

Asilomar 41

To Comprehend the Whole —

Asilomar Conference Grounds
Pacific Grove

September 27-29, 1991



Curriculum Study Commission
Central California Council of Teachers of English



Asilomar 41

The Forty First Annual Gathering of Teachers of English, Preschool through University



To Comprehend the Whole

I reckon – when I count at all –
First – Poets – Then the Sun –
Then Summer – Then the Heaven of God –
And then – The List is done –

But, looking back – the First so seems –
To Comprehend the Whole –
The Others look a needless Show –
So I write – Poets – All –

Emily Dickinson

The Whole! To
put our world together we
will spend the weekend contemplating
the whole rather than each of the fragmented
pieces that are offered to us from the fast lane as we fly by.
The curriculum is fragmented, families are fragmented, schools
and their schedules are fragmented into periods and special classes.
Communities furnish addresses rather than friends, and tests measure
bits of trivia. It is no wonder that students have nothing to hang onto, no
place to belong, and often drop between the cracks.

Asilomar in the fall is the place and the time to step back and take a new
perspective. At recent Asilomars we have focused on new imperatives (Asilomar
40), rebuilding education (Asilomar 39) and the reform movement (Asilomar 38).
We have discussed Steinbeck, David Copperfield, and Families in Crisis, and have
looked at operas, dramas, and student assessment. This year we will contemplate,
and try – *to comprehend the whole*.

We will focus on the whole, whether through whole language and its oral base,
the “Truths we keep coming back and back to” (Friday), through the
envisionment of interpreters (Saturday), or through the larger society and
“The Power of Literature” to make multi-ethnic communities whole
(Sunday). Further, we will look at restructuring schools to bring
schedules, curricula and learning together, and we will make
ourselves whole through collaboration, comprehension,
and contemplation of the poetry of the sea, the
sand, the stars, and the salt air
of Asilomar.

Program

Friday, September 27

- 3:30-9:00 Registration
4:30-6:00 CCCTE Reception
6:00-7:00 Dinner
7:15-8:30 General Session
Student Musical; Bruce Graham, director
Speaker: Marilyn Hanf Buckley, U. of Alaska
The Truths We Keep Coming Back and Back To
Introduced by Walter Loban
9:00-10:00 Group Session #1

Saturday, September 28

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast
9:00-10:30 Group Session #2
10:45-11:45 Group Session #3
12:00-1:00 Lunch
1:30-3:00 Group Session #4
4:30-6:00 Celebrating Asilomar: R & R
6:00-7:00 Dinner
7:30-9:30 Around the Hearth of your choice:
Jeff Corey, Dramatist
Russell Hill, Novelist
Eve Merriam, Poet
James Moffet, Writer
John Cotter and Frank Thomas, Musicians

Sunday, September 29

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast
9:00-10:00 Group Session #5
10:30-12:00 General Session
Speaker: Jesse Perry, President elect, NCTE
The Power of Literature: The Equipment for Life in a Multi-Ethnic, Multi-Cultural Society
Introduced by Pat Cipriano, President, CATE
Ed Cunningham, President, CCCTE
Dan Wolter, Chair, CSC
12:00-1:00 Lunch

The Asilomar conference is sponsored by the Curriculum Study Commission of the Central California Council of Teachers of English, an affiliate of the California Association of Teachers of English and the National Council of Teachers of English

Featured Presentations

Marilyn Hanf Buckley

Marilyn Buckley taught in the public schools in California before earning her PhD degree at UC Berkeley in Language and Literacy. Her dissertation research was in oral language and thought. While there she helped design and direct one of the country's first graduate programs in integrated language. She has worked with both the Writing and Literature Projects in both California and Alaska and was a former Asilomar Conference Chair. She is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Alaska in Anchorage.

Jesse Perry

As Program Manager of English Language Arts for the San Diego City Schools, Jesse Perry has been integrating English Language Arts throughout the curriculum and fostering the study and love of literature. As the current Vice President and next year's President elect of the National Council of Teachers of English, he will have the opportunity to influence a wider audience. He will speak to us about the value of integrating literature from many cultures into the whole curriculum and the power of literature as equipment for life.

Jeff Corey

A distinguished actor, director, and teacher, Jeff Corey has appeared in over one hundred feature films and many established TV series. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Screen Actors Guild and on the Actors Committee of the Motion Picture Academy. The National Observer called his acting workshop, "a major influence in the motion picture industry". Among those who have participated in his workshops are Jack Nicholson, Jane Fonda, Candace Bergen, and Anthony Quinn.

Russell Hill

Russell Hill is a contemporary novelist who has also taught high school English in Marin for thirty two years. He has been a member of the Central Council and CATE "since pterodactyls were flying", as he put it. His latest novel is *Lucy Boomer*, a Ballentine book that is scheduled for publication in January 1992. He will talk about writing and memory and will share with us parts of *Lucy Boomer* and *My Life With the Tubers*, a work in progress set in an Arizona tubercular sanatorium in the 1940s.

Eve Merriam

Eve Merriam has won numerous awards for her poetry, plays, fiction, and non-fiction for both young people and adults. We know her best for her whimsical approach to sound and meaning for children. Her works appear in TV, books, magazines, and most of the leading language arts textbooks. Among her best known titles are *Inner City Mother Goose*, *Mommies at Work*, *Blackberry Ink*, *Chortles*, and *A Poem for a Pickle*. *The Singing Green* will be published in 1992. She has been awarded the Yale Younger Poet Prize, the NCTE Award for Excellence, the Obie award for playwriting, and is a member of the Tony Awards Committee.

James Moffett

As a leader in reforming the way we think about teaching and learning, Jim Moffett has written much of the material that has served as a basis for improving the way English is taught, and has been an inspiration for the theme of this conference, "—to comprehend the whole". His books include; *Active Voice*, *Storm on the Mountain*, and the student series, *Interaction*. His current work explores curriculum integration, a restructuring of subject matter that will enable students to function effectively in restructured schools. His 1991 book is titled: *Student Centered Language Arts, K-12*.

John Cotter and Frank Thomas

John Cotter is a long time member of the Curriculum Study Commission and into his fourth year as registrar for this conference. Now retired from Encinal High School where he was the English Department Chair, he is currently a part time instructor of English at Chabot College. His avocation is playing the piano. Frank Thomas is an English teacher at Acalanes High School in Lafayette. He has studied voice and is often a soloist. He has sung with the Boris Goldovsky Opera Co. and is a member of the talent bank at U.C. Berkeley. Join them for an hour of classical music.

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To Comprehend

Group Discussion Sessions

The Asilomar conference is based on sustained group discussions following the teachers-teaching-teachers, collaborative learning philosophy. The chair and one or more resource persons in each group do not function as lecturers. Rather, participants share information and insights as the discussions evolve. The emphasis is on good conversation and the pursuit of intellectual interests. In order for the group to maintain integrity, it is necessary that the same people stay together for the week-end.

Please select a first, second and third choice of the group sessions below. Every effort will be made to assign your first choice, but groups are limited to 25 since more would tend to limit discussion. Group sessions will be assigned on first come, first served basis.

Session discussions will include ideas and methods for meeting the needs of all students, including the special needs of those students at-risk, those who are educationally disadvantaged, those whose first language is not English and those at both ends and in the middle of various ranges of ability and achievement.

The following letters after each title indicate the approximate grade level focus:

(E) Elementary (M) Middle
(S) Secondary/College (G) General – all levels

- 1. Writing on the Road** (G)
Freeing students from the classroom can encourage experimentation with different points of view and genres. Workshop participants will select a local destination (Point Lobos, Monterey Aquarium, Robinson Jeffers' Tor House) to explore and write about. The group will respond to one another's drafts during the weekend with a view toward producing a classroom resource publication. Additional information will be sent upon enrollment in the section.



- 2. Poetry Meets The Core Reading—Round Two** (S)
Participants will generate liaisons between poetry and works routinely "required" in secondary schools with a war as focus, *All Quiet*, *Red Badge*, *Farewell to Arms*, *Separate Peace*, *Lord of the Flies* and with Shakespeare plays. We will bring a minimum of 20 poems and some teaching suggestions for each. You are encouraged to bring your own. You will have fun adding to your teaching arsenal and discussing the poetry in light of the core reading.



- 10. Shaping Student Cultures** (M,S)
Students enter the classroom with their own responses to instruction and classroom discussion. Are social concerns, romance, machismo, rap concerts, drugs, runaways and gangs areas of concern that teachers can address? Should they? If so how? Discussion will focus on strategies to deal with them.
- 11. A Curriculum For Restructured Schools** (G)
The restructuring of school governance, schedules, and teaching practices is a growing trend, but subject matter disciplines and conception of knowledge have remained largely unchanged. This group will explore ways of reconceiving the knowledge that students need from schooling to enable them to function effectively in a world where subject matter boundaries are increasingly blurred. Suggested reading: Resnick's, *Education and Learning to Think*.
- 12. Controversy in the Classroom** (MS)
Works that are controversial will be the focus of this workshop, especially those that deal with sexuality, sexual orientation, abuse, and feelings of rage and powerlessness. Discussion will center on the complexities of the four works; *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Women of Brewster Place*, *Beloved*, and *The Color Purple* to examine our own reactions and difficulties or resistance to their themes and characters.
- 13. Censorship: Selection, Balance or Mind Control** (G)
Literature based language arts programs are easy targets for censorship. Any book that deals with real issues will offend someone. Group members will share strategies for defusing confrontations and for developing district wide policies and procedures which prevent a determined minority from dictating a reading program.

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Please Post

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20. **Hamlet, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern on the Page, the Boards, and the Screen** (S)

The extraordinarily diverse ways that teachers can approach this tale of treachery and revenge will be explored. Examined will be the texts as text, as script, and as scenario, arriving at imaginative ways to stimulate the curiosity and participation of a new generation of readers and viewers.

21. **Politics in Literature** (S)

Use the immediate world scene to build an "I Search" contemporary research unit. Participants will develop strategies for having students use mass media, local resources and literature to explore immediate controversies in world, national and local socio-political issues.

22. **Watcher on the Curb: Naguib Mahfouz** (G)

Called "the Dickens of the Cairo cafes", Naguib Mahfouz views the parade of urban life marching before him, while watching from the curb. The 1988 Nobel Laureate, the most successful and well know Egyptian novelist, Mahfouz provides Western readers with a view into Cairo society, and through it, into the larger context of Arabic literature.

23. **Young Reader Medal** (E,M,S)

The following books nominated for the awards will be discussed. Primary; *Never Spit on Your Shoes, Thunder Cake, Tommy at the Grocery Store, The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, and The Wolf's Chicken Stew*. Intermediate; *All about Sam, Martin's Mice, and This Island Isn't Big Enough for the Four of Us*. Middle/Jr. Hi.; *The Facts and Fictions of Minna Pratt, The Secret of Gumbo Grove, and The Sniper*. Young Adult; *Bearstone, Children of the River, and A Sudden Silence*.

24. **Toni Morrison's World of African-American Women** (S)

"The black woman had nothing to fall back on, not maleness, not whiteness, not ladyhood, not anything. And out of the profound desolation of her reality she may very well have invented herself", wrote Toni Morrison. Whether it's *Pecola, Sula, Tar Baby, Beloved* or others, we meet the most intriguing characters to unfold in literature. This group will discuss Morrison's women and mythology and her genius as a writer.

25. **Democracy in Schooling** (G)

Participants will write narratives about their experiences with schooling, as learners or as educators. Narratives will become performances which will then be presented to the group. From participant experiences we will abstract theories about how politics, culture, and social issues impact schooling today. Suggested reading: *Post-Modern Education: Politics, Culture and Social Criticism*.

26. **The Spoken Word, The Living language** (E,M,S,G)

Research shows that students who have power over the spoken word excel in reading and writing, yet American schools do little to give students that power. Using the techniques of Reader's Theater, small group discussion, choral reading and dramatic reading, this group will develop ways to get students into, through, and beyond the text. Participants should bring four copies of a short story, a poem or an essay to work with.

On-Site Bookstore

The bookstore will be located in Scripts Living Room during the conference weekend. Every attempt will be made to have the books listed by the session organizers available. If you would like to pre-order, phone or write:

ARTIST PROOF

460 Magnolia Avenue, Larkspur, CA 94939,
(415) 924-3801

Book Exchange

Participants are encouraged to bring mystery/detective books they would like to exchange on a one for one basis. The location and the hours of the book exchange will be posted in the registration area.

Conference Fees

Registration

Because a predetermined number of rooms on the Asilomar grounds have been reserved for this conference, registrations are processed in the order they are received until all spaces are filled. Register by paying all fees at the same time. **No on-site registrations are taken.**

Early registration (by June 15)

Regular registration (June 16-31)

Late registration (after July 31 if space is available)

Participants interested in registering after July 31 must call the Conference Registrar, John Cotter, (415) 357-5425, to determine whether rooms are still available.

Accommodations (Lodging and Meals)

The accommodations fee includes two nights' lodging and six (6) meals (Friday dinner, served from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M., through Sunday lunch). **Only a very limited number of single rooms are available. Rooms fill early and all room assignments are on a first-come first-served basis.** Monterey Peninsula residents may register for the conference on a nonresidential basis by paying the off-grounds fee of \$15. Meals are not included; individual meal tickets, however, may be purchased at the Asilomar office.

Refunds

For cancellations **by September 15**, a refund minus a \$15 processing fee will be granted if requested. No refunds can be made after September 15, 1991.

Membership Fee

Members of Central California Council of Teachers of English or other affiliate of CATE pay the reduced registration fee. Those who pay the non-member fee automatically receive a one-year membership in CATE, entitling them to reduced rates at other conferences and the CATE convention and a one-year subscription to *California English*.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS...

about registration or accommodations, or if you need extra copies of this brochure, write or telephone the Conference Registrar:

John Cotter (415) 357-5425

2882 Marineview Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577

3. **Teachers Telling Their Stories** (G)
Teachers will be given the opportunity to reflect upon their teaching experiences through "creative" writing – personal essays, short stories or poetry. Participants will share short pieces with response groups, revise those projects, and develop some "percolating" ideas into new pieces of writing. Information about publishing will also be offered. Participants should bring a draft of their own writing.
4. **A Time for War: A Time for Peace** (M,S)
The war experience will be explored through literature in its various forms. Discussion will include recurring themes such as veteran adjustment, national reconciliation, intercultural understanding and peaceful solutions to conflict through the use of many techniques including oral history projects. Suggested reading: *Buffalo Afternoon, Piece of My Heart, The Barracks Thief, When Heaven and Earth Changed Places, and The Things They Carried*.
5. **Non-English Speakers in Regular Classrooms** (S)
Structuring regular English classrooms to develop the literacy of all students will be explored. Literature circles, purposeful writing, integrated language tasks and other activities undertaken through interactive and collaborative approaches can empower all students to create personally significant meaning. Suggested reading: *Grand Conversations, In the Middle: Writing, Reading, and Learning with Adolescents*.
6. **Voices of Diversity: Reading and Writing** (G)
This will be a celebration of our own students' cultural diversity, focusing upon the literature of their many cultures and upon their own cultural voices, written and spoken. Participants will share both ideas, classroom materials and bibliographies in response to growing ethnic diversity at all age levels.
7. **Golding on Trial: Fiction/Non Fiction Connection** (M,S)
English and social studies teachers put William Golding on trial. Using *Lord of the Flies* and non-fiction prose from writers such as Freud, Morris, Leakey, Turnbull, Edmund Wilson and more (who appear as "expert witnesses"), students present arguments on Golding's assessment of human nature. Participants will experience how this English/Social Studies connection makes fiction and non-fiction come alive for students.
8. **Technology in the English Classroom** (G)
Participants will discuss a wide spectrum of kinds of technology, from word processing to interactive video. Both theory and practical application will be included. Intelligent, interactive state of the art courseware will be demonstrated.
9. **Roll 'em: Designing Video Productions** (E,M,S)
Classroom video production can enhance the literature based language arts program. Participants will share ideas for using video camera and computer "desktop video" as a humanist technology. The group is open to beginners and experts, with time to share examples of classroom VCR productions.

14. **Healthy Teaching** (G)
As teachers, we all want to help students, but sometimes our "helping" makes them more dependent on us and less independent as students. In our attempts to help we often are unaware that both teachers and students get into codependent roles. This group will confront the difference between empowering students and playing into the "helpless" role. Dysfunctional family patterns sometimes play out in the classroom.
15. **Collaborative Learning** (M,S)
The collective thoughts and experiences of students create a synergistic effect that exceeds what each student could accomplish alone. Group participants will share successful techniques for planning, conducting, and evaluating the collaborative learning process. Participants should bring some techniques that have worked for them and a literary work that they have used in the classroom.
16. **Making the History/English Connection: Medieval Asia** (M)
The focus will be on using literature and related language arts activities in implementing the new history/social science curriculum. The specific emphasis will be on Medieval China and Japan. Participants should bring books, materials and units they have found successful.
17. **Climbing to the Heights** (E,M,S)
Join this group to work collaboratively in developing divergent "silk purses" from mandated "sow's ears". Materials will be developed which stimulate thinking for all students. Various models of teaching will be used with different content areas. Bring your own books or materials to share and be prepared to dig in.
18. **Star Crosse Lovers in Bellini & Wagner** (G)
Two operas – *Tristan and Isolde* and *I Capuletti E I Montecchi* – will form the focus of this group. Participants will analyze the literary sources, the operas, ballets, and incidental music related to these stories. Copies of the libretti will be provided, but participants are urged to bring favorite video and tape versions for the weekend's immersion in music of star crossed lovers.
19. **The Novel Practicum** (M,S)
Love of literature is often the reason for our becoming English teachers, however students do not always share that fervor. When teaching a core novel we can usually engender enthusiasm for the first three chapters, but what about chapter 17 when students have lost interest in Huck, no longer care about Pip, and think Jay Gatsby is a real "tool"? Suggested reading: *Lord of the Flies, 1984, and To Kill a Mockingbird*.



27. **Chortles: Humorous Poetry for the Classroom**

(E,M,S)

Whether young readers are 6 or 16, humor can open the doors to appreciation of poetry. This group will explore poems and active learning techniques for making wordplay a regular feature of the classroom. Participants are urged to bring poems to share. Suggested reading: *Chortles*, and *The Rattlebag*.



28. **Orientalism**

(S)

Imaginative writers have taken the Orient, especially the Muslim Orient, as their subject in portraying the Other. Using Edward Said's essays, we will survey how authors from Dante to LaCarre projected their alternative world views on texts and assess the effect of these representations on popular culture. Selections will include readings from Twain, Shakespeare, Flaubert and T. E. Lawrence.

29. **Color as Image: A Poetry Writing Workshop**

(G)

For a weekend we will be poets drawing our inspirations from the colors of our natural and cultural environments as well as from the sharing that we will do with each other. Beginning and experienced poets alike are welcome.

30. **Shakespeare for the 21st Century**

(S)

Reality, character, poetry, myth and politics – an exploration of the natural affinity for interactive opportunities, collaborative learning, critical thinking, meaning-making relationships, and pure pleasure exist for high school students and us in the following texts: *As You Like It*; *Henry IV, Part I*; *Henry V*; *Macbeth* *The Tempest*. Participants should bring copies of the plays, read once or twice!

31. **Paradigms and Change**

(G)

How do we develop a vision of tomorrow's schools using today's paradigms? This section will address the role of schools in the 21st Century, reviewing recent critical reports on the state of our ability to adjust to new crises. It poses the question, "Are our ways of thinking about education limiting rather than enhancing our vision?"

Registration Form

Please make out a separate form for each person registering and mail in the same envelope with your check for the full amount (made out to **Curriculum Study Commission**) to John Cotter, 2882 Marineview Drive, San Leandro, CA 94577. Date _____

Name _____ M / F

Address _____

_____ Zip _____ P.M. Phone (____) _____

School/District _____

City _____ Zip _____ A.M. Phone (____) _____

Roommate (s) _____

Preferred Group: first _____ second _____ third _____

Registration Fee	CATE member	non-member	please fill in amount
Early registration (all fees paid by June 15)	\$45	\$ 80	
Regular registration	\$60	\$ 95	
Late registration (after July 31)	\$75	\$110	\$ _____

Accommodations (lodging and meals; prices per person)
(Please check desired accommodation)

Guest Inn, Tide Inn, Hilltop

2 - 4 to a room \$ 84

HISTORIC (some with shared bath)

Lodge, Scripps

Single \$116

2/3 to a room \$ 94

DELUXE (private bath)

Sea Galaxy, Surf and Sand

3/4 to a room \$ 96

East Woods, North Woods, View Crescent

2 to a room \$104

3 to a room \$ 96 \$ _____

Smoker Non-smoker Non-smoker roommate please

Vegetarian menu

Off-grounds Fee (Monterey residents) \$15 \$ _____

Total fees enclosed payable by check only \$ _____

(No school purchase orders are accepted)

Celebration: R&R? Yes No

First Asilomar Conference? Yes No

Interest in SCU Hayward Extension Credit Yes No

(2 quarter units at \$60)

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