



The Needle's Eye

Celebrate Your Success as a Professional

By Sarah L. Tanner-Anderson, VATE President

Greetings, VATE members!

It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of another school year—already! As we face SOL assessments, end-of-year grades, and seemingly endless to-do lists, I find myself reflecting on accomplishments of the year. With so many obligations, responsibilities, and deadlines, it's easy to become absorbed by the stress. Why not take this time, instead, to celebrate our profession? Three cheers for our students, our achievements, and our craft!

How have you made a difference this school year? Did you attend the VATE conference and share your new-found knowledge with your colleagues? Have you written an article for submission to the *Needle's Eye* or *Virginia English Bulletin*? Have you participated in professional development workshops or symposiums such as the VBATE symposium or the PATE mini-conference? Or, perhaps, have you engaged in educational discourse online through social networks such as Facebook, or through blogs or webinars offered by NCTE? I hope that you have had an opportunity to do so; if not, I encourage you to take advantage of all we, and NCTE, have to offer! I welcome your thoughts and suggestions! Feel free to email me at stanner.anderson@gmail.com.

It is so important that we connect with each other and provide opportunities for sharing, exploring, and learning—together. We are our best resources! In fact, the purposes of VATE, as detailed on our website, are:

- To promote a professional spirit among Virginia teachers of English Language Arts
- To provide a forum for dissemination of information among these teachers
- To provide a medium for the exchange of opinions and information
- To provide an agency to foster cooperation between Virginia teachers of English language arts and the National Council of Teachers of English--[NCTE](#).
- To provide varied programs and services to meet the needs of all levels English Language Arts instruction represented in the organization

How can you explore and learn with us? Join us at the fall conference in Staunton on October 14-16, 2011. Soak up the wisdom of Carol Jago and Sharyn McCrumb, our featured speakers. Get caught up in *The Tempest* or take up a sword with *Henry V* at the American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse. Relax in the luxury of the Stonewall Jackson Hotel and Conference Center. Join us to regenerate your enthusiasm. Join us to network with other professionals. Join us to meet old friends. Join us to make new friends. Join us to celebrate our students, achievements, and our craft!

Best wishes for a stress-free (ha!) end of your school year! Take time to enjoy the moments you share with your students, and enjoy the love of learning you share with your fellow English/language arts colleagues!

VATE Issues Call for Award Nominations

By Chuck Miller, VATE Secretary

First of all, a disclaimer: If this article seems like a rerun, some of it is recycled material, much like the series reruns that dominate the television landscape this time of year. Even the world of

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October 14-16, 2011

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sports is featuring repeats. Butler, after ending VCU's incredible run in the NCAA basketball tournament, had a déjà vu experience in the championship game. But unlike Butler's loss in the title game, the information in this article is well worth repeating because you or a colleague may qualify for one of the many awards that VATE sponsors each year, and if so, VATE would like to honor you for your efforts and achievements.

Though many of us who teach are rather modest folks, the **VATE Service Award** gives you an opportunity to let your fellow VATE members know what you have done for VATE and for the "noble" profession of teaching English/language arts. To qualify for the service award, you must document three significant contributions to the organization and three recent professional achievements, as well as provide two letters of endorsement of achievements from appropriate sources. You must nominate yourself to be eligible for this award, so don't be shy. Remember the old proverb, "If thou dost not toot thine own horn, then thine horn shall not be tooted." Winners of the VATE service award receive framed certificates and are honored during the brunch at our **annual conference on October 14-16 at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel in Staunton.**

If you know of a colleague at the college, secondary, or elementary level who has distinguished himself/herself in commitment and service to his/her students, then please take the time to nominate that special colleague for the **Foster B. Gresham Award**. The Gresham Award is a very special honor because it not only indicates that the winner is an exceptional teacher, but that his/her efforts have been recognized and appreciated by fellow faculty members. Two letters of nomination and a resume from the nominee must be submitted by the nominators (not the nominee) in order to qualify for this award. The winner receives a plaque, free conference registration, accommodations at the conference hotel, and a ticket to the banquet where he/she will be recognized.

Another very special award sponsored by VATE is the **Heritage Award**. The nominee for this award must be a person of color who has made noteworthy contributions to the organization and who has fostered cultural awareness in his/her teaching. Documentation of achievements, as well as two letters of endorsements of achievements from sources such as principals or supervisors, is needed to qualify for this award. The winner will receive a plaque and be recognized at the fall conference luncheon.

Honors and recognition are nice, but in the current economic climate, one might be inclined to say, "Show me the money." And, VATE is ready to do just that. If you have an innovative idea for your English/Language Arts classroom but need a little extra cash to fund it, then you might want to apply for a **VATE Teacher Mini-Grant**. Grants range from \$50 to \$500. To apply for a mini-grant, you must provide a description of the project, a plan for carrying it out, the expected outcomes/benefits for the students, dates the project will be implemented, an itemized budget, and a letter of support and willingness from the principal to accept the grant money. Winners will be recognized at the banquet at the fall conference. Should you win a Teacher Mini-Grant, you are also agreeing to share the results of your project with your fellow VATE members through an article in the *Needle's Eye* or the *Virginia English Bulletin* or a presentation at the annual VATE conference.

In years past, the nominating materials were sent to various members of the executive board, and the deadline dates for receiving those materials likewise varied. This year, in an effort to streamline the process, all materials should be postmarked on or before September 1 and sent to Chuck Miller, VATE Executive Secretary, 1417 Birchwood Drive, Crozet, VA 22932.

This article contains only a general account of some of the awards that are available for VATE members. For more specific information about how to apply or nominate someone for one of these awards, as well as the latest information about VATE (including the fall conference), check out our website, www.VATE.org.

"Being honored as the VATE/NCTE High School Teacher of Excellence for 2010 was the high point of my career. It means so much to be recognized by your peers, who truly understand the investment you make as a teacher both inside the classroom and outside of contract hours."

Sara Zeek

2010 Award Recipient

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR NCTE AWARD DEADLINES

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognized for their outstanding service as an English educator? VATE encourages members to nominate exemplary candidates to receive national recognition for a variety of awards. If you feel that you know of a candidate who may be honored, please visit www.ncte.org/awards/educators for more information, and contact Sarah Tanner-Anderson (stanner.anderson@gmail.com) with your nominees. Deadlines are quickly approaching! <http://www.ncte.org/affiliates/awards/leadership>

What I Know for Sure

By Gena D Southall, Longwood University

During my data collection for my doctoral dissertation, I was fortunate enough to observe a secondary instruction and assessment methods course led by a truly gifted instructor. She regularly used a metaphor that I have adopted as a teaching mantra. She always told her students, "Teaching is like driving a boat while pulling water skiers. If the driver does not constantly look behind and check his/her skiers, how will he/she know if one has been lost? How will the driver know if things are going well if he/she is not consistently vigilant?" (Doubet, 2005) I have never had my feelings about teaching articulated more accurately.

The teacher of any course has an immense responsibility. He/she is the guide, the leader, the "driver." The teacher is there to provide leadership, to provide guidance, and to provide balance. If these goals are accomplished, then the students will put forth the effort and enthusiasm needed to maintain that balance, to learn new skills, to gain new understandings, and to have an enjoyable ride.

A teacher's premiere responsibility is to know his/her students, as a community and as individuals. It is through this intimate knowledge that I, as the teacher, can design and implement curriculum that meets students "where they are." As both a student and a teacher, I have encountered so many educators who tout twenty-five or more years of experience in the classroom. I have unfortunately learned, in many cases, that the number is more accurately expressed as one year of experience recycled twenty-five times. Each group of students should be taught differently. Not only is it my responsibility to keep abreast of current methods and research, it is also imperative that I adapt and change my teaching to meet the needs of each unique class. If nothing else, teaching the same material in the exact same manner would become extremely monotonous!

English and Language Arts Education lends itself to innumerable teaching opportunities. I have the venue to foster a lifelong love of reading and writing in all I encounter. Specifically, in my position as a teacher educator, training future teachers must involve both the modeling of and the direct instruction of methods of successful implementation. I believe in fostering a community of learners. This community shares its ideas about what is being read, writes about the issues that are important to its members, and constantly reflects on what constitutes excellence in teaching. Modeling this type of community encourages students to carry that environment into their classrooms. I try to teach my students how to engage their students in all that is "English." I also strive to teach them how to think critically, to be reflective educators, to become invested in their students' learning, and to grasp the importance of the career they have chosen. We are teaching students first and foremost; English just happens to be our chosen medium.

I have grown as an educator during my time working with pre-service teachers. It has been a joy to work with students who are interested in what I have to say and excited about learning. I have learned that students notice and appreciate when I make that extra effort to design my instruction to fit their needs and interests.

I am challenging myself to keep abreast of current pedagogical research studies and findings. It is fascinating to hear student responses when I present these in class. Making students aware of these ideas reinforces the idea that it is imperative for teachers both to keep current on educational research and to critique the validity of the real-world application of that research.

My knowledge base has grown tremendously during my time in the university classroom. I am so excited about the educational ideas and concepts I am discovering. It is a privilege to have a role in training pre-service teachers and to share this knowledge with them.

Works Cited

Doubet, Kristina. Class Lecture. Charlottesville, Virginia. 21 May 2005.

What Do You Know for Sure?

Past President Adria Merritt noted, "Reflection is a powerful tool educators possess. It allows us to question our instructional choices as we strive to engage our students in the learning process, while further developing their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Reflection often yields surprising results, like much of what we are already doing really is working despite the barrage of "new, improved" methods and strategies that overwhelm some practitioners compelling them to throw out the tried and true for the next best thing. Reflection also pushes us to make simple, yet profound changes." **What I Know for Sure** is a regular column in *Needle's Eye*. We encourage members to reflect on their classrooms and beliefs and share their thoughts with us. Please email your contributions to szeek@bcps.k12.va.us.

SIOP: A New Approach to Instruction for ELL Students

By Louise Sutton, ESL Teacher at Salem Church Middle School

SIOP Coach at Falling Creek Middle School, Chesterfield County

SIOP is an acronym for **Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol Model**, which is a new concept in planning and instruction coming to schools in Virginia. The instructional model is designed to help all students, but especially English Language Learners (ELLs) access the academic language of content coursework.

SIOP is a research proven framework that promotes high quality instruction for students, especially ELLs. It is so successful that teachers in Virginia are being encouraged to take SIOP courses as schools adopt this planning and instructional model through school-wide initiatives. Administrators are recognizing that ELL students moving from sheltered classes to mainstream content-driven classrooms struggle to succeed without a more scaffolded, interactive, and language-rich environment. It can take an ELL 5 years or longer to develop academic language. Yet they are expected to participate in state grade level SOL testing in reading after only 1 year.

Chesterfield County Public Schools is working toward training all content teachers in the SIOP Model through a federally funded grant with Virginia Commonwealth University known as ACT-ESL (Assisting, Collaborating, and Teaching Secondary Content Teachers) or site based school-wide trainings conducted by associates from the Center For Applied Linguistics. Falling Creek Middle School is pioneering a model through the ACT-ESL Institute's school-wide SIOP training and providing a site-based SIOP Coach to support staff.

SIOP has 8 Components to successfully guide the teacher through planning and instruction. Each component is made up of several building blocks that ask you to clarify aspects of your instruction:

Component 1— Lesson Preparation

Component 2— Building Background

Component 3— Comprehensible Input

Component 4— Strategies

Component 5— Interaction

Component 6— Practice/Application

Component 7— Lesson Delivery

Component 8— Review and Assessment

Fundamental to the SIOP Model are the language and content objectives from Component 1. The language objectives identify what the student will be expected to produce linguistically by the end of the class. These objectives drive the activities for the lesson. The content objectives need to relate directly to the state SOLs for the course. Both should be written with verbs that demonstrate what the students should be able to do by the end of the lesson.

The SIOP model then helps the teacher deliberately plan the vocabulary and directly teach it to ensure clear content understanding. The role of the teacher is then to scaffold the concept by modeling the lesson in gradual increments that relate to the students' past learning. As the activities begin, the students should be able to work together in groups. All students including ELLs can access academic language better through interactive activities, as the brain is stimulated more when it is interested in an activity. When the brain is stimulated, it usually retains much more as it actively engages.

This approach helps create a classroom with less teacher talk and more student talk. The teacher's role is then more one of supplying strategies and guiding peer interaction than the voice at the front of the room. Finally the teacher needs to assess if the students demonstrate independent understanding. This can be done by having the class read out the content objectives written on the board and identifying gained knowledge.

Language arts teachers may question the need for two objectives, but there is a difference between the two objectives. I know that some may question the strength of a new concept. However, I will testify that this new framework has recast my focus on teaching content by intentionally incorporating activities that include reading, writing, speaking, and listening in every lesson. Even after years of teaching, it is refreshing to revamp your old content plans and refocus on the language arts delivery. Focusing on both content and language objectives will strengthen all students' academic language and literacy skills.

The following is an outline of a SIOP lesson plan for a Middle School Language Arts class that I taught:

**Lesson Plan for LA 8.6f, 7.5g, 6.5e Summarizing
Grades: mixed 6/7/8 ESL Levels 1-3**

Content Objective - SWBAT identify the accurate/inaccurate facts found in the passage and summarize the passage using these facts.

Language Objective - SWBAT *read* a passage and *write down* the accurate facts. Then *write* a summary.

Vocabulary - accurate, irrelevant, important, summarize

Lesson

Warm up - Read Content Objective and Language Objective

Listening/Modeling. Give the students examples of 3 things Accurate/Important/Relevant in my life. 3 things Irrelevant in my life.

Speaking/Scaffold. Ask the students to help me come up with the definitions for Accurate, Important, Irrelevant and Relevant and copy them down.

Writing/Scaffold. Ask the students to write 6 Accurate/Important/Relevant things about their life. Write 3 Irrelevant/NOT Important things about themselves. Discuss their writing as a class. Do the important things help you know more about your friends?

Speaking/Writing. Each student works with a partner to write a 3 sentence summary about each other based on the important written facts. Ask some partners to share with the class. Do we think they gave a good summary of their partner's life? Did we need the unimportant info?

Speaking/Reading. Give out the worksheets and 3 highlighters to each student. Ask them to read the passage and stop. Ask students to then take turns reading out to class. Round Robin. Teacher reads it aloud to clarify unknown vocabulary.

Model how to do the worksheet.

Writing. Individually the students will highlight the - Accurate/Not Important/Irrelevant sentences in different colors. Write down the sentences and then use the accurate sentences to form a paragraph summary.

Assessment. Review Objectives. Did we achieve them?

Works Cited

Jana Echevarria, MaryEllen Vogt, and Deborah J. Short. *Making Content Comprehensible for Secondary English Learners – The SIOP Model*. Allyn & Bacon, Pearson, 2010

Jana Echevarria and MaryEllen Vogt. *99 Ideas and Activities for Teaching English Learners with The SIOP Model*. Allyn & Bacon, Pearson, 2008

First Annual JMU Poetry Day Takes Poetry to Secondary Students

Dr. Hood Frazier, with the help of JMSATE and the Poetry Hit Squad of JMU, facilitated the 1st Annual Poetry Day for local high school students in Harrisonburg. Students in every grade spent all day reading and writing poems. They studied foreign objects in a paper bag in order to write with their senses and studied works of art and made them come alive in poems. JMSATE students helped out throughout the day, which provided various opportunities to connect with the high school students. Other schools have showed an interest in Poetry Day, and Dr. Frazier hopes to make it an annual event.

AFFILIATE NEWS



Wendy Bryant learns to use an iPad.

PATE Technology Show and Tell Is a Success

*By Wendy Anderson Bryant, President of PATE 2010-11
English Honors teacher, Stonewall Jackson Middle School, Roanoke, Virginia*

What a “techno geek” I’ve become in such a short time!

In fact, it only took two hours of an afternoon.

I attended the PATE Mini Conference, *Technology Show & Tell*, at Hidden Valley Middle School with Roanoke area English teachers. On March 29, we gathered for refreshments, entertaining advertisements from local vendors, and informative sessions from colleagues who have mastered some piece of technology in the English classroom. It’s “sink or swim” time when it comes to technology in education. It seems my students know more about iPods, iPads, Apps, eReaders, and texting than I do.

But not for long ...

Barnes & Noble presented a compare/contrast discussion of the Nook eReader along with past VATE President, Chris Woods, sharing about the Kindle eReader. In the wake of their sharing, I feel better prepared to purchase and use this gadget for personal and educational use. It is a teacher’s dream to receive “freebies” from EMC Publishers. Barnes & Noble even provided a book bag for every attendee. PATE is always appreciative of Chuck Miller of VATE, who provides an annual invitation to the fall VATE conference along with “incentives” to attend.



Amy Hodges shares her Kindle.



Heater Gerbus demonstrates how to use a wiki.

Heather Gerbus of Breckinridge Middle School shared her ideas for a classroom Wiki. Carrie Honaker of Hidden Valley High School illuminated multi-genre projects for writing presentations, such as Glogster and Voice Thread. Roanoke City Supervisor of Secondary English, Christine McNair, showed us the “ins and outs” of iPad. I’m ready for a classroom of these technology tools! Aileen Murphy of the Blue Ridge Writing Project was also present to encourage us to be students again.



Christine McNair, (left) assisted by Carrie Honaker, explains various uses for iPads in the classroom.

Thanks to all who attended. A special “thank you” goes to all who planned and presented in the mini-conference. It was a good learning experience for us reluctant technology users. PATE gained two new members, but mostly we gained newly-excited users of technology in the English classroom.

VBATE Spring Symposium: Third Time is *Still* a Charm

*By Catherine Walker, VBATE President
Princess Anne High School, Virginia Beach*

For the third time in as many years, VBCPS English and reading teachers from all grade levels from elementary to high school teachers were invited to attend VBATE’s spring symposium at Green Run High School. This year’s theme—“The 21st Century Classroom: Proven Strategies for Teaching Today’s Students”—was a hit with over 100 people attending the event.

You might think asking teachers to give up four hours of their personal time on a bright and sunny Saturday morning would be met with refusal. But Green Run High School was packed. The morning was kicked off by Joe Burnsworth, our keynote speaker, who is VBCPS’ Assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. Even after thirty years in the system, Joe knows that change is a must and sent participants off to their selected sections thinking about new and innovative ways to teach both literature and writing.

For the next few hours, participants were able to attend three sessions of their choosing covering such subjects as VOKI's, podcasting, Facebook, and Twitter. Other sessions provide tips on using persuasion in the classroom, finding inviting texts that students will read, and discovering how to create an effective inclusion classroom. And all of these sessions were led by fellow teachers sharing their expertise. What an effective way to reach an audience!

The symposium was brought to a close mid-day with what has become a favorite among participants, the drawing of names for various door prizes. The door prize selections this year were extraordinary, and for a mere \$1 donation, participants were able to vie for prizes ranging from an IPOD Shuffle to elaborate gift baskets. All donations go into our scholarship fund. (Each year we hold two writing contests--one for middle school and one for high school.)

VBATE works to continue to build our membership, and we have found that our spring symposium is being met with great enthusiasm and interest. We encourage other VATE affiliates to give it a try!

JMSATE Reflections: Everything I need to know I learned in my PRACTICUM

By members of the student affiliate of James Madison University

JMSATE recently had a writing workshop under the direction of Dr. Mary Beth Cancienne, Assistant Professor of English Education, in which students wrote about their experiences in their practicums. Their reflections are shared below.

There's no such thing as too many chances

Matthew was one of "those kids" in my 9th grade practicum class. Matthew had problems with authority, and he didn't feel as though his work would be rewarded. Although he seemed to be somewhat of a slacker, I was able to look past his wannabe tough guy exterior and realize his intelligence and love for sports-themed books. It was from Matthew that I truly learned the power of listening to students and that we should give them as many second, third, and fourth chances as they need.

~Cathi Owens, JMSATE Student

Understanding a student's interest can open many doors for both the teacher and student

In the fall of 2010 I worked with a 6th grade practicum class and quickly discovered that the students lacked interest in reading on our first visit to the school's library. When I attempted to assist Brandon, an eleven-year-old boy, in choosing a book, he replied, "I want the thinnest and shortest book I can find." I learned that finding out our students' interests and trying to connect these to reading material will be beneficial for students who may have never enjoyed a book before.

~Stephanie Passino, JMSATE Student

Everyone needs support because not everything comes easy

During my reading practicum experience, James was that student that "didn't care about reading" and had no interest in reading books with a tutor. After working with James for several weeks, the slow pace with which he read and his tendency to struggle to pronounce words were clear indicators of his negative attitude. After joining with another tutor-student pair for small-group reading and providing James with support, encouragement, and material that interested him, James opened up to reading. It became clear to me that his initial attitude was the result of insecurity in his abilities and a lack of interest in his materials. This insight allowed me to realize the importance of providing students with support in both their abilities and their interests to maximize effort and learning.

~Shelby Kardon, JMSATE Student

You have to look beyond the classwork to understand a student's ability

During my practicum, I met a young boy, William, whose handwriting and spelling were atrocious. Reading his work, I made the decision that he was one of the many students in my collaborative class that had a low reading level or a learning disability. William didn't talk a lot but finally I parked myself at his desk and let him know I was really listening. It turned out that he was incredibly insightful and intelligent. He had one of the highest reading levels in his class, well above his grade level. I learned that a few writing assignments can never tell a teacher a student's full potential and ability.

~Mai Khanh Nguyen, JMSATE Student

Book Review: *Research Notes for Women at Play: The Story of Women in Baseball*

by Robin D. Smith, Longwood University

Research Notes for Women at Play: The Story of Women in Baseball is exactly what the title promises: a compilation of selected newspaper articles and research notes Gregorich collected in the process of researching her 1993 book *Women at Play: The Story of Women in Baseball*. In the introduction, Gregorich states that she hopes the book will help others interested in the history of women in baseball as well as anyone who teaches writing the research paper. Her hopes are realized: the book could be very useful for teaching the research process.

This is volume 1 of what she intends to be a three-volume set, each focusing on different players. The material in Volume 1 is specific to Maud Nelson and Margaret Nabel. Two parts of this book are of interest to those teaching the research process: newspaper articles dating from 1875 – 1922 and the chapter in which Gregorich describes her four-year research process.

Whenever I teach a class in which students need an introduction to the research process, including finding, selecting, evaluating, and incorporating sources, I begin with a mini research project with the entire class using the same sources; we go through the process together, giving me a chance to model the behavior and thinking of real researchers. Together we identify terms and anything else on which we need background information in order to understand what we are reading. As a class, we come up with several thesis statements that we can substantiate using the research. We revise and refine our theses and play with using various combinations of support. We toy with different ways to incorporate direct and indirect quotes to create varying effects. Since everyone is familiar with the available sources, we can focus on the process we are using and develop the skills needed for real research. The most time-consuming part for me was always finding sources to use on a suitable topic.

This collection of notes is perfect for this sort of introduction to research. The subject appeals to students. Because of the blatant sexism of many articles, the book offers rich grounds for thesis statements on tone, gender bias, and humor—as well as the more concrete and obvious sports topics. The use of outdated sports slang and unfamiliar cultural references presents opportunities to model the common need to do further research in order to understand sources. In some instances, Gregorich summarizes articles and gives only limited direct quotes. A discussion of her choices could provide insight into how real authors select what goes into direct quotes, indirect quotes, summaries, or paraphrases. Her careful attention to detail, such as the use of [sic] for irregular spellings and score tallies that do not add up, again shows what professional writers do—without sounding pedantic. The final chapter, in which she discusses her four-year search using archives, letters, interviews with relatives, and other venues to find something as simple as the real names of these early female athletes, is an eye-opener. I will use this resource. I am sure.

Gregorich, Barbara. *Research Notes for Women at Play: The Story of Women in Baseball – Volume 1 Maud Nelson, Margaret Nabel*. 2010. Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Books. Print.



Virginia Association of Teachers of English

Please contact Chuck Miller at cmillercrz@roadrunner.com to update your email and post office address so that you will not miss a publication or announcement. Encourage others to join VATE online at www.vate.org.

The Needle's Eye

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The Virginia Association of Teachers of English is committed to enhancing the quality of the teaching of English and language arts in the Commonwealth.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

***Virginia English Bulletin* Spring / Summer 2011, Vol 61, #1**
Themed Issue on the Virginia Affiliates of the National Writing Project

From National to Neighborhood: The Homegrown Pedagogy of Virginia's
Affiliates of the National Writing Project.

This special themed issue is meant to highlight the outstanding work being done throughout the state of Virginia by our affiliates of the National Writing Project. For this special themed issue we invite participants from across the state to submit research articles related to their work with the NWP on both a national and regional level. Additionally, we invite the directors of each of Virginia's NWP affiliates to share their experiences and goals with their respective colleagues from across the state. While the goal of this issue is to highlight the work of our state affiliates of the NWP, we will gladly consider submissions outside of the scope of the NWP dealing with the teaching of writing at all levels.

The state of Virginia is a true microcosm of our nation as a whole. Few states offer the diversity of culture and traditions as found in our state. And yet, the Virginia affiliates of the NWP find a common ground in the continued study and improvement of issues related to the teaching of writing. No matter their location, teachers across the state are working toward the singular goal of improving students' writing. Regardless of the region, the importance of students being able to write not only for communication, but even more so for self-expression, is the shared goal of members of the NWP statewide. This issue is devoted to the work of all of those members who dedicate their time and energy to improving the lives and opportunities of all of our students.

Virginia English Bulletin is a fully refereed journal. In addition to publishing full length articles on English language arts teaching and learning, we feature teaching ideas in our Great Teaching ideas column.

Deadline: May 15, 2010

Authors should submit their articles electronically as e-mail attachments, preferably Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect; however, other formats and word processing programs are acceptable. We do not accept simultaneous submissions. **Please include your mailing address, as well as a short biographical sketch including the name of your school, position, courses taught, and a brief statement about your professional life; also include a statement of submission noting that the work has not been submitted elsewhere simultaneously for publication.**

Send to drwoods@radford.edu, for the attention of Daniel Woods, Radford University, P.O. Box 6935, Radford, Virginia 24142. The editor reserves the right to modify manuscripts to fit length and language considerations. Please include "VEB Submission" in the "Subject" line of your e-mail. Alternately, interested individuals may call the Editor at 540.831.6266.



VATE welcomes Daniel Woods as the new editor of the Virginia English Bulletin. Woods received his PhD from Virginia Tech majoring in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on English Education. Before pursuing his PhD, Woods taught middle and high school English in Roanoke City and Montgomery County. He earned M.A.Ed. from Virginia Tech, as well as a BS and MA in English from Radford University. His research interests include teacher education, critical literacy, and social justice. As of August 2011 he will be an Assistant Professor of English Education at Radford University.