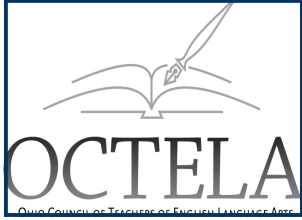


Ohio Voices

Fall 2010



The Ohio Council Teachers of English Language Arts

644 Overlook Drive, Columbus, OH 43214

Ruth McClain, Editor

School Bullying—The ABC's of Harassment!

Last week, as I drove to the Chillicothe campus of Ohio University where I teach, I tuned the car radio to NPR's program on bullying. The program highlighted President Obama's anti-bullying message—that we must "dispel this myth that bullying is just a normal rite of passage, that it's some inevitable part of growing up. It's not." Having taught for nearly fifty years, I was well aware of the whole bullying issue and how difficult it is to know precisely how widespread bullying is in any given school. It tends to be a hidden activity.

Spending the last ten years at the college level, I honestly had to admit that I'd not given much thought to the issue of bullying. At least, not until I was sitting in a conference later that day with one of my junior composition students. I'll call her Debbie.

As we chatted about Debbie's progress on her research paper, she revealed to me that she had taken two of her five children out of their elementary school and placed them in another school in another district. Her story was familiar. She had first gone to the administration but had not



gotten any satisfaction. Not wanting to tell her children that it was all right to literally fight back, she did what she felt she had to do—she put them in another school. She wanted to know if she had done the right thing. Her question haunted

me, and I didn't have an answer that I felt either supported or refuted her decision. The only thing I knew for sure was that the least effective strategy with bullies was leaving kids to deal with the problem themselves.

I recalled how much the bullying issue had been in the media during the past few weeks. I thought about Elizabeth Scheibel, the fifteen-year-old student from Massachusetts, who killed herself and the nine teens who had been charged in the "unrelenting bullying of the teenage girl from Ireland." I remembered seeing Joel Burns, the Fort Worth City Councilman who, himself, was a victim of bullying and who had made a courageous national appeal to gay, lesbian and transgender youth who are at risk for suicide. Burns became the face of courage, hope, and inspiration.

It seems that in American curricula, a growing emphasis on standardized test scores as the primary measure of "successful" schools has crowded

IN THIS ISSUE!

- School Bullying—Cover Story
- The Digital classroom, pages 4—5
- Ohio Educators Honored by NCTE, page 6
- Ohioana Library and NCTE News, page 7
- Bonnie Chambers Award, page 8
- ELA Awards and Call for Proposals, pages 9—10

The OCTELA Newsletter, member of The NCTE Information Exchange, is a publication of the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (OCTELA), founded in 1957 as the English Association of Ohio (EAO). OCTELA is the only statewide affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) representing teachers of English language arts, prekindergarten through college.

out what should be an essential criterion for well-educated students: a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others. Education and health experts say parents and teachers must step in. We cannot wait on a bullying victim to come forth. But legislation alone can't create kinder communities or teach children how to get along. That will take a much deeper rethinking of what schools should do for their students.

Recent School Bullying Statistics:

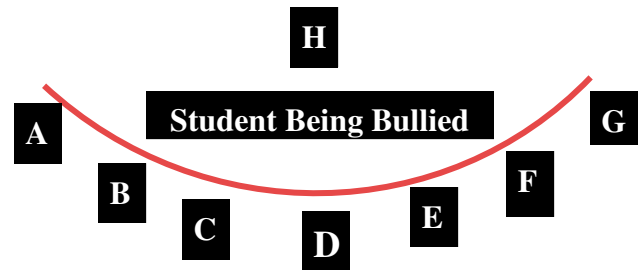
- 1 out of 4 kids is bullied.
- School bullying statistics surveys show that 77% of students are bullied mentally, verbally, and physically. Cyber bullying—Electronic Aggression via cell phone or internet—is rapidly increasing.
- 1 out of 5 kids on a school bullying statistics and cyber bullying statistics study admit to being a bully or doing some “Bullying.”
- Each day 160,000 students miss school for fear of being bullied.
- School bullying statistics reveal that 43% fear harassment in the bathroom at school.
- Daily, 100,000 students carry a gun to school.
- 28% of youths who carry weapons have witnessed violence at home.
- 282,000 students are physically attacked in secondary schools each month.
- More youth violence occurs on school grounds as opposed to on the way to school.
- Every 7 minutes a child is bullied.

(Bureau of Justice School Bullying Statistics and Cyber Bullying Statistics—School Crime and Safety)

Why Students Bully:

1. Students who bully have strong needs for power and (negative) dominance.
2. Students who bully find satisfaction in causing injury and suffering to other students.
3. Students who bully are often rewarded in some way for their behavior with material or psychological rewards.

Dan Olweus, creator of the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program*, describes students involved or witnessing a bullying situation as also having roles in the Bullying Circle:



- A. Students who start bullying and play a leader role.
- B. Followers—students who are positive toward bullying and take an active role but usually don't initiate it
- C. Supporters or Passive students who support bullying through laughter or calling attention to the situation
- D. Passive Supporters who like the bullying but do not show outward signs of support
- E. Disengaged Onlookers—students who do not get involved but who do not take a stand in either direction
- F. Possible Defenders—students who dislike bullying and think they should help but do nothing
- G. Defenders—students who dislike bullying and help or try to help the student being bullied

(Olweus, Dan. "Peer Harassment: A Critical Analysis and Some Important Issues," in *Peer Harassment in School*, ed. J. Juvonen and S. Graham. New York: Guilford Publications, 2001).

Breaking the Bully Cycle:

Every educator needs tools for recognizing and addressing bullying in the classroom as well as in other areas of the school setting. One such educator is **CJ Bott**. During her thirty years in the classroom, CJ was involved with several student groups including the school's drug prevention program and The Gay Straight Alliance—both of which dealt with “stereotyping, bullying, and harassment. She read research on bullying, adding fiction titles, from picture books to high school novels, that dealt with harassment—and the connection happened.” CJ began an on-going

bibliography of books that contain a focus on bullying and harassment. “When I retired after thirty years in teaching, a job I loved,” CJ writes, “I wrote *The Bully in the Book and in the Classroom*, with 200 titles of books, K-12, that I started calling “Bully Books.”

“Bully books reflect what is happening in the lives of our young people, and using a bully book to start the discussion about bullying is better than having to discipline after a bullying event,” she says. “Most people still believe the many myths about bullying.

- **The bully usually has a poor self-concept—MYTH. The Elitist Bully or Social Climber Bully spends so much time thinking about him/herself, there isn’t any time left to think about others.**
- **Bullying will make the targeted child stronger—MYTH. Bullying can destroy lives. The word **bullycide** (also **bullicide**), being bullied to the point where killing oneself is the only perceived escape, has been added to our language.**

“For far too long school staffs have been correctly accused of doing nothing. **THAT IS NO LONGER AN OPTION.**” CJ advises, “Start by reading a bully book with your class so that you can encourage a discussion before you have to discipline the problem. Keep a list of bully books available so when you hear a kid is having a problem, you can share that book. Literature has always been a bridge, and bully books can help targeted students, confused bystanders and even active bullies cross to a healthier place.”

Sample Bully Books for Middle and Secondary School:

- ***A Friendship for Today***, Patricia C. McKissack. Scholastic Press, 2007. Set in Missouri in 1954, twelve-year-old Rosemary will start sixth grade at an all white school. At her new school, Rosemary experiences prejudice. She realizes Grace Hamilton suffers it also as the other white kids call her “white trash.”
- ***Buddha Boy***, Kathe Koja. Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003. Justin doesn’t plan on befriending the weird new kid who calls himself Jensen, but after seeing how others at wealthy Edward



CJ Bott and her dog Sitka

Rucher High School treat this newcomer with a shaven head, kind smile, and gentle ways, Justin can’t go along with the crowd.

- ***A Perfect Snow***, Nora Martin. New York: Bloomsbury, 2002. Ben Campbell and his family live in a trailer in Logette, Montana, where his father has not been able to find a job, but he has found a church, the Guardians of the Identity, led by Lonnn, who believes our problems are almost always someone else's fault. Ben drops out after realizing the Guardians are a hate group, but his brother doesn't.
- ***Alt Ed***, Catherine Atkins. B. P. Putnam’s Sons/Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 2003. Ninth-grader Susan Calloway has gained weight since her mother died. At school though nearly invisible, she has managed to be assigned to a suspension alternative with five other students. One is Kale, the biggest bully in school and another is Brendan, perceived to be gay and Kale’s main target.

If you have any questions about bullying in your school or in the life of someone you know, or if you need a title dealing with a bullying issue, please contact CJ Bott at <http://www.bulliesinbooks.com/>

Congratulations to C.J. Bott
CJ has been named president-elect of The Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN) of the National Council of Teachers of English. Founded in November 1973, ALAN is made up of teachers, authors, librarians, publishers, teacher-educators and their students, and others who are particularly interested in the area of young adult literature.

Taking the Leap across the Digital Chasm

By Dawn Hogue

Reprinted from NCTE *Council Chronicle*—September 2010

The other day as I waited in line for the copy machine, I watched a colleague for about ten minutes as she cut, folded, arranged, and taped components on a piece of paper to create a new document, a small, local MLA guide to give to her sophomores working on a research project. It kind of reminded me of my college newspaper days before desktop publishing. What she did not know is that she'd also given me the perfect opening for this article. I love her and she's a good teacher, but she is also an example of a teacher whose feet are firmly planted on the other edge of the digital chasm that divides us.

What I would like her and others like her to know is something I have known for about ten years. What I want to tell them is that while it may seem like an overwhelming, fearful step to bridge that chasm, it actually is not. In fact, she's already wiggled her toes in the air.

How quick and easy, for example, it would have been for her to create a link on her website to any one of many excellent MLA guides on the Web instead of creating her own guide. Not only simple, but also effective and efficient pedagogy. Because she will have linked to a reputable site, it will be updated as MLA changes its guidelines. And in the time she saved, she could have made a link to an automatic bibliography maker, which she could show her students how to use. Our students' time is far better spent researching, assessing credibility of



Embracing the 21st century paradigm should inspire not fear but excitement. But we all must start with that first step—with the first few steps. And honestly, isn't this what we ask of our students all the time?

resources, and learning how to use all the new digital tools for researching instead of making them struggle with how a date should look in a particular citation. By using a citation maker, they will have confidence they've done it exactly right.

The change in thinking that allows us to think of digital resources, digital media, and digital tools instead of paper represents our leap across the chasm, and that first foot off the cliff truly is terrifying for too many teachers. What lies on the other side is unknown, and it is not just obvious things like “what is a wiki?,” or “how does one manage a blog?,” but more important questions like “how will this change my teaching or my role in the classroom?”

In his blog post Practical Theory, Ted Nellen describes what happened to him as he moved from a paper and pen classroom to a computer classroom: “Everything had changed from a teacher dominated room to a student dominated room. Differentiated instruction became the rule, not the exception. Lessons became projects not daily lessons. Students were much more responsible for their own progress and game plan. So much of what I learned about teaching in the previous 15 years had to be morphed into a new paradigm, a new pedagogy, a new way to teach based neither on theory nor practice alone, but instead on practical theory.”

Recently, I worked with our English department to create their own websites and wikis. They expressed sincere trepidation about what we were doing and what it would mean to them. I tried to explain that this change to computer based teaching and learning will seem odd and even time consuming in the beginning, but it will not always stay that way. I wanted them to know that the most significant change will be how they think about themselves as teachers.

Ted is exactly right. Everything changes. BUT the change is not to be feared. The change is very exciting and actually



freeing. Since I made the shift from paper and pen classroom to computer based classroom in 1991, what I've learned has made me a better teacher. I've learned that I hate hearing only my own voice and that the front of the room is no longer where I'm most effective. I've learned that when 28 students are typing it sounds like learning. I now realize that adding a simple web tool will change how students feel about their role in my classroom—they begin to see themselves as trusted and more autonomous. I can tell you that they are all more engaged. This leads me to expect more and more from them as they explore, discover, and decide. I've learned that teaching is not about what I know. Instead it's about how to help students figure out what they want to know. I've learned that my role has changed: I am now a facilitator, a resource, a nudger, a guide. What are the questions? Let's find the answers together, because learning is more about the process than the product.

And yet it's not so easy to convince those who are wary of change that a digital classroom is a good thing. Shifting from paper and pen to computer is truly a "hands-on" paradigm shift. The only way wary teachers will discover this is to use web tools in their classes and professional development, and to experience the change in perception that can come from a change in procedure.

Embracing the 21st century paradigm should inspire not fear but excitement. But we all must start with that first step—with the first few steps. And honestly, isn't this what we ask of our students all the time?

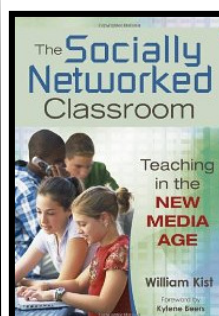
If we think it isn't a fearful journey for some students to begin reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, we're deluding ourselves. Literature is our home territory, not theirs. But we assess their prior knowledge and introduce them to the characters we



know they'll come to love if they just give them a chance, and we tell them, in many ways, to take a giant leap into the unknown: "It's safe. We promise." This is what I want my paper and pen colleagues to do—wiggle their toes and take a deep breath and leap. Come find me and hundreds of others on the other side. We hold out our hands in friendship. Take the leap. You will wonder what you were ever so afraid of.

Dawn Hogue teaches Cyber English 9 and AP English at Sheboygan Falls High School, Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. She manages a website, several blogs, Nings, and other online tools for sharing and learning. Find her at www.mshogue.com.

For Further Reading:



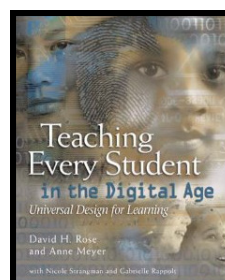
The Socially Networked Classroom
William Kist
Corwin Press, 2010

This book demonstrates how pioneering teachers have successfully integrated screen-based literacies into instruction and how you can harness students' social networking skills for learning.



New Literacies In Action: Teaching and Learning In Multiple Media
William Kist
Teachers College Press, 2004

What do classroom teachers do on a daily basis to incorporate the study and production of texts in multiple media? This book answers this and many other questions by examining the work of pioneers: teachers who have transformed their classrooms in an effort to broaden the literacy of their students.



Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age: Universal Design for Learning
David M. Rose and Anne Meyer
ASCD, 2002

Along with references to digital tools and links to online resources, the authors provide a set of templates to facilitate classroom implementation of UDL, share the experience of a school district already succeeding with UDL, and highlight plans for UDL implementation on a national scale.

Ohio Educators Honored by OCTELA and NCTE

Intellectual Freedom Award

Karen Ballash

Established in 1997, this award is given by state, regional, and provincial affiliates, who choose to participate, to honor individuals, groups, or institutions that merit recognition for advancing the cause of intellectual freedom; established by NCTE and SLATE—Support for the Learning and Teaching of English.

Karen Ballash, a journalism and American Literature teacher at Lakewood High School, values journalistic integrity and the freedom to read controversial literature in her classroom—a value for which she has changed jobs until she found a school board willing to support those freedoms. Not only has she taught her students to “get the story right,” she has also defended the school’s editorial policy and stood up for the First Amendment rights of colleagues.

In her own words, she “fights the good fight every day. And sometimes,” she says, “I’m not always sure I’m right as I try to balance freedom with responsibility. But my heart’s in the right place—right behind the First Amendment in the plastic ID holder I wear around my neck

NCTE Leadership Development Award

Travis Morris

This award, established by NCTE, is designed to nurture the development of new leaders within state/regional/provincial affiliates and NCTE. Any early career teacher with one to five years experience, who has never attended an NCTE Annual Convention, and who has demonstrated a capacity for professional leadership as well as a willingness to join and participate in the affiliate during the upcoming academic year is eligible.

Travis Morris teaches middle school in the

Granville Exempted Village District, Granville, Ohio. Travis, a sixth grade teacher at the intermediate school, is in his fifth year of teaching and currently serves as the president of the Granville Education Association. He was nominated by colleague **Debbie Thomas**.

High School Teacher of Excellence

Sarah Ressler



Each year, the Secondary Section of NCTE recognizes and celebrates high school classroom teachers who have demonstrated excellence in teaching.

Sarah Ressler Wright teaches at Rutherford B. Hayes High School in Delaware, Ohio. Sarah’s own students, Graham Bowling and

Caitlin Green, write, “Her thoughtful and creative projects reach out to all the different learning styles. Ms. Ressler connects what we are learning to popular media to instill enthusiasm in her students. She is a positive role model for her students...and she understands that students have hectic lives outside school. She is willing to be flexible and accommodate our needs by adjusting deadlines within reason.”

NCTE Affiliate Journal Award

Margaret Ford, Colleen Ruggieri, Susan Stevens

For the second time during their three-year tenure as editors of the *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts*, **Margaret Ford, Colleen Ruggieri,** and **Susan Stevens** have won the **NCTE Journal Award**. In addition to themed issues and an appeal to K—College teachers, the judges cited scholarly articles, interviews with noted authors, compelling essays, book reviews of YA literature, quality websites, and lively, engaging writing and attractive graphics as criteria for the first-place win.

Draper Receives Alice Louise Wood Memorial Ohioana Children's Literature Award



Ohioana Director Linda Hengst presents Sharon Draper with Children's Literature Award.

Sharon Draper is the author of more than thirty books for children and young adults. A National Teacher of the Year, Draper has been honored at the White House six times. In 2009 Draper received her Doctor of Laws Degree from Pepperdine University. Her literary recognition

began when, as a challenge from one of her students, she entered and won first prize in a literary contest. Since then, she has been the recipient of five **Coretta Scott King Literary Awards** and is a *New York Times* bestselling author. Draper has also won the **Marva Collins Education Excellence Award**.

Ohioana Robert Fox Award for Young Writers

The **Robert Fox Award for Young Writers** was established in 2007 to honor Robert Fox (1943-2003). Robert was a writer and poet who served as the Ohio Arts Council's first poet in the schools and then became the literary coordinator for the OAC. Three awards are given in two categories: prose and poetry. First place carries a \$250 award, second place, a \$150 award, and third place, a \$100 award.

DEADLINE: January 15, 2011

Criteria and Eligibility:
Open to Ohio students in grades 9-12.

For an Entry/Submission Form, go to
<http://ohioana.org/awards/rfoxentry.pdf>



NCTE's 100th Anniversary

Break out the confetti and the party hats: soon the National Council of Teachers of English will mark its Centennial, 100 years of leadership in literacy education. Founded in Chicago in December 1911, NCTE has grown from its original 60 or so members to its current strength of 54,000. And while 2011 is the birthday year, plans and activities are currently under way to mark the organization's vital place in literacy education in America and to foster more public awareness of issues in literacy education.

For more information, check out this website:
<http://www.ncte.org/centennial/info>

NCTE Dates & Sites:

NCTE Annual Convention:

- 2010: November 18—21 Orlando, FL
Teachers and Students Together: Living Literate Lives
- 2011: November 17—20 Chicago, IL
NCTE's 100th Anniversary Celebration

CCCC:

- 2011: April 6—9 Atlanta, GA
- 2012: March 21—24 St. Louis, MO
- 2013: March 13—16 Las Vegas, NV
- 2014: March 19—22 Indianapolis, IN

Whole Language Umbrella:

- 2010: July 8—11 Indianapolis, IN

For details on professional development, including Web seminars and conventions, see the NCTE homepage at
<http://www.ncte.org>

**OCTELA's Best and Brightest
Bonnie Chambers Award
for Exemplary Beginning Teaching
in Language Arts**



This biennial award valued at \$1,000 will be presented at the March 4-5, 2011, Spring Conference to a K-6 teacher in his or her 2nd, 3rd or 4th year of teaching. The award is designed to support Ohio's best and brightest new LA teachers.

Nomination Form: Nomination forms must be typed or printed and sent to the chair of the selection committee no later than November 30, 2010. Nominees will receive their application by Email or regular mail.

Nominee's Name: _____

Number of years of teaching experience by the end of the 2010-2011 school year ____

Name of School: _____

School Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Nominee's Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Current Position: _____

Nominator's Name: _____

Nominator's Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Nominator's Current Position: _____



**Send nominations to Susan Malaska—597 Brae Burn, Mansfield, OH 44907
Phone: (419) 756 0962 Email: vmalaska@neo.rr.com**

Deadline: November 30, 2010

OCTELA 2012

Outstanding English Language Arts Educator

Nomination Form

All nominees **MUST** be a member of OCTELA, and all nominators **MUST** either be members of OCTELA or be a building principal.

Nomination forms **MUST** be typed or printed and submitted to the chair of the Selection Committee by **November 1, 2011** **AWARDS GIVEN IN MARCH 2012**

Nominee's Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone : _____

Email Address: _____

Current Position: _____

Please write a brief statement telling why this individual is qualified to receive this award.
(Statement may be used if nominee is selected.)

Nominator: _____ Date: _____

Home Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Name of School or Institution: _____

Send nominations to Karen Tollafield ktoll82@yahoo.com
6908 Sutherland Court Mentor, OH 44060

Deadline: November 1, 2011



OCTELA 2011 Spring Conference: March 4—5, 2011
CALL FOR PROPOSALS:
Literacy: Leading the Way in the 21st Century
Featured Speakers: Jay Asher, William Kist, Shelley Pearsall

Session Title (please keep it short): _____

Description of content and purpose in 50 words or fewer:

NOTES:

- 1) If your proposal is accepted, both the title and the content may be edited to fit printing requirements.
- 2) When you submit your proposal, please include the Ohio content standards that your session addresses.
- 3) Please indicate if you are affiliated with an Ohio writing project. (yes) _____ (no) _____

Audience: Circle the grade level(s) for which this session would be most beneficial.

K-4

5-8

9-12

HS & College

Multiple Levels

****Audio Visual Needs**** (Please circle): **Overhead** **Screen** **Cart** **TV/VCR/DVD**

Internet (requires a wireless card)

**Make sure that the AV you request is essential to the successful presentation of your content. Due to the cost of A/V rental, OCTELA will NOT be able to provide computer/LCD projectors. If you need this for your presentation, you will be asked to bring your own equipment along with power strips and extension cords.*

Contact Presenter's Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Work phone: (_____) _____ **Home phone:** (_____) _____

Work Fax: (_____) _____ **Email:** _____

Other Presenter(s): _____

Name of School Building and District & Complete Address for Building:

If your proposal has one or two presenters, each will receive 1/4 off the conference rate. Additional presenters will be asked to pay the full conference fee.

PROPOSALS DUE NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15, 2011

E-Mail to: Karen Carney kcarney716@yahoo.com (Preferred)

or Mail: 672 Wyndcliff Circle, Austintown, OH 44515

Note: Proposals will be acknowledged by email. Please supply your email address.