

The English Pub: ACTELA Newsletter

Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts



Letter from the Vice-President

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

In its rebranding efforts, NCTE is promoting the idea of turning the page. The organization invites us all to be page turners. What actions are you considering for incorporating page turning in your professional life and your classrooms?

Let us know how you are Turning the Page!

Dear ACTELA Members,

I'm sure you are all settled from your winter break. Perhaps missing those extra hours of sleep? As educators, we hit the ground running in 2017.

With new leadership in Washington, and our own legislature back at work, now is the time to bring enthusiasm to our occupation.

While we may not know what the future holds, we know that education is still the foundation of our nation's successes and strengths.

What WE do is important, even though we may not always have

someone singing our praises. We have to showcase what we are doing in our classrooms and in districts all around the state.

One way to do this is to present at the Arkansas Curriculum Conference in November. The call for proposals is just around the corner, and we hope to see you there!

The time and year is NOW. So, brag about your students, praise your peers and their efforts, and show some love to those who need that extra support. After all, it is February!

Sunny Styles-Foster
ACTELA Vice-President



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We Want to Connect!

Visit our website: www.actela.weebly.com

Email our editor: walter@uamont.edu

Or Friend us on Facebook:

Arkansas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts



Memories from ACC 2016



The ACTELA table announces our presence at the Arkansas Curriculum Conference.



We have copies of our featured author's books for sale, which our authors are always glad to inscribe.



Leanna Morris presented her research on Biblical Aspects of *King Lear* at the Preservice Roundtable.



Brycial Williams, Arkansas Teacher for the Dream 2015, made his first session presentation.



The Award table at our ACTELA Luncheon is always filled with wonderful prizes.



Corey Oliver poses with Editor's Choice Award winners from *Arkansas Anthology*.



Cindy Green, ACTELA president, directs the business meeting at the luncheon.



Cindy Green, ACTELA president, listens as Kay Walter, newsletter editor, introduces Pamela Jones as Arkansas's Teacher for the Dream 2016.



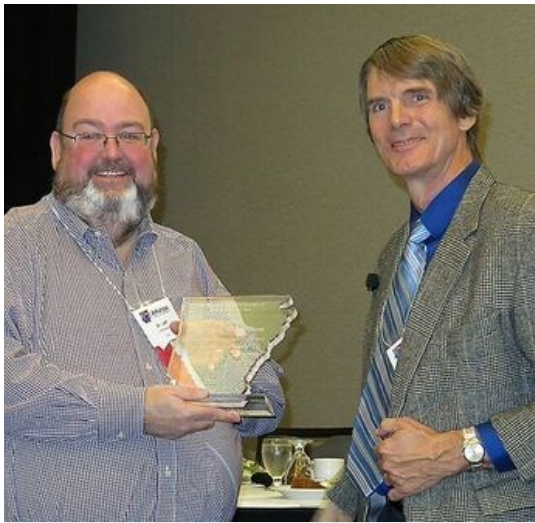
Sheree Crites , ACTELA's Secondary Teacher of the Year, poses with Rob Lamm.



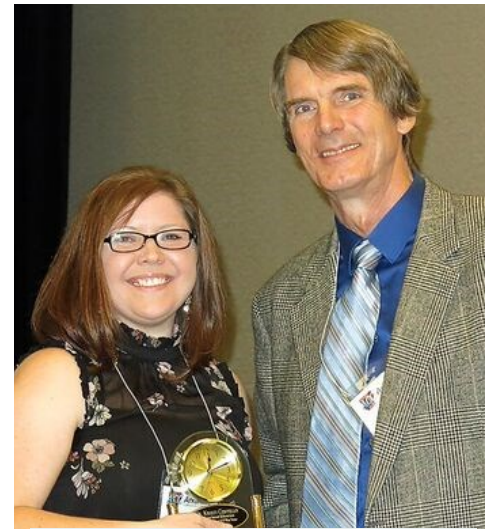
Barbara Moore from Hampton School District wins the Middle Level Teacher of the Year Award.



Angela Stout accepts the award for Early Career English Teacher of the Year.



Jeff Wittingham, Membership Chairman, poses with his Pitman Lifetime Service Award.



Dr. Kristi Costello is our college level Teacher of the Year from ASU.



ACTELA members enjoy meeting with other ACC attendees at the Butler Center Reception.



Arkansas poet, Kai Coggin, shares poetry from her new volume with her audience at the Butler Center.

FEEDBACK

The December 2016 issue of our newsletter was distributed electronically throughout Arkansas, to many other states, and in several nations. It was read by literacy enthusiasts in, among other distant locations, Idaho, Texas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Tennessee, Kansas, England, Italy, China, and the Middle East. In all these places, our work has garnered praise.

Here are some of the comments we've received from **Arkansas**:

- ◆ **Wow.**
- ◆ **This is excellent.**
- ◆ **Great work!**
- ◆ **Wonderful! Thanks for sharing!**
- ◆ **I especially appreciate your promotion of *Catcher in the Rye*. I think it's a valuable book for young readers.**
- ◆ **Bravo, Kay! I really enjoyed reading through this! I love the different color—the hue of blue! And I love Donna's piece on the NCTE trip! Just a beautiful job!**
- ◆ **Great job!**
- ◆ **I shared it with my Literacy team throughout the school as well as the principals.**
- ◆ **You have put together a wonderful newsletter! Congratulations!**

These comments are from readers in **other states**:

- ◆ **It sounds like you had a great conference and made a connection with a film maker!**
- ◆ **I am very impressed not only with your newsletter, but with the encouraging tone that you set for all English teachers, whether or not they teach in Arkansas.**
- ◆ **Thank you for this. It looks like all is going well in Arkansas.**

These comments come from readers in **other countries**:

- ◆ **I consider it another window to get to the world better.**

- ◆ Thanks so much for the newsletter. I have skipped through and it is full of such a lot of interesting things and wonderful pictures. I am looking forward to a proper read. The contributions from Pamela and Brandi were so interesting, and it is such a joy to follow their journeys. All those young teachers with such enthusiasm and dedication must have been so inspirational to them! There is nothing like a community of like minds to help one's growth and development.

Here's what the author, **Donald Measham**, has to say:

- ◆ I do recognise and applaud the tone of your dialogue and the range and variety of your purposeful discourse. I also like very much the way that you relate my work to them, which I regard as a privilege and a pleasure. You manage the context and, for that matter, the rather-dated 'me', very well. I'm indebted, and I have to say, well-pleased.

And here is the response from the filmmaker, **James Sadwith**:

- ◆ Wow!! Well done! I should have hired you as our publicist! Thanks for all the kind words. I'll let you know if anyone reaches out to me as a result of your article.



It's for you.

NOW WHAT ABOUT YOU?

WE WANT YOUR COMMENTS TOO.

WHAT RESPONSES HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT

THE ENGLISH PUB: ACTELA NEWSLETTER?

THE ENGLISH PUB: ACTELA NEWSLETTER

SHARE YOUR COMMENTS WITH US BY EMAILING

WALTER@UAMONT.EDU

Board Meeting Announcement

ACTELA board members have been busy arranging a move into twenty-first century technology! Their first meeting of the year will be a virtual one using Cindy Green's favorite videochat program—ZOOM. The board will meet digitally on Saturday, 25 February, from ten to noon. Contact your representatives with items you would like added to the agenda or discussed at the meeting. Your representatives on the board include the following:

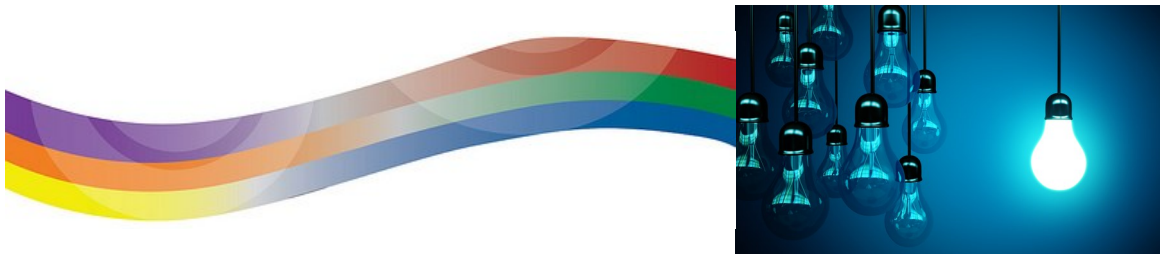
Northwest: Tyler McBride

Northeast: Rob Lamm and Grover Welch

Central: Melinda Francis and Corey Oliver

Southwest: Jessica Herring

Southeast: Brycial Williams



Black History Month



Are you looking for ideas for February lessons? NCTE's Black Caucus suggests hosting a Black Read In. Details and a link are available on page 15 under News and Notes.

Another resource is the annotated bibliography, *Spirited Minds: African American Books for our Sons and our Brothers*. This book edited by Archie Givens provides thoughtful reflections on masterworks of African American litera-

ture and focuses on presenting these voices to inexperienced and reluctant readers. Over a hundred titles are offered to “the father, mother, brother, minister, teacher, or grandparent who is looking for books to read to and with young people.”

The books are grouped into six categories: Autobiography and Biography, Drama, Novels and Short Stories, History, Poetry, and Read with the Children. Each section includes books at various reading levels arranged from those for youngest readers to adults. A specific audience is identified for each book, so every teacher should find something of interest to share in the classroom.

The book is available from Amazon (and very inexpensively!) here:

https://www.amazon.com/Spirited-Minds-African-American-Brothers/dp/0393317390/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1484847904&sr=1-1&keywords=0393317390

If you use this book as a resource, or have other books you use to prepare lessons for February units, tell us. We want to know how your classroom celebrates Black History Month and how you devise lessons to inspire reluctant readers throughout the year.



AEJ Update

The second issue of our new peer-reviewed publication is now available. The online journal is linked to our website under the INITIATIVES tab. The Call for Papers is posted for issue number three. The new issue theme is *Turning the Page*, so read, enjoy, share with others, and send us the results of your scholarship.

http://arkansas-english-journal.weebly.com/uploads/5/3/7/2/53720385/aej_fall_winter_2016.pdf



Literacy Links

"What attracts you to HI USA and serving on the HI USA Board?" response by Dr. Kay Walter <https://www.hiusa.org/about-us/hi-usa-board-of-directors/at-large-candidates>

Ruskin & Arkansas features "Arkansas Intimacies with John Ruskin" by Dr. Kay Walter <http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/north-american-companions/ruskin-arkansas>

Website Presence

Our webmaster, Tyler McBride, has completed our move to a Weebly format. Visitors now encounter our readily-navigable online presence through a dynamic and interactive webpage at ACTELA.WEEBLY.COM. Our newsletters are archived under the BLOG & NEWSLETTERS tab, and our journal is linked to our INITIATIVES tab. Visit often to stay up-to-date on ACTELA news.

Arkansas Anthology Update

The latest issue of *Arkansas Anthology* is available online in a digital version under the INITIATIVES tab on our website. Print versions exist only in limited quantities. Contact Aaron Hall for further information about access or submissions.

Exciting changes are in store for *Arkansas Anthology 2017*. This year's online edition will be fully interactive with additional elements accessible from the website. Student submissions are currently invited for the 2017 issue. Send your student's best creative efforts along with yours to

ARAnthology@gmail.com

Writing into Advocacy

by **Grover Welch**, Gosnell Junior High School

In the current climate of post-election uproar, students are faced with larger questions about the role of civil-disobedience and advocacy in the country they know. This prompted me to rearrange my Civil Rights unit this year utilizing newer materials to create a foundation for the 8th grade unit in advocacy and the democratic principles of non-violence. This reframing of how I teach Civil Rights created the most powerful writing exercise I have had in a class, when I asked students to respond to letters from civil rights activists.

After utilizing texts and screenings from the *Teaching Tolerance Project* of the Southern Poverty Law Center, I introduced my students to the real people behind the change. This move from a fictional text-based classroom approach to a historical document approach rooted in real people's stories provided a great opportunity to offer real perspective while attending to the revised Arkansas Standards more closely than previous units.

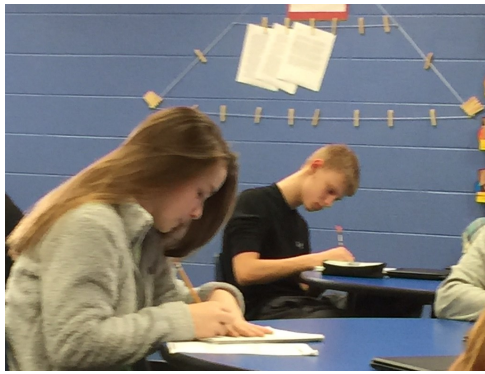
In the beginning, we viewed *A Time for Justice*, a great documentary that used real photos and participants to outline the events between 1954, Emmett Till's death, and 1965, the passage of the Voting Rights Act. The film introduced the subjects to the students in powerful, but personal, ways. Many of my students

had very little prior knowledge beyond having read the brilliant *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges. The text had given the students some perspectives in the sixth grade, but now I was asking them to embark on a legacy journey.

We opened the classroom experience up to perspective readings, where students were encouraged to read biographies about Freedom Marchers and other Civil Rights leaders. Students read books on Martin Luther King, Jr and John Lewis, among others. What emerged from the independent reading was a desire to discuss more of the individual peo-



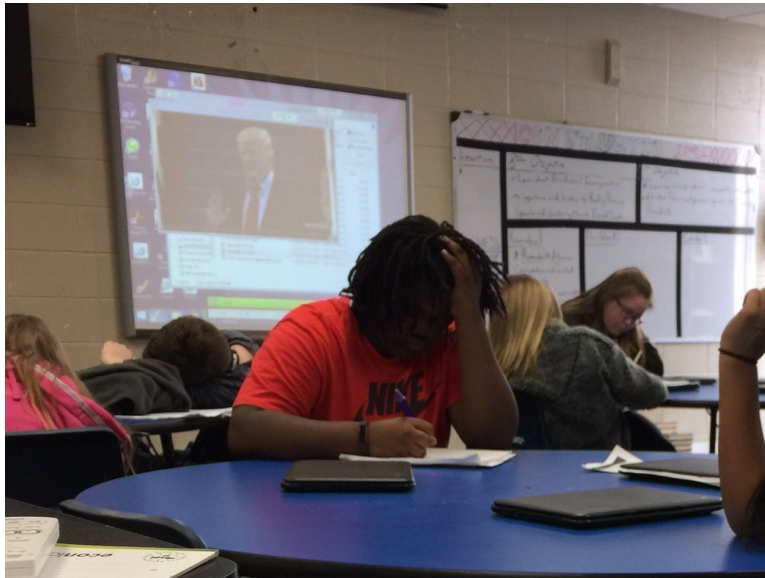
Students analyze texts in Mr. Welch's spring civil rights unit.



Students in Mr. Welch's class use Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream Speech* as a foundational reading for their advocacy writing.

ple in the events, and we began keeping reading journals that asked important questions about the participants and their roles.

Each lesson moved us through the timeline of events. We studied the Desegregation of Little Rock High School, the Lunch Counter Sit Ins, The Montgomery Bus Boycott, The Children's March, the Birmingham Bombing, The Selma March and Dr. King's stay in the Birmingham Jail. We read the *Letter from Birmingham Jail* and the *I Have a Dream* speech. Comparing the themes and ideas we had identified throughout the lessons in each and how he spoke for the men and women who were participating in these momentous events. Then we entered into an exercise that made me fall in love with my students all



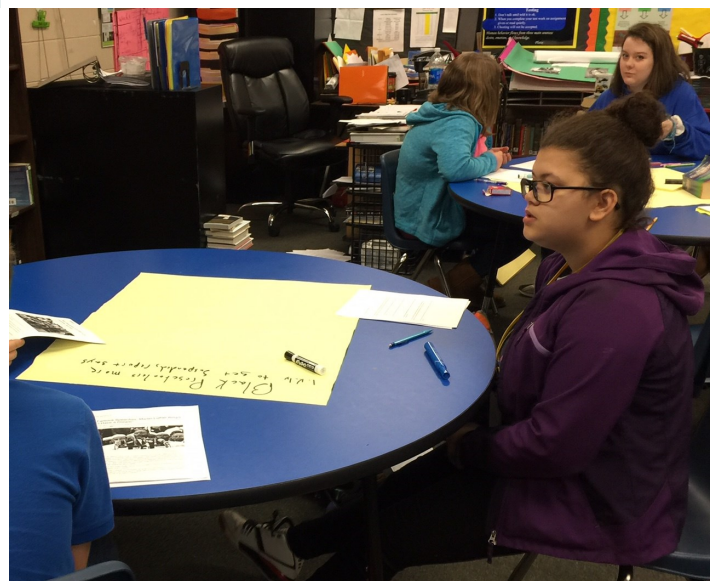
A young African American Student compares and contrasts Civil Rights Documents to the language of the *First Inaugural Address of Donald Trump*.

over again.

In early January my students began

writing letters responding to the letters written by The Children's Marchers printed in the book *Freedom's Children* by Ellen Levine. The book features real letters written about The Children's March from those who participated. The

Students use Historical documents to synthesize responses to current advocacy needs. Newsela Articles on topics from gender equity to early childhood education in low income districts are analyzed for opportunities to apply the lessons of the civil rights movement.





Students were encouraged to comprehend not only the needs of the students featured in the articles but the possible results of inequality's being allowed to continue.

event is famously remembered by the amazing photos of May 3, 1963 when Police unleashed dogs and hoses on children as young as seven. These powerful letters illumi-

nated what it was like for students to witness these events from the inside and resulted in one of the most powerful writing assignments of my teaching career when I asked students to respond to the letters.

The idea of writing back to text is not new, Rebecca Powell and Nancy Davidson draw the distinction between school-based and situated literacy, noting that the former “distances students from the literacy event, treating written language as an object for analysis rather than a medium for genuine communication” while the latter “is embedded in real-world events (249).

Offering young learners opportunities to communicate for genuine purposes to real audiences engages them and makes their literacy learning real and relevant. Powell and Davidson assert that “[t]apping into students’ ‘funds of knowledge’ is inherently motivating, and hence children are more engaged in learning when they perceive an authentic purpose for their efforts” (254). Learning about the purposes and conventions of letter writing, then, is made more meaningful and relevant when it bridges school-based literacy learning with the personal communication needs and interests of the learners.

One student responded to Judy Tarver, a teen activist who was swept up in the march after leaving her school on May 2nd:

Your letter included information about your participation in the Children’s March. It tells how uncertain many people were about joining, and it tells how others were very bold..... I didn’t expect thousands of people to agree to nonviolence. I was inspired by the lunch sit-ins. Those protesters had to have perseverance to let the owners push them around. They knew that if they were consistent they would make a change...I really admire how much bravery was shown in The Children’s March and in every protest that there was.

Another student wrote to Bernita Robertson, a protester who told how personal the experience was to her, and how the Easter Season meetings with Dr. Martin Luther King created a sense of duty and pride in her. Robertson outlined the needs they felt, and the desires they wanted to achieve so eloquently that it

moved many students to tears and in her response one student was awestruck:

I loved reading your writing about the march. It was very inspirational and heartwarming to know that you believed in this subject so much that you disobeyed your parents' rules. I don't know how you were not terrified of what might happen. It's hard to believe you were only fourteen years old. Your bravery really inspires many people in the world today. We have gotten so far from where we were to where we are because of you and many others.

A student who wrote to Mary Gadson illustrated the ultimate impact of the lessons on Civil Rights in her letter.

Your letter about the Sixteenth Street Baptist church bombing, and how you felt about it really spoke to me. I can't imagine being friends with the girls who were killed. If I was your friend (the one who saw the head go right by her) I don't think I could mentally be back to where I was before...I can't imagine living in the south back then. I bet you felt awful and scared for most of your life. In your letter where you said that you and one of the girls that was killed in the bombing (Cynthia Wesley) sang in the school choir together kind of shocked me...I just want to tell you how brave you are for writing about your life experiences. I'm sure it brought up old memories that you really wanted to forget. But, at the same time bet it made you proud that you fought for freedom and could encourage people like me to never forget.

The lesson utilized letter writing and deep connection to create student interest and participation. Both before and during the films, I utilized Depth of Knowledge Questions to keep students engaged and involved and now as we round out our unit with Black History Month essay writing students are excited about the opportunity to write into their school time a chance for advocacy. Students are taking the learning from the first half of the unit and creating advocacy on current issues. This has begun with students brainstorming ideas and needs. In class discussion has featured "health care," "poverty," "homelessness" and many other modern areas for advocacy. I always attempt to empower my students, and this unit has accomplished that more than I ever imagined it could.

Work Cited

Powell, Rebecca, and Nancy Davidson. "The Donut House: Real World Literacy in an Urban Kindergarten Classroom." *Language Arts* 82: 4. (March 2005): 248-56.

A Valentine from Vonnegut

by **Kay Walter**, University of Arkansas at Monticello

Do your students celebrate Valentine's Day? Mine do. We read Kurt Vonnegut's short story "A Long Walk to Forever" and write to someone we love. We say, "When the author says ". . ." I think of you because . . . We highlight the quoted passage in a copy of the story and share it with our valentines. This gives students practice incorporating quotations into grammatically correct sentences with smoothness, and it also gives me a chance to share the joys of reading Kurt Vonnegut with my students' support networks. If you aren't familiar with the story, February is a good time to give it a try. "A Long Walk to Forever" is available here:



<http://lib.ru/RAZNOE/long.txt>

Sharing Best Practices and Ideas

UAM is making plans for an English College Readiness Workshop Series. On 8 February 2017 over two dozen teachers from area public schools, will meet with university faculty, preservice interns, and other stakeholders for a day of professional enrichment. Topics for presentations include the following:

- ◇ Universal Design for Learning
- ◇ The Research Process: Preparing High School Students for the Rigors of College
- ◇ Getting Back to the Basics: Reading, Writing, and Discussing
- ◇ Grammar Workshop

In addition, there will be a luncheon discussion to open conversations about cheating, plagiarism, critical thinking, and reading skills and activities.

For more information about the event, email Tracie Jones, UAM ERZ Director at

jonestr@uamont.edu

News and Notes

- **Corey Oliver** spoke at the Martin Luther King Breakfast at UCA on Friday, 13 January. His talk was described by one listener as “phenomenal.” Hurrah, Corey!
- NCTE offers the opportunities to participate in African-American Read In for Black History Month. It’s sponsored by NCTE’s Black Caucus. Here’s the link where they have a toolkit to help teachers host one: <http://www.ncte.org/aari>
- **Pamela Jones** has begun her professional work as a long-term substitute para-pro in the Drew Central Preschool classroom. Keep up the good work, Pamela. We know you are making the difference in many little lives.
- **Janie Mason** has recently married and is now **Janie Walburn**. Congratulations to the couple! We wish you many years of happiness together.
- UCA is considering the promotion of **Jeff Wittingham** to full professor. He will hear the official decision about his new title in May, but ACTELA is already cheering. Hip, hip, hooray!
- **Janine Chitty**, editor of *AEJ*, is under consideration for promotion to Associate Professor at UAFS. We’re all aware of how valuable you are to our profession, and our fingers are crossed hoping your committee realizes it too!
- **Jessica Herring** submitted a panel proposal for NCTE with a group of Apple Distinguished Educators about multiple literacies. The panel will discuss the



importance of guiding students to see the way literacy has been transformed in the 21st century and how we "read" various media in different ways. The panel will discuss media literacy, coding literacy, literacy for augmented and virtual reality, and digital literacy, all in the context of the English/language arts classroom.

- The Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs at UAM, in concurrence with the School of Arts and Humanities and the Campus Promotion Committee, has recommended the promotion of **Kay Walter**, editor of *The English Pub: ACTELA Newsletter*, to full professor of English. Congratulations, Professor Walter!

Board Members Respond

⇒ In terms of the page turning prompt, I think my goal as an educator in this current climate is to turn to a renewed page of advocacy and hope. Public education is facing serious opposition and is being painted in such a negative light. I truly believe that the best way to turn the page on negativity is to promote all the positive things that are happening in our public school classrooms by sharing my students' work on social media, blogging, and acting as an advocate for my colleagues and students. Jessica Herring

⇒ When I think of "turning the page" my mind goes to Bob Seger, but fortunately

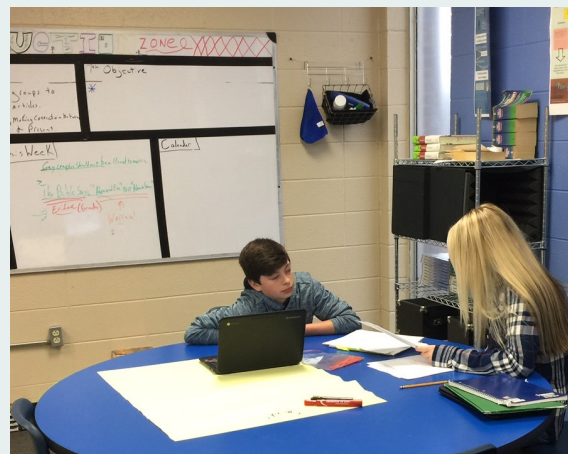
we are not all on a "long lonesome highway". Instead, we have the opportunity to embrace a new role in our educational systems as advocates and guides. During a recent unit on the Civil Rights



Mr. Welch's students explore civil rights in a spring unit.

Movement, and Selma in specific, we watched as teachers left their classrooms *en masse* to challenge the segregated voting laws in Alabama. I was struck that teachers found the nature and environment of their students more important than the curricular

needs of the institutions they were employed by. As a teacher, I am taking this lesson to heart and promising my children/students that as a teacher it is my duty to stand for what is right and model a participatory citizenship. So to all those on those contrary sides I say "I



Mr. Welch's students learn about advocacy through writing in response to civil rights readings.

am turning the page...Here I come on the road again"—the road to equity, the road to responsibility, and the road to democracy. Grover Welch

⇒ Two colleagues and I are "turning the page" this year by trying something new for all of us—co-teaching. I teach four sections of 7th grade Language Arts, and they just happen to be at the exact same time as the four sections of 6th grade Language Arts taught by another teacher in my building. The two of us, along with a Special Education teacher who teaches one section of inclusion Language Arts with each of us, joined forces to teach together this semester. We found an empty room in the building with room enough for 40-50 kids, and we scrounged and searched through storage rooms and forgotten corners of



our school to scrape together enough furniture and supplies. We've only been teaching together for a few weeks, but so far it has been going extraordinarily well—even though it has felt like the school year is starting all over again. We have so many more opportunities to personalize and differentiate for each student, because one-on-one and small group conferences and mini-lessons are so much easier to manage with more than one adult in the room. We look forward to further and ongoing experimenting and turning the page to have the best possible experience for our students! Tyler McBride

⇒ I am turning the page by incorporating service learning projects gradually into all my classes. I began last summer with a single experiment, and in the fall I made service learning an option for all my upperclassmen. This spring I am incorporating service learning assignments for my sophomores. Dare I think of service learning with freshmen? Dr. Kay J. Walter

⇒ My students and I are Page Turners for the Civil Rights Movement. We are reading *Portraits of African-American Heroes* by Tonya Bolden. On Bessie Coleman's birthday we discovered her contribution of courage to women around the world. Throughout this unit students will evaluate examples of the courage it took to gain the rights that every American deserves. Many books offer knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement, and my students are eager page turners continuing to discover the dream that Martin Luther King eloquently claimed for us all. Janie Walburn

Pamela Jones was Arkansas's Teacher for the Dream 2016 while she was a preservice member of ACTELA. She attended our state conference where she took part in the Preservice Roundtable, sharing her research on James Boswell. The matching funds provided by NCTE allowed her to attend the national conference.

Pamela now works in a preschool classroom in her local school district. I asked Pamela to share her experience moving from preservice to the classroom.

Dr. Kay J. Walter

Teaching Toddlers

by **Pamela Jones**, Drew Central Preschool

I enjoyed my experience with the conferences I went to [ACC and NCTE] and now feel a part of a large family of educators who are passionate about helping children [learn] and grow an excitement about the books they read.

Going forward, I am now a paraprofessional at Drew Central Preschool and show my excitement with the boys and girls I am involved with on a daily basis. We get excited over great accomplishments and things they have learned. [To these toddlers, school is] an exciting time!

The children sing the ABC song that includes the sound and a word with pictures so they are able to make associations and show [their mastery of the basics of literacy]! In centers around the classroom they are given many opportunities to show they are familiar with letters and words.

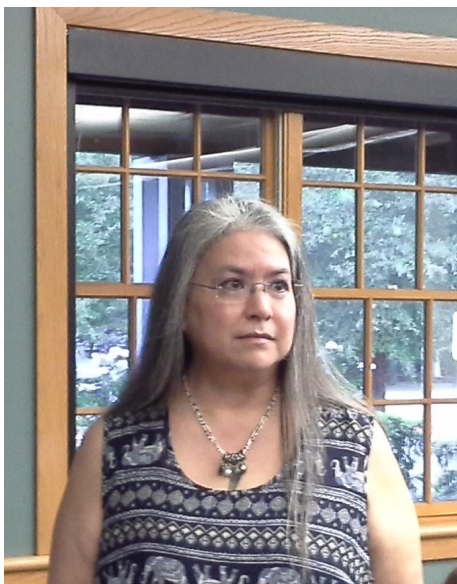


One example I will give is in our art center where they have tools such as crayons, colored pencils, and markers as well as construction paper, printed paper with outlines they may color, [and also] play dough that comes with plastic letter for molding letter shapes to manipulate.

I used these tools and made the word CAT for them. [I] showed them the



A peek into the classroom of Pamela Jones at Drew Central Preschool



tool I used and how to press it into the dough as well as [pointing out the necessary letters in their] alphabet around the classroom, [which we use to] sing the [alphabet] song. They got excited [when they realized] that I [had illustrated] a part of their song in the play dough, and they could use the play dough to make words from their song too!

Pamela Jones received her Associate of Arts degree in December 2016, and January 2017 saw her taking charge of a classroom of preschoolers.



I have enjoyed my job working with the children immensely! They keep me energized and delighted to work at learning. Through the end of this school year I [pledge] always [to] show them the excitement and joy [I have in] their accomplishments. They make my first teaching experience a happy one.



We are here to represent **YOU!**

All ACTELA members are represented by a board from geographical regions which cover the entire state. Get to know your representative board members. They are available to share your concerns and victories with the affiliate as a whole. Email contact with your representative is linked to our webpage. These are some of the ACTELA officers who serve you on the board:

Cindy Green, President

Sunny Styles-Foster, Vice President

Janine Chitty, Treasurer

Jeff Wittingham, Membership Chairman

Kay Walter, Newsletter Editor

Dixie Keyes, Past President

Donna Wake, Past President



Cindy Green, ACTELA's president, lost her father on 23 January 2017. Please remember Cindy and her family in your thoughts, prayers, and peaceful meditations.



St Louis in November

Your ACTELA board members are looking forward to representing Arkansas at the next NCTE conference. November 2017 will see us gathering in nearby St Louis, so travel should be affordable. Make plans now to join us at this national meeting of literacy enthusiasts. The

theme for NCTE 2017 is **Teaching Our Students Today, Tomorrow, Forever: Recapturing Our Voices, Our Agency, Our Mission.**

Find more information here:

<http://www.ncte.org/annual>



Help

Wanted

Do you have current authorships we should enjoy and celebrate? Do you have online or print publications? If so, you have a vital Literacy Link, and we want to know about it. Send us your hotlinks and bibliographic citations to help us demonstrate how productive English and Language Arts instructors are in Arkansas. It's easy to see ourselves solely as classroom functionaries, and it helps define our goals and successes when we can focus on the public face of our work. Get involved and share your ideas with ACTELA! We want to hear from voices throughout our affiliate, throughout our nation, and throughout our profession—including yours!

Global Perspective

Advocating for Arkansas: Ruskin and The Guild of St George

by **Dr. Kay J. Walter**, UAM

When I was a graduate student, John Ruskin was an integral part of my studies. I had never heard of him before I started my graduate program, but though I was trained in diverse authors, movements, theories, perspectives, genres, and diasporas, my studies at UCA began and ended with Ruskin.

Since I have studied him in a formal program, I find Ruskin more and more common in my surroundings. See, for example, the sign erected at our own state capi-



The sign in this photo includes a quote by Ruskin which reads “when we build let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for the present delight, nor for present use alone, but let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time will come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, “See! This our fathers did for us.”

tal building, featuring the words of Ruskin to excuse the inconveniences of construction.

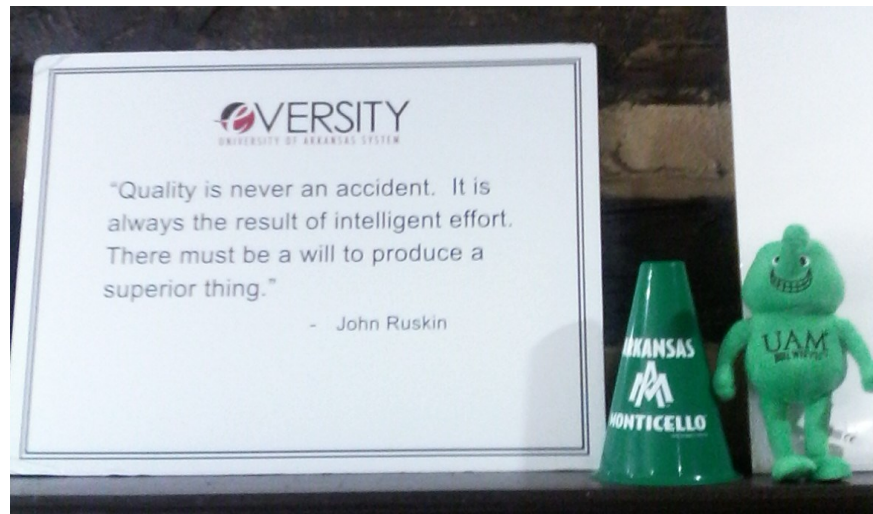
I found Ruskin on a sign in the headquarters of the new University of Arkansas System eVersity. Indeed, Ruskin seems to be everywhere I look these days.

Because I teach as a faculty member at my own *alma mater*, I know that too many Arkansas students are, as I was, unfamiliar with Ruskin, so I include him in my curriculum from the first writing course my students take through to senior-level independent studies.

If you have studied art history, you may know Ruskin as the champion of J M W Turner, author of *Modern Painters*, and advocate for Pre-Raphaelitism. If you have studied architectural history, you may know Ruskin as the champion of Venetian antiquities, author of *Stones of Venice*, and advocate for gothic design. If you have studied educational history, you may know Ruskin as the champion of Whitelands College May Monarch ceremony, author of *Sesame and Lilies*, and advocate for the Working Men's College. If you have studied the history of social justice, you may know Ruskin as the champion of cottage industries, author of *Unto This Last*, and advocate for environmental sustainability.

Ruskin's students include many great and famous names in their own fields: William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, George Allen, Benjamin Creswick, and Oscar Wilde, to name but a few. Few canonical writers contribute so much to so many fields of study. Ruskin's interests and his efforts to improve the world in which he lived were wide and varied. One of the most important of his efforts was the establishment of the Guild of St George. The Guild was originally established to acquire land in Ruskin's native England and to make it "beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful," but like many of Ruskin's undertakings, the Guild has taken on a life of its own and spread beyond the original vision to include influence in many parts of the world. Currently Companions of the Guild of St George number over 240 and are natives of twenty-nine different nations.

I have had the pleasure of meeting and interacting with many of the Companions, several of whom are avid readers of our newsletter. Such friendships beyond our classrooms and beyond the borders of our country and our continent are important in a world rapidly growing more connected. Our students must learn to become global citizens in a multicultural world, to cross boundaries of languages, abilities, and ideologies and join efforts toward common goals with others whose different backgrounds, beliefs, and lifestyles they must learn to understand and appreciate.



This eVersity sign includes a quote by Ruskin which reads "Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of intelligent effort. There must be a will to produce a superior thing."

The Companions of the Guild of St George have often been resources to me and to my students. They have made us all welcome and acted as our hosts and tour guides when my students and I travel in Britain. Clive Wilmer, the Master of the Guild, has been reading our publications, both our newsletters and our journal, and his words of encouragement are inspiration to produce even more scholarship. Annie Creswick Dawson provided a safe place to park our vehicle when we are in Oxford, and she talks with my students about her family associations with Ruskin. Her great-grandfather, Benjamin Creswick, was one of Ruskin's many successful students, and her biography of Creswick is a textbook in my freshman writing courses. Annie always makes much of my students, continuing Ruskin's tradition of mentoring young talent. They adore her and delight in sending her greetings when they return to Arkansas.

Stuart Eagles, the Communication Office for the Guild, met us in Oxford and escorted my students through many of the museums and colleges there. His connections allowed us to access non-public areas, and his knowledge is encyclopedic. Susie Doncaster introduced my students to the art of storytelling and continues to correspond regularly with them via social networking. Nicholas Friend took us on a tour of the National Gallery and taught us to read Hogarth's narrative paintings. He connected the tour to Ruskin by introducing my students to the wonders of Turner. Donald and Joan Measham read our newsletter and value our ideas. John and Linda Iles and Neil Sinden and his wife, Lynne, will be helping my students with the service learning project they will undertake this summer. Colin Ford will be meeting with them to talk about Julia Margaret Cameron. Paul Dawson will guide their tour of Brantwood, Ruskin's Lake District home.

The Guild of St George is also active in North America. The companions here are few, and their meetings are generally California or Canadian events, but there are Companions even in the South: at Oklahoma State University, in Memphis, and in North Carolina—all busy at the task of promoting the ideals of Ruskinian education. Through all of the Companions, the Guild of St George continues the work Ruskin created it to accomplish, making our world beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. Companions practice his ideals of compassion and integrity. They show kindness to strangers, and they see my students as evidence of the success of our educational efforts, here, in Arkansas.

Background information about the Ruskin service learning project my students will complete in Ruskinland on 22 May 2017 is presented by John Iles in this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKD_OqoF968&feature=youtu.be

You can visit the website for the Guild of St George here: <http://www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk/> or follow them on Facebook or on Twitter [@RuskinToday](https://twitter.com/RuskinToday)



Graduate or Undergraduate Credit
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Celtic Origins of British Literature

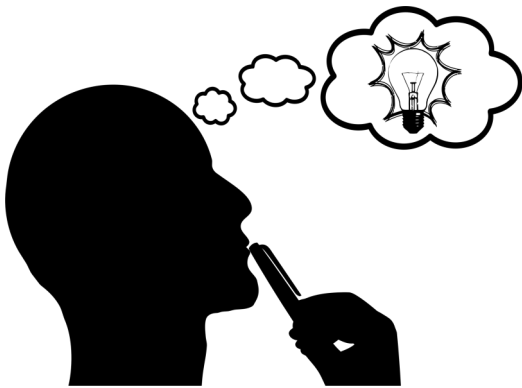
Travel Seminar Itinerary May 2017

- 16th overnight flight from Little Rock to London Heathrow
- 17th arrive Heathrow, collect hire car, drive to Isle of Wight <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/days-out/regionlondonsoutheast/isle-of-wight>
- 18th tour Isle of Wight <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-needles-headland-and-tennyson-down> , meet with Colin Ford <http://www.getty.edu/publications/virtuallibrary/0892366818.html> , drive to Tintagel <http://www.thisisnorthcornwall.com/tintagel.html>
- 19th tour Tintagel Castle <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/tintagel-castle/> , drive to Cheddar <http://cheddarvillage.co.uk/>
- 20th tour Cheddar Gorge <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cheddar-gorge> , drive to Brecon Beacons <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/brecon-beacons>
- 21st tour Tintern Abbey https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tintern_Abbey and Hay-on-Wye <http://www.hay-on-wye.co.uk/> , drive to Bewdley <https://neilsinden.wordpress.com/author/neilsinden/>
- 22nd complete service learning project in Wyre Forest <http://www.wyreclt.org.uk/> , drive to Coniston Coppermines <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/coniston-coppermines>
- 23rd tour Brantwood <http://www.brantwood.org.uk/> , drive to Stirling <https://www.syha.org.uk/where-to-stay/lowlands/stirling.aspx>
- 24th tour Stirling Castle <http://www.stirlingcastle.gov.uk/> , drive to Inverness <https://www.syha.org.uk/where-to-stay/highlands/inverness.aspx>
- 25th tour Culloden Battlefield <http://www.nts.org.uk/Culloden/Home/> , drive to Pitlochry <https://www.syha.org.uk/where-to-stay/highlands/pitlochry.aspx>
- 26th tour Killiecrankie Visitor Center <http://www.nts.org.uk/Property/Killiecrankie/> , drive to Alston <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/alston>
- 27th drive to Hartington Hall <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/hartington-hall> , <https://www.chatsworth.org/>
- 28th drive to Oxford <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/oxford>
- 29th tour Blackwells <https://www.blackwell.co.uk/rarebooks/> , drive to London, drop off hire car, tube to St Pauls <http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/london-st-pauls>
- 30th fly to Arkansas

For further information or for more details, contact UAM or the instructor,
Dr. Kay J. Walter at walter@uamont.edu

How Will You Celebrate Spring?

Our next issue of the newsletter will consider spring both as a season and as a metaphor for a new beginning. How will you celebrate the earth's rebirth and Persephone's return? Send responses to our newsletter editor at walter@uamont.edu



Bright Ideas Wanted

Have ideas you'd like board members to discuss in our newsletter?

Send them to our newsletter editor at walter@uamont.edu

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