

The English Pub

ACTELA's Newsletter

Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts



Letter from the President

The English Pub welcomes a new editorial assistant this fall. Ashley King will be helping with forthcoming issues, so be on the lookout for her clever contributions. She has agreed to write for us about her study of Japanese culture and language for the next issue.

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Greetings ACTELA,

In my favorite novel, *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo reflects on a season of bad harvest and tells himself, "Since I survived that year...I shall survive anything." The past year-and-a-half have felt like that to me, and I reckon you feel the same.

I am at times both exhausted and excited about the work we are doing in education, but the former tends to overwhelm the latter. It seems like so much is out of my control, so I delight in those things I can. I can ensure that learning is taking place in my



classroom. I can ensure that my students feel supported and loved. I can support my coworkers. I can make sure I am hydrated.

I hope you find this newsletter both useful and uplifting. I also hope that you surround yourself with people who build you up. The work we are all doing as teachers of English and language arts is of great importance, and we can't do that alone.

I hope you have had a wonderful start to the school year and wish you good health. Drink plenty of water; love yourself and others.

Aaron Hall

ACTELA President

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Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts

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Editorial Note

by Dr Kay J. Walter

If it seems to have been an age since you last saw a new issue of *The English Pub*, it's not an illusion. We're glad you missed us. As it did to you, to our entire world, Covid happened. We all scrambled to survive, to protect, to endure, and hoped for brighter days to come. We locked down, isolated, quarantined, masked up, and prayed for vaccines. When they came, we got our jabs, but then we learned about breakthroughs and reinfections. We sighed and went on, especially ELA teachers. The world recognized nurses and doctors as the frontline workers in danger, but what about the teachers? We attended classes and conferences virtually. We heard angry echoes of school board meetings about mask mandates.

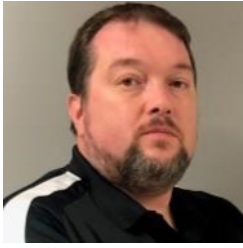


We went back to our classrooms anyway because we understood better than most that all the hype about technological advances and online learning left our students behind. When the time arose that we had to rely upon virtual learning, we did our best. We wanted to teach, and we wanted personal and not just virtual interactions with our students. They needed us. We did what we had to do to make education work for our learners, but we all suffered. We got behind and overlooked responsibilities because we are human. It's been hard.

We're back in class now, but our students struggle with heightened anxiety levels, underdeveloped social skills, and frequent depression. As a nation, mental illness plagues us. Students are edgy. More and more often tragedies greet us in the morning news. We crave safety for our homes, our families, and our students. Somehow a whole year and a half has slipped by in this daze. I'm not sure where it went. Life is very short even though life during a pandemic seems illusory.

My own summer travel plans to Europe got postponed in 2020 and then cancelled altogether. I'm still waiting for an opportunity to reschedule my flights. I don't want a refund. I want to return to a world where I can travel in safety. I stretched my social bubble to include August Clemons and his parents. August is one of my favorite young readers. You can find photos of him and his books on page 14.

While I was in Oxford, MS visiting August and his family, I went to see Faulkner's home, but like much of the world we love and rely upon, it was closed. Here's the bottom line: we read. The stories we study teach us to hope. Brighter days are coming. This difficulty is not the end of our tale. If *The English Pub* didn't appear in 2020, it will be back in 2021. There will always be more news to share in issues of our newsletter. Here is the first of them. If you enjoy it, [write and let us know](#). Send us your reports, ideas, concerns, awards, honors, and tales of victories. There will be more 2021 issues to come. Help us keep the faith.



Building Fences

by Grover Welch, Newport Special Schools—High School

As a child, I would ride to work with my grandfather and help him build fences. He was famous for his fencing, and he had a reputation for lining out the straightest, tightest fence in the state. His reputation meant he was almost always busy. Some of his work was fixing the fences he had built when they had been demolished in an accident or storm. He always repaired fences for a really good price, and insurance companies called on him day and night whenever tragedy struck.

I remember walking the line with him and watching him use his transit level. He would stop regularly, every so many steps, to mark a hole. Then he would have me running to and fro placing fence posts at each mark. Fence posts then were heavy, round, and wooden. My grandfather would step off the distance as we walked. He knew exactly how many steps to count for the gap.

He would pull wire fencing the same way, anchoring the wire to the end post and pulling it tight on each middle post. He would set the posts so well in the ground that they stood in a perfect line, no lean, never a wobble. It was artistry at work, and he never, to my knowledge, built a bad piece of fence. To know him was to trust him, and people came from all around Kentucky to hire him.



He told me once, “Whatever you do, you have to do it with care and confidence.” Now, thirty years later, my world seems to be full of hastily constructed fences. After crimes perpetrated by awful (not lawful) men, the world seems to be in a state of tearing down memories once constructed with pride, our fences.

However we look at it, in a short time we can number in weeks we will be standing in front of amazing

little faces. We need to have our elevator speeches ready in those first weeks of instruction. We will have to address the awful events of this year and the history of many years past. As an English teacher, I am planning some pretty deep dives in the months ahead not only to teach my students what has happened but also to give them a vision of what can happen as they grow into adults who take control of the future.

Civil disobedience has its roots in antiquity, but its more recent application can be traced to American essayist Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862). Thoreau was arrested for refusing to pay a poll tax. He believed the money generated from the tax would be used to fund the Mexican War, a campaign with which he was at odds. He is famously quoted as saying, "Every actual state is corrupt. Good men must not obey laws too well." Later members of the Civil Rights Era, Martin Luther King, Jr. most notably, adopted a form of nonviolent resistance that cemented civil rights laws in the 50's and 60's.

When we return to class, my students and I will begin with discussions centered amid these earlier protests because I believe that only in context will my students truly understand the depth of our nation's pain. We are living with strife and confusion in our communities right now, but ultimately change happens. Students will need buttressing to help them fence out fearmongering and hate. In my classroom we do that through deliberate planning and preparation just as my grandfather stepped off and prepared the support for his fences.

I spoke with a teacher at my school who had very little understanding of what was going on and has failed to follow any specifics of media coverage. That teacher, Facebook aware, had not looked deeply at any of the issues. "I teach math. When is it going to come up?" he asked me. I fear such narrowness of view can create strained relationships and sew discord in the classroom. I do not believe in telling any teacher what to think or how to feel about the events of 2020.



Grover's grandfather taught him that "Whatever you do you have to do it with care and confidence." This is a fence-building lesson Grover teaches his students to apply to their composition.

However, every teacher has an obligation to answer student questions, and my students will surely have new questions this fall.

It is important to identify for students all the factors in the protests and riots that swirl around them. I will teach them short lessons on Antifa and Black Lives Matter. We will discuss in safe conversations Colin Kapernick, Travon Martin, Eric Garner, and inevitably George Floyd and the world-shaking results of recent weeks.

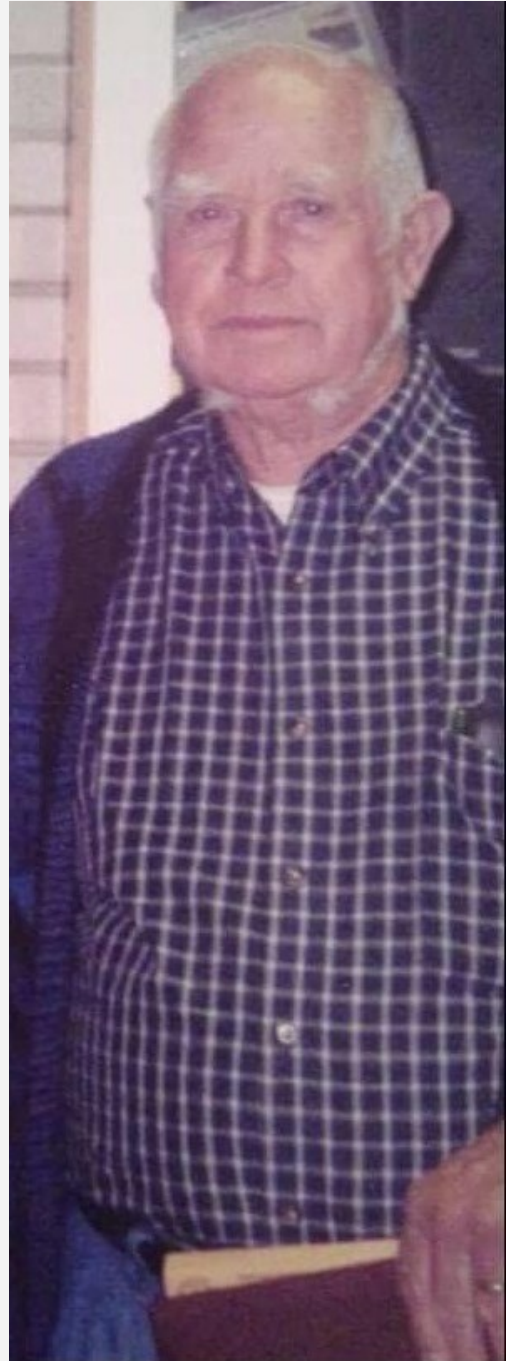
Student dialogue in class will be guided by questions like these that will prompt deep learning:

- Why do you agree/disagree with these actions and outcomes?
- What would you recommend as a beginning of retribution?
- How can you elaborate on the reasons for the recent turmoil?
- What steps could you take to build a better tomorrow?
- How can a model be constructed that would change things?
- What elements would you choose to change to make life safer for African Americans?

We will, however, have to fence in some of those discussions to keep the classroom safe. Particularly, we must see ourselves as teachers with facts and ideas to keep these discussions positive. I talk with my classes weekly in circles. Before school let out, we were having discussions on many deep topics, so my students are accustomed to this difficult and essential part of their growth. I believe that just as the protests and demonstrations are tearing down the inequitable fences of modern law enforcement, we have a duty in the classroom to teach our kids how to erect new and better fences. Society is after all a product of socially constructed systems of governance.

I believe that the work my students and I do this year together in our classroom will go toward building a better future, contributing to the future fences—student-lead, of course. I will be slow, deliberate, and prepared to make these study and reliable fences for our future children. Just as my grandfather instructed, I'll work with care and confidence. However, these posts will be the heaviest I've lifted.

Wilbur Morris built fences from 1952 until he retired at the age of 75. He never owned an auger and did all his work by hand.



ANNOUNCEMENTS, AWARDS, NEWS, AND NOTES

- First, let's all shout "Hurrah!" *The English Pub* was awarded the 2020 Newsletter of Excellence Award by NCTE. We are one of ten newsletters in the world to receive this honor, and we claim it this time for the fourth year in a row.
- Since our last issue emerged, we have collected many, many new readers. Our map now indicates active readership across thirty-two nations. ACTELA extends a hearty welcome to our first-time viewers in the following places:

In April 2020—Columbia, MO; Olive Branch, MS; Mount Juliet, TN; Hayden, ID; Buffalo, NY; and Sioux Falls, SD

In May—Cedar Falls, IA; Worcester, MA; Indianapolis, IN; Henning, TN; Gainesville, FL; Cambridge, MA; Tenaflly, NJ; Evanston, IL; Northridge, CA; Broken Arrow, OK; Oak Park, IL; and Schaumburg, IL

In June—San Bruno, CA; West Hollywood, CA; Grover, MO; Albany, CA; Republic of Moldova; Valley Village, CA; Menifee, CA; Newark, United Kingdom; Spokane, WA; El Cerrito, CA; Bangor, United Kingdom; Enfield, United Kingdom; East Orange, NJ; Oakland, CA; Chertsey, United Kingdom; Bethany, OK; Zaragoza, Spain; Clarksville, TN; and Wichita, KS

In July—Hammond, LA; Barnett, MO; Rochester, MN; Upland, CA; Blacktown, Australia; Fairfield, IA; Wauseon, OH; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Ocean City, MD; Laredo, TX; Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada; Watford



City, ND; and Bydgoszcz, Poland

In August—Haslet, TX; Idaho Falls, ID; Redmond, WA; Carnegie, PA; and Richmond Hill, NY

We also had new readers from one town in Arkansas—Hermitage. It's important to see that we are still expanding coverage in our own state.

In September—Palmyra, VA

In October—Hawkins, TX; Gdansk, Poland; Moscow, ID; Melbourne, AR; Ardmore, AR; and Leachville, AR

We're happy to be back to growing our readership in Arkansas!

In November—Springfield, MO and Guilford, CT

In December—Columbia, SC and Chelsea, United Kingdom. It's amazing to see how faithful our readership is at growing even when we haven't been producing new content.

Readership continues to grow in 2021. So far this year we have welcomed new readers from Livingston, NJ; York, PA; Logan, UT; Redwood City, CA; Katy, TX; Troy, AL; Valparaiso, IN; Castro Valley, CA; Garfield, AR; an undisclosed city in CT; Elmer, NJ; Changi, Singapore; an unnamed city in China; La Fayette, GA; Budapest, Hungary; Boydton, VA; Stockbridge, GA; Netherlands; Monrovia, MD; Largo, FL; Sacramento, CA; and West Helena, AR.

Let's keep spreading the word. Our newsletter has something to share with literacy enthusiasts everywhere!

- Braden Taylor, recent assistant in the editorial offices of *The English Pub*, was awarded the Drew County Extension Homemakers Clubs 2020

Basic membership in ACTELA begins at \$20. Student discounts and lifetime memberships are also available [here](#).



WHAT A BARGAIN!

Scholarship to help support his senior year at University of Arkansas at Monticello.

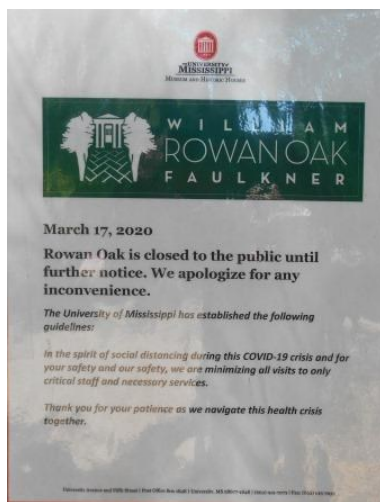
- Brycial Williams was named 2020 Arkansas Teacher of the Year. A blog post celebrating Brycial's success is available [here](https://professorjballen.blogspot.com/2020/08/black-male-teacher-of-year-is-inspiring.html) <https://professorjballen.blogspot.com/2020/08/black-male-teacher-of-year-is-inspiring.html>.
- Braden Taylor was also awarded a UAM Alumni Scholarship for the spring 2021 semester.
- Dr Kay Walter has been once again selected as a finalist for the UAM Hornaday Outstanding Teaching Award.
- Dr Kay Walter and five of her students presented research papers at an (online) InContact international interdisciplinary conference on Memory, Guilt, and Shame in Poland. See their masked and socially distant photo on page 15.
- Three of her students read papers at the 28th annual St Francis Writers' Conference via Zoom, and one of them (our own Braden Taylor) was awarded the Best Overall Presentation prize.
- Dr Walter is a new lifemember of the Ruskin Art Club of Los Angeles. The upcoming newsletter of this organization will feature an article by her.
- Dr Walter was also recently published on page 21 of the Autumn 2020 edition of *The Friends of Ruskin's Brantwood Newsletter*.
- Former editorial assistants for *The English Pub*, Ana Rodriguez-Mesa and Braden Taylor, have entered graduate study at the University of Arkansas this academic year and are now located in Fayetteville. We certainly miss them and wish them well.
- **What about you? What news do you have to share with fellow members of ACTELA? What have you missed or found useful to help you and your students survive? Share your ideas. Send them to your newsletter editor [here](#).**



What COVID Makes Us Miss



One of the world's best bookstores in Fayetteville has been closed to casual browsers.



Faulkner's home isn't welcoming guests.



Even the statue of the great Southern writer in downtown Oxford, Mississippi is wearing a mask.

Not having a chance to travel is one of the difficulties most of us suffer as we endure the pandemic. Dianna Baxter shares with us her memories of a journey to Britain in 2015 and her thoughts of the significance of what she experienced on her travel seminar studying British literature in the United Kingdom. She is now an ELA teacher in Dumas who encourages both her students and her children to read. See a picture of her twins enjoying their books on page 13.



Quotes from my journal while abroad:

May 12, 2015

“I have been in this beautiful country, England, since May 10th, Mother’s Day. I have thanked God every chance I get for the experience of a lifetime. I am grateful and feel lucky to share this great adventure with four amazing women who have shown me a woman’s strength, compassion, and true caring for one another.”

May 14, 2015

“On May 11th, we visited [Knole of Sevenoaks](#). Words would never be enough to explain the luxury of this historical, royal manor which was home to Archbishops and Kings since 1603. The tapestry on the walls, the intricate decorative tiled ceilings, and the exotic canopied beds were all still preserved for the eye to marvel at.”

May 20, 2015

“On May 16th, we visited [Canterbury Castle](#) and Cathedral. The castle was awe inspiring, but the Cathedral was much more than I am able to explain with words. Every place we have visited thus far has sent chills through my body for the beauty my eyes were beholding, however [Canterbury Cathedral](#) not only was beautiful upon my eyes but was MOST beautifully spiritual for my soul. The echoes of prayers could be heard throughout the grand halls and the tombs which held Saints brought tears to my eyes.”

These are just a few quotes taken from my journal during this time, but there is so much more! In fact, as I was typing these quotes, my heart was set aflutter, and my eyes were damp. Being able to sit where poets sat and look out at the still, well-preserved, landscapes which they, as well, looked upon as they wrote their poetry was pure magic!

**NCTE will be
virtual again!**



**Equity, Justice, &
Antiracist Teaching**



November 18-21, 2021

Speakers We Can't Wait to Hear:

Michelle Obama, former First Lady of USA; **Amanda Gorman**, National Youth Poet Laureate who read at Inauguration for President Joe Biden, 2021; and many more

Don't Miss It!

#NCTE21

Arkansas Anthology 2022

Call for Submissions:

Deadline March 18, 2022

Send to ARAnthology@gmail.com

Please use Google Doc for written submissions, JPG for images, MP4 for video, and MP3 for audio.

Be sure to include ALL necessary info: email, phone number, and statement claiming the work is original to the submitter.



AEJ 2021

Fall publication of the journal will be posted on November 1st. The submissions deadline for the spring issue will be in January 2022. The theme of the spring issue is undetermined at present so stick around for more information soon. Also, watch for upcoming announcements about the future of this publication in the next issue of our newsletter.

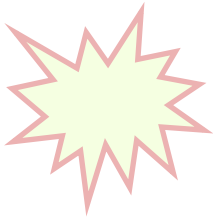
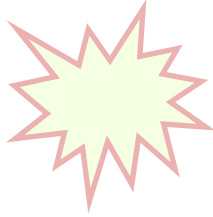
Readers and Writers



Thanks to Malisa Kennedy for these photos of the young readers and writers in her life. Pictured on Story Walk at the Monticello Library is Brayden Harrison and Emily Youngquist.



Dianna Baxter shares this photo of her twins, both avid readers.



August Clemons has been enjoying books all his life. A recent favorite is *Manjhi Moves a Mountain*, which he read after his parents noticed a review of the book in our [April 2020 newsletter](#). Thanks to his mother for sharing these photos of August.





Savanna Westhelle shares her favorite book with her doll while teaching her to practice Covid safety measures by wearing a custom-fit mask she made.

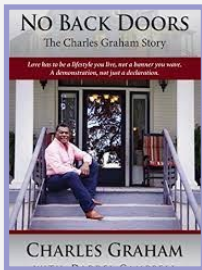
When Braden Taylor visited U of A to explore opportunities for graduate school, he and Dr Leigh Sparks wore masks and kept socially distant.



Dr Walter and students presented at a conference in Poland via Zoom.



From the Library



No Back Doors: The Charles Graham Story

Author: Charles Graham with Darrel Campbell

Self published

Publication date: 2019

Available through Amazon.com for \$17.99

Charles Graham, a music minister, gospel singer, and evangelist, is one lucky man. His story is a rags to riches tale—but not riches as in wealth. His riches come from the love of God, his family, and friends. In his autobiography, *No Back Doors: The Charles Graham Story*, Graham, along with writer Darrel Campbell, shares his amazing journey from a poor boy in Arkansas to an accomplished minister and gospel singer who eventually lived a majority of his life in Temecula, CA, traveled the world, and returned to Arkansas successful.

Graham's story begins in August 1956, when he was born as the fifth child into a family of cotton farmers in the Deep South who showed him how hard work pays off. His home, and the homes of most people in his neighborhood, didn't even have running water or indoor plumbing, yet Graham's parents, teachers, friends, and especially God, touched him and taught him profound life lessons. In his book, he shares inspirational stories about these people and how they helped shape his attitudes, beliefs, and character. In one particular story, he explains how he couldn't even attend a white church, but now he owns one and ministers in it; he shares how he began singing, attended college, saw race riots, ministered in the United Kingdom and Scotland, and how he saw several miracles. Stories like these show how Graham, at a very early age, had the desire to "spread his wings and fly." He had the desire to leave Arkansas and see the world. Once he was old enough to journey beyond his home state, he realized that being raised poor didn't matter—what mattered were words; he realized words had the power to change people and their lives. Words in music, words in sermons, and words from loved ones helped Graham see the world and earn a Bachelor's Degree and honorary doctorate in music ministry from Southwest Baptist University.

His story is one that everyone should read because it transcends race, religion, ethnicity, and shows readers that anything is possible with hope and love. According to Graham, "His main goal is to inspire people to live beyond your past hurts and disappointments." He wants people to understand that the conditions you are born into do not define who you are or what you become. This book is exactly the type of book the world needs right now. It is a story that will uplift ELA teachers in Arkansas and inspire all readers.

This review is provided by [Dr. T. Madison Peschock, Ocean County College](#).

Community Involvement in Literacy Support

Interview with Kathy Anderson Philander Smith College Library Director



By Braden Taylor, UA



Did you have a favorite teacher and what was the most important lesson you learned from them?

I had a few favorite teachers but in elementary school my favorite teacher was Mrs. Wilson. She was my 4th grade teacher and she was so kind and thoughtful. It was like when you talked to her you were the only person in the world. She made you feel special and made you feel like you could do anything and learn anything and nothing was too hard for you to understand. I liked that quality about her. She took time with her students. I really admired her and wanted to be just like her.

Can you remember anything she might have helped you with in particular?

No, it was just her attitude and her demeanor. She was like that with everyone, and actually she was my son's teacher too and one of his favorites.

How is being a librarian like being an English and Language Arts teacher?

A lot of being a librarian has to do with the researcher and essays. An English or Language Arts teacher also deals with articles and research papers. You are doing a lot of similar things to librarianship. You are finding the proper articles and proper papers, and then you are having to develop them in your English class. Both jobs require knowing how to develop and respond to information.

Do you have any memories from being a classroom teacher and what did you teach?

Well, I thoroughly enjoyed teaching. At UAM I taught the first year seminar course and a reading course for developmental students. Most of the students I taught were freshmen. It helped them get acquainted with the campus, helped them break the boundaries many students have with libraries and librarians. It was a gateway to get them into the library, and it helped them

learn how to ask questions in the library. It offered them a familiar face and point of contact when in the library; I really liked that.

Do you think that freshman year relationship carried throughout these students' college careers? Without that freshman experience do you think it might have been harder for them?

For some students, yes. I developed relationships with some of the students that continued until they graduated. It really helped them a lot. Of course, some students are going to be successful no matter what because they have the motivation. Other students who are shy or timid, or if this is the first time they have been away from home, they need that point of contact so I think that freshman seminar can be really important.

How does your job at Philander Smith College differ from the job you had at UAM?

I am in an administrative position now, but we are a small college so I still get that personal connection that I was able to get at UAM. I really like that. And Philander Smith College is an HBCU, so my job here really helps me help people of color.

What are the functions of a library director?

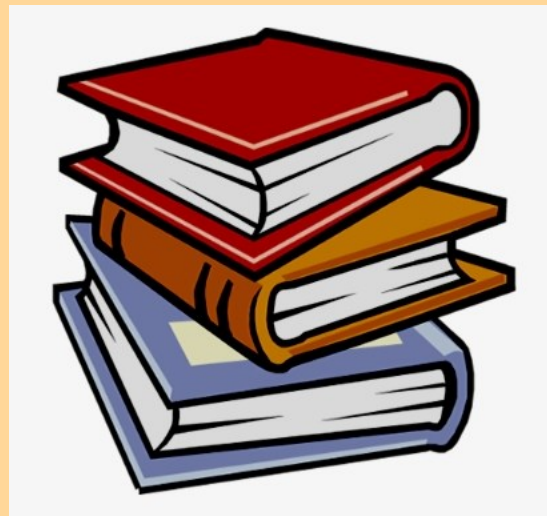
It is to oversee all aspects of the library services and oversee all departments and areas in the library such as public circulation and reference materials and special archives. I supervise every aspect of the library, and I am the point of contact for the rest of the college. I am a part of the cabinet for the vice president of academic affairs.

I spent some time reading about your college on the website where I learned a lot about the history.

We have a very rich history. I have learned so much. I have officially been here a year, and I have learned so much about Philander Smith history and Little Rock history. It has been so much fun for me because I love learning about new things. It helps me learn more about my culture as an African American and about the culture of Arkansas. I have been to some new places in this job, so it has enriched me in many ways.

How is Covid 19 going to affect the functions of your library in the fall?

Well, it is going to change; you know everyone is changing. There will be more online resources in the fall. We are going to have to think outside the box on how we will engage the students. We will be on a limited services module, so we will have online instruction and face to face in only some areas. Usually you would have library instruction and you would go to the library or librarians would come to you, but now it might be virtual. We will do more one on one type instruction directed to what that student needs. We



have to be much more flexible on how we do things.

How will you be engaging your students with the sacrifices you are making in your library?

We will be doing zoom, phone calls, and emails. These services have increased because students and faculty feel better this way. We already had an “ask a librarian” service but now we are planning on expanding this.

Philander Smith is a historically Black college, how has your campus responded to the recent movement for racial justice?

I am not sure about any official statements, but we do have social justice organizations on campus and there was an organized peaceful protest here on campus. We are very aware of social justice issues, and Philander Smith is very active in social justice movements.

What sets an HBCU apart from other schools other than race? Or is that the defining factor?

I think there is a lot more to it. I think that it is a major factor to educate our black students, but it is all about learning who you are and where you came from. We consider how we can help engage our community locally and globally.

How active is interaction and support from alumni at your school, and how is it important to your students?

It is very active. We have lots of support from our alumni. I think it is wonderful, and it shows the student what can be possible. The alumni are from all walks of life and all kinds of academia. It shows the students that the sky is the limit. They now have someone showing them that anything is possible. The alumni come to the campus and talk to the students about what they do and what can happen. It is amazing to see how many alumni are actively supporting the college.

Do you have any stories of interaction between alumni and current students?

During homecoming there was a parade, and all the alumni came and greeted the students. Everyone had a great time talking and getting to know one another. They talked about jobs and majors and it was really a great time.



What is ALA Holding Space and what part will you play in it?

I was very honored to be asked to be a panelist on that. We are going to be discussing what is going on right now and leadership in HBCU libraries. It has not been finalized yet, but I look forward to being a part of that.

What do you hope to teach people who tune in?

I just hope to let them know that HBCU libraries are a wealth of information where you can learn about

anything. The area the library is in and the community around it is culturally rich. If you are a learner, it is a great place. Many of the HBCU have great collections of unusual things that are amazing to come and look at, study, and research.

Can you talk about the first presentation you made with Dr Walter?

I was extremely nervous. I am such an introvert! Presenting in front of people takes me a little while. Dr Walter encouraged me and pushed me. She kept telling me I do it all the time when I am talking to classes, so I finally got out there and did it.

Do you think it is necessary for professionals to share their ideas and what they know publicly at professional meetings?

I think so. I think it is beneficial to all parties to share what they know and collaborate on different projects. I think if you are keeping it to yourself it is doing a disservice to everybody.

What book did you love most as a child and how did you find it?

I read everything I could get my hands on. We had what was called a Weekly Reader. It was a paper you could bring home and order books from. I would pick them out, and my mother would order them. When I was at the library, for every new book I would try and be the first to read it. I was in a race with a friend to see who could read the books first. The Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys stand out the most. I found these at the school library and the local public library.

Who is your favorite author now and why?

My favorite author without a doubt is the late author Ernest Gaines. My favorite book is *A Lesson Before Dying*. He is a native to Louisiana, and my father is also a native to Louisiana. The way he talks about the setting and culture about African Americans draws you in. I read everything I can get my hands on by him. I love it all. I actually got to meet him a couple of years ago. He was doing a book reading in Louisiana, and I drove down there and got a photo with him.

What advice do you have for ELA teachers who are having trouble learning and growing with their students online?

I think the main thing is to try and keep the connection. Let them know you know where they are coming from and understand what they are going through because we are all going through it together. If you have that attitude, they will know you are sincere and know you care about them. We need more of that consideration and love for one another.

Why is lifelong learning important?

In order to grow you have to learn. If you stop learning it does not matter how many degrees you have or how far you got in education. New knowledge can be learned from anybody and everywhere, so when you stop and say “this is it” you stop growing. I think everybody should grow as long as they can. If it interests me or piques my interest, I try and learn about it. I can think about everyone's opinions and thought processes. That helps me be outside the box and be open to the possibilities of my life.

Contact Kathy Anderson by email at kanderson@philander.edu.

Global Perspective



Our wider view for this issue tells the story of a student in the United Kingdom. Young Arthur endured a pandemic lockdown in southern England which was much more rigid than our COVID19 days in Arkansas. His efforts to continue learning and advance in his education were productive even if the circumstances were not optimal. Arthur took his lessons seriously and used his family resources, creativity, and clever wit to master the tasks he was given. His grandfather, Paul Dawson, narrates Arthur's story for us here.

Arthur lives in a tiny village in Sussex, England called Norman's Bay. Its neighbouring village is Pevensey Bay, known in history as the place where the Norman invaders landed from their boats in 1066 to invade England. Arthur has been going to school in Pevensey since he was five years old, and he has been in the pages of this journal before along with his big sister, Florence, when they shared their thoughts on ['World Book Day.'](#) Florence and Arthur both enjoyed the wonderful experience of walking through history on their way to school, the kind of experience that few of us will ever know. They walked first through the grounds of Pevensey Castle which is still surrounded by the ancient curtain wall built by the Romans to protect the site around 55 B.C. The castle would later include a 'new' Norman fort built to protect the site and the French soldiers inside it. They then walked past St Mary's Church, the very first church built in England by the Normans. It is still in use. Beside the church there is a little lane that runs between the churchyard and an old half-timbered Tudor house of the 1400s that leads to the gates of a modern, bright and welcoming school yard. For all of their school



years, Florence and Arthur have been treading on a pathway that has carried men and women – and their families – through times of peace and war, now landscaped and preserved for generations to come.

In 2020, Pevensey, Norman’s Bay, and England – like every other town and village in every country – suffered another battle, this time a silent one. In March, with Arthur (ten years old) in ‘year five,’ the country went into lockdown as covid 19 stretched its tentacles out to strangle the world. Of course, his sister, by now thirteen and in a different school, was in lockdown, too. The schools rapidly brought contingency planning into action, with take-home lesson formats and with online access to teachers. ‘At-home’ parents became teachers; television networks aired educational programmes to suit school curricula, and imaginations were tested as pupils, parents, and teachers worked and played together in the name of education. Here is Arthur’s story:

The first lockdown came in March of 2020, and school exercise books record the tasks and projects in diary form, something that will be preserved as part of the family’s history. An early assignment was ‘My letter to Boris Johnson the Prime Minister’:

Dear Mr Johnson,
I would like to tell you about how I feel about my school being closed. I’m missing my teachers and I miss seeing my friends. My mum is trying her best to teach me. I am worried that my education is going to suffer.

A writing task two weeks later was in response to news reports of the high demands upon the country’s National Health Service and the dedication of the hospital workers. Pupils were tasked to write a personal letter of thanks which would reflect their own, individual understanding of the issues being reported in the daily news and their understanding of the seriousness of the situation.

Arthur wrote these words:

Dear NHS,
First of all I would like to say a big thank you to your team,
Keep it up. How does it make you feel at this hard time?
Are you scared? Stay safe because you are doing so well. I
imagine it will be extra difficult wearing a protective mask
and costume.
THANK YOU!



British lockdown rules did not allow Arthur and his friends to play in the same yard together, but they enjoyed many lively games of socially-distant Swingball over his garden fence.

The importance of self-distancing and of exercise was taken very seriously, and a soccer ball was kicked, alone, against the garden wall for many hours over the following weeks while imaginary game scenarios went through Arthur's mind. Ever resourceful, Arthur found an inventive way found to play socially-distanced swing ball with a friend over the garden fence!

Arthur's family established a lockdown routine to help life seem more normal: begin the day as in the normal term time: up and dressed, breakfast, and a little exercise to replace the walk to school, and then to settle down to lessons either with mum or with online teaching. Arthur promoted his exercise regime with a poster.

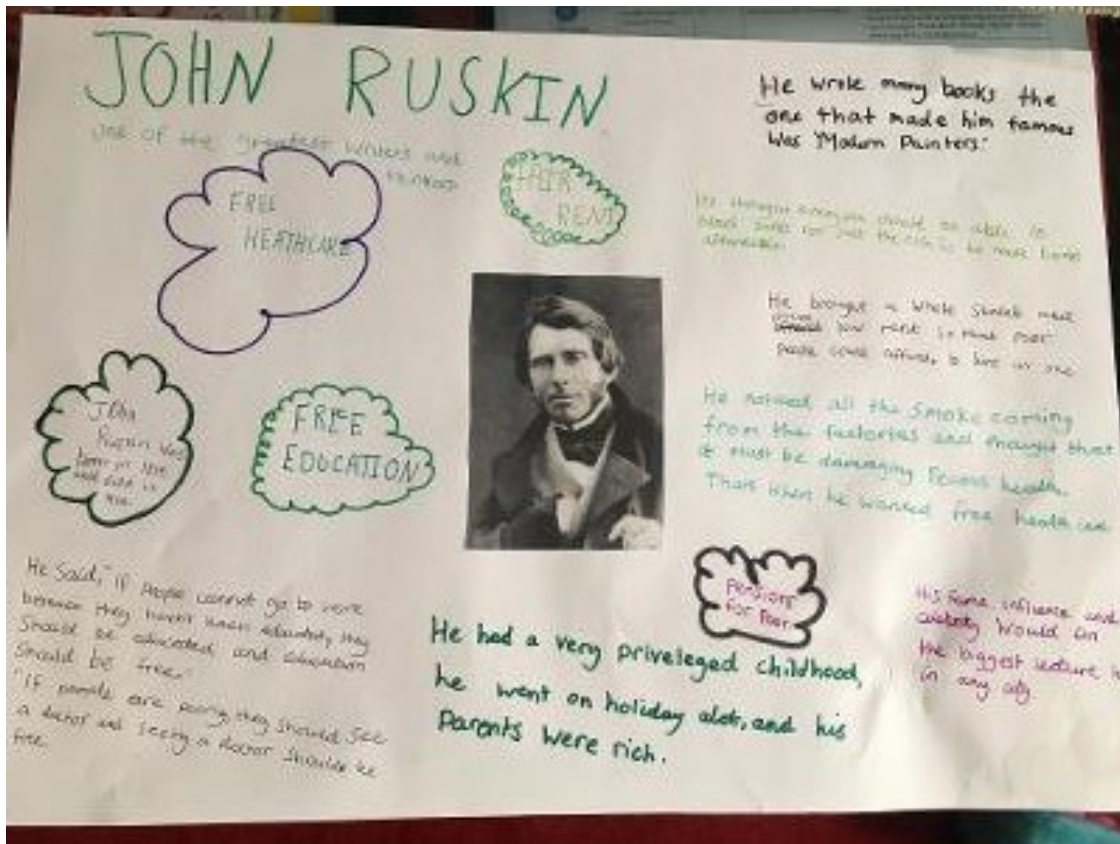


Arthur's poster on the need for exercise suggests how much he missed playing out of doors with his friends.

His smile disguises a little sadness, though, as not only the school

routine but the highlights of each season were being lost:

At Easter the village comes alive, we have Easter Egg Hunt on the green followed by a quiz and a raffle. There's always lots of people walking on the beach. Now, due to coronavirus, the village sleeps at Easter. On Easter Sunday when I woke up it was a really sunny day but it was strange because there was nobody on the beach, no egg hunt, no quiz. They put up a Road Closed sign at the entrance to the village. I'm just waiting for the virus to stop and for them to find a cure so I can go back to normal life.



Arthur's informative poster about a famous person from history told about John Ruskin.

In the meantime, good school work was being done. A visit to a museum exhibition the previous year gave Arthur ideas when he was asked to design a poster about a famous person from history. He may have surprised the teacher with his choice. It was not someone from his classroom learning but from books at home and images from the exhibition. Arthur chose John Ruskin for his subject and produced a poster that highlighted some of Ruskin's then-radical teachings:

"If people cannot go to work because they haven't been educated, they should be educated and education should be free."

"If people are poorly, they should see a doctor and seeing a doctor should be free."

"He bought a whole street of houses and offered low rent so that the poor people could afford to live in one."

"He noticed the smoke coming from the factory chimneys and thought that it must be damaging people's health."

A daily sheet with check boxes and space for comments monitored each pupil's thoughts:

'Write down three things for which you are thankful.'

'What person brought you joy today?'

'What was the best part about your day? Draw or write about it.'

A daily series of emoji-styled faces with expressions ranging from ecstatic delight down to deepest misery – the middle one being the neutral straight mouth – instructed students to draw a circle around the face most appropriate to the day's feelings. Arthur seemed to find each day a happy one, with the best part almost every day being the walking or exercising – but with a beach beside him on one side and country walks on the other, he was much better-placed than those families in towns, especially those isolating in high-rise apartments without outdoor space.

Bird watching while walking offered exercise and fresh air, but this activity was not as much fun as tossing pancakes at Lent. Still, both offered a diversion from the lockdown routine.



Arthur's parents made sure his lockdown life was filled with fun activities like birdwatching and pancake tossing.

'Lockdown one' ended in June and school resumed with each class contained all day in its own 'bubble.' Arthur's class divided into groups of six seated around long tables with each table appropriately separated from the others. Although the arrangement was not ideal, Arthur enjoyed being with friends even in such confinement. Still, he appreciated more the open-air environment once the school day was done. The school year ended under these conditions. Arthur returned after the summer holiday for the autumn/winter term and his final 'year six' of grade school. With no public gatherings and a limit of six people able to meet in a public space, Arthur's country continued to combat the pandemic until a surge in the virus resulted in another lockdown that November which would not be eased for a return to school until March.

This of course meant that Arthur's last term before moving on to another school was curtailed to just four months, but the teaching staff and pupils managed to get the most that they probably could with carefully planned outings. There would not be the usual end-of-school celebrations and congratulations, but the teaching staff did produce a wonderful review of the

school careers of the leaving pupils, complete with video and images, anecdotes, and personal messages, all posted on the school's own secure website. The usual days spent visiting and having classroom experience at the chosen new schools during 'acclimatisation week' could not happen so on the first day of the new term Arthur bravely set out on the train (within sight of his big sister) to meet a new group of classmates who will soon become his friends for the next five years of his life.



Questions for young Arthur and his classmates can be directed to the editor of *The English Pub* [here](#).



Braden Taylor is studying for his master's degree at U of A. He made his latest presentation virtually this month for the Medieval/Renaissance Conference XXXIV at Center for Medieval/Renaissance Studies, University of Virginia at Wise.



Update from a Former Editorial Assistant

by [Ana Rodriguez](#)

En este mes de septiembre, un mes de celebración de la herencia hispana en el Estados Unidos, tengo el placer de reflejar sobre mi experiencia como estudiante de posgrado. Después de un breve descanso de dos años, al fin regresé a la escena académica. Este semestre es mi debut como profesora. Ser maestra siempre ha sido mi sueño y es mi placer informar que es todo lo que yo esperaba. Estoy muy feliz y afortunada poder vivir mis sueños. Extrañaba el caos, el estímulo intelectual, y la amistad de compañeros que tienen la misma pasión que yo. ¡Espero poder decirles más sobre mi experiencia en una futura edición de *The English Pub*!

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