Summer Writing Camps

We hosted more than 80 kids in grades 3 to 12 at our summer writing camps in Bethlehem, Concord, Hampstead, Laconia, Meredith, and Plymouth. That includes the nearly 40 young writers who attended our residential camps at Plymouth State University. If you missed the mini-profiles of our campers on our Facebook page, here’s a sampling:

“I really like writing. I want to be an author. Here, I meet other people who are into writing, and this gives me an excuse to write rather than get distracted.”

Tessa, 17, of Epsom on why she is glad she’s at NWPNH’s writing camp in Plymouth for high school students.

“Tessa, 17, of Epsom on why she is glad she’s at NWPNH’s writing camp in Plymouth for high school students.

Philosophical Framework

Recently, the Summer Institute staff and returning fellows developed a philosophical framework for NWPNH. We used it in the Summer Institute as part of the teaching explorations and referred to it at other times. We hope it represents the core values of the writing project. We think of it as a living document and would to know what you think.

Community – We bring our best selves to the Writing Project in order to create a positive culture. We assume the good intentions of others and avoid blaming. We understand that learning is a social process and that we need opportunities to collaborate with other learners. We understand that community is best when it respects the individuality and diversity of its members. We value our community as ongoing and lasting, including continuity beyond the summer institute. Continued on Page 2.

Annual Conference Preview

Invite a friend and register now for our Oct. 28 Annual Fall Conference at our website. Topics include helping reluctant writers, teaching digital literacy, oral storytelling in the writing process, creative ways to introduce new vocabulary, the latest in children’s literature, and bringing the philosophy of nonviolence in the classroom.
Writing Contests

Scholastic

NWPNH would like to expand the number of New Hampshire public middle and high schools participating this year in the Scholastic Art & Writing Contest. We need your help. We are providing all schools contest information; you can also go directly to our Scholastic entry page at www.artandwriting.org/Affiliate/NH001W Contest categories include short story, critical essay, memoir, flash fiction, poetry, and journalism. Entries can be submitted now until Jan. 15. We publish winning pieces in our Middle-High School Voices Anthology and will celebrate winners at a May ceremony at Plymouth State University.

One Pen

We will again host our “One Pen Can Change the World” writing contest where middle and high school students are invited to write essays on their ideas about justice. We are still finalizing the contest writing prompts and submission deadline, although entries will be due sometime in February. We will share those details soon via email and on our website, where you can read last year’s winning entries.

Summer Institute

We are recruiting now for the 2016 Summer Institute. Applications are due Feb. 15 for priority consideration and March 31 spots still open. Visit our website for more details. Here are a few of our 2015 fellows explaining what they took away from the Summer Institute.

“I will encourage the struggle of writing more. It is the great equalizer and unifying characteristic of writing because we all go through that at some point. When you feel that panic, it doesn't mean you can't write. It means you are going through the process.” Christina Annicelli, a high school English teacher at Parker Academy, an alternative high school in Concord.

“It’s changed my perspective about responding to student work. To not only grade student work but to respond to thoughts and ideas. I want to make a community (in my classroom) where students can share writing without judgment. Roman Santana teaches English to students in grades 5-13 in the Dominican Republic.

“’You never stop thinking for the entire five weeks you are here. You are constantly mentally engaged, which is exhausting and exhilarating at the same time.” Jess Scudder, a 7th grade English teacher at the middle school in Gilford.

Practice to Share

We are beginning a new feature called Practice to Share where NWPNH fellows will share a favorite or successful teaching practice with our NWPNH community.

We begin with a practice from Dominic DiBenedetto, a 2015 NWPNH fellow who teaches language arts in Keene. Dominic has adapted the NWPNH writing group response protocol for use with his 8th grade class. (Protocol worksheet on Page 3-4.) He reports that “I have never seen my students so engaged! I am getting chills from eavesdropping on their conversations!” hope you will adapt this to your classes and let us know how it goes. If you have a practice you would like to share, send a short write-up about it, with a headshot, to Annmarie Timmins, NWPNH graduate assistant, at atimmins44@gmail.com. We will be posting them on our webpage and including some in future newsletters.

Meg’s Alternate Vision of Education Reform

If you missed NWPNH Director Dr. Meg Petersen’s lecture at the Monadnock Summer Lyceum in August on education reform, you can listen by visiting www.monadnocklyceum.org. Meg presented an alternate vision of education reform, a vision of how education can be local, integrated, critical, and at the same time, joyful.

Like us on Facebook

www.plymouth.edu/outreach/nwpnh

Frameworks continued from Page 1

Inquiry: We support the inextricable connection between theory and practice. We believe it is important to have a repertoire of flexible practices anchored to a solid theoretical base, fueled by a commitment to equity and social justice, and guided by an inquiry stance. We respect teacher professionalism. At NWPNH, we value challenging assumptions. There is no single correct way to teach writing – everything is open for discussion and inquiry. We believe in setting rigorous, high expectations while also providing the support learners need to meet those expectations. We value thinking hard, because teaching is intellectual work.

Equity: We view literacy not only as a tool for learning, but as a way to claim agency, advocate for ideas, and actively participate in a democratic and pluralistic society. We believe that teachers need to understand their own background and perspective in order to better respect and honor the experiences of others. We believe in listening to all voices and honoring students, colleagues, and families as partners. We respect everyone’s expertise and perspective.
Phase 1:
Greet your partner, and thank him/her in advance for working with you today.

My partner's name is _______________________________________________________

Next, do some preparation for your conference on your own:

The point/main idea of my story is:
__________________________________________________________________________

A concern/worry about my writing is:
__________________________________________________________________________

I'd like to know:
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Phase 2:
Next, decide who will read first.
The first reader will share what (s)he wrote in Phase 1. Write your partner's concern below:

My partner's concern/worry about his/her writing is
__________________________________________________________________________

Then the first reader will read aloud his/her story.
As one partner reads aloud, the other partner listens and takes notes (questions or thoughts and ideas) below, based on the concern:

What I want my partner to know about his/her concern: (at least 2 ideas)
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Source: Dominic DiBenedetto
Phase 3:
Next, the listening partner shares his/her notes. The writer records his/her partner’s notes below:

What my partner wanted me to know about my concern: (at least 2 ideas)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Phase 4:
Next, the other writer shares. Repeat Phases 2 & 3.

Phase 5:
Thank your partner. Ask any clarifying questions if you have them. The last step is individually completed.

Reflect on the feedback you received; what will you do with the feedback? What does this make you think about your writing? Are you left wondering about anything? How do you feel about your concern now?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Source: Dominic DiBenedetto