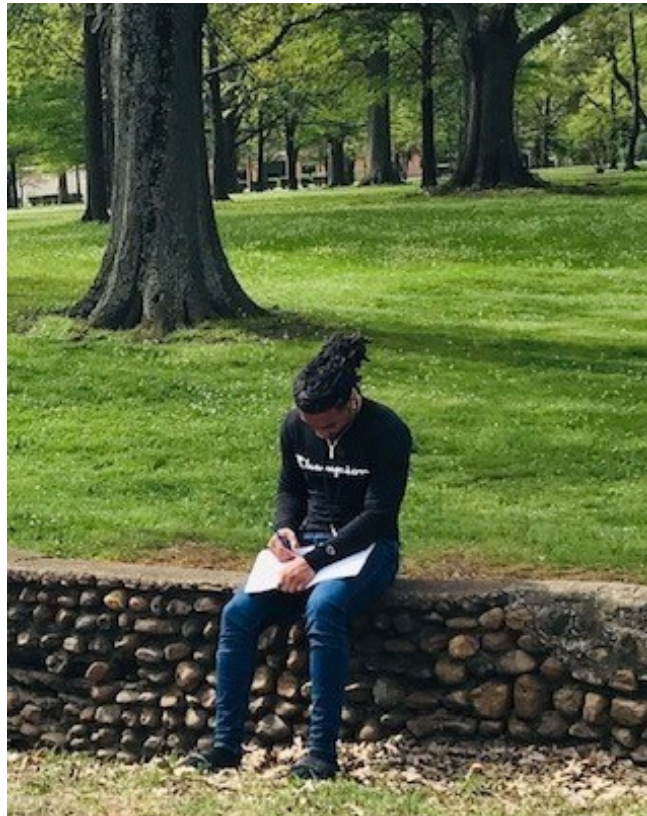
This shared writing experience bonds us, and it also creates growth. Why? Because students do not know they are growing. Because we don't focus on the grade, students take much more pride in their writing. The process is very similar to the one my grandmother taught me: freewrite, brainstorm vocabulary, outline, and then begin drafting. Sometimes what was written in the freewrite can be shaped; other times it is thrown out and writing begins from the outline.

Writing in multiple spaces is important for students as well. We take nature walks and stop to write. These walks often produce imagery or interest in a topic. So far, our walks have produced several poems, an essay on lake care, and a short story about Robbie the Squirrel. Each time students bring me their writing, proud to have accomplished the work.

What do students say?

"I like writing in your class because it seems to be important. You are not just making us write."

"Writing this year has been fun and I



Grover teaches his students to write for the joy of composition, and they learn that perfection isn't necessary in drafting.

learned a lot. It is easier when I am writing about things I like.”

“I like writing and never thought I would. It doesn’t get me upset. I learned a lot by watching you make mistakes and get things wrong. If the teacher has problems then, of course, I will.”

Over lunch was not the place to share all of this, but I left my friend with one bit of advice. “How do you write? Think about that, and then use it as a filter for what you expect your kids to do.” The important lesson is that they learn to express themselves, and the best way to teach that is alongside them. Our students need to see us, too, making mistakes, struggling, and persevering. That is how they learn the truth about composing, and truth enables them to see themselves growing into writers.



His students enjoy developing a personally successful composition process which focuses more on achievement than on assessment.

# Reinforcing Reading Development

by

Ana Rodriguez-Mesa, UAM

One easily accessible recreational and educational treasure for parents and their children is the library. Students in all our schools have access to school libraries, but people often forget the enormous benefits of public libraries. Library cards are free to all patrons, and in some cases libraries will offer guest passes to those who forget their library cards or are only visiting for a day. Library cards give patrons access to books, computer and internet use, and much more. For many children, libraries provide support for classroom instruction by becoming a haven of wonder and joy.

Libraries are especially significant in my own life. Some of my earliest memories revolve around a library. In elementary school, the librarian would gather us around and read us books during story time. On special occasions, a large boxed TV would be wheeled out and we would watch *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood* or *Barney*. In middle school, I distinctly remember my librarian going out of his way to tell



Abigail Rodriguez, a Drew County School District student, enjoys the art work in the garden at the Monticello Branch Library.



us scary stories one cloudy afternoon in October. As I got older, my school librarian worked to find books for me that I hadn't already read. Even now at twenty-one, libraries are still a part of my daily life. As a college student, much of my time is spent at the library researching, working on assignments, or reading. I have never met a librarian who isn't willing to help; librarians love to share their knowledge with others and love to assist with information literacy development in any way they can.

The Monticello Branch Library is headquarters for many of the libraries located in southeast Arkansas. This branch of libraries ranges from Monticello to Lake Village, Arkansas. There are nine branches in five different counties. They offer many resources to their patrons including job search aids, tax and legal services, and even sources for genealogies. At the Monticello branch they have services such as an after-school program for students and even a rental service for families to rent out fishing poles. Local libraries provide a wide range of services for their communities.



Abigail enjoys playing educational games that reinforce the lessons she learns in the classroom.

The library is becoming a favorite place for my six-year-old sister as well. No matter how many times we've visited, every time she is excited and full of joy. Over the summer, we try to attend as many of the activities that our local libraries offer the community as we can. These activities are free and fun. Over the past, the Monticello Branch Library has offered many enjoyable activities for children, from canvass painting, to computer coding classes, to movie showings. Over the summer they often provide programs such as magic shows, plays, visits from wildlife centers, and much more. Through their summer reading program, our local library encourages children to read as much as they can in order to support and supplement what students learn throughout the school year. This program offers prizes to the children who read the most over the summer. The

library works to provide free reading material for children to have at home as well.

For my sister and me, visiting the library has become a part of our summer routine. The library is always free and so are many of the activities they offer. She enjoys spending time with other kids from the community and making new friends. Children like my sister benefit greatly from local and school libraries, from providing their community with free DVDs, books, and even fishing poles, to offering computer-coding classes or bingo night for the elderly, libraries fill in gaps for their community that other organizations can't.



The month of April brings National Library Week which lasts from April 7th to April 13th every year. This is a time to celebrate the valuable contributions of all libraries and to celebrate the many people that work so hard for their communities. This is also a time to encourage the community to participate with their local libraries and use the wonderful services they provide. Taking children to visit libraries is an important part of supporting the schools in our communities.

**Family involvement makes a child a happy reader in and out of school!**

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP IN  
ACTELA  
HAS BEEN REDUCED TO \$20!  
SIGN UP [HERE](#).**

# Blissful Ignorance

by Ashley Burch

Substitute Teacher, Bryant Elementary School

For today's social media enthusiasts, many expectations seem nearly impossible to reach when people share their most successful moments for the whole world to see. It is hard not to compare myself or my family with others who seem to have it together. Some of my greatest accomplishments and most horrifying experiences stem from the same area . . . being a teacher and a mom. Teacher Moms find a whole different level of judgement. A good portion of this judgement is self-inflicted.

I began my journey as a mom and a teacher right around the same time. To say that there was a learning curve would be a significant understatement. For the majority of my teaching career, I have had the pleasure and opportunity to work with fourth graders. Typically, by the time students reach fourth grade, most have developed the ability to read, and those who have not yet reached proficiency have a solid language base to build on. It was my belief that the primary educational focus shifts from "learning to read" to "reading to learn" upon entering fourth grade.

Looking back, I remember being completely and utterly overwhelmed with the idea of teaching my step-son, Trevor, to read. I had no experience teaching how to read in the traditional sense. I was at a loss. I had focused most of my professional attention on developing skills that benefited the "read to learn" methods that I used in fourth grade classroom since they should have already developed the ability to read in their earlier elementary school years. I gathered research that I could find on the topic, and ultimately I helped Trevor learn to read.

It most definitely was not a



Trevor struggled to perfect his reading skills.

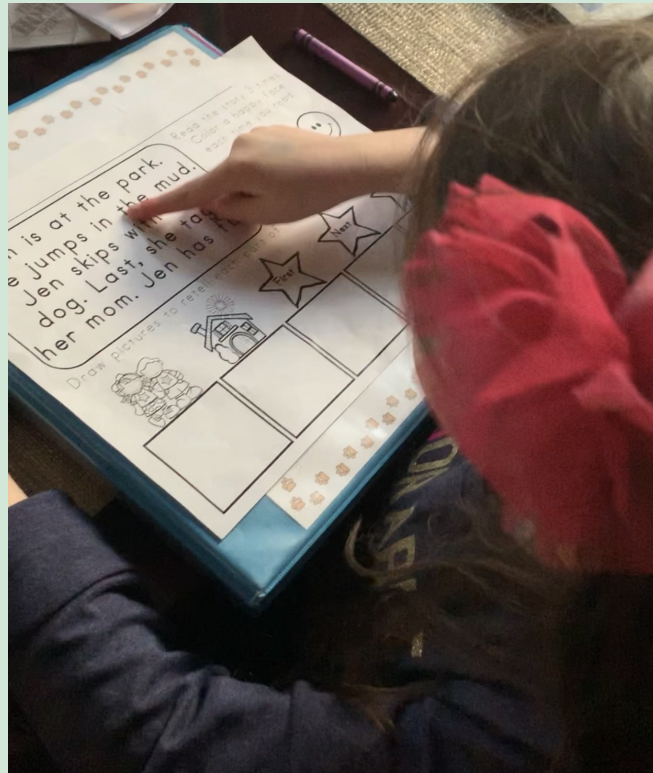
simple task, but we worked at it together. Hearing him fluently read a text took time, but when it finally happened it was music to my ears. He and I both felt rewarded by the accomplishment. I grew confident in my teaching abilities and now had even more validation. For a little context, this experience occurred a few years before Common Core had been fully implemented. My frame of mind around instruction shifted as Common Core took over the world of education.

The curriculum that I had grown accustomed to and felt confident in teaching changed drastically. The pedagogy that I implemented had to be modified as well. I would be dishonest if I said that I welcomed these changes with open arms. It took a great deal of adjusting, but the curriculum and philosophic modifications occurred. The emphasis on spreading literacy instruction across all of the disciplines along with a more precise scaffolding of the objectives from one grade to the next was enacted.

I recognized that “reading to learn” would no longer be a completely separate task from “learning to read” in the elementary classroom. The sudden awareness that the two not only could coexist but would essentially provide support in the development and the ability to comprehend on a much deeper level transformed my teaching. The long overdue recognition that “learning to read” and “reading to learn” must be done simultaneously revolutionized my approach to literacy development.

Fast forward several years. I am currently finding myself in a similar position. My daughter is learning to read, but this time I do not find the process to be quite as overwhelming. This task is not nearly as daunting as it was when I was working with Trevor. So much has changed in my approach. The importance of exposure to literacy at an earlier age has been magnified.

The alphabet is no longer a foreign thing that we sing about until a child reaches school age. **ELIMINOPEE** isn't just a verse in a child's song that has no meaning. Recognition that children have to begin developing literacy skills at a young age has dawned. Reading for information can, and most definitely should, start from the very first moment



Claire practices reading for comprehension.



From the start, Claire was reading to find information and gain knowledge.

when I think about the number of parent-teacher conferences that I conducted, where I so artfully recited my spiel about this clear and certain transition that occurred from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.”

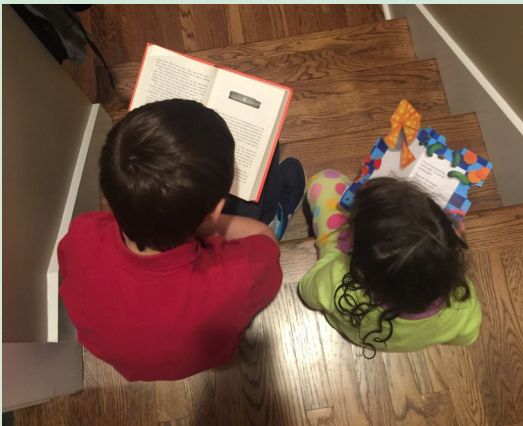
Being a Teacher Mom who is judgmental has afforded me plenty opportunities to witness progress

that a child is read to for the first time. There is undoubtedly going to be individualization in the time frame and the situation in which this moment occurs, but there is no reason why comprehension cannot be integrated into that very moment.

I now recognize that I created a disservice to each of my students and my very own child for all of those years that I taught based on the premise that a child must be a proficient reader before comprehension can grow. I literally cringe



Sometimes she still relies on her big brother to help her understand the application of ideas.



These days they enjoy reading together.

similar to that which has occurred for so many within my classroom over the years. The application of priceless knowledge gained from my experiences is a welcome change in my own home and classroom. As odd as it may seem, I will forever be grateful for the times when I thought I knew best only to find out that I was just blissfully ignorant. How could I ever expect my children, my students, or anyone else, to learn and grow from their mistakes if I cannot even recognize and embrace my own?

# Arkansas Anthology



**Encourage your students to submit their creative work.**

A downloadable copy of the interactive *Arkansas Anthology 2018* is available [here](#).

Call for submissions as well as other past issues are available [here](#).

For more information contact Aaron Hall about access or submissions.

[ARAnthology@gmail.com](mailto:ARAnthology@gmail.com)



# AEJ

## **A Learning Journey: Exploring New Paths to Teaching and Learning**

A call for manuscripts and submission guidelines are available here:

<http://arkansas-english-journal.weebly.com/call-for-manuscript-submission.html>

Submit your documents to [ACTELA123@gmail.com](mailto:ACTELA123@gmail.com).

*Arkansas English Journal* Volume 4.1 is available online now:

<https://arkansas-english-journal.weebly.com/current-aej-issue.html>

# NCTE News

## 2019 AFFILIATE LEADERSHIP MEETING

Our president, Sunny Styles-Foster, and vice-president, Jessica Herring-Watson, will represent ACTELA in Washington, DC this July for the 2019 Affiliate Leadership Meeting. This event brings together affiliate leaders from across the continent, NCTE elected leaders and staff, and invited guests. Watch for their report in an upcoming issue.

### VOTE NOW!!

#### 2019 NCTE Elections

Elections will close at  
11:59 p.m. Central Time,  
Saturday, 1 June 2019.

S  
U  
M  
M  
E  
R  
2  
0  
1  
9

#### NCTE and Penguin Random House Teacher Award for Lifelong Readers & Maya Angelou Teacher Award for Poetry

Consider applying or  
nominating someone for  
this award **now!**

Deadline: 31 May 2019

### 2019 NCTE SUMMER INSTITUTE

June 30—July 2 Province, RI

Join us and veteran teachers **Leila Christenbury** and **Ken Lindblom** in an event that will advance your practice and transform your classroom! NCTE's Summer Institute is informed by more than 70 years of combined classroom experience, a large body of research in the discipline, and the collective expertise of a broad network of English educators. Early registration closes **30 April 2019**. Learn more **today!**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS, AWARDS, NEWS, AND NOTES

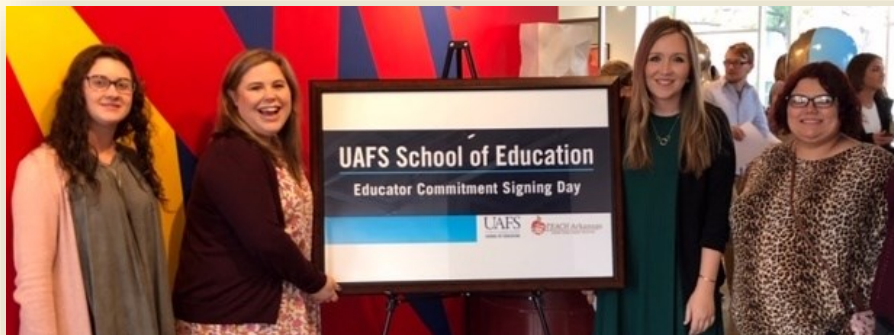
- Ana Rodriguez-Mesa has been inducted into Delta Zeta Epsilon, the UAM Modern Language Honor Society. She will serve the organization as vice-president and wear their honor cord when she graduates with her Bachelor of Arts degree in English next month.
- Our newsletter featured prominently in the Third Annual Library Celebration of Faculty Scholarship and Imagination in Monticello this month. See pictures on page twenty-five.
- Our newsletter webpage now includes a [global map](#) which logs the location of visitors. Click to open the map, and you'll see where readers live. Share the link with others you know who are literacy enthusiasts. In the first week, we had readers from three countries besides the USA, ten states, and twenty-one towns across Arkansas. Keep spreading the word! We want to light up our world!
- Our newsletter editor has again been selected as a finalist for the annual Hornaday Outstanding Faculty Award at her university. Maybe she'll be third time charmed?
- Our editor has also been nominated as Educator of the Week in her local newspaper.
- Two of her poems and a short story will be featured in a forthcoming creative writing publication produced by her university, *Weevil Pond*.
- Her second review of Francis O'Gorman's book *Forgetfulness: Making the*





*Modern Culture of Amnesia* is forthcoming in [Moveable Type](#).

- Our newsletter editor's article, "Internalizing the Message," is forthcoming in [Minnesota English Journal](#).
- Brycial Williams has been nominated for Educator of the Year for the 2019 TAP Award Ceremony.
- Jeff Wittingham has a series of professional development workshops and booktalks scheduled for the summer. For details about dates, topics, and places, see his itinerary on page twenty-four. Locations are hyperlinked to websites for directions or further information. Jeff has promised us a report on these events, so watch for an article to appear in an upcoming issue of our newsletter.
- UCA is proud to announce the winner of the UCA English Department's Williams/Arnold Scholarship. This is a scholarship awarded to the outstanding English Education junior and named after Rebecca Williams and Linda Arnold. This year's winner is Catherine Ziller.
- UAFS takes pride in announcing that Markie Garner is this year's recipient for the UAFS Academic Excellence Award for English with Teacher Licensure.
- ACTELA celebrates the achievements of university students who are graduating this spring to take their places in ELA classrooms around Arkansas. They are pictured below and on the following pages. Congratulations and welcome! We hope you all will join us as active members of our affiliate. We wish all of you joy in your careers as teachers and full benefit of the Satisfactions of Teaching described in the article beginning on page twenty.



**UAFS graduates include the following new ELA teachers: (Left to Right) Hannah B., Catherine L., Markie G., and Mercedes C. Not pictured Sara E. and Robert H.**



**UAM graduate, Emily Smith.**

- Emily Smith graduates from University of Arkansas at Monticello with a BA in English next month.
- UCA announces the following graduates of their MAT program:

Sarah Charton-Middle School English  
 Cassandra Green-Middle School English  
 Elizabeth Hill-Secondary English  
 Hannah Jutze-Middle School English  
 Amanda Mayo-Middle School English  
 Lauren Smith-Gilleran-Middle School English  
 Alyssa Starkey-Goad-Middle School English  
 Elizabeth Taulbee-Secondary English

- UCA also announces the successful completion of their programs of study for the following undergraduates who will be in ELA classrooms next year:

Tammy Gately  
 Erin Smith  
 Anna Adams  
 Harrison Carlock  
 Antoria Harrison  
 Kylan Riggs  
 Emily Watson  
 Timothy Kass  
 Jennifer McGee  
 Mitchell Smith



- Ana Rodriguez-Mesa completes her BA in English with a Spanish minor at UAM in May.



UAM congratulates new ELA teacher, Ana Rodriguez-Mesa.

- UALR presents Kimberly Maurer. Kimberly is a nontraditional student, a single parent, and a first generation college student. She is a McNair Scholar, Cooper Honors Student, and President of UA Little Rock's Sigma Tau Delta Chapter. She is graduating with honors with a BA in English and a minor in Secondary Ed.



Kimberly Maurer and her daughter, Daphne (age 7)

- A-State introduces three new ELA teachers: Allison Bridges, Taylen Smith, and Emma Reddmann. Allison Bridges has accepted a position at Harrisburg Middle School, teaching 8th grade English. Taylen Smith has accepted a teaching position for 10th and 11th grade English at Buffalo Island Central High School in Monette. She also will be attending graduate school at ASU in the summer to work towards her MSE in English. Emma Reddmann graduated from ASU's English BSE program in December 2018. She was honored recently as the outstanding graduate of the year. This semester, she's been teaching English full time at Jonesboro High School as a temporary replacement for one of their instructors, and she has a full-time contract at Jonesboro starting in August.



Allison Bridges



Taylen Smith



Emma Reddmann

- Are you looking for a way to incentivize performance in your secondary classroom? We have an idea. Look for an article to appear in our next issue which will introduce you to an app we found which might be helpful in motivating students to achieve.
- If you know of new ELA teachers we've missed announcing, please write our [newsletter editor](#) and tell us about them so that we can include them in a future issue.

# Satisfactions from Teaching

by

Denise F. Baldwin, EdD, University of Arkansas at Monticello

This year, many new literacy teachers will enter the field. Ms. Misty Garcia Ibarra, a current student at the University of Arkansas in Monticello, will be one of them. According to Elliot Eisner, six satisfactions come from teaching, and I would like to take this opportunity to share with her and everyone else entering the teaching field these six satisfactions that have made my career as a teacher worthwhile.

Satisfaction #1: Introducing students to great ideas

Imagine being able to introduce students to literary ideas that they can think about for the rest of their lives. As a teacher, you are now able to do this.

Satisfaction #2: Ensuring your immortality

Reaching out to students ensures teachers' own immortality. Students always remember a teacher they admire.

Satisfaction #3: Playing your own cello

Teaching is a custom job. How something is taught influences how something is learned. How literacy is taught influences how everything is learned.

Satisfaction #4: Artistry and aesthetic experience

Artistry is not restricted to the fine arts. Teaching depends on artistry. Artistry is the ability to craft a performance, influence its pace, shape its rhythms and tone so its parts merge into a coherent whole. Occasions remembered are those that are most meaningful to students.

Satisfaction #5: Sharing a deep affection for what you teach

Passion for your subject area is the sincerest and most powerful invitation you can extend. Passion for literacy is the sincerest and most powerful gift you can offer.

### Satisfaction #6: Making a difference

Teaching provides the opportunity to discover that something you once said in class has made a difference later to a former student. There is no feeling like it.

Teaching is filled with many surprises that reassure teachers that their contributions sometimes exceed those that they can recall. The satisfactions of teaching extend beyond the academic realm. The most lasting contributions come from saving lives, rescuing a child from despair, restoring a sense of hope, and soothing discomfort.

Teachers must remember that the student is a whole person who has an emotional and social life, not just an intellectual one. This is true for graduate students as well as students in elementary school. Teachers need to be more nurturing. Teachers need to pay attention to the whole child and address the whole child in their teaching practices. How they teach is related to achieving the deep satisfactions of teaching.

---

### Work Cited

Eisner, Elliot. "The Satisfactions of Teaching." *Educational Leadership*, vol. 63, no. 6, 2006, pp. 44-46.



ACTELA warmly welcomes Misty Garcia Ibarra to the world of ELA teachers in Arkansas.

# UCA Media & Literacy Conference

The UCA Media and Literacy Conference is a two-day conference at the University of Central Arkansas sponsored by the UCA College of Education, Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts (ACTELA), Arkansas Literacy Association (ALA), and the Arkansas Association of School Librarians (ArASL), a division of the Arkansas Library Association (ArLA)

The 2019 Media and Literacy Conference will focus on current issues in literacy and the use of media to support educators. This year's theme is "**Create, Curate, Collaborate.**" Conference attendees will receive twelve hours of professional development, lunch, and a t-shirt. Conference registration is as follows:

- Two-Day General Admission – \$65.00
- One-Day General Admission – \$45.00
- Two-Day Student Admission – \$35.00
- One-Day Student Admission – \$25.00
- Exhibitor – \$65.00

This year's conference will be held on July 9th and 10th at the UCA College of Education (Mashburn Hall) in Conway, AR.

## [Participant & Exhibitor Registration Form](#)

### **Proposal Submissions**

Proposals are now being accepted for the UCA Media & Literacy Conference! Please keep the conference theme, "**Create, Curate, Collaborate,**" in mind while writing your proposal. Submit your proposal using the form below.

## [Proposal Submission Form](#)

First presenters will receive a free registration to the conference. All other presenters must pay the full registration fee.

**April brings another Arkansas Literary Festival!**



# ARKANSAS LITERARY FESTIVAL

**APRIL 25-28**  
DOWNTOWN LITTLE ROCK

**AUTHOR PANELS \* MUSIC  
FOOD \* BOOK SIGNINGS  
SPECIAL EVENTS**



**ARKANSAS LITERARY FESTIVAL**  
**ARKANSASLITERARYFESTIVAL.ORG**  
The Arkansas Literary Festival, a program of the Central Arkansas Library System, is sponsored in part by the Arkansas Humanities Council.

# Summer Professional Development and Booktalking Itinerary

for  
Jeff Wittingham, University of Central Arkansas

Date	Location	Topic	Time
June 10	<a href="#">Great Rivers Education Services Cooperative</a>	Character Development and Booktalking	12:30 to 3:30
June 17	<a href="#">Northeast Arkansas Education Cooperative</a>	Booktalking	afternoon
June 18	<a href="#">Northeast Arkansas Education Cooperative</a>	Writing Linked Verse with Google Docs Using Pinterest for Character Development Book Insecurity	all day
June 19	<a href="#">Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative</a>	Booktalking Social Studies books	12:30 to 3:30
July 11	<a href="#">Pulaski County Special School District</a>	Booktalking	
July 16	<a href="#">Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative</a>	Booktalking	12:30 to 3:30
July 19	<a href="#">Ozarks Unlimited Resource Educational Service Cooperative</a>	Booktalking Character Development Linked Verse	all day
July 22	<a href="#">Wilbur D Mills Education Service Cooperative</a>	Booktalking	afternoon
July 26	<a href="#">Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative</a>	Booktalking	afternoon
July 29	<a href="#">Dawson Education Service Cooperative</a>	Character Development Linked Verse Booktalking	8:30 to 11:30 12:30 to 3:30



# 3RD ANNUAL CELEBRATION of FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP AND IMAGINATION University of Arkansas at Monticello

Dan Boice, Director of the UAM Library, has organized another well-attended celebration of faculty members as active scholars. Faculty are often lauded for their teaching, but this event presents them as experts in their fields of study. Students get to see the work their teachers produce outside of class and value them more highly as they see the respect their publications earn.

Issues of our newsletter are prominent and colorful features in this event each year. This was a productive year for our editor, so her publications took up an entire table of the display.



Dr Kay Walter poses with her table of publications.



Issues of our newsletter make colorful contributions to the display.



Administrators gather to admire the scholarship of faculty members.

# Shreveport Report

LSUS hosted the 4th Annual Regional Student Scholars Forum on 15 March 2019. Students, both graduate and undergraduate, presented the results of their research in the form of scholarly papers and poster talks as they competed for prizes and awards. ACTELA was well-represented at this event as students of members showed off their mastery of coursework. The following pages offer comments from participants and photos for those who missed the fun.

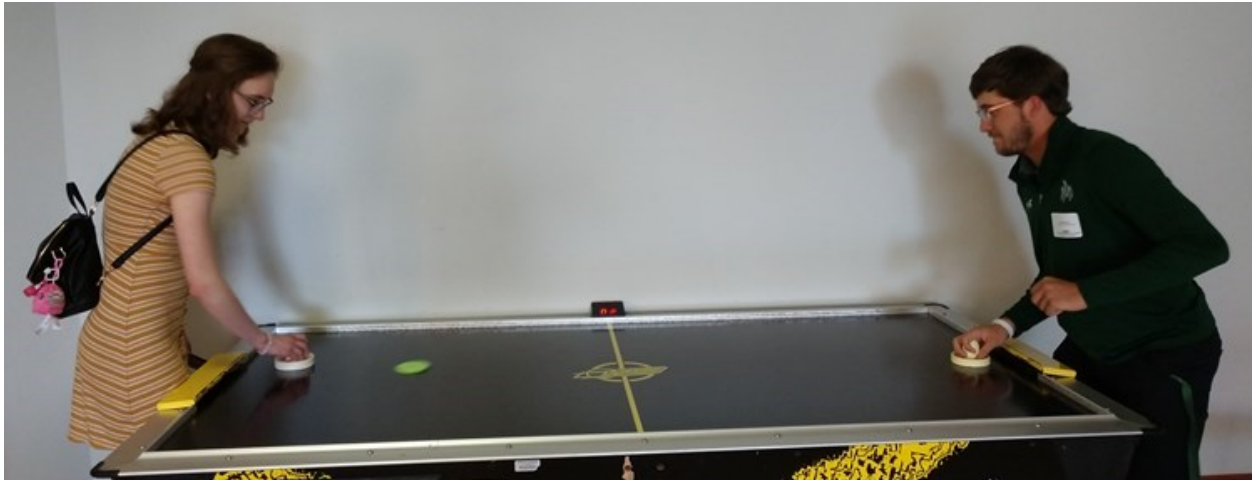
---

## **Emily Jackson, UAM:**

Presenting at Shreveport was a wonderful experience! Braden, Jeff, and I read our papers early in the morning and got to listen to other scholars for the rest of the day. It was a perfect experience for an English major, and I hope I can go back again! The ride was great; we all got to know each other better throughout the day and got to spend time with our professor outside of the classroom. The conference itself was just as amazing! Lunch was great, the other presenters were well-informed, and there was no time wasted. The day was all full of learning about research projects.



**Dr Kay Walter (L) poses for a group selfie with her students (L to R), Emily Jackson, Braden Taylor, and Jeff Whitson.**



Emily Jackson and Jeff Whitson find time between sessions to play a game of air hockey in the student union.

## **Dr. Elisabeth Liebert, Director of Masters of Art and Liberal Arts, LSUS:**

Sadly, I didn't hear any [UAM] students present. I remember meeting them as we were waiting for the awards ceremony and wishing that I had heard them, because their topics were wonderful. I also remember your telling me that students in [your] class have to present at a number of conferences. What a wonderful way to help them develop professionally!

In terms of a comment about the Student Scholars' Forum, what strikes me is its multidisciplinary nature. Sir Francis Bacon lamented the compartmentalization of knowledge in *The Advancement of Learning*, but the situation today is far more extreme: although we have access to a wide spectrum of information (thanks to the internet), our academic training tends to enforce distinctions between disciplines that are not only artificial but perhaps even perilous because they encourage the belief that our own approach and our own understanding is sufficient. The programming of Student Scholars' Forum brought together students from many disciplines within single panels, so that English majors were exposed to scientific research and Business majors learned about proto-feminism in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. To be challenged to understand and appreciate research beyond our own small disciplines is infinitely valuable.



Jeff, Emily, and Braden are proud of their presentations.



Emily, Braden, and Jeff attend the award ceremony to see who won the honors of the day.

**Jeff Whitson, UAM:**

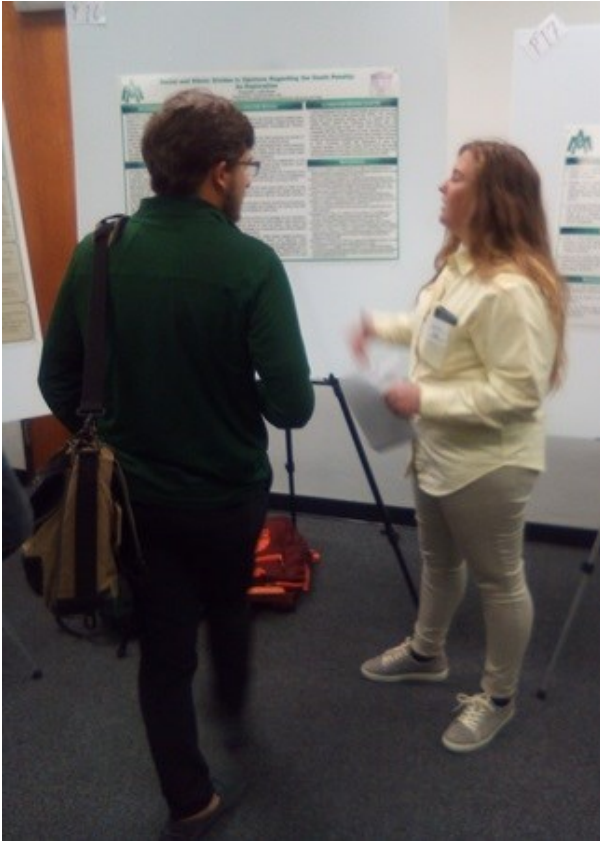
The conference at LSUS was a fun experience. We introduced topics that discussed literary elements in British literature. The conference itself was a conglomeration of all academic research. The math and science-based research was complex, but that did not stop me from learning. Some of our compadres from the social work department gave presentations as well. Overall, it was a very informative and mindful conference that I hope to attend next year.



Jeff presented on Ideal Masculinity in *Joseph Andrews*.



Braden's research concerned the publication history of unfinished novels.



Jeff enjoyed learning about research in other disciplines and making connections to his own studies.



Emily and Jeff pause a moment to take in all the successful research around them.



The poster presentation sessions were a swirl of interdisciplinary information.

### **Braden D. Taylor, UAM:**

The trip to Shreveport was fantastic. I loved learning about all the different research topics. Seeing how a mathematical presentation is set up was very interesting to me. The LSUS campus was pretty. The lawns were lush and green, and the buildings matched their beauty. Listening to my friends present was an insightful experience, and everyone did an outstanding job. For one of them, it was a first professional presentation. Overall the drive, food, presentations, and bonding were unforgettable. LSUS was happy to have us, and I look forward to submitting my abstract for the Forum next year.



Braden and Emily were pleased to know their own work reflected well on their school.

## Dr. Seungyeon Lee and Dr. Jennifer Miller, UAM:

Being active in professional meetings yields many benefits for our students. Four students in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences presented their research at the fourth annual Student Scholars Forum hosted by Louisiana State University in Shreveport, LA on March 15, 2019.

Leah Rowe's presentation, "Racial and Ethnic Issues Divide Opinions Regarding the Death Penalty: An Exploration," focused on how race and ethnicity are possible contributing factors to opinions regarding the death penalty. Her study examined the history of immigration and the resulting oppression, opposing political ideologies, and divided religious affiliations that generate even more gaps. Her faculty mentor was Dr. Jennifer Miller, an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice.

Sydney Edwards's "A Review on How Art Therapy Can Improve Health-Promoting Attitudes for Patients Diagnosed with Cancer" examined a growing body of literature that analyzes the use of art therapy as a clinical intervention for minimizing cancer patients' anxiety, depression, and related stress. Kyra Hatcher, Amanda Pennington, and Brandi Brewster's study, "The Effect of Personality Traits and Procrastination on Goal Content Which Impact Student Learning," considered whether publicly-shared goals increase the likelihood of improved learning. Sally Pharr's research, "Implication for Dog Therapy on College Students' Psychological Well-Being: A Systematic Literature Review," explored the effect of dog therapy on US college students and how it could improve psychological well-being. Their faculty mentor was Dr. Seungyeon Lee, an Assistant Professor of Psychology.

Throughout this educational experience, students illuminated the need for future research which would involve investigating the benefits across various settings. The [Forum] helped to broaden their horizons and foster new social connections as well as [introducing them to an academic audience] as "experts" in their fields. Students saw new ways of conducting research and being more productive and discerning at the same time. The faculty mentors were especially pleased [by the] research-oriented milieu. Participating in a professional conference could positively impact general motivation levels as well as fulfilling specific learning outcomes. This definitely is a positive experience for all.



(Front L to R) Kyra Hatcher of Pine Bluff, Sally Pharr of Monticello, and Leah Rowe of Mountain Home

(Back L to R) Dr. Seungyeon Lee, Amanda Pennington of Monticello, Brandi Brewster of Pine Bluff, Dr. Jennifer Miller, and Sydney Edwards of Lake Village

## **Dr. Sanjay Menon, Director of Graduate Studies, LSUS:**

Thank you for the enthusiastic and robust participation from [Arkansas]! You and your students made a significant contribution to the conference. I also want to thank you for serving as a judge and as a moderator. LSU Shreveport hopes to continue to welcome your students and faculty to the forum in the years to come.

The LSUS Regional Student Scholars Forum has gotten stronger and stronger as it attracts bright young scholars from Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, and Oklahoma, in addition to Louisiana students. This year we had participation from 19 different colleges and universities including: Arkansas State University, Belhaven University, Centenary College, Louisiana State University, Louisiana State University Shreveport, Lyon College, Northwestern State University, St. Mary's University, Texas A&M University – Texarkana, Texas Tech University, Texas Woman's University, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, University of Arkansas at Monticello, University of Holy Cross, University of Louisiana at Monroe, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, University of Texas – Texas Medical Center, Houston, and University of Texas at Tyler.

The Forum is an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate student scholars from our region to come together to present their research, meet each other, and share ideas in a welcoming atmosphere. They can hone their presentation and networking skills, as well as practice giving and receiving constructive feedback in a friendly and encouraging setting. I am looking forward to seeing you and your students at next year's event.



Dr Kay Walter served as mentor and moderator for a panel of student research paper presentations.



Emily Jackson's paper concerned comic aspects of *Joseph Andrews*.

# Global Perspective

Last month our broader view was provided by a young man who, although he has attended every day of his school life in Arkansas, is an international student because he was born in Mexico. This time, we feature a young lady also born abroad. She turned seventeen this month. She was born in Budapest, Hungary and began her school days there. She moved to Vienna, Austria as young child and studied German in an international school. She lived in *Wien* for four years before moving to Prague, Czech Republic where she entered fourth grade. Even though she has never attended school in the USA, she is an American citizen and will soon return to our country for her university studies. Her perceptions of literacy education enlighten our perspectives of ELA teaching in Arkansas by offering a European view of the importance of developing critical thinking skills in young learners. Classrooms around the world are filled with students all more alike than different.

## AN AMERICAN STUDYING IN EUROPE

BY

EMMA ARDEN FARMER, INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PRAGUE

As a 17-year-old who is reaching the end of her first year of the International Baccalaureate program, I feel it is the proper time to reflect on my past experiences and growth as not only a student but also an English enthusiast. I have been attending the International School of Prague in Czech Republic for the past 8 years through the Elementary, Middle school, and Upper school curricula. As college applications and daunting thoughts of what my life will become loom over me, I think about how my





school has shaped me through its motto, "Inspiring learners for life."

Over the years, I have come to notice the particular attention my school pays to develop its students' critical thinking and communication skills. The school is fully committed to enhancing these skills through project-based learning because that is when these learning habits are most effectively taught. These life-long abilities must be practiced, not just taught when you need them. Like most things, they require repetition to achieve mastery.

I've found that even in elementary school, activities they would have us do root deep into these values. In 5th grade, we were tasked with a "Personal Passions Project" or PPP. Being in 5th grade, it was hard to establish a passion or even understand the gravity of what a passion really was. My older self is mildly embarrassed that my topic of choice was social media. Despite the fact that I don't believe I really understood what social media was when choosing it as a project, the validity of my choice as a passion proves to be irrelevant because I was curious and that is all that really mattered.

The PPP resulted in a 10-minute presentation that we gave to about a fourth of my grade plus parents. This was a high stakes audience for any fifth grader. Although this project doesn't have great significance in my overall career as a student, it was the introduction of techniques I will need for the rest of my life. My presentation skills and communication of ideas, finding interests and researching them until my knowledge of a subject is quenched, the making of intelligent inferences that go beyond the topic of what I am discussing, started small as most things need to. I am sure the formulation of these skills was constant. However, the next time I really recall their being put to the test was in 8th grade when we were given an artifact from the Lobkowitz storage.



Emma Farmer



The Lobkowitz family is a Czech noble family that dates back to the 14th century. Being one of the oldest Bohemian noble families, they collected artifacts from all over the globe for centuries. In 1939, the Nazi forces occupied Czechoslovakia and seized all of the Lobkowitz's collections. At the end of World War II, they regained possession of their collection before having it taken from their family again during

the Communist occupation beginning in 1948. Only after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1989 did the family permanently reclaim their property. The Lobkowitz palaces, artifacts, and descendants are an integral part of the Czech identity and luckily they are huge supporters of my school, ISP. The Curator Project is an educational research project for 8th-grade classes allowing us to visit one of the palaces and borrow an artifact for an hour to study and take pictures.

We were separated into groups of five and challenged to discover information about our uncatalogued artifacts. After doing two months of research, we were to write an article on the object and present our findings to the parents and Lobkowitz archeologists at the Lobkowitz Palace. My group was given an Indonesian musical instrument called the *Angklung*. The presentation itself proved to be very successful and rewarding as our research on the *Angklung* was placed on “mini-exhibition” in the Lobkowitz Palace for a year. However, the mental challenges and rewards have taken me much further.

A task spanning between two and three months can seem rather intimidating to a 13-year-old. While the same lessons I learned from the PPP were being reinforced, a few other, more sophisticated, habits were being taught. These relating to life skills such as time management, organization, and what it means to research. Organization and time management are both

easy to ignore when time is of an abundance to you as it was to me, but they still should not be dismissed as they have become the strategy to my everyday life now. Critical thinking and research, nevertheless, go hand in hand. Researchers must devise what they really want to know to discover the correct questions to ask.

Critical thinkers doing research should see themselves as lawyers in a courtroom. Probing whoever is on trial until the answers are sufficient for judgment. To assess the current situation and decide what is to become of it is an art rather than a skill really. Through different contexts and situations, critical thinking warps and changed its form. Knowledge does not have the same value until you know how to assess it properly. However,

**To assess the current situation and decide what is to become of it is an art rather than a skill really.**

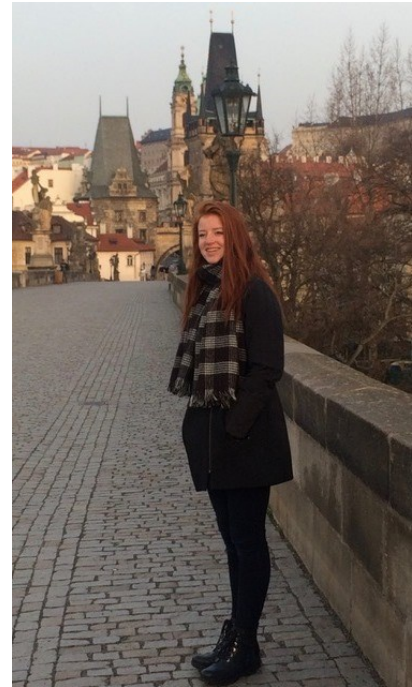


The *Angklung* is a musical instrument.

“properly” is highly subjective. A proper assessment of knowledge is only what you make of it. That is why ingenuity and originality are vital to critical thinking.

Currently, I am a Higher Level English Literature student at my school. A day without using critical thinking skills is a day wasted. My English teacher, Mr. Lamken, has taken all opportunities to maximize my experiences with the culturally rich city I live in. In my 10th grade year, we learnt about Franz Kafka and read *The Metamorphosis*. This year, we looked at Vaclav Havel’s plays. It would be a mistake to study both without looking at their cultural context. Franz Kafka was a Jew before the Nazi rule, and Vaclav Havel was an activist against the communist regime. Knowing these facts broadens the perspective for understanding their literature. To give a piece of literature cultural or biographical context is to understand fully what was going through the authors' minds and to amplify the interpretation of their incentives. I consider myself to be so fortunate as I have the ability to walk out of the doors to my house and walk the same streets that Havel and Kafka once did. I can see and understand their lives and what it was like to live like them. Not to mention that there is no shortage of museums on either writer here. If you ever find yourselves in Prague, they are worth the visit.

Looking to the future, I plan to return to the United States for college. I do not believe a “fulfillment of Europe” exists, although, I crave a change of scenery and to return home to satisfy the American girl in my blood. However, I am not done with High School yet. With this next year comes review for the final IB exams, applications to college, and SAT tests which is no simple feat. I hope the skills I have developed over the years carry me far and that I am prepared for whatever comes my way. I have no doubt that I have worked hard for what is to come, but what will actually happen is what I am interested in.

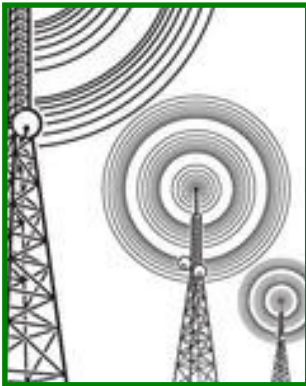


Emma Farmer on the Charles Bridge in her hometown of Prague, Czech Republic

**Questions or comments for our author may be directed to the newsletter editor:**

**[walter@uamont.edu](mailto:walter@uamont.edu)**

# Developing Connections



Allie Stevens,  
Calhoun County Library  
Director, has promised us a review of her favorite new YA novel, *Sadie*, by Courtney Summers. Look for her contribution in the next issue of our newsletter.



Literacy and NTCE is the official blog of the National Council of Teachers in English  
<http://blog.ncte.org//>

Summer is almost upon us. We all have plans to rest, reflect, and renew our energies for teaching. The next issue of our newsletter will describe the results of our summer adventures. As you read, write, travel, reflect, or practice a talent, tell our newsletter editor. Share your summer attempts and achievements with us.

Email Contacts for Ideas and Input	
Membership	<a href="mailto:jeffw@uca.edu">jeffw@uca.edu</a>
Anthology Submissions	<a href="mailto:ARAnthology@gmail.com">ARAnthology@gmail.com</a>
Teacher Initiative	<a href="mailto:oliverc@conwayschools.net">oliverc@conwayschools.net</a>
Newsletter	<a href="mailto:walter@uamont.edu">walter@uamont.edu</a>

Do you know teachers who deserves to be nominated for our Teacher of the Year Award? Submit your pitch on their behalf [here](#). Be sure to include details and to highlight administrative support.