

North Dakota Council of Teachers of English

W I N T E R 2 0 1 0

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From NDCTE President:

Well, despite swine flu, the holidays, a couple of snow days, and life in general, we have begun the second semester of school. I hope you and your students are having a good year. Traditionally, this is the time of the year which we hope to accomplish the most in our classrooms. This is often the time of year, also, that we get frustrated because we see that we have so much to get covered before the end of the year. I personally agonized over the semester grades that proved too low for a couple of seniors to hope to graduate, and yet I was overjoyed by the book club projects some of my kids did. One of the highlights of my year is the chance for all of the

Language Arts teachers in our little corner of the state to get together for a day and discuss items of interests to our subject area. I think of it as a little "mini" conference. These content meetings cover all the content areas K-12 and are arranged by the Roughrider Educational Service Program which is consortium of approximately fifteen schools in the southwestern corner of the state. Many of you have a similar consortium. If they offer the content meetings, I encourage you to attend. It is a great mid-year boost to our teaching spirits. It is also very good time for us to encourage membership in NDCTE. I wish you well as you dive into the second half of the year. Enjoy your students!

Make your plans for the NDCTE Convention now. A tentative schedule is included on page 6.

Don't forget to make NDCTE nominations to be awarded at the fall conference.

Also, feel free to share your ideas in the next newsletter.

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“What Should I Read Now?”

by Maggie Townsend

(or also titled “I Can’t Find Anything Good to Read!”) On a good day of teaching a student comes to us and says, “I loved reading _____! What should I read now?” Or on a not so good day after badgering a student to pick up a book, the student says, “But I can’t find anything good to read.” Here are two websites that can help you recommend titles to your students.

Bookseer.com is an easy-to-use search engine that combines Amazon, Book Army, and Library Thing to make recommendations. Simply type in the title and author and you are given a list of books both by the same author and from the same genre. For example when searching *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini, The Book Seer recommends the rest of the *Eragon* series, books by Cornelia Funke, and a handful of other titles.

Using movies to encourage reading is a popular tactic, and basedonabook.com is another helpful website. This

website is not as user-friendly as The Book Seer, and you may need to spend some time on the site before you find what you are looking for. Here are a few movies and books that I thought students might enjoy: *Friday Night Lights* based on *Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream* by Buzz Bissinger, *The Princess Bride* based on a book of the same title written by William Goldman, and *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* based on *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days: Universal Don'ts of Dating* by Michele Alexander. Use these websites to make individual recommendations to students, summer reading lists, or bulletin board displays. Or perhaps you need to find a good book for yourself to read in between correcting the piles of papers!

Legislators support Literacy Education

State Report
by David Woods

The National Council for Teachers of English’s first resolution to appear before Congress was passed into law on October 8, 2009. This resolution “(1) supports the designation of October 20th 2009 as the National Day on Writing; (2) strongly affirms the purposes of the National Day on Writing and encourages participation in the National Gallery of Writing, which serves as an exemplary living archive of the centrality of

writing in the lives of Americans; and (3) encourages educational institutions, businesses, community, and civic associations, and other organizations to promote awareness of the National Day on Writing and celebrate the writing of their members through individual submissions to the National Gallery of Writing.”

To see resolution S.RES.310, visit: <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c111:S.RES.310>:

To Kill a Mockingbird

Project: 1930s Newspaper

Assignment

Requirements: Your assignment is to re-create a newspaper from the 1930s. Your pages should reflect the elements of the novel and the era in which it is set.

- Use either full sheets of computer paper or full sheets of poster board.
- Name and date your newspaper. Have a banner and an index line at the top.
- All articles need to be typed into columns before being pasted to the poster board.
- You may take some poetic license in terms of the time frame, both for the local Maycomb news and for the national news. In other words, you may include articles of events that happened in different seasons or even months apart. For instance, your local news stories might include the killing of Tim Johnson (the dog), the verdict of the trial, and Bob's attack on Jem and Scout even though these events occurred months apart. You may also take license with your national/world news stories, but do be reasonable. For instance, please don't assert that Hitler invaded Poland (fall of 1938) the same week the stock market crashed (October of 1929). Be sure to write in your own words. Teachers have an amazing and infallible ability to recognize student writing from evil copied writing (especially in the choice of words and wording).

Your paper must have the following:

1. Write three "local" *Maycomb County* articles that detail incidents from the novel. This is your local news. Be accurate in the information you present. These articles should run about 150 words each.
2. Write two articles on national or world news that really occurred during the approximate time period of the 1930s. Remember, this is pre-WWII and is during the Great Depression. Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) was in the White House and was implementing New Deal projects like the WPA, the CCC, the TVA, and so on. On the world scene, Hitler and the Nazis were on the rise in Germany, the Hindenburg exploded, Stalin had succeeded Lenin in Russia and was building the Soviet Union, and so on. Each story should be 150-200 words.
3. Write one editorial on a local or world news item. This is an opinion piece written by the editor of the paper. This is the only place in the paper the staff is allowed to express personal opinion. Editorials are usually about something controversial that recently occurred. An obvious possibility here would be the editor's opinion of the rape trial.
4. Include two pictures on your front page. Put a caption under each, and be sure the picture is placed near the story it illustrates. You may copy pictures from the library, the internet, etc.
5. Be sure to have a title banner, headlines, a table of contents (optional) column format, etc. This should have the look of a real newspaper. Check the *Leader News*, the *Bismarck Tribune*, etc., for a model and to get layout ideas.
6. Write one "society news" article. This could be on the Maycomb County Fair, the Missionary Tea meetings, current fashions, the Debutante Ball, the Maycomb High School Prom, etc. The only limit is your imagination.
7. Include two extras of your own choosing. This could be farming news, advertisements, sports news, comics, etc. These must fit the time period of the novel. Do research in the library or internet to find these.
8. Add anything else that would enhance your paper. Be creative. Be sharp!

continued on next pages...

The following can be handed out for reference for the newspaper project.

Journalistic style:

Newspapers are meant to be read quickly. Therefore, one of your tasks as a reporter is to provide clear, concise stories that contain a lot of facts and that are easy to read.

Here are some characteristics of news stories:

Start with a strong lead paragraph that answers the 5 W's (who, what, where, when, why) and the one H (how).

Avoid long complicated sentences. Remember a news story is packed with facts but is meant to be read quickly.

Keep paragraphs short. In most cases, newspaper paragraphs are 2-3 sentences.

In news writing, the reporter must not express his/her own opinion. Simply report the facts without giving your opinion. To show the opinions of others, use direct or indirect quotes from the people involved in the event.

Use a person's full name on first reference and use just the last name thereafter.

Briefly introduce each quote or paraphrase and identify the speaker.

Examples:

Direct quotation: Atticus Finch raised many objections to the verdict, but Tom Robinson's conviction stood. "I am so sorry that Tom has to go through this injustice," Finch said. "He is a fine man and a fine father. I will continue our fight to see true justice done."

Indirect quotation: Atticus Finch raised many objections to the verdict. He said that Tom Robinson should not have to suffer this injustice and that he and Robinson would appeal the verdict.

Here are some characteristics of editorials:

Start with the basic facts and then strongly give your opinion about the situation.

Do write in the third person. Don't use the following: I, me, my, mine, our, we, you.

Examples: Avoid - "In my opinion, Tom Robinson was wrongly convicted."

Do use - "Clearly, Tom Robinson was wrongly convicted."

Keep sentences and paragraphs fairly short.

Here are some characteristics of headlines:

Make the headlines much bigger than the text.

Make sure the headline stretches over all the columns that the story covers.

A headline should be like a complete sentence without the end punctuation. Use a strong action verb and give the most important information.

Examples: Avoid: Tom Robinson Trial (This headline lacks a verb.)

Do use: Jurors convict Robinson of rape.

Here are some characteristics of photo captions (also called cutlines):

Cutlines should be complete sentences with all the proper punctuation.

A cutline should clearly identify the people and event(s) shown in the photo.

Grading Rubric for Newspaper Project

Required articles

1. Local news - 3 @ 15 pts. each (150 words)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. World news - 2 @ 20 pts. each (150-200 words)

- a. _____
- b. _____

3. Editorial - 1 @ 15 pts. (100 words)

Topic: _____

4. Society news - 1 @ 10 pts. (100 words)

5. Pictures - 2 @ 3 pts. each

6. Extras 2 @ 5 pts. each

- a. _____
- b. _____

Appearance - 10 pts.

Does it look like a newspaper? Columns, little black space, headlines

Mechanics - 22 pts.

Spelling, fragments, run-ons, etc.

Total possible - 160 pts.

Your total _____

**NDCTE Summer Conference
Seven Seas
Mandan, ND
August 1-3, 2010
Teaching Language Arts: The Old to the New**

Tentative Schedule

Sunday, August 1

5:30-9:00 p.m. Toni Gredesky --Picturing America
Maggie Townsend
Novels-old to new and novel exchange
(Heather Woods 15 min SL)

9:00-9:15 Credit registration

Monday, August 2

7:45- 8:15 a.m. Breakfast

8:15- 10:15 a.m. Gayle Hyde and Jane Snyder
Using Technology to Update
the Research Process

10: 15- 10:20 Break

10:20- 11:20 Ron Fischer
Northern Plains Roundtable Writing
Session

11:25-12:05 Lunch

12:10-1:10 Mandy Wardner
Modern Drama

1:10-1:20 Break

1:20-2:20 Bridget Greff
The Five-Paragraph Essay

2:20-2:30 Break

2:30-3:30 Laurie Larson
Six Traits

Tuesday, August 3

7:30- 8:15 Breakfast and Annual Meeting

8:15-9:15 Aaron Knodel, David Woods, Anne Volk
Graphic Novels

9:15-9:20 Break

9:20-10:50 Shiela Hlibichuk
The Canterbury Challenge:
Engaging Students in the Lives of
Chaucer's Pilgrims

10:50-11:00 Break

11:00-12:00 Margaret Barnhardt
All Aboard the Titanic!
An analysis of poetic diction, tone, and style

12:00-12:45 Awards Lunch

12:50-2:20 Dr. Allen Church
Overcoming Anxiety in the Inevitable
Accreditation Process

2:30-3:30 Kristi Frahm
Words, Words, Words

3:30-3:45 Wrap Up