

**teachers and writers
collaborative
newsletter**



Teachers and Writers Collaborative is a government funded project whose purpose is to involve teachers, administrators, children, and writers in the creation of an English curriculum that is relevant to the lives of children in schools today.

Two of the Collaborative's three programs received funds this year from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

- 1) Writers-in-the-Schools: Professional writers go into school classrooms at the elementary, junior high and high school levels and work directly with the children in these classes. School administrators arrange informal workshops in which teachers and writers have an opportunity to discuss the writer's new methods and materials. An adjunct of this program is a series of Saturday writing classes conducted by writers. Each writer submits a detailed report, or diary, of the sessions he has conducted.
- 2) Teacher Training Seminar: A teacher training seminar is being conducted by writer Stephen Joseph at the 92nd Street YM-YWHA Poetry Center. Teachers contribute new curriculum ideas which participants discuss and try out in their own classrooms.

Many people have asked about the third program, development of curriculum materials, that the Collaborative sponsored in the past. Present funding does not allow for materials development and we can only hope that we shall be able to continue this vital aspect of the Collaborative in the future.

Since leaving Teachers College in September, 1968, Teachers and Writers has been under the fiscal aegis of the New York City Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, August E. Hecksher, Commissioner. Director Doris Freedman has extended much support, tangible and otherwise, and her generosity with the facilities at her disposal has enabled Teachers and Writers to make the fullest possible use of the small grant.

Additional support was also received from the New York State Council on the Arts in cooperation with the Poetry Center at the 92nd Street YM-YWHA of New York City.

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Cover photo of Olatunji at L. S. 55 by Jerry Thompson

**TEACHERS
and WRITERS
COLLABORATIVE
april newsletter
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april, even in the city

THE GRASS IS GREEN
THE LEAVES ARE GREEN
THE SEEDWEED IN THE
SEA IS GREEN AND
IN THE SPRINGTIME, ALL
THE EARTH. BEGIN TO
CHANGE. BEGIN TO
GROW. A SOFT AND
LOVELY COVERING
OF GREEN. WE
COULD NOT LIVE.
WITHOUT THE GREEN
AND GROWING PLANTS.

Luz, Grade 4
P.S. 165

In Spring I play
I eat in Spring
I do my work in Spring
I'm good in Spring
I'm doing my things in Spring
Spring, Spring you're mine
Spring is the color of a rose
If I was Spring
Spring, Spring I'm calling you.
Spring, Spring play with me.
Spring, Spring I love you.

Maria, Grade 4
P.S. 61

The Spring is like polluted air.
When Spring comes the flowers die.
Spring is the ugliest season there is.
In Spring a tornado comes.
In Spring the ice cream man faints.
In Spring everybody turns into stamps.
In the Spring rotten birds fly for air.

Henry, Grade 4
P.S. 61

Spring is like....a blade of especially sharp green grass standing out from white, orange, and withery green blades of grass.

Spring is like....sliding down a white hill and then, all of a sudden, finding yourself rolling on green crayons.

Spring is like....washing yourself with white soap when all of a sudden the soap turns green and brown and flowers designs appear on it.

Spring is like....when a cold day comes, suddenly a fires heat surrounds you.

Spring is like....cold snow in your hand while you are building a snow fort when it immediately turns into water and runs out of your grasp.

Spring is like....when your hands are freezing from lack of gloves or mittens while you are playing with snow, all of a sudden your hands thaw out and become warm.

Spring is like....being in a refrigerator and wishing to be in a stove when suddenly you are in a stove!

Spring is like....bundling up in all your woolies, and throwing them off when you get outside.

Lisa, Grade 5
P.S. 61

Soccorito said I like today. Mayra me to. Patty! Patty! Patty! Your brother danny is crying he is on the old spring said Billy. Your sister Lisa is crying and she is on the spring to. Esther Lorraine Barbara Nancy Ron Hector Marion Guy Fontessa Ileana Maria Tommy R Tommy Jose Madlyn Rodney Stephen Jeannie said we shall call our new season spring! because of the kids crying on the old spring. and we all shouted out spring and our building went timber!!!

Tracy, Grade 4
P.S. 61

director's letter

after a very slow start this school year, complicated not only by the various strikes and boycotts here in new york, but also by funding problems at the national endowment, teachers and writers collaborative finally got going for its second year in december. that's why this newsletter is getting out so late, but we hope it'll prove valuable in any event. as most of you know, the project has concerned itself mainly with working in schools with younger kids, but this year we've expanded into both writing workshops for teachers, and out of school workshops for older (high school) kids.

it doesn't need to be said that it's been a rewarding year for us; the opportunity to work with kids and see them flower makes every writer among us jealous of the teachers, and, equally, the general openness of the teachers working with the project toward the writer's 'thing' has changed the whole attitude of writers to teachers.

we're presently seeking funding for next year, and we hope to be able to expand even further; this year, for instance, we were not able to do much needed work in curriculum development. there are also possibilities of special pilot projects both in and out of new york city, all of which are being investigated as we go to press.

may i ask that we hear from you, as to ideas, comments, and directions that you, either teacher or writer or both, feel we ought to take; and may i hope that this newsletter in some small way helps you.

have a good summer, and, if all goes well, we'll see you in the fall.

joel oppenheimer
director

During the past year the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs has been working closely with Teachers and Writers Collaborative in a unique and fruitful partnership. As an arm of the city administration, the Department of Cultural Affairs brought to the Collaborative a special kind of support and endorsement that enabled it to establish an effective and working relationship with those individuals and organizations vital to the success of the project. Together we developed a visible network of communication with the New York City Board of Education, the New York State Board of Education, the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, the U.S. Office of Education, the Academy of American Poets, The 92nd Street YMHA Poetry Center, foundations, universities and colleges throughout the country, community groups, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, students, poets, writers and journalists.

The Department of Cultural Affairs of the New York City Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Administration was established out of an awareness that the artist can provide new directions and dimensions to society, and that he must be supported. The very success of our department's relationship with the Collaborative is unusual for only recently has an organizational structure become available which makes possible constructive relations between government and the arts, particularly in the area of the arts and education.

We hope that our partnership with Teachers and Writers Collaborative will continue, so that a lasting impact can be made on the educational front in New York City.

Doris Freedman, Director
Department of Cultural Affairs

teacher's workshop

I call the workshop I direct for Teachers and Writers Collaborative Helping Teachers to Help Children to Write, rather than Teaching Teachers to Teach Children to Write, because I don't believe writing can be taught. I do believe, though, that a climate can be created and an attitude learned, which encourages people to write what they are thinking. Potentially, anyone who can think can write, and everyone can think. Neither thinking nor writing are the exclusive provinces of we lucky - or unlucky - few. Most people are unable to express their thoughts on paper because they have been educated away from thinking of any sort, as the kind of activity which brings trouble. Thinking is a creative process which forces divergence from the norm. The title of a recent book is Teaching as a Subversive Activity. Thinking is also a subversive activity, and writing what you think is even more subversive.

Since children are systematically taught not to think in school, and every subsequent group experience from religious instruction to basic training reinforces this awful crippling of the brain, how then can we help children in a classroom to say and write what they really think - essentially a dangerous, non-conformist activity? This is the purpose and the problem of our workshop.

The workshop is informal and loosely structured. We sit around a long table, exchanging ideas for lessons, our own writing, and writing by children in our classes. The children's writing is often spectacular in its insight and sensitivity. One girl wrote, "I understand astronomy, but I cannot make a star." As for our own writing - it's improving.

People drift in and out of the workshop. There's no course credit involved, so those who stay do so because they are crucially interested in helping their students. Those who don't stay still get a chance to read some excellent children's writing and exchange ideas with some very effective teachers. Some of the regulars are Art Berger, Sherry Soloman, Marlene Harding, LeeOlive Tucker, and Sisters Barbara and Irene from Corpus Christie School. We've had people come once or twice, bringing us difficult problems like how to help retarded children to write, or how to help a man at Bellevue who was too afraid to admit that he really didn't know the alphabet.

I ask the teachers to write as much as they can for the workshop, assuming that they'll have a much better idea of what the children experience in trying to get their thoughts down on paper. Herbert Kohl says in Thirty Six Children that he tried to do every assignment

before he gave it to his students. (Incidentally, someone should come up with a better word than "pupils" or "students". "Children" isn't specific enough, and "kids" looks self-conscious on paper.) Most of the adults in the workshop are even less confident about writing than the children they teach. I guess we can assume that they've had more time to be convinced that they can't do it, whatever "it" is, and that they surely can't live up to the ridiculous literary standards that were set for them when they were in school.

Here are some of the questions we deal with in the workshops: Why do we want to help and encourage children to write? What kind of writing do we want from them? What kind of climate can we establish to get this kind - or any kind - of writing from them? What can we do to help them get started, and what can we avoid doing to keep them from starting? I've saved what I think is the most important question for last: What do we do with this writing, once we've elicited it? What answers can we give the children to the questions they raise in their writing? What can we tell a child who writes about his brother's death from an overdose of heroin, or the child who writes that everyone hates him, or the black seven year old who wants to know what black people did wrong to be "...treated so bad?" What do we tell the child who wants to know why Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King were murdered, and why people of all colors are dying in Vietnam? To shake our heads and say "That sure is a hard question," or "I don't know", is not enough.

The children's questions in the form of writing lead us to question our own roles as teachers. How do we define ourselves? Are we counselors, advisers, therapists, and surrogate parents? If we are truly teachers, rather than programmers, what is it we teach, based on what frame of reference, and what, and whose set of ideas? If our job is really to teach, rather than just to spoon-feed the doctrines and rituals with which our society insists we inoculate the young, isn't teaching a subversive activity and aren't all of us, then, subversives?

I've learned a great deal about what it means to be a teacher from the people in the workshop, and the writing and questions they've brought in. I think we've all learned from each other. The writing has gotten better and better, and the people in the workshop, many of them very shy to start, now talk and participate with enthusiasm and confidence. If you need some ideas on helping yourself or some children to write, we'd love to have you come to our workshop. If you have some ideas of your own, that's even better, but you're welcome even if you just want to come and listen. Now that we've shaped the questions, we can help each other to find the answers.

Stephen M. Joseph

ice-breaking

First days are always trying, challenging, exciting, or whatever.

Trepidation in the classroom is possibly the healthiest feeling an adult can have before a group of children; it suggests that the children have a right to the best the teacher has to offer. Most participating writers have expressed their feelings about the "first day"; it should be encouraging to teachers to hear how universal these feelings are.

"Relating with the kids as a writer makes ones first day with a class a shadowy affair. The most important ingredient for me are these kids and until familiarity puts flesh on them, they are paper characters. Since an important goal of this program is to write up every day, I find myself looking forward to every session as a writing assignment. For plot I must make things happen so that the characters the students are to become for me, can begin to move in and out of the plot that every experience with the kids becomes. Then I have something to write up.

"My first session with a new class within the tight limit set by the 45 minute time barrier, becomes one on which I have to define my own role and personality to the class. I have found that a little soul and relating it to the spoken word works. Using the best ingredients of previous opening sessions, I related words to rhythm and life. We took inventory of words that evoke the feel, sound and picture of things. Then with the aid of recordings, we listened to how the songwriter uses words in blues and rock. As usual, the class loosened up and became warmly involved in talking about their favorite songs and recording artists. I asked them each to write up a verse of their favorite song and bring it in to read and discuss."

Art Berger
I.S. 8
Class 6/18

"I kicked it off by explaining that we were definitely not a class, but rather a workshop or perhaps even a club. Our thing was going to be the written word. We were going to work with words for the fun and joy of it. Together we would find a common project or individual works, a T.V. play, comic books, a magazine, a collection of poems or fables might be our goal.

The first thing would be to know one another. To do that will be our first objective. Written words would be our method. Everyone was to think of themselves as characters in a story; or a personality being interviewed. Thus everyone could create a character in either the first or third person through a self-interview, and we would have a collection of sketches that would break the ice in getting to know one another. On request, I agreed to do the same thing about myself. In this way we would all come alive as personalities to each other.

For guidelines, I asked them to use the following questions: How do you dress? What are your habits of eating, reading and playing? What work do you do? What are your joys and what bugs you the most? Tell us something about your parents and your brothers and sisters. Do you dig music? Name your favorite group or singer. Write the first line of your best song. What is your favorite sport? Name team or player. Have you had any unusual experience? Have you taken any trips? What are your hopes? As a clue to your view of the world around you, write your reaction to any of the following list: The Kennedys; Dick Gregory, Bob Dylan; James Brown, T.V.; comic books; Muhammad Ali; Albert Shanker; Rap Brown; John Lindsay; The Jets; Apollo 8; The Beatles."

Art Berger
I.S. 8
Workshop

"First days are always trying. All my plans, the tightness before accepting and giving. And there's nothing like a long subway ride to make you think and rethink and throttle your cool in circles. My class was not a class. I had conducted several workshops (for the Center for Urban Education) and was convinced long before PS 26 that the ideal creative session would happen outside the classroom, away from the well-meaning but oft-times scarecrow presence of the teacher who owned the class and jealously guarded the manners of his charges.

So children are quiet while Teacher stands on the edge of their fear and restlessness; and holds their minds to his teachings. He means well; but children (and perhaps everyone including myself) demand clarity in place of meaning. Meaning is irrelevant to ecstasy.....We try to make them over into the images of our mistakes; forgetting that they should have theirs. O.K. So I was sent to PS 26 where, with the ready understanding and encouragement of Miss Saunders, the Principal, Creative Writing was taken out of the classroom into its own environment, shared with the music teacher. So here comes that first and trying day, January 3, and I am meeting kids from grades 3-6. And my mind is blown as I waltz in.....first and second graders! I had planned to work out some dreams with the older class, but there I was, stuck; and some of them said they couldn't write; so dreams, dreams, dreams, and color. And I rustled up some red, white, yellow, orange and green card paper 18 x 12. Passed them out. I told them of Denise, my little cousin, who has been having a serialized dream since 1965, the leading character flitting in and out of her dreams every week. They were dreams. A dream is a readymade story, and everyone had a story, and was eager to share it. I had a few relate their dreams to the workshop, then I told everyone to use the crayons I was distributing around the room to draw and write. Or draw or write. And 17 handed in their dreams, the visuals coming through plain as ever.

Lennox Raphael
P.S. 26

Each writer found his own way of beginning. Kenneth Koch, at P.S. 61, began by "explaining what (he) was up to", and then he read a lot of the poems they and other P.S. 61 students had written last spring. "The children liked these poems a great deal and wanted to begin writing their own poems. When they began writing they were asked to raise their hands if they had a problem. Some needed a little inspiration or encouragement, some suggestion of an idea, more often help with spelling, which after a while I tell them just to forget about it and spell as best they can. I tell them that at the beginning, but they keep asking how to spell things anyway. As for encouragement and inspiration, if a child is stuck I sometimes go as far as to suggest a situation, or a kind of thing, though I try not to give them any actual words to copy. Once they get properly started, they usually can go on quite successfully."

Ron Padgett's first solo day at P.S. 61 gave him a "terrifying feeling of emptiness that tells me that I will be standing in front of a group

of people and this silence will be between us...neither of us having anything to say." Ron Padgett began by giving a "basic or early assignment, namely the Wish poem. I also imagined, and rightly, that it would be an easy one to explain to the students and therefore would help break me in....I read the kids some Wish poems (other children in the school had written). I told them they could write anything they wanted. They could make up the wildest wishes, even crazy ones."

The results were pretty good. Examples:

I wish I was a cow
I wish I was a cat
I wish I was a genius
I wish I was a Mrs. M. Magnani
I wish I was a good teacher
I wish I was a millionaire
I wish I was a big girls
I wish I was a baby
I wish I was a butterfly
I wish I was a princess

Lydia, 4th grade
P.S. 61

The first hint that this is an interesting girl is the third line---not "I wish I was smart", but "I wish I was a genius." This, along with her including the teacher's initial (for Margaret) interested me, but what I liked especially was the way the poem jogged between cliché and poetry and then at the end became very delicate and pretty.

Here are some more examples, without comment.

I wish I was Superman and Superlady and I would marry Lois Lane and Superman was my friend and I would be Jimmy Olson and Perry White and be the boss of the Building.

Ruben, 4th grade
P.S. 61

I wish I was sitting up front and I wish the girls easy money and I wish Morgan was a monkey and I wish Morgan was a rat and a mouse and I wish Morgan was a ape and a W and I wish that Morgan was a nut and I wish and I wish

Carmello, 4th grade
P.S. 61

(Morgan got his revenge by wishing that Carmello was a marshmallow).

The children do some moving around during their poems, to ask how to spell, to see what everyone else is doing, etc. Not disorderly, just curious, and possibly to defend against possible insults, as in the above, and in many poems. The insults are almost always unmalicious, many directed toward a teacher a child likes and admires. We should think of a way to inspire creative insults.

Some isolated wishes:

I wish I had three heads.
I wish I had three eyes.

and:

I wish that I was a lady full of diamonds

and:

I wish I were a moo

Then:

I wish I was ten feet and ten head so one head came go to school for me and two feet can go to school for me the other can go places for me

Genett, 4th grade
P.S. 61

I quote this wish poem exactly to demonstrate that the spelling and syntax have very little to do with a child's being able to write interestingly and amusingly.

One final example from this class:

I wish today March 19 and then we could go to the trip.
I wish Mrs. Magnani was my mother and she work for a teacher. I wish the boy were monkeys. I wish the teachers were ice cream but Mrs. Magnani. I wish I was a elephant to eat all the people. I wish I was superstar to kill everybody. I wish I was supergirl and could fly in the sky and take Mrs. Magnani far away to the country. I wish Maria was a monkey and she had four eyes. I wish I had all the money in the world. I wish I was the president and the government and the Mayor.
I wish I was Santa Claus.

I collected the poems and read many of them aloud, to the evident delight of the students. They especially liked the lines that hit home:

I wish Mrs. Magnani was a pig, I wish Luis was married to Concepcion, etc. Lines like, I wish Morgan was a W---this escaped most of them as being too far out. However, lines like "I wish I was a moo" were perfectly acceptable."

Ron Padgett
P.S. 61
4th grade

Art Berger began one class by having the children catalogue words and situations in lists of "Bad Feelings" and "Good Feelings".

"Thus far, I told the class we had seen three qualities a poem has: feeling, sound, rhythm--and there was yet another--story or message. To illustrate this I read the ballad John Henry. We discussed the story. Then the whole class sang the ballad to the accompaniment of my harmonica. By this time, I noticed that we had an audience of other teachers, Mr. Nathanson (head of English Department) and even Mr. Korot, the Principal, had slipped in. The bell rang and the session was over. I left feeling good that I was getting to the kids, and from the look on Mr. Cohen's face and his comments, I knew that he was receptive to what I was trying to do and had empathy with the whole view of Teachers and Writers Collaborative.

Art Berger
I.S. 8
7th grade

black literature

David Henderson has addressed himself to the collection of Black Literature for today's school children. He has been working in I.S. 55 in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn. Members of the faculty at this school have been eager for help in this area and they have done an exceptional job of bringing black culture to other areas of the curriculum. The Collaborative believes that Black Literature should be made available to all children in this country; white children have been as deprived of this rich body of literature as black children have. We shall include Mr. Henderson's completed bibliography in our next newsletter. Some general comments follow.

"When we come to literature and creative writing we would do well to remember the common sensical laws of nature. IT IS BEST TO START OFF IN THE FAMILIAR. Black students for the most part have not been exposed to their literature, their culture, and in the cases where feeble attempts have been made (as I have observed) the material has been seriously misinterpreted. Now. If we are talking about the familiar then where do we start? Before I answer that question I will complete some remarks on the misinterpretation of black lit, and culture. Judging from the degree of black and white alienation it is evident that it is difficult for both sides to articulate their true feelings. More to the point is the fact that the two cultures don't really understand each others culture. Most people prefer to live with their own kind. We have many different kinds of communities in New York City to bear this out. I take this as granted. White people in general don't understand black people, and as a consequence don't understand their literature and art and as a further consequence of the will of the majority Black Literature and culture have been largely kept from the public's eyes and most importantly the eyes of the young student in the school systems who needs exposure to a culture which deals with him and his problems more than anybody else.

Gwendolyn Brooks
Don L. Lee
Langston Hughes
Mari Evans

Sonia Sanchez

Nicolas Gullian
Present/familiar
Contemporary
Issue oriented

Most of the above writers are alive, Hughes has recently passed. These are contemporary poets, from them we can get to the great heritage of the black literature of the part that began with American Culture and form such a significant part that they cannot be said to exist apart. From the particular and familiar of the contemporary black poets and writers we can capture the enthusiasm of the young student and really begin to teach."

David Henderson
I. S. 55

"They filed in and sat demurely as I talked about language. I told them that we speak English differently from most other peoples, races. We speak English with African accentuations and grammatical structures. That for us English is a second language. And as a language of a certain sensibility is good for doing certain things and not so good for others. We have a language we use to communicate with our grandparents as we have a language to communicate with the fellas on the block. There's a diplomatic language used in the United Nations between nations. In order to function in certain environments it is necessary to learn how to communicate within it. We talked of "black talk": soul-sister, soul-brother, cool, together, uptight. It surprised them to find out that "Cool", "Yam" "Aretha" were Yoruba words."

David Henderson
I. S. 55

"A couple of students and I went on a sort of field trip to the store to get some sodas. In the candy store the knee-high-to-a-grass-hopper students, 10, 11, 12, 13 were smoking cigarettes and dancing amazing African steps to the juke-box. Such a divergence from the uptight school atmosphere. If there were only a way to make the two worlds meet."

David Henderson
I. S. 55

“for the children”

Not well, and not long enough, any night.
"There's a place in the city where the children don't sleep.

Not well, and not often enough.
There's a place in the city where the children don't eat.

There's a place in the city where the children
have to hide
have to lie
have to fight
and sometimes have to kill.

It is not a slum.

It is not a ghetto.

It's not even a community.

It's one crumble block of kids next to another. And another. And another.

It's a flight of stairs to nowhere, in particular.

It is violent isolation.

It is violent loneliness.

It's a place in the city the children call home. You can find our children in the Ft. Greene section of Brooklyn, which is across the bridge, or across two bridges, or three bridges, from Manhattan. But once you get inside Ft. Greene, you might as well forget about the bridge. There are no bridges leading the children from Ft. Greene to someplace else.

About a year and a half ago a small group of black and Puerto Rican youngsters stood together in Ft. Greene on a Saturday morning. Where they stood was cold. They were trying to get into somewhere: somewhere warm with chairs and a table and a couple of lights.

A white teacher and a black writer stood with these children, and finally they got into someplace else and started something different. Their own thing.

The Church of the Open Door let this group meet weekly in a large and sometimes sunny room. There the teacher and the writer collaborated to bring books, records, snack stuff, paper and pencils. After a free while of dancing, book browsing and gossip, the kids would take a title, one they individually accepted, and write -- a poem, an editorial, an essay, a story, a fable, a joke -- there went the morning. Afternoons together, the children explored Manhattan museums, parks, docksides, and so forth.

Within a few months the original group grew larger and steadily it happened, every weekend. The children elected to form a magazine called the Voice of the Children. Now they were publishing once a week, and the admiring audience of their work spread fast.

Towards summertime, prospects of disbanding came closer and the kids demanded an alternative. The two adults, Terri Bush and June Meyer, decided to try establishing the alternative of a country, summer camp experience centered on creative writing. They wrote letters and used the telephone. Nat Hentoff, Buckminster Fuller, Herb Kohl, and Jonathan Kozol, among others, contributed their names and other help in the effort to secure campsite, staff, money and equipment.

So the Voice of the Children became a non-profit, tax deductible corporation at least responsible for twenty Ft. Greene youngsters, ages 12-14, at a campsite donated in Ohio.

Since the summer, the Voice of the Children has been heard on WBAI-fm, in poetry readings at Hunter College, at Queens College. The children have been presented in a documentary film for channel 31, and their writing has been published in the Teachers College Record, The Village Voice, The Now Voices (Scribners, 1969), McCalls Magazine and Soulscript (anthology of Afro-American poetry, Doubleday, '69) and Uhuru (newspaper, California).

The children increase in their number and in their needs: they require a competent, varied staff working year round in music, drama, sports, photography, editorial and production techniques.

Until now the adult associates of the children have been volunteer, and the equipment marginal, at best.

And so the Winter goes.

Spring comes, and Summer.

We worry: where will the children learn to go? Who will tell them to stop, here, at the beginnings of their own bridge? If we do not receive help, the children will have to be told: this is the end of what you have begun. Please help these children to be heard. Help to create and to protect the promises these kids deserve."

In faith,

Terri Bush and June Meyer
Directors
The Voice of the Children, Inc.
4901 Henry Hudson Parkway
Bronx, New York 10471

The Collaborative believes that student magazines, such as The Voice of the Children, are exciting library items which would be useful to children outside New York as well as to those in the city. Teachers could use these materials to motivate their children to write, or to introduce their group to the lives and feelings of children in New York City. For a contribution of any size to The Voice of the Children, Inc. the Collaborative will send copies of the Voice of the Children to teachers, administrators, librarians and students.

Selections from the April volume of The Voice of the Children follow:

My Joy is a thing of the past
How did I get
 here and who am I
I'm trading a dream
My tears peacefully sleeping
my lips unable to move
while I wait myself becomes my fortune
for the lord is my shepherd
and I'm looking to find him

Linda Curry

THE WAY OF LIFE

by Loudel Baez

It started when I was a little boy. I lived in a town in which many things happened. This town, it had many gangs, and always there was a fight. Everyday I would go to the store for the shoeman.

So one day the shoeman gave me five dollars to get coffee and change. It was seven at night and I would go through an alley. There were five boys they surrounded me and began to hit me. I was scared. One said "give me your money or I will kill you."

They took the money and began to run. I went back to the shoeman and told him what happened. He said "why didn't you fight back?"

I answered, "I was scared."

He sent me back with another five dollar bill, right back to the alley. I went. There they were, the five boys, they came to me, I ran. They chased me, I ran and ran, then I fell. They caught me and started to beat me up, one said again, "give me your money." I did, and they ran away with the money.

I went back home to the shoemaker, crying. I told him again the story. He was mad, he was mad at me because I did not fight back. He said to me "you can go to your room now, so I went to sleep thinking about what would happen to me the next day.

Hours passed by, then it was morning. The shoemaker called me to breakfast, I ate and ate. Then the shoemaker said "tonight I will give you a twenty dollar bill, and you will get me some food, and if those boys come you will not turn around and run, you will fight back." So when it got dark, I went out with the money and there they were at the alley waiting for me. One yelled to the others "he has a twenty dollar bill -- get him."

I heard them and ran again, I ran and ran. And then I remembered what the shoemaker told me, so I stopped and they came to me. One had a knife, I ran and picked up a stick and I went back to them. I hit the one with the knife, I hit one in the head. I picked up the knife and cut one. I broke one's arm, and I beat one up, and they went back hurt.

The day I was proud to myself no one beat me up no more. I was everyone's friend, and each day I would go and come back for the shoeman. Well now I say that's the way of life.

OUT
THROUGH
SILENT
WALLS

Out through silent walls,
 creeps the loneliness about me.
The loneliness I try to hide,
 so only known to me.
Out through silent eyes,
 creeps the tears of hurt about me.
The tears of hurt I try to hide,
 so only known to me
Out through silent sorrow,
 creeps a crying pain of death
The death I did unto myself
 only known to me
No one loves
 No one knew
 No one cared.

Vanessa Howard

OUT IN THE COUNTRY

by Miriam La Santa

Out in the country it's beautiful, the birds are always singing, the shades of grasses are beautiful. The trees. Man, you could always daydream easily.

With the country as the background you can make a story. It's fun to walk barefoot in the grass and especially on rich good soil it feels so good. It soothes your feet and with a pair of shorts and thin blouse you can feel the breeze. I may be a city girl but I would love to be a country girl.

TO
STOP
AND
THINK

Watching the steam shovel lifting the dirt from the
ground,
the rich brown soil of the earth
And another man standing by
knocking off the pieces that are not willing
When you stop to think it's like the black man,
and the white man
digging out his goodness
the black pride of the black man
And humanity standing by
knocking down the pieces
That are not willing.

Vanessa Howard

THE SEA AND ME

by Miriam La Santa

The sea to me is very beautiful. I usually go there
to cool off. You know it may seem stupid but the sea
and me have something in common. We lose our
temper and then we cool off trying to apologize. That's
why I like the sea so much.

abalabi

I. S. 55 in Ocean Hill-Brownsville held an "Abalabi" (meaning "festival" in Yoruba). Mr. Babatunde Olatunji, who has been working with the Collaborative at I.S. 55, created a professional looking troupe of dancers in the school. David Henderson described the Abalabi and the dancers as follows:

"The festival "Abalabi" was beautiful. Out of sight. Community people, parents and children. Lots of children participating in the events: Fashion show with the new African fashions, a play about an African girl in the U.S.A. for the first time and her experiences at school, Olatunji and his dancers, composed of the nascent students of dance at I.S. 55 and a couple of tiny proud drummers from his center on 125th Street. The audience was loud, responsive and patient. It was a beautiful event, especially as one of the more important learning experiences for most of the student participants.

David Henderson
I.S. 55

found poetry

Clarence Major has been working with fourth graders at P. S. 165 in Manhattan. The "Found Poems" from these classes were constructed in the following way. First, the children cut out words, phrases and pictures from magazines and newspapers. They then selected and arranged them in an order that gave new meaning to the selections, and, in some instances, became an exciting and coherent statement. Even where the pieces were not "meaningful" to adult readers, there was always interest in the individual words and phrases. Clarence Major does point out, however, that children can get carried away with pictures in this assignment, letting the pictures speak for themselves without looking for words to carry the meaning intended. Written, or typed, some of the selections hold together very well.

"Would you believe a magical car?
it flies like a plane
its chitty chitty bang bang
in the car with its own mind."

Brigitte
4th grade

LIKE DIRT

. It makes you want to

step
in the right direction!

SO

Make way for David

Gene Bell
Class 4-405
Age 9

Saul

a

Child!

REGIMEN

In

Ten

Spain

SIGNS

NO

swinging millionaire

is

Changing

The New York Times

Scene

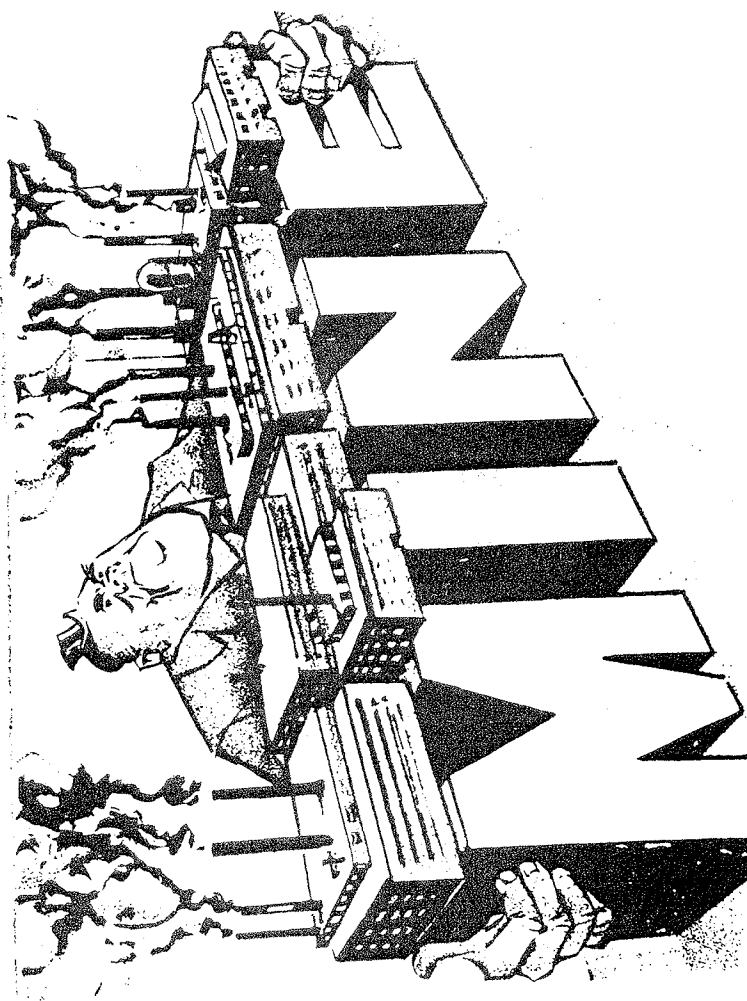
The night before Christmas.

H-405

Senee Bel
AGE 9 1/2

WEEKLY PEOPLE

Vote Where the wealth is



Reality

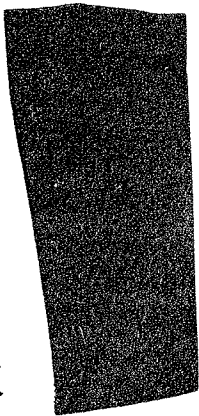
BEHAVIOR

isn't

AN ISLAND

We

want



BUT

Not in this girl's kitchen.

GO

to Jack Benny

HE



S

A

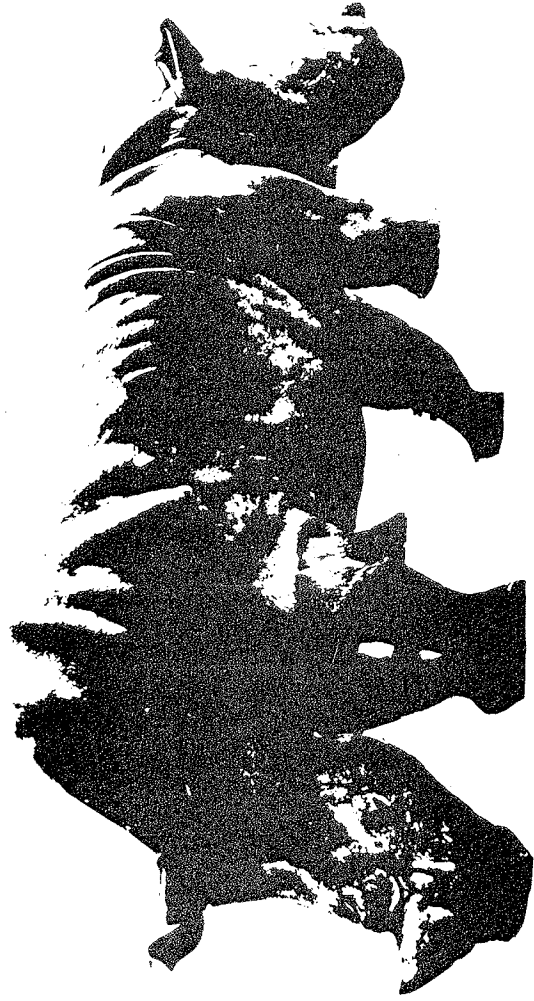
TOY

Rachel Koch

By Robert F. Fleming

winter is coming

FLORIDA



Florida

Kate

good ship Bonds.

From Roots and Leaves

From Spores

From Seeds

A Poison Tree

It must be fun

To grow

500

garden stole

NEXT WEEK:



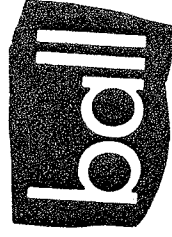
fashion

Fashions

of



GREEN GIANT



two little,

between

choose

to

have

You

the one-word poem as a barometer

"One of the prime values of this assignment might be barometric; it could give a quick sampling of how children are going to 'take to' writing." Ron Padgett developed the idea of the "one-word poem"

with a fourth grade class at P.S. 61 in Manhattan. The readability of these poems varies tremendously. But the interesting thing is the classroom atmosphere created by the assignment. It was easy, fun, and a little crazy.

"For better or worse I had come up with a new assignment: the one-word poem. It seemed simple enough for this class. I also thought it would be interesting to direct the children's attention to the fact that words are language, or, more to the point, that words are words, that they are physical objects when written on a page. As opposed to the idea that words are only throw-away receptacles for ideas. That is, I wanted to give an assignment which would in itself suggest to the children that even if you have a good idea you may not have a good poem.

An additional advantage of this assignment was that if anyone wanted to write in Spanish, it would be easy enough for me or anyone else with a dictionary to have some idea of what they were talking about. But then, how many of these kids are used to writing Spanish, anyway? Probably very few, if any; so perhaps my concern with this business is wasted.

I explained that what I wanted was for them to write down a one-word poem, a poem consisting of one word only, and that they should pick their favorite word to write down, the word they like the very best out of all the words they know. They didn't seem to understand, so I explained further that they had a favorite color, right? Yeah, blue. OK. And a favorite month? Yeah. A favorite day? Yeah, Saturday! OK. How about your favorite word?

A few children understood the assignment practically before I had finished explaining, and they were already hard at work. Most, however, sat in a sort of stunning

silence, as if they were going insane. As I walked around the room, giving out correct spellings, these voices would ask me what they were supposed to do. It wasn't so much that they hadn't understood: I don't think they believed their own ears. Frequently heard questions: "Just one word?" Some children, even after a third explanation, would write, "Red is the color of your heart." Not understanding the present assignment, one fell back on a previous one and hoped for the best. Still, on reading this sentence, "Red is the color of your heart," I sensed an unexpected and extraordinary compassion for the little boy who had written it, as if he had written it to me. Hmm.

I forgot to mention that I had given an example of a "word": "dog". Then I explained that the word could be made up: "gsm1pgh". I also explained that it could be like a word they knew, but not necessarily the word itself: I gave as example Aram Saroyan's immortal "lighght". I also said that they could write as many one-word poems as they wished; or none at all.

Below is a cross-section of the one-word poems. Only one girl turned in a paper with one word on it, Maria. I asked her if she'd like to do more and she said, kindly and respectfully, no. I think she understood the assignment perfectly. Others, more verbose, were interesting, especially the quoted example by Carmen."

Ron Padgett
Fourth graders
P. S. 61

color.
teacher.
girls.
hat.
cool.
coo.
my.
-----Rafael & Sato

Wish
-----Maria

scientist
football
swimming
baseball
-----Luis

museum
teacher
work
doll
-----Linda

Lucille. nose need yarn
hat home house you
-----Augustine

dog
around
yes
rain
Black
house
Henritta
present
lunch
M Magnani
Bronx
-----Luz

lighght
mighght
righght
bighght
hot
house
handwriting
love
Luzy
you
nose
yellow
yarn
yard
home
-----Cecil

cow
dog
two
there
-----Angelo

red henry
hot head
hat Henrietta
light yellow
yes no
-----Ruben

Moon
yellow
hat
yes
you
light
night
look
next
no
house
home
-----Sofia

Something
Love
cat
bog
dog
dig
words
run
book
going
looking
cooking
tooking
coming
looked
ten
sixty
teacher
museum
name
for
got
see
puting
put
things
thing
puted
car
can
-----Samuel

explorer
cow
day
swimmingteam
sportsmanship
car
hat
hot
Henry
hose
lunch
day
they
Miss Downs
-----Henry

new now
hat had
Me Men
you your
can come
-----Carmen

love
Mosia
Luz
white
see
before
summer
Dear
nose
boy
grade
hat
who
more
Nancy
now
home
some
your
you
am
book
do
no
it
that
they
girl
with
-----Antonia

drama

Nancy Charney has been working with drama at P.S. 51 in Manhattan.

Here is a description of how she involved a group of third graders in dramatics.

"I began by giving them an introduction to acting. Comparing it to when they have stories read to them. I asked them what they do when stories are read to them (LISTEN and HEAR). What they hear (WORDS). How do they know what the words tell them? (CAN SEE THEM). Then I told them some story I made up on the spot and asked them what they heard in it. By this time the class was extremely responsive---jumping up and down to answer my questions. I went on comparing opening the book to opening the curtain. A story begins in a place and so does a play and there are people in it. In a play you see the people on the stage as well as in your head. We then talked about audiences who look as well as listen. I then set up an exercise with them. I asked them:

1. where they would like to be.
2. who they would like to be
3. what they would like to be doing

They were in a palace. The princess was getting married. I gave out the parts. Some were doors and bells as well as soldiers and ladies in waiting, etc. Most of the suggestions came from them. We found "props" around the room and with great excitement the "play" proceeded. Everyone had a part. They were extraordinarily excited.

After they finished we talked about it. They couldn't believe that they had really made a play.

Then I took a piece of chalk and proceeded to the blackboard. I asked them if they would like to write their own play. They all said yes and again there was a lot of jumping up and down. I said O.K. let's start. Who shall we have in the play, and collectively these characters emerged.

EVELYN - 12 years old, short hair, tall, skinny, beautiful, mean, witch with a pointed nose.

MARIE - blond, long hair, blue eyes, beautiful, good,
158 years old, crooked shoes.

JOHN - black hair, ugly, wears a blue sweater, hoboe, 4
ears, a big tail, long hair, 550 years old.

CAT - (Marie's) black and white, big brown spot in back,
green eyes, 4 white legs, female, married, named Tiger.

We then talked about where our play might take place and
what these characters might be doing.

I asked the group to write down some things our characters
could be doing and bring them in next week and that we
would then act some of them out.

I thought that the class had been most successful. The
children hated to see me go. They wanted to start writing
immediately and I felt like someone had given me a very
large present.

Nancy Charney
3rd graders
P.S. 51

Having worked for a while on the mechanics of drama, Mrs. Charney
and the children began to explore character and personality.

"Then I asked everyone to join in a circle. We skipped,
jumped, it was hot and cold and foggy, heavy, humid,
dark, someone chasing us--needing to hide.

Then we all tasted coffee (which turned out to be something
they all drank in the morning) and smelled it and talked
about what it is like to taste something that is not really
there.

Then I asked them if they would each tell me something
about themselves...something that they wanted me to
know. I asked them to start what it was they wanted to
tell me by telling me their names because that was
something that I wanted to know.

This was marvelous. First they were all so shy and then
they were telling me so much. Evelyn, who is rather
chubby and earthbound, wants to be a ballerina because
it is beautiful to dance, and she wants to do something
beautiful. Frank wants to be a policeman or in the army

because "those two make money." He told me about his cousin who makes "a pile of money fighting in Viet Nam." Frankie wants to fight in Viet Nam when he grows up. We talked about the war and how we hope Frankie won't have to fight anywhere when he grows up. Then we talked about all the different kinds of professions there were... We told Frankie that there were lots and lots of things he could do and make money, too. He was surprised to think of all of them.

Jeannie is a little Chinese girl who is afraid to speak above a whisper. "Yell at me. Say...STOP IT MRS. CHARNEY" I say as I yell at her. She tries and then when I persist tries again. The class begins to help her. Again, I say. And she gets it out a bit louder this time. Wonderful, I say and hug her. For this I get a very big smile. When she sits down we all talk about how on the stage people have to talk loud. Everyone complimented Jeannie who was still smiling. I asked the class if anyone thought Jeannie would make a good actress. Yes-yes-everyone called. So do I, I said. Jeannie was still smiling...and so was I.

Mihalles comes from Greece and doesn't like his name. He wants to be called Mike. Why, I ask. Mihalles is such a beautiful name. Yeah - because it's GREEK - he says disgustedly - that's why you like it. Well, what's wrong with that? Greeks and Greece are terrific, don't you think so? He looks at me to see whether or not I'm putting him on. I'm dying to go to Greece - I say - and so is my husband. As a matter of fact I'm trying to save as much as I can of the money I make so that someday my husband and I can go to Greece. And because it is true, he believes me, and he starts to tell me about Greece -- how quiet it is -- not like New York -- blue and green - no cars - very pretty. And then the class starts to ask him questions and he got so happy that he was almost dancing while he talked. Can you say any words in Greek, I ask. Yes. Would you write us a few words on the board and tell us how to say them. And he did and the class said thank-you to him in Greek and it was a very beautiful moment.

Nancy Charney
3rd graders
P.S. 61

Mrs. Charney continued having children interpret and develop by holding up a big picture of a man's face.

"We talked about him - who he might be - where he lived - what was happening to him, etc.

Our play was going to be about this man. Each person would write one line. He would go to the board and write his line and then act out the line he just wrote...getting help from the other students when necessary.

This went on for the rest of the session and didn't seem to be enough time. It seemed as if they wanted to go on and so did the teacher, Mrs. Schlupf. It was decided that they would do just that--they'd work on it the next day, save me what they had finished--and maybe we'd act out the finished produce the next week.

Note: It really did take forever for each student to write his sentence on the board. They were afraid to try words that they could not spell...it was hard for them to write words on the board...they couldn't write big enough, they couldn't write dark enough, they couldn't write in a straight line... and all of these things were the cause of great frustration.. for me, too, because I couldn't relieve it for them.

Nancy Charney
3rd graders
P.S. 51

Mrs. Charney did essentially the same things with a sixth-grade class, but the effect was different with the older group.

"Divided group in half...first with nothing to do and then with an activity...did the same with the other half of the class. This time the class understood that they felt more comfortable when they had a real activity or a real point of concentration.

We then talked about actors making real what is not real. If we as actors believe so will the audience. i.e., we must concentrate on what it is that we are doing.

Other exercises included watching a sport together... really seeing it. Listening to the sounds in the room... listening to music. Walking around the room...feeling the atmosphere of the room, feeling heavy, light, eating something together, tug of war, mirror exercise where one group is mirror reflecting what other person is really doing. Class to determine which is mirror and which is really the doer.

Big discussion about listening to what is not really there--hearing sounds you didn't ever hear before--tasting what is not really there, etc.

I asked them to please really taste things when they were eating them and listen to things when they were listening to them so that they could taste, and listen and smell when the real things were not there. They seemed to dig this idea a lot.

And then I told them that we would end each class with a group sound which would be our sound. It would come out of how we were feeling and who we are and out of what had happened during the session.

To make the sound we all got together in a circle and joined arms. The sound started out as a little hum and then from each other we could feel it getting louder and louder until there was no where else for it to go at which point it would be over.

We made the sound. It was tentative and the kids weren't sure what to do and they all looked at each other...but when it was over we really felt as if we'd made a connection and so the class was over.

Nancy Charney
6th graders
P.S. 51

Mrs. Charney had several exercises for increasing awareness.

Tug of War: "in which they each needed the other and had to make real the rope between them."

Items on a tray: "I put 15 items on a tray. Everyone looked at them. Then I covered the tray and asked them to write down those objects they remembered. Everyone thought it was a test. What cheating! It was really incredible. It's only for yourselves...to show you that you really don't look. I won't even look at your papers. But they continued to cheat. They were very surprised when I really didn't look at their papers."

Sound and Gesture Exercise: Someone makes a sound and gesture. Goes to someone in the circle and makes the sound

and gesture to him. The person repeats the sound and the gesture and then makes his own and so it continues. "

Mirror Exercise: "One group is mirror reflecting what other person is doing. Class to determine which is the mirror and which is really the doer."

Age Exercise: "You are waiting for a bus. It is someplace in which they have a place for you to sit while you wait. Choose a particular age. When you decide write that age down on a piece of paper and then go up to the bus stop and wait for a bus as if you are that age. After a number had tried the exercise I asked them to take out a piece of paper and write something for me about someone who was a different age from them. I reminded them that they could write anything they wanted. It could be long or short or serious or funny and I didn't care about neatness or spelling or correct English. Everyone wrote very excitedly. There were times when there was much noise - much consulting - many questions."

Nancy Charney
6th graders
P.S. 51

sestinas

"PROOF AGAIN THAT KIDS TAKE TO FORMS EASILY"

Phillip Lopate, working at Central Commercial High School, found students apprehensive about writing poetry. They were convinced that it had to be meaningful and moralistic; poems read in school (Frost's "Mending Wall", for example) are usually treated in a terribly meaningful and moralistic way.

"The kids seemed puzzled or discouraged about writing poetry. After awhile I thought it would be good for them to try their hand right there instead of belittling their own efforts. I told them we were going to write a sestina: they picked the end-words (all of which reflected their idea of the nature of poetry) and I parceled out stanzas for each to write. There were only five kids so I took the sixth, but fortunately Malcolm came along and I pressed him into writing the envoi. Two of the authors were on the art squad and had never written a poem before. They were so pleased. Despite the initial fright, everyone felt more competent for having risen to the task. All in all, an exciting group effort (and remarkably cohesive, considering that none of them saw what the other was doing until the end.)"

Phillip Lopate
Central Commercial H.S.

(NOTE: A sestina is a six stanza poem. The first five stanzas contain six lines each, each line ending in the same, but reordered, six words. The sixth stanza, the "envoi", contains only three lines, but all six end words are distributed in those lines.)

The sestina referred to above follows:

With trembling pen I began to respond
But of no answer could I think
Of why or how we shattered the happiness
Which climbed as high as our favorite mountain
But now has dropped to the shallow water
Leaving in sorrow but a lonely memory.

I sang a song in memory
Of a love which wouldn't respond
Your reflection I saw upon the water
A trick from the heart, pained by what it thinks
For in the surrounding of these mountains
I had known you and happiness.

The spring warm water
In my childhood of happiness
Would stimulate my thirst and my mind to think
Of my little reveries and memories
Which in account respond
To the trickling of the virgin snow on top of the mountain.

Security in happiness
Bring a fond memory
Of a flat-topped mountain
To the scenery I respond
Journey in thinking
Over pure, sparkling water.

What makes a mountain?
With its flowing water
Its size smaller to the response
Of erosion. The happiness,
As it flowers, brings back a memory.
Why should I think?

And while I am sitting in class I sometimes think
Of a grey billy goat climbing down the mountain
And I am the bell around his neck. Memory
slips, but was I really clanging in the water
To remind the goatherds of their happiness
As the temples in the background respond?

I think that I shall never respond
To mountains so beautifully surrounded by ponds
The memory of that happiness shall bring water to all eyes.

Creative Writing Workshop
Central Commercial H. S.

Phillip Lopate later tried assigning sestinas to smaller groups.

"Since there were three of them I had them write a half-sestina. The word endings they picked drove the poem in a rather morbid direction. Aside from my suggestion that they use one of their names as an end-word, I found that they could go completely on their own in this rather difficult structured assignment. Proof again that kids take to forms easily. The result was splendid, to my mind, and had a wonderful Annabel Lee feeling."

Phillip Lopate
Central Commercial H.S.

A memory that is stark
Perhaps the wish of God
Displays a vivid picture
Of a love so dead and empty
That once was pure and young
And now is dark and far as Melani.

I like to visit Melani
She lives in a bird's nest that's getting stark
She makes me think It's good young
And everything goes to God
When I got there it was empty
It's winter, now I have the picture.

The water had evaporated in the brown pitcher
The same water that could save poor Melani
The feeling of numb bones, dehydrated shell and an emptiness
Fill the body of the stark
Creature; her death returned her to God
Instead of being old she was young.

Melani
Brenda
Deborah
Central Commercial H.S.

Kenneth Koch, working with much younger children at P.S. 61, also found the Sestina a workable device. Mr. Koch had these fifth graders contribute single lines to the collaborative poem while Mr. Lopate had the high school students each write an entire stanza.

"I had a wonderful and very long (an hour and a quarter almost) session with the 5th-graders. I read them a number of their color poems and then we wrote a sestina together on the blackboard. The sestina is enclosed. It took quite a while to write but I believe it was very enjoyable and interesting for everybody. First I explained the form to them and then I asked for suggestions for the 6 end words which get repeated throughout the poem. I wrote the words on the blackboard as they were shouted to me from the class: they chose PERPLEXITY, DISJOINT, COMMON, WEALTH, HOORAY and FABULOUS. Then I wrote the end words for the first 2 stanzas on the blackboard and asked for lines from the class which would end in the required word. The blackboard looked like this:

(1)		(2)
.....perplexity	fabulous
.....disjoint	perplexity
.....common	hooray
.....wealth	disjoint
.....hooray	wealth
.....fabulous	common

There were 4 or 5 children who had their hands up almost all the time and who had really good ideas most of the time but I tried hard to get lines from other less eager class members. I succeeded with about 7 or 8 others I think. The poem might have been better if it had been entirely written by Jean, Lisa, Charles, and Jeff (all of whom write very well) but I wanted to get as many students as possible involved in it; and the others did in fact contribute some good ideas and some good lines. When the poem got into a tough spot, however, the four children mentioned above, along with Argentina Wilkinson, could be relied on to come to the rescue. So I included as many children as I could (all who volunteered got at least one line in the poem) and kept the poem as good as I could by relying on a few students sometimes when everybody, and the poem, got stuck. After we'd done the first 2 stanzas I got a volunteer to copy them down (Erin was hailed by the class as having the clearest handwriting so she got the job) so I could erase them after we'd done stanza 3 and write more stanzas on the blackboard. Just in case the above isn't entirely clear, we wrote the poem line by line from the beginning; we didn't take lines at random to fit the end words. I was feeling a little worn out at about stanza 6 and I was afraid the children might have gotten bored with the whole thing. I believe this

was not the case however. (The title of the sestina was decided on after we wrote the poem. About 7 titles were suggested and we voted on them. "Hooray", a late entry, was an easy winner). After we had finished, I suggested that some of the students might like to write sestinas of their own at home and show them to me on Thursday. To my surprise this suggestion was greeted with great and even wild enthusiasm by a number of children in the class and looks and words of interest by the rest. Some were saying that was really fun! and other such things, so I was very pleased. Mrs. Weick, their teacher, was also taken with what they had done. "They really did a fine job with those words," she said."

Kenneth Koch
P.S. 61

"Hooray" is on the next page.

HOORAY

My wonderful perplexity
Is so disjoint.
Words like that are not common
But they do have quite a wealth
Of meaning. Hooray! Hooray!
It's really fabulous.

It's a wonderful fabulous
Day! Let's have some perplexity.
It's time we got some hooray!
I think I'll just disjoint
Altogether. Look who's here! the wealth
Man! His visits aren't so common.

Today isn't so common
But tomorrow will be fabulous.
We want wealth
But getting wealth is a great perplexity.
I've got to disjoint.
My finger fell--Hooray!

It's time for lunch hooray
What do work and lunch have in common?
I'll go have something to eat in a disjoint
Restaurant. The food there was fabulous!
Food is a great perplexity.
Food is great wealth.

Here comes the Wealth
Parade! No one is going to say hooray.
Why that is is a great perplexity.
A parade isn't common
But it's fabulous.
The wealth man's float is going to disjoint!

Things like that are disjoint.
How should we distribute the wealth?
Distributing wealth is fabulous.
They're distributing wealth--Hooray!
Distributing is so common
We'll distribute it with the perplexity.

The perplexity of the cat is disjoint.
It comes out in common with the wealth
Man. The people will say, "Hooray! it's fabulous!"

5th grade
P. S. 61

Ron Padgett continued work with the sestina form. The sheer delight these fifth graders have in words is very clear in "The Vorple" and "Friendship In An Elven Lore Double Sestina".

FRIENDSHIP IN AN ELVEN LORE DOUBLE SESTINA

Once I met an ELF
But yesterday a hooded DWARF
I like jolly people like HOBBITS
But I'd rather meet a BROWNIE
And marry a blondehaired SPRITE
Or a green haired FARIE.

If I married a greenhaired FARIE
I would be an ELF
Or a grim faced DWARF
If I married a SPRITE
I would be a HOBBIT
Or a gold haired BROWNIE.

If I was a BROWNIE
And married a blondehaired FARIE
Orr all my friends were HOBBITS
And I was an only ELF
And my best friend was a DWARF
And my best friend of all was a SPRITE.

If I was an ELVEN KNIGHT
And interested in HOBBIT LORE
Married to a FARIE WIFE
But really I was a HOBBIT KNIGHT
With a friend a BROWNIE FAIR
Another one a DWARVEN KNIGHT.

I had a group with a DWARVEN KNIGHT.
And with me was en ELVEN KNIGHT
And a brown haired BROWNIE FAIR
And I concerned in HOBBIT LORE
And I was a HOBBIT KNIGHT
With my beautiful FARIE WIFE.

My FAIRIEWIFE and DWARVENKNIGHT.
I HOBBITKNIGHT and ELVENKNIGHT.
I concerned with HOBBITLORE and my son a BROWNIEFAIR.

5th grade
P.S. 61

THE VORPLE

Democracy is the exact equal of Communism
They both have great generosity
Vorple vorple vorple
That last line was fabulous
In fact it was incredible
It happened in Argentina

Was that A_rgentina?
No, it was communism
That all is incredible
Or is it generosity?
That's fabulous
Vorple vorple vorple.

Hooray we're going to start with vorple
This vorple lives in Argentina
His car is fabulous
It came from Communism
It has a lot of generosity
But we all think it's incredible

That sure is incredible
Vorple vorple vorple
That last vorple sure was generosity
The best vorples live in Argentina
A vorple is full of Communism
That last stanza was fabulous

Dr. Frankenstein was fabulous
Frankenstein was incredible
They both came from Communism
Vorple vorple vorple
Argentina went to Argentina
Argentina is full of generosity

But I still think vorple is full of generosity
And Communism always was fabulous
Especially in Argentina
But the real Argentina is incredible
Vorple vorple vorple
Vorple is Communism

Hi Communism, how is your generosity?
Vorple vorple that's fabulous
It sure was incredible in Argentina.

One child from this class wrote his own sestina:

JACOB AND DENOTHER

There was a brother of the world named Jacob
The other was Evil named Denother
Jacob was fair and believed in Love
Denother was Evil and the same with Hate
Jacob when a fight would always make Peace
Denother when a fight would always make War
Jacob on a Lyre made beautiful Music
And Denother only made Static

Static bugged the world
Poor-----Jacob
Music sounded much better but he can spread it
How happy is -----Denother
War broke into the world
Very little people believed in Love
Hate was the thing that spoiled the world
How would Jacob make Peace

Peace was hope and how could he get it.
If I get people who can help me said Jacob
Hate would not be so strong.
(Hippys) they will believe in Music
Love they will believe in
How unhappy he will be poor Denother
War will not make the world Dead.

War was dieing down
And weaking friskly was Denother
Love was getting stronger
Stronger getting was Music
Hate but was still in the world
And how it was destroyed by Jacob
Peace was what he used.

Yet Ron includes a note:

"I had such success last time in Mrs. Weick's class with the sestina that I decided to try it with this less advanced group. These kids had never heard of a sestina, so trying to explain the form was pretty strange. Even trying to explain that each line must end with a particular word, this was hard. If the end-word were "mystery", a child would offer something like, "It is a mystery to me". It was futile to try to run the extra words over into the next line, when some kids couldn't grasp the idea of the end-word. But some did, and the result was not unpleasant."

Ron Padgett
Fourth graders
P. S. 61

eadwina harvey

The poems collected on the following pages were written by Eadwina Harvey, a student at Central Commercial High School. The Collaborative has made a policy of not singling out individual students for superior work, but we feel that we do have a responsibility to a young writer whose work reflects a serious interest in writing as well as exceptional ability. Miss Harvey is a senior in high school, and it is time her work reached a wider audience.

The Collaborative does not take any credit for the quality of these poems. Mr. Phillip Lopate, the Collaborative's poet working at Central Commercial, makes it very clear that Miss Harvey was writing long before he arrived in the school.

shining light/flairing darkness/or
(how he was able to melt my inner thoughts)

stretching walls and rock-a-bye windows
rubber ceilings and plasticine floors--
i dream-i dream- he is always there--
in a vision, in real life--he is always there--
he stands there in a white sheet made of purple glass--
with a blue face and blonde eyes--he is beautiful--
he sits out in the middle of the lake on top of the water--
floating as it seems--but he really is "don't you see?"
it's really as plain as the nose on his face that
he is seated atop of waters--
where in what place can i find that vision that has just
flew away with his white sheet made of purple glass??
it seems that he has flown into the wilderness so as to escape.
all things are real if you touch them, but to see them, one
needs the eyes of the moon--and the mind of the sun--to see
through the blue and white of the sky, and the purple and
green of the sea.
as i--with my moon eyes can see beneath the depths of the sea,
and farther;
as i--with my sun mind can see far, far beyond the heights of the
sky; i feel, i really feel.

i catch up with the vision; he is dressed, not in a white-purple-
glass sheet,
but in a plasticine coat and illuminating pants, that shine in the
stars of the night, that glow with the sun's ultra-violet rays
that make me squint when i see him coming close to me--
what is the meaning of all the shining light and flairing darkness??
i have blown my mind in the depths of the sky and the sea--
where will i go when i start going mad and they put me away
with only a diary to write down all the frightening things
that are happening to me--and not to him--he is like a
spirit creature that glides in the night--
he can see through the walls of my inner brain--
he is able to melt my inner thoughts, that they are able to
come right out in the open air--and dispose of themselves--
i do not wish any danger or misfortune to come upon anyone
that these thoughts hit, because it is not my willing intention--
but if such things do so happen by this foreshadowing, i shall
go far-far- away--never to return to this civilization--
but to the next-----

SUM, MER VALLEY, SUN or (let me take you with me to Fallard Springs,
Moon for a visit)

taking a walk through springland wonder,
the weather is not as tough as i thought it would be-
in fact, there is no weather,
as there is not temperature. .
seeing it all again made me feel quite at home--
as it is the same surroundings that i was brought up in.
springland wonder is a beautiful place--
where the trees seem to talk and move the minute you are out of their sight--
where the flowers all love one another; and they stand in the sun all day
long and take it in, and talk about things in general. . .
where you may see little children playing a very serious game
of chess--and they are only at the age of four. . .
where, if you want to send a letter to your best friend. .you may fly it
through the air. .
where all of the teenage girls play lutes,
and all of the teenage boys seem to play mandolins. .
where you may be able to find a horse or two or even three
galloping about free as the birds that fly in the sky. .
where all the cats old and new sit in the platinum window panes of the
glass houses. .
the dogs run around in the front of the back yard,
and the people who live in the glass houses never throw stones,
for fear of breaking the unbreakable glass that surrounds the house. . .

where people wear electronic clothes...

and walk around with electric smiles in phantasmagoric faces,

that never frown...

where the colour that everyone likes to hear played is blue,

and they all have a ring with two hearts, a ruby, and a small half moon

on it...

we all live happily together in this small piece of land called Fallard

Springs, Moon...

no one discovered us as yet, but it will not at all be very hard

for us to vanish, for it is in us.

as i go toward my home in sun, mer valley, sun, i will take

with me many of the souvenirs that i have bought while on

my little stay in this part of the country.....

A PIECE OF GLASS.....

SEE, I TOLD YOU THAT IT WASN'T REAL

see, i didn't think that you would notice the way that it was set up.

even i would never have noticed that it was situated in the far eastern side of the building.

i guess things like that we never pay attention to, even if it is as plain as the wooden pole that is standing right in front of your nose.

we don't notice things like that, but we do notice it if it was as bright as the psychedelic lights that surround us in our little houses.

but really what we want to see is something non-real for a slight change in our drab lives.

some things like an invisible cat going through a bed of orange roses;

like a rubber ball playing with a small boy;

like a stone house floating on an ocean of cool clear water;

like a piece of pink paper walking across a yellow street;

like a turtle that runs faster than the speed of light;

like a kite flying a young boy (showing him how it feels);

a peach tree that grows pears, grapes, oranges, and apples - something we all know can never be possible, even at our late stage of life's game.

changing from right to wrong in just the twinkling of an eye-- which is all so very possible.

returning from wrong to right, which never happens overnight

to most of us, that is...

in reality, we are all imperfect, though some of us do not think
of it in that sense.....

seeing a cloud take the shape of a huge bell, and then ringing;
then seeing that same cloud take the shape of an angry old fist
and throwing down water on us as if we were like flowers that drift
up and down the street.

en realidad, no sabemos que toda la gente creen,

so that is why we all take different steps in the different things
that we attempt to do.

A big meadow full of flowers--she lives there with her mother,
father, and her twin brothers.

she lives in a bowl full of flowers. there's water here and
there where fishes float and swim.

she lives in the heart of Switzerland and there's a playpen
for the babies to play that the grass and flowers grow in and
she has her own playhouse made of a big pile of flowers/

where she goes to think and sometimes to play with her lyre.
there is also a field filled with sunshiny apple blossoms and
sunflowers that grow ten feet tall.

Oh, why --- must i return to the place where people fight and
cry --- where they moan and die.

the next door neighbors are fun --- they have a house made of
orchards ---
they grow freely -- you know -- especially where the little children
go to play -- they sing.

they are put in a glass garden to clear up the obscurity of their
minds

-----TO CLEAR THEIR HEADS-----

they grow up building enormous fantasies -- like the ones
edgar allen poe tells.

it is wonderful how they live -- shall we all live that way??/?
i want to move ----- to move away -----

it si time for changes in my meadow -----
for it to become big and grow
for it to blossom and spread out
for it to fill the earth with peace and happiness.

oh

pacem en terris

mir chantz

shalom

WANDERERS

green eyes wandering
not knowing the way out ---
 hoping that some day ---
it will work ---

she is not here ---
she will not come ---
she is dead ---

she has died from hate ---
it has killed her ---
here she lies ---

her face shining in morning dawn ---
 the tears still there but ---
although she is dead, ---
they keep coming as if from Niagara.

they are still around killing hate ---
they want to see it end ---
to hurt it before it kills another ---

they all have green eyes ---
but they know a way out ---
through heaven and hell they will go ---
 they want to exterminate that

thing

the

HATE.---

HARPSICORD TUNES

take my hand, and we can walk along the skyway--
we can talk along the way--
for we have many things to look forward to.
i can float all the way there, but you'd rather swim--
but first i must stop in mid-air, and think that
three years back when i was young..
and knew nothing of the world,
but since those few last years i see,
that everything has from me been changed--
on my way up to the sky,
i continue to see visions of
harpsicords that are coloured like apples-
oranges that resemble organs-
and green grapes that wind like guitar strings...
maybe they are true-maybe they are not,
when i reach my destination,
which has taken me a number of light years awy,
many of which i cannot remember--
but manta! i see those visions! ! !
still weird----but beautiful----
a band of people, i see, are tuning up those outlandish instruments---
the sound that they produce is:
ear-shattering-
heart-stopping-
eye-popping----
and mind blowing! !
touching, they are, but not playing...
hearing, we are, but not listening--
these, all long forgotten--
as we return to ground----
oh, manta!!! we have returned to you----
remembering all that has happened....

query

Teachers and writers and students all have varying opinions on the subject of correcting student writing. There is such divergence on the subject that it might be helpful to collect ideas from Newsletter readers. If you would like to contribute your opinion, please send it to us. Our next Newsletter will contain a summary of these replies. Material on the subject now in our files is more innuendo than stated opinion and is not, in present form, very useful.

“if you can’t beat ’em, join ’em”-comics in the classroom

Two writers have done considerable work with comic characters, comic book format, and the heroics of comic book situations. Both Art Berger, at I.S. 8 (Queens) and Lennox Raphael at P.S. 26 (Brooklyn) have found comics a remarkably stimulating medium, not least because of the excitement aroused in children by adult appreciation of comic book cults and heroes. The statistics of comic book ubiquity and the atmosphere created by such "easy work" come through clearly in Lennox Raphael's description. In this group were 18 children drawn from the sixth, fifth, fourth and third grades.

"The children were eager to discuss comics. Of the 18 students, only two claimed to have never read a comic book. And even those two weren't sure. Anyhow, kids do relate in a very alive way to visual involvement and I saw the making of comic books, modeled after the known format, as one very effective method of loosening them up and breaking down the great fear (out of respect and confusion) of the printed word. Print. They were being harnessed to print and judged by it too - at a time like this when mixed media remain unexploited in the classroom. I used the same card paper (colored construction paper) for dummies, only folding them this time and making a book. Passed out crayon. They could use pens, pencil, crayons. Such easy work, they felt. Said I wanted them to create a comic book, each person one in the 40 minutes we had left. They could draw and write. I went to the board and casually discussed the

organization of the traditional comic. Suspense, action, story; just do it. Tell and illustrate. Archie-lovers predominated. Of importance; they were doing, coming forward, everything working fine. Two teachers stayed a while, marveled at the seriousness of the kids as they fought out their comics, I feeling them, they feeling me."

Lennox Raphael
P.S. 26

The children had absorbed the style of make-believe comic characters and were ready to use this style in portraiture. The question, "Can we make it up?" at the end of this next diary suggests the depths of unreality children must feel about their real lives, --or perhaps, the depths of their humor.

"Today I had everyone cross-portrait. With the same comic book material, and working out of the same style, I first had each one choose a partner and do portrait of said with crayons on cover. Do it anyhow, I said, but let it be because of what you feel about the person. They lunged at this task. So everyone was doing portrait of another and also having one done of himself. A few protested the portraits that passed for their faces. But all in good humor. Then I told them, OK, you have this cover of this book with a face on it, and I want to know what's behind the face, what stories hide behind it, what turns it on. "Can we make it up?" Of course, I said. Just don't bore me. They would deal with themselves, and this they were doing. Device is a spur."

Lennox Raphael
P.S. 26

Even in the next assignment the children demand some fantasy. The bigger-than-life element in "soul" seems to satisfy them.

"So today we spoke about comic books and the fact that they were usually about people they didn't know and really couldn't identify with fully except in little fantasies, so write about something you know, using what you see around you as props. Again they wanted to know whether they could make up the story. Yes. Make it interesting. Make somebody want to read it. Put some soul into it."

Lennox Raphael
P.S. 26

"Soul Girl and Soul Boy" emerges as a fantastic character and proves an excellent device for self-examination.

"Out of the last session came SOUL GIRL, by Doreen Douglas, a sixth grader. I took SOUL GIRL to the workshop, had it read aloud and created a discussion around it, before getting into a larger one of working collectively on THE ADVENTURES OF SOUL GIRL, and somebody said, why not Soul Boy too? so we decided on SOUL BOY AND SOUL GIRL, after the question of whether it should be Soul Sister instead of Soul Girl was put to a vote, and Soul Girl carried. I remembered saying to myself afterwards that I should have been more flexible and allowed them to use either one because, essentially, it is the same. We, still following Doreen's script as a basic outline, discussed them as heroic, powerful, magical, mysterious, Wonder Woman, Mandrake, Marvel, Captain Justice, action, everything and soul. And told them we would work on it together until we had something juicy to be mimeographed and distributed to the rest of the kids in the school; and they were cheeks aflame. We used lined paper."

Lennox Raphael
P.S. 26

Art Berger's classes at Intermediate School 8 in Queens followed much the same progression from comic style and lore to self-portraiture. Two of Art Berger's diaries follow and they illustrate how discussion of comics evolved out of talking about dreams.

"I HAVE A DREAM that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made straight.' I asked--if Martin Luther King had that kind of dream; what was he doing and Andre answered, "setting things right." I asked what was special about dreams. Claire said, "dreams are the only place you can do anything." I wrapped up dreams as doing for us the things we can't do or are not allowed to do! One could jump over clouds, walk on water, meet purple people... anything... "Go to Cloud Nine," said Vincent. Yes, Cloud Nine, I said--there are enough clouds for everyone, so you can say like the song Hey Get Off of My Cloud. Your dreams, inside your own head is the one

place you can surely "do your thing". Like Jimmie
Hendrix's Castles in the Air; The Yellow Submarine;
Magical Mystery Tour; or follow Mr. Tambourine Man:

I'm ready to go anywhere
I'm ready for to fade
into my own parade
cast your dancing spell this way
I'm ready to go under it.

I asked if there were bad dreams and they shouted
NIGHTMARE. To my query as to how many had them,
only a few hands went up. I asked for a few samples of
both good and bad dreams and for a while talk of candy
butterflies, singing telephones and subway monsters
filled the air.

Some of the kids believed a myth that seemed to inhibit
their dreaming; that if in your dream you died--you
would never wake up. This reminded me of a nightmare
I once had when sailing on a trading schooner in the
South Pacific, which I spun for the class. How my bunk
was in a crowded forecandle. That it was like a shelf
that I had to crawl into, with the overhead just inches
above me. How after a stormy watch I crept into that
sack for some badly needed shuteye. I soon was wrapped
in the dream, reliving the action of the storm, getting
clobbered by a swinging boom (that in reality had missed
me). My shipmates picked me up off the deck and brought
me to the captain who pronounced me dead. They put me
into a pine coffin and nailed it shut. In the coffin I
revived. Horrified by my predicament I tried to sit up
and pounded my knuckles raw screaming that I was alive,
come and get me out of here. In reality I had woke up
from the dream and tried to sit up in the tight bunk,
smacking my forehead against the overhead, shrieking
my throat raw, "Let me out. Let me outta here. I'm
not dead. I'm not dead". I was finally pried out of that
bunk shaking all over.

That wrapped the kids in hush. I told them that the stuff
dreams are made of are tales worth telling. And the
telling of them makes you feel good for letting out the

fears that bring them on. And that was what I wanted them to do today. Put a dream (or nightmare) on paper so that we could have a class dream book.

Hannah asked, "What can I do, I never have dreams." Addressing myself to that, I showed how one could learn to make dreams. How to discover that the inside of your skull is like a cinerama screen with double features in technicolor possible. To that Vincent said, "Sounds like getting high." Keeping my cool, I said, "Sure, only you don't have to get it sniffing glue. The wise men of the east, called Yogas, do it by sniffing fresh air." Vincent retorted, "Where do you find fresh air-- all we get is pollution." He had me there.

To demonstrate tailor-made visions I showed the class a mix of body, breathing and eye exercises. With some of the kids, snorting, swaying, cupping eyes, contemplating, and finally reporting patterns of lines dots and color swirling before their shut eyes. I suggested that those who had no dreams to write of to try to draw their visions.

I started them off with a sample dream, reading Hugh Romney's Pipe Dream about the

...huge..gaping mouth that ATE all the ugly
people...and the subways like spaghetti...
and little green men jumping out of that mouth
cutting down phone lines, signs and even schools...

to which they shouted--"Yeah." And I read a dream piece by my 9 year old daughter Karen about a chameleon-like stone she found that took on the pattern and color of whatever you placed the stone on. And to the haunting tune of Mr. Tambourine Man I asked to hear them scratch their pens in time to the mists swirling in their mind and play their dreams for me.

They chattered and fussed like sparrows, but they were working. I circulated; giving a prod here and a hint there in the fishing for ideas. A few at a loss for words were doodling imaginatively. I told them if they were hard put for words to put it into pictures. Before the period ended-- out of their chatter emerged a sheaf of dream papers. And several sheets with some way out graphic illustration of their dream.

Seeing all this drawing talent around--I announced that next week we would combine writing skill with sketching and go into comic books.

Attached to this diary are some of the dream sketches and one of the drawings that I traced.

Art Berger

I. S. 8

7th grade

Comic Books are a hangup of most teachers and parents--including myself. I have bugged my own kids about their intense interest in them. But in the search for ways to reach the children one must transcend old ideas and: "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." In the joining I again found that the learning process is mutual. I have as much to learn from them as they have from me.

Last week we looked into dreams as a way to make anything happen. The super heros on the pages of comic books accomplish the same thing. That is what imagination (creativity) is all about. Not to appear like a dope on such literary matters, I spent some time picking the brains of my son and daughter. Therefore I came to class with at least a front of sophistication on the business of comics. I also carried a Gertz shopping bag full of the contraband that I had to sneak out of my house and into the school.

Fanning out a handful of the books in front of the class was enough to snap them to lively attention. From the talk triggered, I learned that the world of comics was built on a complex structure of characterization, plot, locale and legend. These kids were all aficionados of this literature and partisan to particular publishers, lines and heros.

The biggest boy in the class, Vincent, who has been trying hard to overcome the years of schoolings failure to reach him, broke out of his usual aloofness, to display astuteness in this area. He was partial to the Marvel line that featured heroes with special powers deriving from special skills and equipment, such as SpiderMan, Submariner, and Iron Man. He also favored mystical heroes like the god Thor.

Andre; perfectionist and cartoonist in his own right, was partial to the D. C. line of superheroes endowed with an assortment of super powers. It all began with Superman, despatched to earth by his father Jor-el from his planet Krypton which was about to explode. Assuming an earth man identity of Clark Kent, he draws on his superpowers only to foil evil. Through Krypton's gravity he has the powers of flight and super strength and harrasses the ill deeds of Lex Luther and Braniac, arch-criminal with the computer mind. Andre also briefed me on the heroes grouped around Superman; his pal Jimmy Olson, girl friend Lois Lane, his cousin Super Girl; and also Batman and Robin.

From the girls in the class I learned of a whole world of teen and sub-teen prototypes in the Archie and Harvey series. They had nothing to do with super powers but were a reasonable facsimile of the life of young people-- if somewhat lobsided in its white middle class orientation.

After talking up this whirlwind of comic characters, I brought the talk around to action. I proposed that we create new characters and scenes and do our own series of books. We talked of some types we could create, that could accomplish any of our hopes. Some characters that were imagined were:

MARCO PORKO - the boy who could eat his way out of any situation.

HIP MAN - The man with powers to freak anybody out.

SUPERSPADE - a black man whose special powers were used to set things right for his people.

The class polarized into teams of two and three collaborating and pooling their skills and ideas. A few worked as loners. I passed out colored drawing paper and with a few exceptions everyone got busy.

For format, I suggested a folder with the main character depicted on the cover, a biographical sketch on the inside front cover, and at least four squares forming a strip with the action.

Moving around and peeping over shoulders, I found most of the kids laying ideas on their sheets. Donna asked for help in drawing an Afro hairdo and Beryl asked for suggestions as to what a Stretch Lady could do with her elastic limbs, and I suggested basketball.

Two kids were sitting it out. Leroy was moping sad-eyed off to a side. I talked with him and gathered that he had been humiliated by loud verbal abuse from a teacher in the lunchroom. I gave him a few Capt. Fury books to read off his ruffled feelings into.

Cynthia was completely out of it, in spite of the brightness in her eyes. I tried to draw her out, sensing some deep emotional problem. Mr. Cohen later told me she had troubles at home. She said in a weary way that she had no ideas and no patience for thinking. Offering to be her model, I said, "Draw me into a character--anything goes--I won't be offended, no matter what comes out." That evoked a response from her. Her face warmed into her pretty smile and she went to work.

The entire class was now busy, busy, right up to the bell. Their work was in various stages of progress. I collected everything promising to return everything next week for completion. When Vincent handed me his drawings I noticed it was titled Brick Man and Brick Woman. I asked if they were from Brick Town. Surprised at my familiarity with that expression, he pointed out the window in the direction of the poorest part of South Jamaica, saying "that's Brick Town."

The Meditator, Soul Man and Brown Sugar, Mickey Moose and Donald Schmuck; Devil Dog, Sweet Sugar Plum and Goofy Grape; Four Eye Pinky; Peace Lady and War Man; The Executers; Olympic; Magnet Man; Stretch Lady; Forgetful Louis; Colonel Solar; were some of the characters in work.

And Cynthia shyly handed me her cover drawing, where I saw a pretty good caricature of myself under the name of The Peculiar Mr. Limpet. .and as the closing line in one of the books said: "Stay Tuned."

Art Berger
I. S. 8
7th graders

SAMPLES: Dreams, Comics, Portraiture; Soul Boy and Soul Girl

DREAMS:

I am sure that everyone
can be happy if they want.

A beggar when he finds food
A mother when she gets a child
A writer when his book gets published
A child when he meets a new friend.

I am sure that the world is round
& I wont fall off.

I BUT MOSTLY !

I am sure that everyone can
find true happiness.

A beggar when he finds food
A mother when she gets a child
A writer when he writes a book
A child when he gets a new friend.

Just go to sleep and dream,

Dream of candy & merry-go-rounds,
dancing & singing,
your mother & father.

Rachel, 7th grade
I. S. 8

MY DREAM

Once I dreamed that I was in a casket with a black heart and he said come Andrea come I got out of my casket and I took my feet out of my casket and sat up in it. This man said kill my wife take this knife and kill her! kill her! and go and get me a blonde. When I went and got the girl he took the knife. And some men came in when he left and took a giant fork and killed me and I screamed and then I open my eyes screaming.

Andrea, 7th grade
I. S. 8

COMICS:

Devil Dog... A crummy no-good mut who tries to kill poor Sugar Plum for her devil dogs. Sweet Sugar Plum is an innocent American Beagle who is always being threatened by Devil Dog for her devil dogs. The hairy hero of this little tale, Sweet Sugar Plum's hubby, Goofey Grape.

Julie and Heidi
7th graders
I.S. 8

SOUL GIRL AND SOUL BOY:

The scene opens in a School. The robbers are after a piece of chalk that contains a precious rubby. The rubby is worth \$1,000. The robbers claime that if they don't get all the chalk they want they will blow the school up with a atomic bomb. The robbers wanted 1,000 boxes but the school only had 100. So the principal gave them the 100 boxes of chalk. When the robbers came out Soul Girl jumped on them and started fighting. There was a CRASH! and a POW! The fight was over Soul Girl won another victory.

Kimberly
P.S. 26

Soul Girl had a brother name Tom. He was only six years old. One day when Soul Girl came home from school Tom ask Soul Girl how can he become soul. So Soul Girl said you have to be friendly, stop fights, be kind, fight for your rights, and love others. Soul Girl looked puzzle. She said why do you want to know. Because I want my name to be flying all over 'Broadway and be präsident of the United States. I want to become Soul Boy. Soul Girl said you can't do that, because you have a lot of responblet. Tom said I can do it you watch and see just wait. Soul Girl said start tomorow, want you waiting for. So after that day came Tom from school he was almost home a gang of boys were fighting so Tom jump in and try to stop the fight but some boys push him and tell him to mind his own businness. The boy said mind own got damn businness, so Tom said, you want to start something. The boy said ya come on baby you want to

start something come on past hit. When Tom came home you should have seen him he had a black eye. He was all dity up and mass up. Soul Girl said want happen. Tom said I had a fight with a boy because he call me names but for real I was trying to stop a fight. Soul Girl begain to laugh, then Tom said why you laughing because you learn your lesson about jumping into a fight as old you are you can't stop a 2 year old baby from fighting. And so they live happily ever after.

Karen
P.S. 26

PORTRAITS AND SELF-PORTRAITS:

Luis Speaks.

Luis came to school. It was his first time.

Teacher said

Boys and Girls this is Luis Richards. Luis did not say a word. Luis came from Puerto Rico. He did not know English. He knew how to speak Spainsh. He had move to New York the day before.

The teacher said say Luis.

Luis just looked at her.

Say Luis said the teacher.

Luis said "Say Luis, Say Luis."

At last Luis learned his name.

Evelyn
P.S. 26

The boy invented the big teeth was named Deryn. He lived a long toothless life. Look up into the sky it's a bird no it's a plain no it's goffer man. There comes Goffer man the biggest teeth in the world. Let's get goffer man's autograph. The big Sant Clause with the goffer teeth it's Goffer Man brother. He is in my class and we call him Sabra Toothed Animal. The way he got his big teeth was like this. One day there was a boy named Deryn who alway made trouble with everyone he seened. One day he bothered a boy who could beat him and he beat him til his teeth grew as big as the moon.

Samuel
P.S. 26

The Story About Janice Lydes.

Janice is my friend. One day she was sitting on the chair and she fell down on the floor and Janice is nice and kind. She is my best friend. One day she was walking down stair's with class we were going to gym she started playing and everytime she started to jump her slip was hanging every time and I started laughing that was on Thursday

CRAZY

One day when Janice was walking a lady came and she started looking at Janice. She hey girl what matter to your legs and Janice said the built me up wrong and the lady called the police and the police had his leg wrong too then her head came of and her legs the only thing that was left was her arm and her legs and the lady started to run and scream she said when she was screaming help! help! I am crazy.

Janice is the fall apart gril. Hey folks you've got to this book about Janice the patatooe bag. Ok. That all folk read it is cool like Vote toothpaste. It's crazy it's out of sight. Scok it to Me.

Laura
P.S. 26

All About Vertell Alvin.

This story is about Vertell Alvin. She lives on Van Buren Street. She has 4 sisters and 4 brothers. She is very cute. Her sister is in High School. She is practicing to be in the Talent Show. She is smart and does her work all the time. She has three dogs and they are wild. Vertell is very scared of her dogs and I don't blame her, because I am afraid myself. She is in class 5-1. One day I came to her house to practice. And she had the dogs in the backyard. But they got loose and everyone ran upstairs in the small room and it had two doors so we all closed them and held them close until her sister told us to come out. Her dogs kept on barking at us and made us shiver. I was afraid they might have bit me. But luckilly we all made it safely home without having to pay a doctor bill. Up to this very day I still come to her house. And she is still my friend. Her parents owns a two family house. It is very big. It has about six or seven rooms in it. Her bathroom is very big and has a weighing scale in it. I wish I lived closer to her.

Beatrice
P.S. 26

out of school workshops

Since December of 1968 Tom Weatherly has been running a workshop in Harlem for high school age kids on weekday nights. It is a voluntary group and totally unconnected with any school. The workshop was originally started by Tom under a Parks Department grant last summer, and then moved to us when we got going. The purpose of this brief note is to try and pass on a little of what Tom and I have learned -- I mention myself because for over two years I ran a similar workshop for slightly older people (17-25) at St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery.

The first and most obvious thing is that kids have solidly formed attitudes toward both school and 'learning' by the time they get to high school. They may be willing to suffer through learning disciplines they feel might pay off, but they certainly don't want anybody telling them anything about creative work (I think it was Brancusi who said 'every sculpture I ever made came from my eighteenth year'), so that it can be very difficult trying to work in a classroom situation. On the other hand, a voluntary after-hours workshop allows not only, in their terms, more freedom, but also absolute freedom of choice: only those really interested are going to show up. Also, we're dealing here with people who know, or at least think, that they want to do something with their writing -- it's not like a sixth grade class where the objective has to be to convince all the kids that writing can be 'useful' or 'fun' or whatever. Here we're dealing with the beginnings of professionalism, i. e., that particular care for how well the job is done.

This concern for the craft then leads to a possibility of a real development of basic techniques -- spelling, grammar, etc. -- because the necessity for good usage in order to be understandable is now clear, rather than having, let's say, rules of punctuation presented like calisthenics. The kids know they're running with the ball, and want to know how to run better, if I can be forgiven that dreadful analogy.

There's almost always a sequence of shakedown workshops in which tender egos must be protected, and overactive ones aimed at yourself, and it usually also takes time to get the kids yelling back at you and at each other, but that's how they learn the critical end. It's necessary that you be supremely secure enough in your own estimation of your own work, that you not only can make reasonable comments on their stuff, but you can take raps at your own, and decide calmly which are legit -- because in a good group, they frequently are legit.

These workshops should depend on the kids' work, not on lectures or reading lists, although sometimes they move into that, when pertinent. That is, it may develop that the group 'should' read W. C. Williams, or that so-and-so 'should' try writing a couple of sonnets, but this is a thing that comes by feel -- again, basically, the workshop has to depend on the work of the kids. If one poem is brought in, that's the extent of that workshop; if twenty, then, within limits, you try to deal with all of them. Our experience has been that groups of 8 to 15 would seem to be optimal size, allowing for plenty of discussion and cross-fertilization, whereas less than eight tend to become too dependent on the workshop head, and more than fifteen to split into separate blocs.

It's unnecessary to add that the guy running it has to be absolutely open and honest, about everything. Remember that these are volunteers; it's their choice as to whether they come or not, whether they work or not. By honest I mean, and Tom would support me, even to the point, on those bad days, of saying 'hey! I can't work today. Why don't you guys talk.' It also means using considerable judgment as to when to bug somebody about not producing some work, and when to decide that he has a real problem and needs to work it out.

The techniques, the styles, the content, they're all endless, each of us does it our own way, but, in my opinion, exposure to a bunch of your 'peers', working in a particular discipline, under the 'leadership' of a knowledgeable craftsman in that discipline, is an important step in the development of that discipline. And, as every one of us knows, whether working at kindergarten level or here, it's astonishing how much you learn about your own writing.

Joel Oppenheimer

fictionary dictionary

Kenneth Koch developed many types of poems, each of which focuses on one thing. (Mr. Koch is presently developing this material into a book for teachers). The value of this kind of poem for teachers is that only a brief discussion about the focus is required - once the children are inspired to write in the first place. Several samples are given:

POEMS USING MADE-UP WORDS

(Mr. Koch based this idea on a Minneapolis teacher's ideas for a "fictionary dictionary")

"I said, well what kind of a name would an animal have who walks around on top of the world--I said this pointing to a globe they have in the room. Marion thought of a good name for this animal, a WORLDMATWORLD (pron. WORLDMUTWIRLD). I asked what it would look like, how many heads, legs, etc. The children made up a name for the way it moved and for the way it talked. I drew a rough picture of it on the blackboard according to their specifications. Then they all were given paper and pencil and still seemed a little in doubt, so I gave a few more ideas. Think up a name for an imaginary sport; for an imaginary musical instrument; for imaginary flowers. I said they could have a definition of one made-up word in every line or else have the whole poem about one made-up word and also using other made-up words.

The toteslituet is a musical machine that plays daisy music.

The butelerdoe is a house that plays checkers.

The planteranter is a plant that makes ants jump.

Ilona, 4th grade
P.S. 61

...and other things

DREAM POEMS :

MY LITTLE WORLD

My little world is an empty one. And sometimes I can hear a sound of an animal walking toward me. The next morning I thought it was for real but I realize it was a dream. But the dream I had I can not forget. But a dream like that I can not forget.

Lucille, 5th grade
P.S. 61

WISH POEMS :

I wish in the summer it snowed like ice cream and every day I would take a cup and fill it with ice cream instead of going to a carvel and if it really snowed hard I would make a snow man with the ice cream and when it would stop snowing I would eat the ice cream snow man.

Lynne, 3rd grade
P.S. 61

COLOR POEMS :

"I began by reading them some poems with colors in them: De La Mare's 'Silver,' Tomas Torres' 'My Dream' (P.S. 61 4th grade, June '68) and some other P.S. 61 poems with colors. I talked about colors and what was what color. Is the eraser pink? In a pink light the eraser is pink. I also asked them about their favorite colors. Some have several. Also some have their happy colors and their sad colors. I

got some big sheets of colored cardboard and had the class do this: I said, Close your eyes and open them when I tell you to, look at the color I'm holding up and just write down whatever comes into your mind suggested by that color. I did yellow and red. Some of the associations were conventional and not really related much to the actual shade of the color I was holding up; some were more interesting. Here are some responses to the yellow: Yellow makes me think of a sun. A paper is yellow. A yellow paper makes me think of a bird. A yellow butterfly. Pencil. T.V. A banana. A rabbit. Yellow makes me think of a turtle's eye. It makes me think of the moon. To red: It looks red as a rug. It makes me think of a rose. Red makes me think of a dead apple. (It was a sort of dull grayish red I was holding up.) Then I asked the children to write poems with the same color in every line. I told them to pick a color first. A number of them started putting different colors in every line, so I had to explain to them about the one color. Most of their poems turned out to be a list of statements, such as X is red, Y is red, etc. Toward the end of the period I got the idea of telling them they could tell a story in the poem too, but it was too late for most. Telling them to put in wishes, dreams, noises, lies, comparisons would also have been useful I think. Here is a 3rd grade poem:

Black makes me think of King Kong in my bathroom
Black makes me think of the dark
It makes me think of the funny elephant that is black."

Kenneth Koch
3rd graders
P.S. 61

LIE POEMS :

"I began by reading them a couple of very beautiful lie poems written by students in the class--one by Mercedes (excerpt: My desk is made of roses and I have to water them every day...My spelling words are my name and address. I am a ball. I live under my books...My dress is made of wood. I read books about myself...) Here is one by a fifth-grader:

THE DAWN OF ME

I was born no where
And I live in a tree
I never leave my tree
It is very crowded
I am stacked up right against a bird
But I won't leave my tree
Everything is dark
No light!
I hear the bird sing
I wish I could sing
My eyes, they open
And all around my house
The Sea
Slowly I get down in the water
The cool blue water
Oh and the space
I laugh swim and cry for joy
This is my home
For Ever

Jeff, 5th grade
P.S. 61

NOISE POEMS :

"I made some noises, with ruler hitting things and crumpling paper and so on, and asked them what color these noises were. Ruler hitting the wastebasket one thought was black. Paper crumpling one thought was white; another orange. When they had gotten paper and pencil they went to work with astonishing speed and efficiency. Here is one of the results:

WHAT SHALL I CHARTREUSE

Oh green, yellow, orange, pink, red, black, brown
What shall I chartreuse today?
I could chartreuse with brown and gold,
Or I could red John in the nose. What could I chartreuse?
I put a green croak in Pinky's bed, what shall I chartreuse?
I could put a silver yeow on teacher's chair.
What shall I chartreuse?
I could ooze the blue toothpaste in Dad's face. What shall I
chartreuse?

What could I chartreuse if I got a paint brush,
Oh, oh I just wasted the day on thinking on what I shall
chartreuse
But I could always think of something to crown yellow
tomorrow.

Charles, 5th grade
P.S. 61

GARDENS IN SPAIN POEMS :

(Mr. Koch put Manuel de Falla's Nights in the Gardens of Spain on the record player and asked the children to close their eyes and think of anything. The influence of previous assignments, especially "color" and "noise" is evident in these selections.)

It makes me think of the Ice Capades when it is dark and a man and a lady were on the ice and they were spinning and spinning and they never stopped.

Maria, 4th grade
P.S. 61

The record makes me feel like a Spanish bullfighter fighting a very mean bull and there is a symphony playing music and I'm starting to dance. The music sounds very red. I even feel like I'm floating in heaven.

Thomas, 4th grade
P.S. 61

ANIMAL POEMS :

"I had the children write poems about animals. I began by reading them some poems about animals by D. H. Lawrence, among them and principally "Fish". I asked them to write poems about what it would feel to be covered with fur or live in the water and so on. I said they could write the poem as if they were the animal talking, or it could be a dialogue

between them and the animal. What I stressed most was that their poem should be seriously imagining what it felt like to be such and such an animal and not just what was usually said about animals. Here are two of the poems:"

THE BUTTERFLY

Where has my butterfly gone?
He is not in the meadow, not in the field
Not in the park, not in the garden
Oh, where has my butterfly gone?
But today I found him in my house.

Thomas, 4th grade
P.S. 61

DOG

Oh dog how do you feel with so much hair around you? Dear master, oh my dear master I feel nice and warm.
Oh dog how do you feel with those fluffy ears? Dear Master, oh dear master, I feel as if I had super hearing.
Oh dog how do you feel standing on four legs? Dear master oh my dear master I feel light and strong.
Oh dog I'll leave now goodbye.
Dear master oh dear master I feel it, my heart breaking.

Jose, 4th grade
P.S. 61

THING POEMS :

"Following up on Tuesday's assignment to write a poem about what it was like to be an animal I asked the children what it would be like to be a thing, such as a flag or a window or a blackboard and so on. I held up a globe and asked what it would feel like to be that. I blew some air at the flag so it moved and asked them to think what it would feel like to be a flag. Two examples:"

IF I WAS A FLAG

If I was a flag,
I would feel like April,
With the colors, red, white and blue,
I would feel happy flying like a bird swinging on air,

With the breath of air, I would feel pretty good standing
on a pole with the people saluting at me.

Esther, 4th grade
P. S. 61

HOW IT IS TO BE A FLOOR

I'm the floor of a house. Every time someone steps on me
I laugh. But the people can't hear me. Whenever they
step on my belly I really laugh hard. Sometimes when they
step on my eye I get some dirt in it. But I love when they
step on my back. When people step on my mouth I want to
swallow them but I don't.

Billy, 4th grade
P.S. 61

“anne sexton and her kind”

Members of Teachers and Writers are encouraged when projects the Collaborative has supported in the past expand or turn new and exciting directions. The following report from Bob Clawson tells what happened after the school year ended and the Anne Sexton-Bob Clawson class came to an end.

The Anne Sexton-Bob Clawson class at Wayland High School last year has had one extraordinary result, the formation of "Anne Sexton and Her Kind," a chamber rock group with Anne leading a performance of her poems set to musical compositions by Steve Rizzo. Rizzo was "discovered" in the class sponsored by Teachers and Writers Collaborative. Shortly after Anne and Bob had explained what Simon and Garfunkle had done with Edward Arlington Robinson's "Richard Cory," Anne read her "For Johnny Pole on the Forgotten Beach," and Bob suggested that it might be a more powerful piece if set to music. Steve bit, and Anne encouraged him, giving him two more of her poems when he faltered on the first. In less than three weeks, he had composed guitar music for all three. Anne was very pleased, and she and Bob envisioned a full concert of poetry and music.

Since those early days, three musicians have been added (flute, clarinet, drums), forming a group that plays everything from down-home blues to modal jazz to madrigals, all of it carefully supporting Anne's dramatic readings. They performed first at Eugene's II in Boston, then later on at the De Cordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts where a mixed audience of 1,000 was deeply moved, and at St. Lawrence University on March 13th.

Rizzo's guitar technique and his ability to compose have grown at a beautifully proportionate rate and his horizons have broadened considerably from the time when he first met Anne and Bob. He confessed to them that when he first took up the suggestion to put music to the poet's poem, he was "just tryin' to get a 'A'." Now he wants to be heard accompanying Anne on a major label album.

Besides managing "Her Kind," Bob Clawson is now a full-time partner in City Schools Curriculum Service, Inc. (CSCS, Inc.) a new, little outfit that was set up because the principals felt that the big publishers were overpackaging and overcharging for materials that often had no relevance in city schools. They feel that it should be possible to make materials immediately relevant to urban classrooms, and let the big Park Avenue publishers continue to chase the South Carolina adoptions.

They also feel that materials should be a lot less expensive--that perhaps the schools could give them away to the kids and their parents. And they feel that the teachers themselves should have a much bigger role in planning and writing materials for their communities. (The company has as its board of advisors, Herb Kohl, John Holt, Robert Coles, Michael Spock, Bernard Watson, and Preston Wilcox.)

The company has developed some unusual books (available for examination) and, as part of their plan to do tailor-made work for cities and districts within cities, they have established close ties with Philadelphia and several districts there. They are keenly interested in working with people in New York, and should be contacted at 60 Commercial Wharf, Boston, Mass. Their phone is 617-742-7340.

Bob managed "Anne Sexton and Her Kind" through the same office and would be happy to talk about either venture.

biographies

Writers Participating in Teachers and Writers Collaborative 1969

ART BERGER is a poet whose work has appeared in several major anthologies and on two albums, Poems for Peace and New Jazz Poets. He is the author of Blow the Man Down and an associate editor on the magazines Umbra and CAW! Mr. Berger has done considerable work with children and teen-agers.

NANCY COOPERSTEIN CHARNEY is an actress who has acted in numerous on, off and off-off Broadway plays. She produced Viet Rock and is Assistant Program Director for the New Dramatists Committee, which promotes the work of young playwrights. She will be in Flaine May's new film.

DAVID HENDERSON was born in Harlem in 1942. A collection of poetry, Felix of the Silent Forest (1967), was introduced by LeRoi Jones. Mr. Henderson's work has appeared in The New Black Poetry; Where is Vietnam: American Poets Respond, and many other anthologies and publications. He is editor of Umbra magazine.

STEPHEN M. JOSEPH was born in New York City and attended the public schools there. He has been a teacher in the New York Public School system since 1960 and is the author of the novel, The Shark Bites Back, and editor of several anthologies, including The Me Nobody Knows: Children's Voices from the Ghetto.

KENNETH KOCH is a poet of the New York School of poetry. He has published several collections of poetry and several plays. Mr. Koch's latest works, When the Sun Tries to Go On and The Pleasures of Peace and Other Poems, will appear this year. He is currently on leave from his teaching position at Columbia University.

PHILLIP LOPATE is currently a teacher (at the Bedford-Lincoln Muse) an anthologist for Washing Square Press, and a writer and editorial assistant in the general area of the social sciences. He collaborated with psychiatrist Dr. Lawrence Hettorer on The Master and co-authored with Roslyn O'Brien Cognitive Aspects of Preschool Education for Disadvantaged Children. Mr. Lopate's stories and poems have appeared in The World, Sundial, Columbia Review, and other publications.

CLARENCE MAJOR was born in Atlanta, Ga. in 1936. His work includes a novel, The All-Night Visitors, three collections of poetry (a fourth The Sounds of My Eyes, is awaiting publication), and an anthology, The New Black Poetry (1969). Mr. Major's work has appeared in many anthologies including Black Voices, The Writing on the Wall, American Negro Poetry, and served on the editorial staff of numerous literary journals.

JOEL OPPENHEIMER, director of Teachers and Writers Collaborative, has written poetry, drama, and short stories. His publications include several collections of poetry, The Love Bit, and The Dutiful Sons, and a play, The Great American Desert. Before coming to the Collaborative, Mr. Oppenheimer served as director of the poetry project at St. Marks Church in the Bowery. In addition to his activities with the Collaborative, Mr. Oppenheimer serves as a poetry consultant to the New York State Council on the Arts.

RON PADGETT was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1942. He has published Eean Spasms, with Ted Barrigan, and co-edited an Anthology of New York Poets with David Shapiro. He has published a book of poems, Great Balls of Fire. Mr. Padgett has also done translations.

LENNOX RAPHAEL was born in 1940 in Trinidad, West Indies. Before coming to the United States he worked as a reporter in Jamaica. His work has appeared in American Dialog, Negro Digest, and Clarence Major's recent anthology, The New Black Poetry. Mr. Raphael is a staff writer for the "East Village Other". His play Che is currently being produced (with interruptions) in New York City.

TOM WEATHERLY was born in Alabama in 1942. Mr. Weatherly's work will appear in Mau Mau American Cantos (to be published by Corinth Books). He has appeared in Chuchulainn, the World Anthology, Symbolo Oscuro, and other publications. He has directed several poetry workshops for young people in New York City, including the 1968 Afro-Hispanic Poets Workshop for the Inner City Creative Arts Program (operated by the city Department of Cultural Affairs).

In addition to the regular writers-in-the-schools programs, the Collaborative has partially supported three other programs. These are led by:

TERRI BUSH, a teacher at Sands Junior High School in Brooklyn. Miss Bush, along with poet June Meyer, began a workshop for teenagers last year. The same group is continuing together this year.

FLORENCE HOWE is a Professor of English at Goucher College. Miss Howe places Goucher students of creative writing in small "seminars" with vocational school students from Baltimore's inner city. The undergraduates bring contemporary poetry to the high school boys, while the boys give the college students considerable understanding of the difficulties and rewards of teaching.

BABATUNDE OLATUNJI is Director of the Olatunji Center for African Culture in Harlem. Mr. Olatunji is a musician whose records include "Drums of Passion", "Afro Percussion", and "Flaming Drums".

“good-by mr. koch”

Kenneth Koch left P.S. 61 in February to go to Europe. The poems below are selections of the good-byes written by children in the school.

You could walk on Eiffel Tower, eat a lot of meatballs and spaghetti and buy a minny skirt for your wife, and bell bottoms and get a fancy suit and talk to the Parliament and write silly poems and have a bad time when you come back.

P.S. have fun and go to Carnaby Street.

Marion
4th grade

I WISH I COULD SEE YOU

Go to Spain and hear the bells
Go to Italy and hold up a pizza shop
Go to London Tower but don't fall out
Go to Switzerland and visit Heidi in storyland
Go to Scotland and buy a blue green kilt
Go to Paris but think before you cross the street.
Oh, No, the London Tower just crashed!!
And you were in it, I know because I told you to go there.
Make the Leaning Tower straight but don't get arrested.
Eat spaghetti in Italy but don't get stains on your shirt,
But don't get stains on your shirt now!
I have to say goodbye, Goodbye!!!

Eliza
4th grade

EUROPEAN ADVICE

Comb your hair every day
Brush your teeth. Use Macleans.
Water will make your teeth fall out.
Knock down the Eifall tower.
Chop Degulls nose off.
Go to Italy and eat all the pizza and spaghetti.
Go to Iwerland and do the Iwiss jig.

Stephen
4th grade

HAVE FUN

When you go to Italy,
Have lots of pizza in your mouth,
Because when you come home I want to see you with a
pipe in your mouth.
And walking with a cane,
And one important thing is make your stomach fat on
pizza.
Eat a lot of cheese so you could get white hair instead
of black.
Eat a lot of spaghetti so you could get curly feet.
Have a good time.

Lorraine
4th grade

Dear Darling Mr. Coke:
Have a happy trip and I know you are going to visit:
Idly, France, England and other places. I know you
will meet beautiful girl just like Mrs. B. Strasser.
She is the prettiest teacher I ever had. Mr. Coke you
must have a lot of fun? Here's a poem I want to write:

Good-by Good-by
Try and see the sky
Watch the bird fly
Goody-by now

Fontessa
4th grade

GOODBYE, MR. KOCH

Be sure to go to the German Alps and say hello to my Dad
Eat a lot of apple strudle in Germany
Maybe you can dig a tunnel and find another tunnel where prisoners are
 excaping from East Berlin
Eat all the Italian type spaghetti
Try making some pizza
Eat motzah balls
Knock down the Leaning Tower of Pisa
And you'll have a lot of help: it'ss be leaning already
Go to Naples and drink wine
And visit Sibernus for me
You can roam around Rome
Feed somebody to the lions at the Coliseum
Or go chariot racing
Eat the bottom ring of the ice cream in Naples
Be the third Columbus
Take some Spanish dancing lessons
See the bullfights in Madrid
But don't faint
When they pick you to be the matador too
Run a million miles away
Don't eat any enchiladas
They're too hot
Don't forget your bathingsuit
Make sure you don't drown
We want you back
Don't go crazy with your language
Don't forget to button up your overcoat
Send us a couple of cheeses from Switzerland
Don't break your leg skiing
Send me a sample of snow
In a hot stove
Don't go on any Israeli Airlines
Don't meet the Wolfman
Don't work in the Radium Dial Company
You'll get leukemia
Mrs. B. works there---they call her that---she had leukemia
Make your hair grow long and join the Beatles or buy a wig
Hold your ears at 12 o'clock when you're near Big Ben
Don't watch the girls in mini-skirts (this is a recording)
Bring an umbrella and bring an overcoat
Go see Queen Elizabeth and bring back some of her jewels
Bring Charlie Chaplin with you
Install windshield wipers on your eyeglasses
Visit Camelot and steal King Arthur's crown
And meet the stupid Knight in Red
And marry Guinevere
Don't run into a bobby
Go on top of the Tower and don't fall off
England swings like a pendulum do
With the crown and jewels buy an airplane
Get some feathers and make them into wings and fly back
Walk back so you won't get highjacked
Swim the English Channel and fly back
Go by boat and take some seasick pills
(Don't forget to take Guinevere)
Don't forget to write

**I am now a bad boy
in school.**

**I was a good boy in
school but I don't
know what came over
me.**

**Now I wish I could
get good agin.**

But I can not.