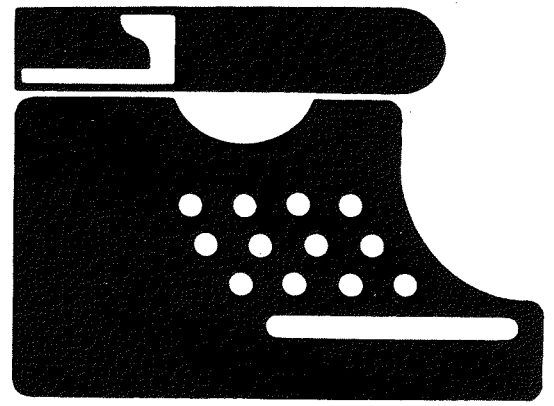


Teachers & Writers



Bi-Monthly • March-April 1990

Vol. 21, No. 4

AFTERWORD TO A NEW EDITION OF **ROSE, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT RED?**

by Kenneth Koch

I WROTE *ROSE, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT Red?* for everyone, for what is sometimes called “the general reader,” not specifically for teachers. I was interested in what had happened in my classes and wanted to tell other people about it. Of course I hoped that teachers would be among my readers, too. It turned out that many were and that some were able to use the book in their teaching. Other teachers tried but became discouraged; still others have been reluctant even to try this kind of teaching, because they felt they hadn’t read and studied enough poetry. All this being so, an afterword, intended to help and encourage teachers, seemed a good idea.

Teachers’ Doubts

I haven’t read enough poetry to know how to teach it. There wasn’t time to read much poetry, even in college. Since I don’t know much poetry, I feel insecure about it. I even feel insecure when I read most poetry. Given these conditions, how can I ask my students to write poetry and be helpful, encouraging, and full of interest while doing so, as I’d have to be to make them happy and interested and inspired? I don’t

A revised edition of KENNETH KOCH’s *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?* has just been published by Vintage Books. His article is from that edition.

even know when a line is good or bad, so how can I tell that to my students? — These are some of the things teachers have said to me, and things that a lot of teachers may think. They represent perfectly reasonable doubts. Fortunately, there’s a simple way to overcome them, which is to start reading poetry again.

Solutions: Reading Poetry on Your Own

It’s not too late; and it may be that you can learn more about poetry more quickly and easily now than you could have when you were in high school or college. You’ve had more experience, and you have a specific aim in mind: you want to teach poetry. Furthermore, you can read, as it is difficult to do in school, for your own pleasure, without having to worry about

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deadlines, papers, exams, or professors. If you had a good teacher, you probably like poetry now. But you may not like it if you had a teacher who taught you that poems were mysterious puzzles containing hidden meanings that you would perhaps never understand; or a teacher who used poetry to teach grammar and punctuation, or in any other wrong way. The good news is that you can start reading poetry anew, without the constraint of anything you were told before. A good way to start is with an anthology or two. Read around in them and, when you find a poet whose work you like, get a book of it. Or you can simply look in a bookstore or library and buy or borrow what seems good to you. There's no absolute taste in poetry: you like what you like; as you read more and become sensitive to and aware of more and more things in the poems, your taste will probably change. Among the best and clearest and most direct modern poets, whose work you may like right away, are William Carlos Williams, D.H. Lawrence, and (in Spanish or in translation) Federico García Lorca; among more recent poets, Frank O'Hara and Gary Snyder. Whatever books you start with, just read for pleasure and don't feel you have to look for symbols or hidden meanings. T.S. Eliot said that it's a characteristic of great poetry that it can be enjoyed before it is completely understood. The same is true of music. The enjoyment, at this point, is what you want.

Solutions: Reading Poetry with Other People — Courses or Discussion Groups

If you live near a college or university, you may be able to find a good literature course in poetry — a course in modern poetry, for example, or in the poetry of the Romantic period, or the poetry of the Renaissance. For poetry teaching, such a course may be more useful than a course in education. You can try the course to see if you like the poetry and like the way it's being taught. Courses have the advantage of obliging you, usually, to read a lot of poetry by one poet, or by a number of poets who lived at the same time. And, in courses, you meet other people interested in poetry. If you have a good teacher, the value of all this is greatly magnified. If a course is not available, or seems in some way not the best thing, you might try forming a reading and discussion group with colleagues and friends. Even a group of two or three can be quite productive. You might discuss Williams at one meeting, Dickinson or Donne at another.

Solutions: Reading about Poetry — Scholarship and Criticism

Most books about poetry aren't written for beginners or near-beginners but for people already familiar with

poetry. Once you've read a lot of poetry, these books can be more helpful and make more sense. A kind of book that can be useful early on is an edition of a poet's works that includes good notes on the poems — notes that explain difficult passages, obscure words, and historical references. Such books can be found in most libraries.

You may wish, too, to read some literary criticism. Sometimes criticism can help make poetry clearer and more interesting. You might begin reading criticism the way I suggested beginning to read poetry again. Look around in it and see if you find something useful, something that you like. You're not obliged to read entire books or to subscribe to theories. What you're looking for is something that will help you read the poems better, find more in them, like them more.

Further Doubts: Not Being a Poet

Some teachers feel that they won't be able to teach children to write poetry unless they themselves are poets. This isn't true. Many good teachers of poetry are not poets. If you like poetry, like children, and like teaching, it can be done. It is also true that it may make you an even better teacher if you do write some poems. You don't need to be a full-time poet in order to do so, just sit down and write. It will help you know what your students feel when they write. You may also like doing it. There may be a poetry-writing workshop at a nearby college. Or you can organize one yourself with friends and colleagues. Whether or not you go this far, it will be good for your teaching if you write poems of the kind you ask your students to write in class.

Further Doubts: Not Having a "Poetic Personality"

When I teach, I am enthusiastic and excited. I move around a lot, talk a lot, joke around with the children. The children generally write good poems. From this, some teachers who have watched me teach have concluded that, since they do not share my personality and mannerisms, this way of teaching won't work for them. This isn't true. At the Brogaw Avenue School in Newark, New Jersey, I worked with a teacher who had her fourth graders write a "Wish Poem." The idea was simply to start every line with the words "I wish" and to wish for something, no matter what. When I gave that lesson I always urged the children to be uninhibited and crazy, to wish for the wildest, strangest things they could imagine. Maybe, after all, I said, it will come true! I was excited and they were excited. They wrote about owning a lot of dogs, about going to the moon, about living in a palace. The Newark teacher did it a different way. She said, "Put

your arms down on the desk and rest your head on them and then think of what you'd really like. Close your eyes and dream. You can think about anything, anything in the whole world. Then wish for it. Write those wishes down." She said this sweetly and softly. The room was very quiet, and then the children wrote. Their poems were wonderful. The children wrote about owning a lot of rabbits, going to the moon, living in a palace, with all the variety and verve my noisily inspired students had. Teaching with the personality you have, with the knowledge and the feelings you have, if you like poetry and children, is going to be all right.

Doubts after the Fact: Discouragement after Teaching

Sometimes poetry lessons don't work out. This doesn't mean that the children don't like writing poetry or that you're unable to help them do it. In truth, *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?* is a record of my successes. I didn't say much about the failures. Teachers have been reassured to hear me say this. It is true that most of my lessons went well. But sometimes the students would be in a bad mood, angry at each other or angry at me, or I would be tired or having a cold and teaching in a perfunctory way. Sometimes the children were happy and I was happy, but the poetry was just so-so. All this happens. Sometimes an unsuccessful class would play a part in a subsequent, successful one. Something would have been learned that was useful to the children or to me later on. To see this happen, though, you have to go on teaching. Which is what I urge teachers to do. On most days, the lessons in *Rose* really do work. If classes persist in going wrong, here are some things to consider:

- 1) Are you genuinely enthusiastic about the poem and the poetry-writing idea? If you aren't, the children probably won't be either.
- 2) Are you allowing enough time at the beginning of the class to get the children interested in and excited about the idea? Especially if you are tired or busy, you may have a tendency to hurry up that part — maybe even hurry up to get to the "good" part, the actual writing. But this part of the lesson needs time, as much time as it takes for you to be the Muse, the one who inspires the poets to write.
- 3) Are you active and encouraging enough while the children are writing? You may have to continue being the Muse while the poems are being written. Many teachers I watched who said their classes went poorly were neglecting this part of the work, staying at the front of the room instead of going around and seeing what the children were writing and talking to them about it.

These possible sources of trouble are, of course, related. The teacher has to be a guiding presence, inspiring and responding, all the time, from the suggestion of the poetry idea at the start to the reading of the children's poems at the end. The daughter of friends of mine came home from school in tears because her teacher had "forced" her and her classmates to do one of these lessons. The teacher had simply announced the "idea" and then told the children to write. That's too hard.

Doubts: Conclusion

I hope that some teachers will be reassured by the foregoing. The most important thing to know is that a poor education in poetry can be remedied rather easily. Not liking poetry or being made uncomfortable by it is often just the result of having been poorly taught. By reading you can remedy this problem in yourself and, by teaching, help children never to have it.

Teaching Revision

In *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?* there is almost nothing about revision, about how to help students to work on and improve their poems. The dangers of emphasizing revision are evident: it can be no fun, the poem may become drier and more conventional, there may be a lot of sterile and pointless changing around of commas and words. What one wants is a kind of revising that is as adventurous and inspiring as writing the first version. One such way to revise is to add more lines, maybe even a lot. For example, if a child has written a poem in which he asks a bear questions about the snow, and if the poem seems a little conventional and dull, you might ask the poet to think of five or ten other questions to ask the bear: about school, the latest news, baseball, anything. Sometimes the writer, in expanding his poem, finds what he really wanted to say. Or something more exciting and amusing than what he said at first.

Another way to see new possibilities in a poem is to arbitrarily rearrange its lines. Make a copy of the original poem and cut it up into strips, one line per strip. Place these strips in a box or a hat or just put them on a desk and mix them up. Then pick up the strips at random and scotch-tape them down in that random order on a new page. The resulting new poem will probably be merely jumbled in some ways but interesting in others. Ask the student which version he likes better. You can then ask him to write a third poem inspired by these first two. This is a good way to get children interested in the order in which they say things and in how words sound depending on where they are placed.

One revision method I sometimes suggested to students was simply to add details. A child wrote, "The party was fun." I said, "Say some of the amusing things that happened." Sometimes I said, "The first three lines are wonderful. Could you write some more like that?"

Whatever you do with revision — and I would advise not doing too much — don't ever make it seem punitive. It should not be anguished "cutting," but a pleasant chance to make something new out of what is already there — a chance to break things up, to add to them, to twist them around — or, to put it more mildly and simply, to add, subtract, or rearrange. These things I'm suggesting are, in fact, more like making different versions of a poem — seeing different possibilities — than like the usual idea of revising, which is making small changes on a work that is essentially already done. Students, helped by these other strategies, will begin to learn how to do that last kind of revision for themselves.

Revising can also be part of teaching a poetry lesson over two or three classes, which may be a good idea with certain poems — for example, "Wallace Stevens's "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird." The first class session could be spent reading and discussing the poem and writing one or two stanzas; the second writing a longer poem; the third, maybe a different version (or revision) of the last poem.

Poets in the Schools

Most states have poets-in-the-schools programs. These programs send poets into schools to teach students to write poetry and to teach teachers to do this teaching, too. The idea of these programs is wonderful: children see real poets, poets see real

children, teachers see the two working together and learn more about poetry and how to deal with it.

If a poet is coming to your school, tell the principal you'd like the poet to work with your classes. Read some of the poet's work in advance. If possible, meet with the poet and ask what he or she is planning to do. You may want to tell the poet about the poetry your students have already written and read. While the poet is working at the school, ask for lessons you can try on days when he or she isn't there. And, by all means, before the poet leaves for good, ask for lesson ideas you can use later on. The point is to get as much from the poet's stay in your school as you can; the poet's continuing effect in the school will be through you and what you can do for your students. Finally, see if the poet can come back to the school after several months to watch you teach and to talk with you about what you've done in the meantime.

You can get information about poets-in-the-schools programs (sometimes they're called "writers-in-the-schools" or "artists-in-education") from your state arts council.

PLUGS



Teachers interested in the idea of a core curriculum should read *50 Hours: A Core Curriculum for College Students*, recently published by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Single copies are available from the Office of Publications and Public Affairs, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506.

The Writer's Eye in Dialogues of Plato, Gulliver's Travels, A Room of One's Own, and One Hundred Years of Solitude is a summer (July 9-August 3) institute sponsored by the Brookline Public Schools and funded by the NEH. Participants will receive a \$1,000 stipend, travel expenses, and lodging. For more information, contact Naomi Gordon, Brookline Public Schools, 333 Washington St., Brookline, MA 02146, tel. (617) 730-2446. Applications deadline is April 10.

Refined Found Poetry

by James W. Penha

AT LEAST AS MUCH AS AUTOMATIC WRITING (Surrealism's great gift to language arts pedagogy), Dada-Pop Art's invention of found poetry has proven its value to the writing process. For my high school and college students, found poetry has been an effective ice-breaker to ride into the glacier of verse.

But is found poetry misleading insofar as it suggests that poetry is only chopped-up prose? Within a course that seeks to call on the creativity of students, found poetry — in isolation — may be a step in the wrong direction. However, as a writer and teacher who believes that prose does provide a valuable first step on the road to poetry, I can't forsake such a sure-fire strategy. Thus in recent years I have used found poetry as an introduction (a sort of written pre-writing event) to poetic composition. I call the unit Refined Found Poetry.

I ask students to bring a newspaper or magazine to class. I arrive with the journals I have been collecting for the lesson. Scissors, glue, and tape should also be on hand.

1. *Today, we shall begin an experiment that, for most of you, will result in the writing of a poem. I shall ask you to do some strange things. If you humor me, most of these requests will make sense — eventually. First, look through your newspapers and magazines in search of a brief passage — about 50 words in length — that strikes you as intriguing or funny or bizarre. The passage can be a complete piece. Or you may select a part of a story, or a caption or an advertisement — anything verbal. Keep an eye out for those small fillers that tend toward the peculiar.*

As students take the 20 or so minutes required for this activity, I circulate to make it easier for them to ask if I think various excerpts will work. If the student likes the passage, I approve it.

2. *When you have landed a keeper, rip it out of the paper or magazine. Tidy students may use scissors.*

I urge students to limit excerpts to no more than 75 words, since extended passages would be difficult to work with in subsequent steps. Students may edit down longer pieces if necessary.

3. *Affix the clipping to a page in your notebook so that you will have a record of your starting point for this exercise.*

4. *Now, I am going to ask you to do something that modern pedagogy warns against: Copy the passage word for word in your notebook.*

Copying insures that the words of the selected article pass through the student's mind. More practically, students will need to work with the lifted sentences on a scale larger than that of most newspapers.

5. *Okay. Put away your notebooks for now. Let the passage inhabit your subconscious as we attempt to understand more about the nature of poetry, which is one of the goals of this project.*

As the unit proceeds, I do want the poem-to-be to gain distance from its original context so that students will take personal responsibility for its future shape and content. Thus, breaks are vital. So is discussion.

Somewhat cruelly, I ask students to define poetry. In response to their hypotheses, I offer contradicting evidence: "Rhyme? Does 'Prufrock' or Whitman rhyme?... An act of imagination? You mean a novel is a poem?..." The discussion demonstrates how hard it is to define poetry, but finally I do propose a definition: "Poetry is writing that formulates a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience in language chosen and arranged to recreate that experience for the reader through its form and content." Students are more likely to recall my shorthand analogy: "Poetry is something like concentrated, frozen orange juice (that tastes like fresh-squeezed)."

That's a lot for one class period. As we sweep up the paper cuttings, I remind students that we shall return to our passages at the next meeting.

6. *Reread what you copied from the newspaper or magazine last time.*

7. *In the belief that any piece of writing is always a step toward a better piece of writing, I now ask you to reread the passage one more time, but, as you do, to put a stroke (!) wherever you think or hear or feel that, were this passage a poem, a poetic line should end. Don't do anything to the passage except stroke it — although if you see or hear any words that jar your eyes or ears, you may lightly cross them out. Trust your senses — all six — to guide you. They will determine what's right and wrong.*

8. *Guided by your strokes and lines, now recopy the poem so that it looks — as well as sounds — like a poem. As you move along, feel free to make any other*

JAMES W. PENHA is a poet and teacher. His book *The Learning Community* was published by the Paulist Press in 1975.

changes. And since you are now the master of this passage, if you care to change the line endings from the way you first stroked them, do so.

That, as I proudly announce to the class as the students finish, is found poetry. Yes, each student has written a poem, and we read them all aloud.

9. Now let's see if we can take our found poetry a step further.

To demonstrate how we can refine found poetry, I present an example from a previous class, or, as follows, a piece of my own. While teaching in Asia, I came upon the following wire-service story:

Deadly trap set

□ New York: A snake handler who calls himself the "Cobra King" and another man were charged on Friday with trying to kill a woman by stashing three rattlesnakes in her flat.

Three young timber rattlesnakes were put in the flat in apparent retaliation for harassment complaints the woman had filed. Only the woman's cat was bitten.

Then I distribute copies of my first-draft found poem based on this article. Hoping to develop the poem further, I had asked myself (I tell the class) three crucial questions about the draft: "What's there? What's good? What might make it better?" I had looked for lurking ironies and an incipient narrative. I ask students to replicate the process and to verbalize the mysteries this found poem suggests. "Why did the cobra king use rattlesnakes, rather than cobras, to terrorize his victim?" And I ask, "What, traditionally, does a snake represent?" The students, not unfamiliar with phallic and religious imagery, scream, "Sex! The Devil!" Right. Thus I suggest that the cobra king was Satan. And in subsequent drafts I tried to focus attention on him by letting the reader hear his voice:

The Cobra King

"King!" he called himself, "I say, 'King!'"
He rose mad,
mad as a "Cobra!"
flared the folds
of his neck,
and stood proudly
collared
admitting that he had stashed
his snake
in her flat.

"Harass?" said the King.
"She sat there filing
harass! so I jest filed
my little timber
rattler in her ducts."

Only the woman's cat
was bitten.

"I wanted to shake 'er up."
He shook his fingers at reporters.
"If I'd a wanted to nail 'er,
I'd a sent a cobra...
I'd a done it myself."

He raised his tongue
at God and smiled
his work to see,
to call himself
"King!"

"But you've changed the facts," a student will usually say. I explain that *refined* found poetry is not journalism or academic research. The "facts" of the original incident and of the original news article serve now only to inspire "a concentrated imaginative awareness of experience." The poem belongs now to its poet, who has full authority "to recreate that experience for the reader" by manipulating form and content.

An assignment concludes this session:

10. Reread your found poem and, prior to our next meeting, write below it answers to our key questions: "What's there? What's good? What might make it better?"

11. Today I will ask a few of you to rewrite your found poems on the board. The class examines these poems and raises the three questions. As we suggest possible paths for revision, we erase, rewrite, truncate, rearrange, and expand the models on the board. Not infrequently, the writer will respond enthusiastically to a classmate's insight — as in the case of one student's found poem about a baseball player named Jesus. When another student suggested that Jesus be "traded" to the California Angels, poet Clint Darch hit the pitch out of the park:

Jesus was a man of greatness and glamor
So the Angels have said,
But the man on the mound would've surely wished
That this young Jesus was dead.

Jesus worked miracles, in his own way
To lift his team to the top.
Now he stood at the plate, to mingle with the crowd,
With almighty God as his prop.

Jesus took a swing and the park seemed silent.
The Angels let out a sigh.
A home run was expected, but no one was neglected:
Jesus popped a sacrifice fly.

Some student writers hold fast to their own conceptions of "what's there," and they deserve to be helped to fulfill those poetic goals. Debbie Driskill, for example, trusted her talent in the visual arts more than her verbal skills.

London

Giant porcupines roaming the
city streets panicking poul
try startling motorists
squawking chickens
speared to death
spiny rodents
barging into
traffic; “
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scene,”
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Carol Drace wanted to rhyme:

Witches' Rights

Seven self-proclaimed young witches,
In Maine State Prison doing hitches,

Ascended to the rooftop lest
The warden stop their wild protest.

From noon till dusk they raved and ranted.
“Religious freedom now,” they chanted.

They aspired not towards absolution
But for rights given by the Constitution,

Rights which guarantee them just as much
As Jews or Protestants or such.

Or so they felt ensconsed on high,
Before their fiery passions died.

For with the moon their protest ceased,
The witches of Wiccan sued for peace.

Kristine Kuhn produced highly “concentrated frozen orange juice”:

Child raised as family pet

Dusseldorf: A four-year-old boy behaved like a puppy after being brought up by the family's Alsatian bitch when his parents neglected him.

The boy, named only as Horst-Werner, is now receiving hospital treatment after police, alerted by his grandfather, found him crouched naked on a blanket next to the dog, nibbling on a chicken bone.

“His house was totally abandoned,” said a police spokesman. “There was excrement everywhere, on the floor, on the walls. In the child's room, a dirty blanket and bits of food lie on the floor.”

The child barks and sniffs like a puppy. He sleeps on his belly, his arms stretched out in front of him, and his head resting on one.

But when found in his apartment at Mettmann near Dusseldorf, his hands and face were spotlessly clean, as the dog groomed him regularly. “It is she who raised and protected the little boy,” said a prosecution official.

In the children's clinic where he has been taken, Horst-Werner still sleeps on his belly, and occasionally mutters a single word: “Asta” — the German Shepherd's name.

He turns away hot food, accustomed — as his pet — to eating cold.

Social workers who visited his home last July said the child's 30-year-old father was unemployed, and the family's financial situation “disastrous”.

Most of the time, the parents locked the boy with the dog alone, said a social worker.

Agence France Presse

Your Mother's a Dog

Son, four years old,
Police found him
naked, crouched
on a blanket
in a corner
abandoned, mess.

The dog would groom him.

In sleep he whispers “Asta”
the name of his “mother.”

His real parents had quit.

By the end of the session, I ask each student to pair up with a peer-editor partner and, after consultation:

12. Write, each of you, answers to the three questions again.

During the following period or two, we pursue, within the writing workshop format, the refining of our found poems. As I observe the pairs working, I discover general poetic strategies worth revealing to the whole class, and we begin to compile a “Method Writing” list:

- The reader should sense that, between the first and last words of a poem, something happens — within the work or to the reader's perceptions, feelings, mind.
- Ideally, form = content. (This difficult idea becomes clearer as the semester goes on.)
- Poetry requires, ordinarily, as much sentence structure and punctuation as — perhaps even more

than — prose in order to provide logic and rhythm.
 (“Punctuation” includes unusual spacing of words.)

- Adjectives limit; descriptive nouns expand.
- Abstractions are sense-less: express them through metaphor and concrete detail.
- The last word of each line garners special attention from the reader.

We use this list to evaluate our work during the course. Since poets are habitual rule-breakers, I ask students to consider these as rules of thumb, but to ignore them if the poem demands it. On a weekly basis, and again with every final draft selected by students over the semester, the poets must submit essays detailing the technical decisions they have made. It is on all this that I assign a grade.

Refined found poems always possess charm even as they vary in depth, quality, and invention.

The Plight of the Cranberry

And he said:

“Gentlemen, I’d like to announce
The time has come for me to denounce.
We must reduce the money we spend,
So cranberry research must come to an end.
We spend too much money on humorous quirks
We must direct our funds to more serious work.”

As the speech continued, he couldn’t keep a straight face.
So others had an opposing view of the case.
The cranberry growers were ready to fight,
They had to take action — the time was right.

So they said:

“We’re sorry, sir, but it’s not amusing.
It’s people’s jobs you are abusing.
It’s a slap in the face, an insult too,
And we, quite frankly, are surprised at you.
Research is critical,
So don’t get cynical.”

So the story continues, where will it end?
Perhaps cranberry research will become a new friend.
People have ranted,
People have raved.
But the question remains...
Will the berry be saved?

— *P. Donohue*

Split Infinitive

Singapore: A seven-year-old boy, imitating his favorite comic character, was seriously hurt after he jumped from the fourth floor of his house, police said. — Reuters

Nestled alone between screen and window
Vincent saw the possibility,
reflected,
and hatched

an idea
to fly
as *Batman’s* Penguin
from the roof
with umbrella
to his mother. On the street
she watched his fall.

c-r-a-c-k

“I told him
not always to confuse life
with television,”
she explains. “I told him
penguins
cannot fly.”

— *James W. Penha*

(Yes, I always write along with the class. It keeps me honest.)

The unit unfailingly encourages every student to write, with some originality, a poem; it introduces the poetic process and dramatizes the psychology and strategies of the literary artist in ways no abstract discussion can. And every once in a while students will refine their discoveries masterfully— as did high school senior Keisuke Hirano, who expanded and refined a brief Chinese fable into an extraordinary poem:

Torn Sleeve

I.
A Chinese emperor woke
beside his boy lover.
His palace duties called.

The boy lay close, still sleeping
on his silken coat-sleeve.
And so as not to wake
the boy, he tore off the sleeve.

This is the story.
And when we have to speak
of ourselves, we say torn sleeve.

II.
Again I rise alone,
growing thinner it seems with each night’s
wandering into the night world. He
left earlier, taking a long confused
path back to his apartment, in order
that no one suspect a thing.

Yet I always think I hear them whisper
Gweilo, foreign devil. What can a Westerner
have to do with me? Where is my Chinese
bride?

III.

In my dreams I am young.
I walk through the halls
of his Majesty with the night's
remembrance in my hand
and stumble into Court,
with only a robe over my thin,
scented body.

He stares at me,
cut off from his speaking. They
all stare, slowly becoming
gold-scaled dragons, breathing
as one until I hear it.

I turn grey and brown as autumn,
and stumble out, leaving
his beautiful fabric
and an unnoticed drop of red.



PLUGS



Stone Soup magazine is looking for poetry, fiction, memoirs, etc. for a special issue devoted to the experiences of Indo-Chinese refugee children, as described by those children. Editor William Rubel says that manuscripts may be in non-standard English and need not be typewritten. Please include a SASE. Deadline for submissions is June 15. For more information, contact *Stone Soup*, P.O. Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063 (tel. 408/426-5557).

COMPAS, one of the most active arts-in-education organizations in the country, has just brought out its annual anthology of selected poetry and short fiction by students (K-12) who took part in its writing programs. *The Ragged Heart* is arranged by subject: Childhood and Family; Our Own Lives; Self-Portraits and Portraits; Dreams and Imagination; Stories; Nature; and the World. *The Ragged Heart* (181 pp., paperback) is available from COMPAS, 305 Landmark Center, 75 West Fifth St., Saint Paul, MN 55102 for \$8 plus \$1.50 for shipping.

The Teachers & Writers Reading Series pairs elementary school writers with the following professional writers:

Friday, May 11: Terry McMillan & Brett Singer

Friday, May 18: Robert Creeley & Paule Marshall

Friday, May 25: Lydia Davis & Bradford Morrow

Friday, June 1: Paul Auster & Sonia Sanchez

At the Cathedral of St. John Divine, Amsterdam & 112th St., New York. All readings are free and begin at 7:30 P.M.

Congratulations to T&W poets Jack Collom and Sheryl Noethe, recent recipients of poetry fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Program.

Herbert R. Kohl, the author of *36 Children* and *Making Theater*, once again enlarges our sense of what education is, in his new book *The Question Is College: Guiding Your Child to the Right Choices after High School* (Times Books, 1989, 288 pp., \$17.95 hardcover).