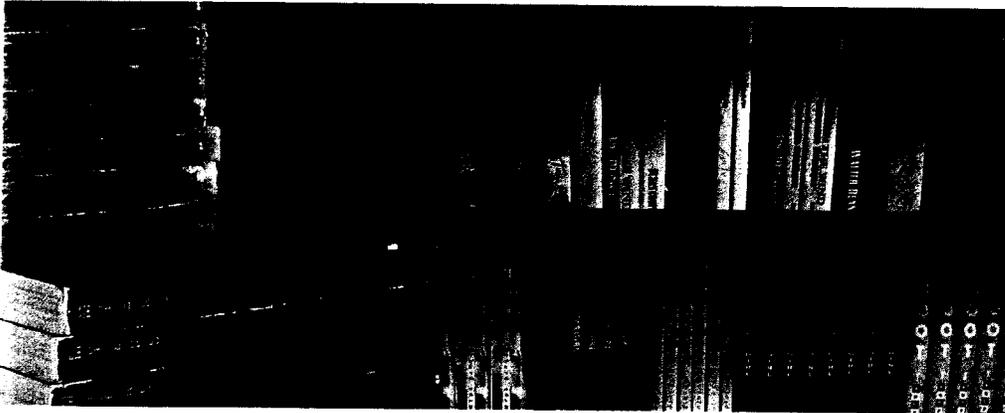




# NEW YORK CITY WRITING PROJECT



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## A NOTE FROM THE Editors

When June 30th arrived, it was not just the closing of another school year. For many of us who have worked in New York City public schools, it also marked the end of an era. District offices closed one day, and regional offices emerged several days later. Some personnel who had worked together for years moved on to new positions and acquired new titles. Others retired, including thousands of our colleagues who concluded twenty-five and thirty-year teaching careers. For many of us, there was a sense of sadness resting alongside the hopes we held for the future.

Over the summer, we began to witness signs of things to come, particularly for those of us who work in language arts and mathematics. New positions – literacy and mathematics coaches – were created. There was a profusion of professional development opportunities. For example, many of our colleagues participated in Ramp-Up training, eager to gain an understanding of the new literacy program that would be initiated in so many schools in the fall. Cartons of books began to arrive at our schools in late August. At the same time, buildings that for decades housed large comprehensive high schools continued to be transformed into homes for three, four or five smaller schools. And, of course, the large wave of retirements also meant a huge influx of new teachers: bright, energetic, looking for help and support.

Dramatic change can be exciting. It can also be hard. Not only are there new expectations and

new curricula, but also, for some of us, new language. As the school year began, many middle and high school teachers became actively engaged in understanding the nature of read-alouds, think-alouds, and shared reading. What did we already do that matched the new expectations? What did we need to know? A time for learning has begun and with it a sense of hope and promise.

In some ways, this fall issue of the NYCWP newsletter captures both worlds, the one we knew and the one that is emerging before us. Throughout the issue, you'll find accounts and columns about last year's events: conferences, inservice seminars, summer institutes and special programs. Of particular interest to some of you might be the report on our New Teacher Initiative, a program designed by the National Writing Project to support new teachers. On the other hand, the concerns about reading and literacy

that so dominate schools right now (and have always been at the heart of the NYCWP's work with teachers and students) are also reflected here. You'll find in this issue's "Listserv Conversations," a stimulating dialogue among NYCWP members sharing their beliefs about and experiences with read alouds. In our "Resources" column, Carol Tureski generously identifies a series of young adult novels that have captured the imaginations of her students.

The format of this issue is designed to be primarily informational. Our next issue will be in the journal format, a collection of articles about our practice as teachers. Therefore, the editorial staff wants to remind every reader that we welcome submissions from teachers interested in writing about some aspect of their work. We are eager to publish stories of both success and struggle in the classroom. We want your student portraits, your accounts of effective practice, your questions about composition, and your musings on the teaching life. We will assist those of you who would like to write an article but do not have a single word on paper, as well as those of you who have pieces in various stages.

If you would like to write an article for the newsletter or want to become a participant on the NYCWP listserv, send an email message to: Ed Osterman at [osterman@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:osterman@lehman.cuny.edu)

# WRITING PROJECT

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**NYCWP'S ANNUAL TEACHER-TO-TEACHER CONFERENCE**  
 Lehman College/CUNY  
 Saturday, March 20

**NWP URBAN SITES CONFERENCE**  
 Philadelphia, PA  
 Friday, April 30 to Saturday, May 1

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**EDITORS:** Joe Bellacero (Evander Childs HS),  
 Benita Daniels Black (Teacher-Consultant),  
 Ed Osterman (NYCWP),  
 Tracy Peers Pontin (Teacher-Consultant),  
 Grace Raffaele (Institute for Collaborative Education)

**INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY STUDIES**

*Executive Director, Marcie Wolfe*  
*Associate Director, Anne Campos*

**NEW YORK CITY WRITING PROJECT**

*Director, Nancy Mintz*  
*Associate Director, Felicia George*  
*Associate Director, Ed Osterman*  
*Program Assistant, Evelyn Cardona*

**ON-SITE TEACHER-CONSULTANTS**

- Joe Bellacero
- Julie Conason
- Debra Freeman
- Linda Garcia-Torres
- Amanda Gulla
- Lona Jack-Vilmar
- Ed Osterman
- Angie Pruitt
- Tyler Schmidt
- Katherine Schulten
- Susannah Thompson
- Patsy Wooters

**Institute for Literacy Studies**

**Lehman College/CUNY**

250 Bedford Park Blvd. West  
 Bronx, NY 10468-1589  
 Telephone 718.960.8758  
 Fax 718.960.8054

On the cover:  
 Photos by Grace Raffaele

# LOOKING BACK at 2003

## **IN-SERVICE SEMINARS**

The NYCWP continues to provide inservice seminars to teachers in schools throughout the metropolitan area. During the 2002-3 school year, many of our colleagues assumed new roles as co-coordinators of our inservice seminars. In this capacity, they made important contributions to the design and facilitation of the Project's inservice program. Some of these teachers have been Project members for years whereas others are relatively new friends.

### **Alternative High Schools**

On-site teacher-consultant: Barbara Martz  
Brooklyn/Manhattan Cluster  
Co-coordinator: Sally O'Connell, HS Redirection

On-site teacher-consultant: Katherine Schulten  
Monroe High School Campus  
Co-coordinator: Julie Mann, Newcomers HS

Middle College HS  
Co-coordinators: Nigel Pugh, Robt. F. Kennedy HS, Georgia Christgau, Middle College HS

### **BASIS**

On-site teacher-consultant: Debra Freeman  
Lafayette HS  
Co-coordinators: Sally McMahon, Fort Hamilton HS, Geraldine Stalonas, Retired

On-site teacher-consultant: Angie Pruitt  
George Westinghouse HS  
Co-coordinator: Jeremy Kaplan, East Side Community HS

### **Bronx**

On-site teacher-consultant: Joe Bellacero  
Evander Childs HS  
Co-coordinators: Marianne Rose and Gladys De La Cruz, Evander Childs HS

On-site teacher-consultant: Julie Conason  
Community District 10: MS 141, MS 391, TAPCo  
Co-coordinator: Amanda Gulla, NYCWP

On-site teacher-consultant: Linda Margolin  
Community District 12: MS 318  
Co-coordinator: Felicia George, NYCWP

On-site teacher-consultant: Ed Osterman  
Morris High School Campus  
Co-coordinators: Gina Moss, Bronx Coalition Community School for Technology, Kate Moss, Lehman College

On-site teacher-consultant: Linda Garcia-Torres  
Community District 8: MS 131, MS 174  
Co-coordinator: Julie Conason, NYCWP

On-site teacher-consultant: Laura Schwartzberg  
Community District 8: PS 36, PS 100, PS 119, PS 304  
Co-coordinators: Linda Margolin, NYCWP  
Liza Hernandez, Muscota New School

On-site teacher-consultant: Patsy Wooters  
Christopher Columbus HS  
Co-coordinator: Sonja Johnson, Gompers HS

### **Brooklyn**

On-site teacher-consultant: Lucie Harris  
Canarsie HS  
Co-coordinator: Maria Fisher, Brooklyn College Academy

On-site teacher-consultant: Lucie Harris  
Prospect Heights HS  
Co-coordinator: Denise Bacote, T. Jefferson HS

### **Chancellor's District**

On-site teacher-consultant: Margaret Fiore  
George Washington Educational Campus  
Co-coordinator: Patsy Wooters, NYCWP

On-site teacher-consultants: Margaret Fiore and Patsy Wooters  
Theodore Roosevelt HS and William H. Taft HS,  
Shared Seminars

On-site teacher-consultant: Lona Jack-Vilmar  
850 Grand Street Campus  
Co-coordinator: Jessica Spears-Hernandez,  
El Puente Academy

### **Manhattan**

On-site teacher-consultant: Amanda Gulla  
Community District 6: IS 164  
Co-coordinator: Kerri MacNeil, IS 164

On-site teacher-consultant: Susannah Thompson-Raphael  
HS of Art and Technology and HS of Law, Advocacy and Community Justice at the Martin Luther King, Jr. HS Campus  
Co-coordinator: David Grodsky, Middle College HS

### **Queens**

On-site teacher-consultant: Debra Freeman  
Newtown HS  
Co-coordinators: Ann Kornfeld, Newcomers HS,  
Jennifer Schneider, Newtown HS

On-site teacher-consultant: Angie Pruitt  
Far Rockaway HS  
Co-coordinator: Sharon Rosenberg, CSD 27

### **Special Seminars**

Manhattan Superintendency ELL Workshop Series  
Coordinator: Halima Touré, Hostos Community College

NWP Leadership Forum  
Co-coordinators: Julie Conason, Lona Jack,  
Halima Touré

Mamaroneck HS  
Co-coordinators: Nancy Mintz/Alan Stein, NYCWP

## **NEW COORDINATORS**

We want to acknowledge and thank the many first-time coordinators who helped the NYCWP support teachers: Denise Bacote, Georgia Christgau, Gladys De La Cruz, Liza Hernandez, Ann Kornfeld, Linda Margolin, Gina Moss, Kate Moss, Jessica Spears-Hernandez, Jennifer Schneider, and Geraldine Stalonas. We also want to welcome back Amanda Gulla! The Project is eager to nurture new coordinators; we need your classroom expertise and fresh vision. We hope that all of these teachers will continue to serve as coordinators in the future.

## **LOOKING BOTH WAYS**

This past spring *Looking Both Ways*, the collaboration between the NYCWP and The City University of New York, held its fourth year of Saturday seminars under the leadership of NYCWP Director Marcie Wolfe, founding director Sondra Perl, Bonne August (Kingsborough Community College), George Otte (CUNY Grad Center) and Stuart Cochran (CUNY Office of Academic Affairs). Once again, teams of high school and college composition teachers coordinated the seminars. Among these coordinators were Paul Allison (East Side Community HS in Manhattan), Carmen Kynard (Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn), Julie Mann (Newcomers HS in Queens), and Sharon Russo (Edward R. Murrow HS in Brooklyn). Alan Stein (NYCWP) and Halima Toure (Hostos Community College in the Bronx), both of whom have coordinated LBW seminars in the past, served as facilitators for the coordinators.

# Summer 2003

## THE 2003 SUMMER INVITATIONAL INSTITUTE

This year our annual Invitational Institute was led by NYCWP Director Nancy Mintz and teacher-consultant Lona Jack-Vilmar. Ed Osterman served as presentation coach for the participants. Every year the Summer Invitational brings together a diverse group of teachers from across the city and is the embodiment of the NWP model of teachers teaching teachers. The four weeks spent writing and sharing work is an intense and rewarding learning experience for participants and facilitators. An essential component of the summer is the preparation and presentation of teacher work. This summer the presentations and demonstrations were as varied as the participants and their interests. We look forward to having the summer participants present their work at our annual Teacher-to-Teacher conference this spring.

## ADVANCED INSTITUTE IN TECHNOLOGY

For the fourth consecutive summer, the NYCWP offered a three-week advanced institute focused on ways to use computer technology to enrich writing and learning in all classrooms. Eighteen teachers and teacher-consultants came together to explore the possibilities of using computers to enhance literacy in a forum we called "Next Steps in Literature and Technology." Our technology liaison Paul Allison co-coordinated with teacher-consultant Sally O'Connell and Associate Director Felicia George. In response to the interests and needs of the participants, many of whom had attended one or more of our previous technology institutes, the focus was reading and the creation of hypertext stories. The group examined websites that publish fiction, some of which specialize in works written in hypertext format. They wrote hypertext stories in a blog and used a software program called Story Space. Teachers explored the commonality and differences between traditional composition and writing in computer-supported environments. In the process, the group was exposed to a variety of software programs for creating presentations, planning lessons, and publishing on the web. Among the programs used were Power Point, Inspiration, AOL Instant Messaging, Story Space, Dreamweaver,

Manila, and the Nicenet conference board. Some of the work that was created can be viewed on [www.myclasssite.org](http://www.myclasssite.org). Much thanks to Mark Federman, principal of East Side Community HS in Manhattan, for letting the NYCWP use his school and its state-of-the-art computer lab. The convenience of the location and the availability of a variety of software contributed to the success of this experience.

## PASS IT ON: A YOUTH WRITERS' INSTITUTE

In the summer of 2003, *Pass It On: A Youth Writers' Institute* went on the road—to Jackson Heights, Queens! For three weeks in July, Tyler Schmidt, program coordinator, and Laura Nuss-Caneda, teacher-mentor for the Institute for Student Achievement, had the pleasure of writing, reading, and sharing with a dedicated, enthusiastic group of 15 students from The Renaissance Charter School. These writers sacrificed trips to the beach and hours in front of the television in order to express their creativity and learn more about writing. These teen writers wrote poems, short stories, and dramatic monologues. They taught mini-lessons on New York poems and then wrote their own odes to urban life. After drafting monologues, these promising playwrights performed their pieces for the entire class. The group went on two trips—the Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City and the International Center of Photography in Manhattan—to view and discuss art, do some people watching, and, of course, write. At the end of the institute, participants turned in a portfolio of their strongest writing and contributed work to a class publication.

## CHARTER SCHOOLS

This summer the NYCWP did on-site work at The Renaissance Charter School in Queens. Teacher-consultant Linda Margolin collaborated with a group of 4th and 5th grade teachers and their students in a three-week writing workshop that was focused on I-Search. Concurrently, Myrna Braitwaite, who teaches at Wadleigh MS, worked with a group of 7th and 8th grade teachers and their students, introducing them to the writing process through the workshop model.

## New Teacher Initiative

In the 2002-2003 school-year the New York City Writing Project (NYCWP) was awarded a \$10,000 grant under the National Writing Project's New Teacher Initiative (NTI) to support a group of educators in two schools who had been teaching for three years or less. Our goal was to learn how best to serve an increasing number of teachers new to the public schools so that they might be better able to use the writing approaches and theory that we impart in our seminars and on-site consulting. We hoped to identify those strategies that prove most effective in supporting the retention and professional development of teachers new to the system.

Debi Freeman at Lafayette High School in Brooklyn and Joe Bellacero at Evander Childs High School in the Bronx recruited 11 teachers who were willing to come together in three face-to-face meetings, and to continue their conversations on an NTI listserv. With Felicia George, their liaison to the NYCWP and Carol Rose of the Philadelphia Writing Project, their liaison to the NWP, Debi and Joe presented the results of their work at conferences with other grant winners in Atlanta and Santa Barbara. In both cases the range and depth of the on-line conversations caused considerable excitement.

Encouraged to discover their own issues, listserv participants let the conversations go where they would. At times they explored writing issues: how to increase low stakes writing in science, or how to use journals. Then talk would move on to management issues: how to manage time both in and outside of the classroom, how to reduce bickering between boys and girls. It seemed that each posting prompted new issues; encouraging students to predict as they read, somehow sprang from the journal conversation. How to deal with an acting out student flowed from a posting on organizing the tenth grade classroom. Sometimes the give and take would lead to a modification in someone's stance on an issue, other times ideas timidly expressed would be validated and applauded by the responders. It became clear that these young teachers deeply cared about their classrooms and appreciated the chance to share concerns and knowledge in the safety of the listserv format.

Our goals for the 2003-2004 NTI program are refined by what we have learned in our first

*continued on facing page*

# RESOURCES

*Carol Tureski's 9th and 10th grade students at Queens International HS participate in a weekly independent reading program. They have contributed this list of recommended books, in which they include reading levels and brief comments, in order to assist student and teacher choice.*

Asgedom, Mawi. Of Beetles and Angels  
(beginner/average/challenging)

Do you need some inspiration to believe in yourself and to hold onto your dreams? This is the true and amazing story of a young man's journey from a refugee camp to Harvard. The entire class will enjoy this book. (Note: this is the only non-fiction selection on the list.)

Bunting, Eve. Doll Baby  
(beginner)

Learn the realities of teen pregnancy through this short story about Angelica and her baby, Daisy.

Crew, Linda. Children of the River  
(average/challenging)

Do your parents understand you? This book talks about this question by examining the life of a Cambodian girl who immigrates to the U.S.

Draper, Sharon. Darkness before Dawn  
(average)

Where will Keisha find happiness? This book is part of a trilogy that includes Tears of a Tiger and Forged by Fire. Read all three or read them separately.

Farmer, Nancy. The House of the Scorpions  
(average/challenging)

A sinister millionaire, bodyguards, border patrol police and a few loyal friends appear in this realistic, sci-fi thriller.

Gorman, Carol. Dork in Disguise  
(beginner/average)

Want a laugh? Find out if Jerry Flack can hide from his new classmates the fact that he is a dork.

Kemp, Kristen. I Will Survive  
(beginner/average)

So your best friend and your ex-boyfriend hook up... do you take revenge or walk away?

Koss, Ann Goldman. The Girls  
(beginner/average)

Did you ever hang out with a group of girls just because they were

popular? Maya wants to be popular, too, but are these girls really her friends? Follow her story through the voices of her friends.

Lubar, David. Hidden Talents  
(average)

Did you read Holes? Well, this book is also about a boys' detention center, a place that is full of peculiar and engaging characters. This is a perfect book for light reading – a real page turner.

Marsden, John. So Much to Tell You  
(average)

What's up with this girl who never talks? Find out what happens in this young person's life that keeps her silent.

Na, An. A Step from Heaven  
(average/challenging)

What do you do when things are difficult at home? Read about the personal life of a recent teen immigrant as she struggles more with her family than with her new world.

Quinonez Ernesto. Bodega Dreams  
(average/challenging)

Follow Chino's life as he struggles with questions of loyalty and ethics, in a story filled with everything you can imagine.

Shan, Darren. Cirque du Freak  
(average)

A new "horror" series full of fun and adventure. It's creepy, funny, and very entertaining. So far, there are five books in the series, with more books to come.

Sleator, William. Rewind  
(beginner)

Peter is hit by a car and dies, but he gets a chance to relive the scene. Will he survive the second time? A suspenseful reading experience.

Woodson, Jacqueline. If You Come Softly  
(average)

Do you think that the color of someone's skin is important in a relationship? Read this book to help you find your answer.

year and are focused on the issues of developing a broader community of support for new teachers and the development of these teachers' skill in writing instruction. Those goals are:

- To assess the impact of one more year of teaching and peer support on the instructional practice of one group of new teachers;
- To explore the potential of the listserv as a

means of sustaining a viable inter-school community of peers;

- And, to identify the strategies and approaches that are most effective in working with new teachers that we will use in planning future professional development services to schools and districts.

The renewal of the NTI grant along with additional support from CUNY has allowed

for the expansion of the teacher group to at least 20 participants. Teacher-consultants, Amanda Gulla, Ph.D. and Angie Pruitt, will bring new teachers from their sites and add their expertise to the work.

Joe Bellacero  
NYCWP

# LISTSERV CONVERSATIONS

*When Neelima Reddy logged on to the listserv in September and asked if anyone could recommend a good text to read aloud to her class on the first day of school, she knew she'd get some good suggestions. What she didn't know was that her request would spark a lengthy discussion about read alouds and reading aloud. And because teachers across the city were responding on the listserv at the same time many of them were getting ready for Ramp-Up, the reading program currently being used across the city, the conversation provided a much needed forum for Project members to share their plans, raise some concerns, and discover answers. What follows is an excerpt from this lively exchange.*

## **Ed Osterman, NYCWP:**

Ramp-Up presents one way of doing a read-aloud but not the only way. Ramp-Up advocates the demonstration of a think-aloud with a read-aloud, but I know skilled teachers who do read-alouds so students will have the sheer pleasure of hearing a good reader or get to know an author. They don't interrupt the flow of the reading to externalize their thinking processes. Ramp-Up presents a more strategic model: engage students and at the same time provide them with a way to connect or think about the text. I believe Ramp-Up also asks teachers to supply students with copies of the text. They follow silently but never read orally. I know teachers who do read-alouds where students don't have the texts; they just listen. The model varies. When demonstrating a think-aloud, I know teachers who pause two or three times as they read to model thinking and continually demonstrate the same type of strategy. On the other hand, there are others who pause and demonstrate two or three different strategies during one read-aloud. At the training I attended, we were advised to model just one strategy at a time in the beginning. I think the key is not to pause too often so that you ruin the pleasure of the reading! When and how long to pause is tricky.

## **Elaine Avidon, Lehman College:**

The term/lingo "read-aloud" for the act of reading aloud -- hurts. Over the past few years, at the elementary level where reading aloud is an age old staple, the language of "read-aloud" has taken over. More importantly, there's a difference between reading aloud to invite students to love literature, to love nonfiction or poetry, and reading aloud to teach reading. And if I always read aloud to teach reading (i.e.,

modeling the one-at-a-time strategy the experienced reader uses to connect to/to interrogate text/asking all of my comprehension questions), what am I not offering my students? Both matter. And surely one influences the other. It also matters where we start, not just with what, but how. Whenever I can, I read aloud to teachers and to my undergraduate students to offer them the sheer joy of what has been written, to give voice to print language. And when we read collaboratively (reading aloud to play with text/give access to text), we collectively do that. We offer one another all the possibilities that listening to text allow; we offer text as opportunity to understand, to think, to connect, to care, to love in the hopes that the page will become this for so many of our students who do not see it as such.

## **Laura Schwartzberg, NYCWP:**

I'm also concerned that reading aloud to children has been taken over by the tyranny of the read-aloud to teach reading strategies. I just re-read Bill Martin's "The Making of a Reader," in which he talks about being a non-reader in 5th grade and how his teacher saved his life by reading aloud to the class two or three times a day. This should be required reading for anyone who teaches reading or English! For high school folks who may not know, Bill Martin Jr. is a very prolific author of children's books.

## **Sally McMahon, Fort Hamilton HS:**

I think many of the Ramp-Up ideas are good; however, the restricted methods imposed on read-aloud are awful. One Ramp Up teacher said, during a read-aloud, she was doing personal connections. She mentioned as her personal connection how lucky her sister was: she wins trips, won on a game show, etc. The kids

were so interested they bombarded her with questions and their own connections. Instead of an interesting class discussion, she had to say, "This is not our skill for today. Please put your questions in the "parking lot." They went crazy and sulked. She said she effectively shut down student voices, totally going against her personal beliefs.

## **Joe Bellacero,**

## **Evander Childs HS/NYCWP:**

I think it was in Chris Cziko's book that I read the suggestion of having the kids bring in lyrics from songs they liked and then having the teacher do a think-aloud. I did it at the beginning of a poetry unit last year with exciting results. I have many Caribbean students, so the songs were as challenging to me as a Shakespearean sonnet is to them. What was good was that they knew the words and the music so my stumbling after meaning did not interfere with their own approaches to the material. Furthermore my age and linguistic experience gave them an opportunity to see their own music in new ways and with new understanding. They laughed at some of my ideas, and they struggled to find words to explain slang phrases to me. We had a good time and they saw thinking aloud as a useful rather than annoying approach to a difficult text.

## **Phyllis Solar, Monroe Academy for Visual Arts and Design:**

Sometimes, I feel "forced" to model a strategy during a read-aloud. The last thing I want to do is break student concentration..

## **Gina Moss, Bronx Coalition School for Technology:**

Thinking aloud requires some skill, practice and preparation. I've made a lot of mistakes as I was developing my style with this, but I'm quite convinced of its effectiveness. I've found that it's best to limit the number of full stops to a maximum of three per reading. Sometimes I also flash a quick thought when there's something to challenge or question, or perhaps

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# PROJECT NOTES

when there is a discovery or confirmation of a prediction. A quick "aha!" can do the trick. I now limit even those, though, to one or two. My Ramp-Up trainers this summer stressed that we should prepare our think-aloud stops in advance, with post-its on the pages, which I have been doing with great effect. That is also turning out to be a good way to model for the students how post-its can be used while they're reading, to catch their own thoughts without interrupting their flow. They love knowing that their thoughts are valued and that there's a way to come back to them, even while continuing to read (or when the teacher wants to save the discussion until after the read-aloud is over, so that flow can be maintained, too). I see kids starting to have their independent reading books cluttered with little yellow post-its, and I am happy knowing each one is a potential writing event.

## **Lucie Harris, Brooklyn Academy:**

Teacher preparation is most important in a successful lesson, and the more often we present a lesson, the better at it we get. Ramp-Up lessons are no different. I think with practice the interruptions will be less intrusive to the text. Maybe the people who didn't have the summer training are having more trouble with the breaks. My trainers in the summer, like Gina's, made a very big point of telling us to keep the breaks short and infrequent. I've been working with the Ramp-Up teacher at my new school and we've found that the guidebook is good but not terrific. Lots of details are left out and, as we think through the lessons, we are figuring out the logic of the program. But, boy, does it take a lot of time to figure out a lesson. The library is fantastic, but I don't know how any one teacher can take care of the zillions of books and figure out the lessons without lots of support. How are people managing? The kids, happily, are very responsive so far--they like the structure and the guides.

The Department of Education's restructuring of the school system into regions and networks has resulted in a change in the way the New York City Writing Project carries out its inservice work. This year the Project's inservice work resides primarily in Region 2 in the Bronx and in Region 8 in Brooklyn. Working in schools in Region 2 are **Joe Bellacero, Julie Conason, Linda Garcia-Torres, Amanda Gulla, Ed Osterman, Katherine Schulten, and Patsy Wooters**. Working in schools in Region 8 are **Debi Freeman, Lona Jack-Vilmar, and Angie Pruitt**. In Region 9, **Tyler Schmidt** works at Coalition School for Social Change and, in Region 10, **Susannah Raphael-Thompson** is working on-site at the HS of Law, Advocacy and Community Justice at the MLK Jr. HS Campus. We are excited by the challenges and possibilities the restructuring presents.

On July 8-10, the NYCWP collaborated with the Teachers College National Academy for Excellent Teaching on a 3-day institute for middle school language arts teachers, principals and literacy coaches from Region 2 in the Bronx. Over the course of three days, participants explored the various elements of balanced literacy practice through hands-on workshops and small group discussions. Participants made plans for working in a 90-minute literacy block, and school teams began to consider their needs for a strong start to the school year. During the course of the three days, many Region 2 instructional superintendents and regional supervisors participated, and Region 2 Superintendent **Laura Rodriguez** and Deputy Superintendent **Eric Nadelstern** were also in attendance. This institute officially inaugurated the Writing Project's work in Region 2. Teacher-consultants **Linda Garcia-Torres, Ed Osterman, and Angie Pruitt** represented the Writing Project at this institute, along with former director **Linette Moorman**. **Marcie Wolfe** along with **Ruth Vinz** and **Jackie Aness** of Teachers College coordinated the three days.

In late August, the New York City Writing Project inaugurated its work in Region 8 in Brooklyn with a full-day workshop for assistant principals and literacy coaches. The focus was reading and writing in the content areas and teacher-consultants **Debi Freeman** and **Lona Jack-Vilmar** coordinated. Also present were NYCWP Director **Nancy Mintz**, Local Instructional Superintendent **Joan Kaufman** and Regional Instructional Specialists **Elana Karopkin** and **Jill Bloomberg**.

The beginning of the school year was full of activity. Prior to the official return of staff, there were many workshops and events ushering in this new era in public education. In the Bronx, on two days immediately preceding the re-opening of schools, **Julie Conason, Linda Garcia-Torres, Ed Osterman** and **Patsy Wooters** demonstrated for middle and high school principals, assistant principals and literacy coaches from Region 2 how to put together a unit on essay writing. They modeled ways to help students identify a topic for an essay and guide them through the early stages of writing and peer response. On September 3 and 4 in Brooklyn, a group of NYCWP teacher-consultants -- **Debi Freeman, Felicia George, Lona Jack-Vilmar, Barbara Martz, Katherine Schulten, Alan Stein, and Susannah Raphael-Thompson** -- coordinated two full-day workshops for 9th grade literacy block teachers in Region 8 schools. The focus was the reading and writing of memoir, which provided teachers with materials and approaches they could use to begin the school year.

In July, **Ed Osterman** presented at a retreat for schools affiliated with the Institute for Student Achievement. Ed demonstrated ways to support students through the early stages of writing.

Congratulations to **Amanda Gulla** who received her P.H.D. in English Education from New York University's Steinhardt School of Education in May. Amanda's dissertation focused on the role of story in teachers' professional development.

**Margaret Fiore's** Hunter College composition student **Josephine Parker** won first prize in the Hunter Library contest for research papers in any 100-level course. This is the third time in six years that one of Margaret's students has won. Bravo, Margaret!

## PRESENTING OUR WORK LOCALLY

In March 2003, the NYCWP held its sixth annual Teacher-to-Teacher conference at Lehman College. Once again, more than 200 teachers from our various inservice seminars attended. Colleagues from around the city shared approaches to writing, reading and learning that have been successful with students. As always, it was a rich and varied program!

### Cheers and thanks to our many presenters:

Roseann Bayer (IS 143); Loretta Bellom (Fannie Lou Hamer HS); Avette Cabrera (Bryant HS); Sally Ceritelli (ISD 131); Elizabeth Evans (IS 131); Kevin Feinberg (Facing History and Ourselves); Linda Garcia-Torres (NYCWP); Griselda Guerrero (PS 36); Cora Heibinger (Evander Childs HS); Dorian Herron (IS 218); David Johnson (Martin Van Buren HS); Nathaniel Katz (Monroe Academy of Visual Arts and Design); Josh Knight (High School for Health Careers and Sciences, George Washington Educational Campus); Gina Moss (Bronx Coalition Community School for

Technology); Barbara Martz (NYCWP); Sally O'Connell (High School Redirection); Troy Richards (Monroe Academy of Visual Arts and Design); Mary Ruane (Bryant HS); Jennifer Rygalski (IS 218); Jennifer Schneider (Newtown HS); Jamie Selip (Bryant HS); Steven Strauss (Evander Childs HS); Magna Stylianou (Bryant HS); Sharon Vera-Delgado (IS 131); Jonathan Weil (Stuyvesant HS); Lesia Wilder (Muscota New School).

And, as always, thanks to our program assistant, Evelyn Cardona, for putting so much of the day together for us!

## PRESENTING OUR WORK NATIONALLY

Each year the NWP hosts several major meetings that bring together Project directors and teacher-consultants from around the country. Several of our colleagues presented at the NWP's Annual Meeting in Atlanta in November 2002. NYCWP's technology liaison **Paul Allison** and Associate Director **Felicia George** presented work on technology;

teacher-consultant **Jeremy Kaplan** joined with teacher-consultants from the NWP's Teacher Research Collaborative to discuss what teacher inquiry looks like when the explicit focus is equity; and **Joe Bellacero**, **Debi Freeman** and **Felicia George** attended a meeting that officially opened the NWP's New Teacher Initiative.

At the NWP's Urban Sites Meeting in Santa Barbara in April 2003, Joe, Debi, and Felicia, along with the nine other writing project sites involved in the National Writing Project's New Teacher Initiative, provided a description of how our project was developing and presented some of their work. More details on the New Teacher Initiative appear elsewhere in this issue.

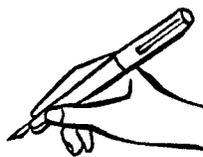
In our next issue, we will report on NYCWP presentations at the NWP Annual Meeting held in San Francisco this past November.



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## NEW YORK CITY WRITING PROJECT

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