

WHAT'S INSIDE

AH, JUNE. The summer is just beginning to unfurl before us, with all its promise and pleasures. When I was a kid, my local library ran a summer reading program that I loved. You'd get a little car with your name on it, or some such thing, and for each book you read you'd move it around a track. Each week my siblings and I would take out a stack of books, with their musty library smell, read them sprawled on the lawn or the couch, then record our thrilling progress when we returned them the following week. The track was long, but what did we care—the summer stretched out forever and we had all the time in the world. I was brought back to this time by Tatsuro Kiuchi's lovely cover image, its colorful bookshelves and retro feel evoking the delight I felt—and still feel—perusing a shelf of books.

Getting students of all ages excited about writing—and reading—is what we do here at Teachers & Writers, and this issue offers a sampling of the many ways that can happen. We start with a great interview with author Dennis Lehane who holds forth on the craft of writing, the majesty of Ellroy Leonard, and the American love of noir.

Camille Goodison writes of a hot summer spent teaching in the deep South, where she helped students create books—treasured long after she left—about themselves and their community. Jess deCourcy Hinds takes us on a tour of her high school's annual "Writing and Thinking Workshop," an immersion in techniques to help free the mind and the pen. In the second installment of our "Teaching Artist Snapshot" series, we feature John Isaacson, a writer and comic artist working with the Writers in the Schools program of Oregon's Literary Arts organization. And finally, Barbara Feinberg and Karen Benke share their perspectives as longtime teachers on the care and feeding of the budding young writer.

We hope you enjoy the issue, and that the months ahead offer you the time and space to meander for a while, to spend time writing, reading, traveling, playing, or just losing yourself for a short while in some perfect summer day.

— Susan Karwoska

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