



2016

Writing for an Authentic Audience – One Teacher-Writer's Narrative Journey


Danielle L. DeFauw

University of Michigan - Dearborn, daniellp@umich.edu

Melissa Smith

South Lyon Community Schools, msatterw@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/wte>

 Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Elementary Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

DeFauw, Danielle L. and Smith, Melissa (2016) "Writing for an Authentic Audience – One Teacher-Writer's Narrative Journey," *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*: Vol. 5: Iss. 1, Article 7.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/wte/vol5/iss1/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.





Writing for an Authentic Audience – One Teacher-Writer’s Narrative Journey

Danielle L. DeFauw

University of Michigan-Dearborn

Melissa Smith

South Lyon Community Schools (MI)

“Your audience is one single reader. I have found that sometimes it helps to pick out one person—a real person you know, or an imagined person—and write to that one” (Steinbeck, 1975, p. 182).

As a teacher-writer, I (Danielle, this article’s first author) chose to design the writing methodology course I teach to facilitate K-8 pre-service and in-service teacher-writers’ focus on using writer’s craft to impact a personal audience. I encouraged my students to write their narrative, poetry, and expository/informational selections (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) for someone they cared for outside of the university (Gerla, 2010) and achieve authentic publication. My utopian goal was for each student to experience the writing and publication process to fruition. One student experienced this goal – Melissa Smith (this article’s second author). The appendix includes her published narrative.

We co-write this article to tell her story. It is imperative her work not be shielded with a pseudonym as it is her learning experience that shaped the research design (Smagorinsky, 2008). Using narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Webster & Mertova, 2007), we explore the following question: How does writing for an authentic audience impact a teacher-writer’s identity, beliefs, attitude, and pedagogy? We argue Melissa’s story highlights how writing for a specific audience and achieving publication positively impacted her teacher-writer’s craft development and transfer of writing pedagogy to her elementary students. In this article, we detail (a) background of writing methodology courses, writing workshop framework, teacher-writers, and authentic audiences; (b) our narrative inquiry methodology; (c) Melissa’s critical event experience compared to other students’ like, other, and discrepant events;

(d) the literature's evidence of like and other events; and (e) K-8 writing methodology course recommendations.

Background

Writing Methodology Courses

Many professionals are committed to ensure all pre-service and in-service teachers are prepared to teach writing effectively (e.g., Baker, Brockman, Bush, & Richmond, 2007; Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1982; The Commission on Writing Teacher Education, 1998-2016; The National Council of Teachers of English, 2008). Even though many secondary licensure programs require secondary English pre-service and in-service teachers complete a writing methodology course (e.g., Street, 2003; Street & Stang, 2008; Tulley, 2013), for elementary licensure programs, writing methodology is often taught in reading courses (Collier, Scheld, Barnard, & Stallcup, 2015; Lenski et al., 2013; Stockinger, 2007). Spiker (2015) stated, "My course focus was predominantly on how to teach reading. Writing was a topic left for stolen time at the end of the semester" (p. 35). To fill the void in Spiker's reading methods courses, seven in-service teachers volunteered to meet informally with Spiker to develop their writing pedagogical repertoire.

Similarly, the dozen elementary in-service teachers involved in Dismuke's (2015) study never took a writing methodology course. Morgan and Pytash (2014) reviewed 31 studies published 1990 - 2010 (20 included elementary pre-service teachers) and discovered few literacy researchers explored pre-service teachers' writing methodology. Lenski and her team (2013) analyzed nine elementary licensure programs for pre-service teachers; per course syllabi, seven addressed the writing process and five focused on workshop approaches (albeit reading and writing were not delineated). Two programs identified signature aspects, one on writing process due to overall university mission and context, and one on the workshop approach per faculty beliefs. Likely, more writing methodology courses designed for elementary pre-service and in-service teachers are offered than the literature currently details (McCurrie, Doherty-McDowell, Richmond, McDermott, & Olsen, 2015); however, empirical research is still needed concerning how elementary pre-service teachers are taught to teach writing well. Utilizing the writing workshop framework is one way teachers are taught to provide effective writing instruction (e.g., Morgan, 2010; Tulley, 2013; Writing Study Group of NCTE Executive Committee, 2004).

Writing Workshop Framework

To support individual writers through their recursive writing process approach (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) to communicate with varied audiences (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Hayes, 1996/2000), many teachers implement the writing workshop framework. This framework provides a structure for teaching the writing process through mini lessons, independent writing time, conferencing, and sharing (Atwell, 1998; Graves, 1983). Some critiques of the process approach and writing workshop framework include (a) teachers not focusing on teaching specific writing skills (e.g., Boscolo, 2008; Delpit, 1988), (b) K-12 students required to write personal narratives versus expository writing (e.g., Stotsky, 1995), and (c) teachers' conversion to

the writing process and framework without critical attention to balancing student-center and teacher-centered writing instruction (e.g., VanderStaay, 2002). Acknowledging these critiques, the National Writing Project (2016) utilizes writer's workshop as one way to support in-service teachers' writing development for personal and professional purposes as teacher-writers (e.g., Stockinger, 2007; Whitney, 2009; Whyte, Lazarte, Thompson, Ellis, Muse, & Talbot, 2007).

Teacher-Writers

Teacher-writers choose to write for personal and professional reasons to model writing for their students and engage with the classroom's writing community (Cremin & Myhill, 2012). Some teachers who actively write outside of class do not consider themselves teacher-writers (e.g., Robbins, 1996). Other teachers teach writing effectively through modeling student tasks without using personal writing (Brooks, 2007). Some teachers model with personal writing, but do not identify themselves as teacher-writers (DeFauw, 2016a). Yet, teachers who choose to identify themselves as teacher-writers learn through their personal writing experiences so they may transfer their understanding of the writing process and writing workshop components to meet their students' needs (Locke, 2015; Writing Study Group of NCTE Executive Committee, 2004). Teacher-writers, like all writers, need to use the writing process to communicate socially for authentic purposes with varied audiences (Wiggins, 2009).

Authentic Audiences

Teacher-writers need authentic audiences with whom they wish to communicate a real message (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1989/2013/2015; National Council of Teachers of English, 2008; Writing Study Group of the NCTE Executive Committee, 2004). The first authentic audience is the writer (Murray, 1982) followed by the readers of the writer's text (Ede & Lunsford, 1984), which the writer may fictionalize (Ong, 1975). As quoted in the introduction, Steinbeck (1975) wrote for a fictionalized or actual person to support his writing process. The audience of any piece includes the writer and present or future readers (Ede & Lunsford, 1984). Writers do not have to write to a general audience (Park, 1982); "effective writers have a concrete sense of their audience" (Barnard, 2014, p. 121).

When writers care about their audience they strive to influence their audience with their message (Wiggins, 2009). Lindblom (2015) argued writers need authentic writing opportunities to understand how to communicate effectively with a real audience, ideally an audience each writer chooses: "When a writer makes his or her own decisions about the writing, that gives the writer real *authority*. That word itself shows how important this is: author-ity" (n.p.). In this study, Melissa experienced the writing workshop framework as she wrote a narrative for her father and achieved publication for a national audience.

Methodology

Narrative Inquiry

Danielle analyzed Melissa's and three of her peers' data and realized Melissa's experience stood apart from her peers' experiences due to the ultimate publication. Narrative inquiry provided Danielle a research methodology (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Thomas, 2012) that "tied to the study's motivating theory in terms of data collection, reduction, and analysis" (Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 395). Clandinin (2013) stated, "Narrative inquiry is an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honoring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding" (p. 17). Simply put, "narrative inquiry investigates what happened, the significance or meaning of that, and how it is told or shared" (Thomas, 2012, p. 210); thus, Danielle used narrative inquiry to explore "features of [Melissa's] professional growth" as a teacher-writer (Gibson, 2003, p. 37), because Melissa's experience represented the course's utopian goal – teacher-writers achieve publication.

Although narrative inquiry often involves layering of narratives from multiple perspectives (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011), this article highlights a single participant's experience as a critical-case sample (Patton, 2015) or a critical case (Webster & Mertova, 2007), similar to other researchers' narrative inquiry methodology (Aharonian, 2008; Conway & Christensen, 2006; Gibson, 2003). Critical incidents often highlight positive experiences deemed critical "because of their impact and profound effect on whoever experiences such an event. They often bring about radical change in the person. These events are unplanned, unanticipated and uncontrolled" (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 77). Achieving publication created two types of critical events for Melissa: intrinsic and personal (Measor, 1985). Intrinsically, the publication strengthened her identity as a teacher-writer. Because of "overt instruction through...[the] methods course...tailored to develop or strengthen the writing identity of students" (Collier et al., 2015, p. 103), Melissa's beliefs and attitude about writing changed positively. Personally, she connected deeper with her father due to the publication's content. Patton (2015) stated, "Critical cases are those that can make a point quite dramatically or are, for some reason, particularly important in the scheme of things. A clue to the existence of a critical case is a statement to the effect that 'if it happens there, it will happen anywhere'" (p. 276).

Per narrative inquiry design, the following two sections narrate key story grammar (context and character) pertinent to this study (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

Context: Danielle's Story

As a second-year assistant professor, a former third-grade teacher for eight years, and a former literacy specialist for three years, I designed the Winter 2013 writing methodology course with lofty goals. (I have since revised the course expectations to make the newly required Fall 2016 course more manageable). The course description stated, "This course provides a theoretical foundation for writing instruction for children in grades K-8. Emphasis is placed on modeling, instructional strategies, and assessment for supporting student writers that teachers use to facilitate children's development of written language. Focus will be on the development of children's writing abilities and the ways in which this development is fostered throughout the primary, intermediate, and middle grades."

Originally, I envisioned the course focused on writing pedagogy following Street's and Stang's (2008) graduate course example for in-service secondary teachers. I understood first developing teacher-writers' voices was instrumental to their success as teacher-writers; albeit, "an 'authentic voice' is as elusive as a 'natural voice'" (Barnard, 2014, p. 68). Per the first few course objectives, I wanted students to (a) find, rediscover, or fine-tune their teacher-writer voices; (b) use the writing workshop framework; (c) "understand professional writing as a recursive, connected, and interactive process that includes prewriting, writing, rewriting, revising, and editing" (Street & Stang, 2008, p. 45); and (d) support the notion that "revision is at the heart of writing well" (Street & Stang, 2008, p. 43). Finally, I wanted my students to "identify with three important principles that underlie the National Writing Project...[mainly] teachers of writing should (a) write themselves..., (b) use a broad range of teaching strategies to teach writing..., and (c) encourage students to write often" (Street & Stang, 2008, p. 46).

During the course's first half, each 155-minute session included writing workshop for one hour (5-10 minutes modeled focus/mini lesson, 40 to 45 minutes independent writing and conferencing, and 5 to 15 minutes sharing) and traditional lecture with small group tasks. Students wrote within three genres (narrative, poetry, expository/informational) and prepared one selection for an authentic publication opportunity (e.g., university publications, contests, educational journals, magazines, newspapers, and electronic outlets). During the course's second half, each session included tutoring third-grade children who came to the university with their families for one hour and 15 minutes. While students tutored the third-grade children following a writing workshop framework, I provided the families literacy support designed to facilitate home-school connections (DeFauw, 2016b). For the last hour, student partnerships designed a four-week unit of study (Morgan, 2010) for a specified nonfiction genre and grade level. The course ended with an e-portfolio reflection.

Character: Melissa's Story

Because I was not enrolled in a Master's program, I signed up to take the undergraduate course, EXPS 498, Exploring Writing with Children and Adolescents as a part of a Professional Educator Certificate program of study to obtain nine credits in literacy needed to renew for three years my provisional teaching certificate set to expire after six years. When I first signed up, I wasn't sure what to expect. I just hoped I would learn a little more about teaching writing. Prior to taking the course, I had never been taught, explicitly, how to teach writing. I always questioned my own writing abilities and the ability to teach others about writing.

Prior to taking the course, I substitute taught and worked as a Title I paraprofessional. While taking the course, I was working as a Title I Teacher Interventionist. Reading and writing were two areas in which I provided a lot of support for third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students during the school day and after-school tutoring. Although I was not the one explicitly teaching their writing lessons, I was the one to reiterate the lessons and provide support. My role was to support students in learning writing skills, whether that meant learning how to brainstorm ideas, write in complete sentences, add more details, organize writing, edit, or proofread.

I wanted to learn techniques to avoid having to feed the struggling writers the words to write. I felt a lot of times the kids did have a hard time coming up with their own details so I questioned them a lot to try to get them thinking about their five senses or the 5 W (who, what, where, when, why) questions. I felt like that helped a lot, but some kids still struggled with coming up with ideas.

Even now, in my current position of working as a special education para-educator in a cognitively impaired classroom, I still find my role as one to support students in their writing skills. Although the students vary greatly in their academic functioning, there are many writing skills these students are learning to use. For example, we have days in our classroom when students get to freewrite in their journals, and we just encourage them to write as much as they can. The classroom teacher has always required writing and believes it is important for students to write often. Then the next day, they have to edit and add more details to the previous day's writing piece. Students are then able to share their edited piece with the class. We share student writing almost every day. After sharing, students use an anchor chart on the wall to help them formulate questions and comments. I can't tell you how many times I have heard other students comment, "I liked your details!" or "I have a connection to your writing." It is awesome hearing this feedback and seeing the students grow in their writing skills.

Data Sources

Because the course's primary focus pertained to teacher-writers' voice development, data sources included required course assignments: writer's notebook, formative assessments, written selections (narrative, poetry, expository/informational), publishing opportunity, group unit of study, field note journal, and final reflection. Pre- and post-surveys were collected (Gallavan, Bowles, & Young, 2007). To understand Melissa's experiences, Danielle conducted pre- and post-phenomenological interviews (Seidman, 2013) with 10 semi-structured questions adapted from Street (2003). One study limitation is Melissa may have felt required to participate in the pre-interview. Final grades were released before collecting other data sources.

Data Reduction and Analysis

First, Danielle analyzed the four research participants' data sources using descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2013) and the constant comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to identify natural themes. From this data set, Melissa's publication experience warranted further analysis as a critical event. To demonstrate verisimilitude for the critical event identified (Webster & Mertova, 2007), Table 1 "tabulates the whole data set in order to demonstrate the representativeness of what is presented as illustrative" (Smagorinsky, 2008, p. 397). Inter-rater reliability was conducted sharing 15% of the entire data set with an outside researcher unconnected to the study (Smagorinsky, 2008); coding matched 94%.

Aside from the first three categories listed in Table 1, most remaining categories were evident in participants' lesson plans (field notes and unit of study) and formative assessments.

Table 1
Original Data Coding

Category	Subcategories
Audience (107)	Purpose (46), Publication (27), Sharing (20), Feedback (14)
Personal Writing (89)	Emotion (57), Purpose (23), Creativity (6), Journaling (3)
Teacher as Model (53)	Modeling (48), Teacher-Writer (5)
Writing Workshop (52)	Focus Lessons (36), Conferences (10), Anchor Charts (6)
Mentor Texts (60)	None
Details (49)	Dialogue (21), Voice (13), Five-Paragraph Essay (12), Organization (3)
Genres (40)	Narrative (27), Nonfiction (9), Poetry (4)
Writing Process (38)	Drafting (18), Editing (11), Revision (9)
Idea Development (35)	Freewriting (21), Graphic Organizers (8), Brainstorming (6)
Topic Choice (30)	Motivation (22), Authenticity (8)

Second, Danielle reread Melissa’s assignments and interview transcripts; the publication experience remained paramount. Thus, narrative inquiry provided a research process (Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) to identify Melissa’s recursive narrative writing experience for an authentic audience and publication as the critical event (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Third, using the critical event approach, Danielle re-analyzed the whole data set for like events and other events following Webster’s and Mertova’s (2007) definitions:

An event is classified as a like event if it repeats the context, method and resources used in the critical event but with different people. Like events occur at the same level as the critical event and, because the context is like the critical event, they are labeled “like events”...Other anecdotal and incidental information is called “other events” and may reveal the same issues. (p. 78)

For member checking, Danielle shared these events with Melissa. Additionally, the research’s validity is strengthened through Melissa’s choice to collaborate as a co-author, because her experience holds “personal meaning...[albeit] not...an observable, measurable truth” (Thomas, 2012, p. 216). Thomas (2012) stated, “Narratives can and should, at times, stand alone. Indeed, some are significant testimony in their own right and...often defy simple narration and interpretation...all narratives have already undergone a form of analysis in the telling process. No act of telling is devoid of interpretation” (p. 213). Webster and Mertova (2007) argued, “Narrative is an event-driven tool...[and, as such] events are critical parts of people’s lives, [and] using them as a main focus for research provides a valuable and insightful tool for getting at the core of what is important in that research” (p. 71). Thus, the following section highlights findings pertinent to Melissa’s narrative writing experience.

Findings

Per the findings detailed in this section, we argue Melissa's experience writing her narrative for her father and achieving publication positively impacted her self-perception as a teacher-writer. Believing in her ability to write, Melissa grew eager to share her writing with her students to motivate them to write. We detail Melissa's narrative writing experience as the critical event with like-, other-, and discrepant-event examples.

Melissa's Narrative Writing Experience

During the first interview conducted two weeks into the course due to study approval delays, Melissa described a positive writing experience, "I feel like the narrative that I just did for this course is a very positive experience. It brought back a lot of memories...I felt like I was opening a little bit with myself and being a little bit more free with my writing. And I'm pretty proud of the end result....I'm going to share it with my dad....I'll probably just read it to him when I visit him one day. He's a big part of it....I think he might cry...He doesn't cry that often, but when something really gets to him, he will." Melissa felt she utilized writer's craft in her narrative. She stated, "I incorporate dialogue into it so it makes you feel like you're kind of there...letting my voice come through...and bringing back just my life and my childhood."

From the beginning of the course, Melissa's experiences with her dad and the beagle pups were central in her writing. For the first session's task, she created a map of her childhood neighborhood and recorded memory snippets (Frank, 2003). Next to the old hickory tree, she included the beagle pups playing near her dad's barn. Melissa also detailed the beagle pups in her authority list (Atwell, 1998) and various freewrites. Melissa chose to write the narrative for her primary audience, her dad, to honor her dad's love for his hobby of "running dogs."

In her final reflection, Melissa wrote, "Growing up with beagle pups was a huge part of my childhood, so it automatically stood out to me as something to write about. Moose was that one pup that left a special place in my heart, so he was incorporated into the story, *More Than Just Puppy Love*. If it wasn't for my dad and his hobby of 'beagling and running dogs,' I wouldn't have experienced these great childhood memories.... [M]y husband...was the one that thought of *Hounds and Hunting* magazine. I immediately thought it was such a great idea! How great would that be for my dad to read it and be surprised!"

By the post interview, Melissa had submitted her narrative to *Hounds and Hunting*. She stated, "I haven't heard anything yet, but I'm hoping to but I would just call that a successful piece because it went through the whole writing process of it started out as an idea on my authority list and then it developed into a rough draft, went through revisions and editing and then finally to a published piece, so it's one that I'm proud of."

On July 7, 2013, Melissa sent Danielle the following email message:

I finally heard back from *Hounds and Hunting* magazine and my piece was published in their July issue! I was so excited when I got the email saying that it would be published, and even more excited to receive a copy of the issue in the mail!

I can't wait for my dad to read it! He still has no idea! Unfortunately, I probably won't be there to see him read it in person, but I'm sure he'll be surprised and want to let all his "beagle" friends know.

I can't thank you enough for all your help and guidance in producing this piece. Again, never would I have dreamed of ever having something published...and it happened! I will forever cherish this issue of *Hounds and Hunting* magazine!

While writing this article, Melissa described the experience when her dad discovered her publication: "The word 'surprised' comes to mind when I think back to the time that my dad learned of the piece. He was definitely surprised to learn that his daughter had written a piece, and had gotten it published in his favorite beagle magazine that he has been receiving and reading cover to cover for over 25 years. Although I was not with him when he first learned of the piece, it was his few simple words in that phone call, 'Wow! That was great! Thank you!' that let me know how much he appreciated it.

The first time I saw my dad after he read the piece, I overheard him talking on the phone. The published piece had definitely become a hot topic with his 'beagle buddies.' I can still recall him saying, 'Turn to page 43 in the new *Hounds and Hunting*...my daughter wrote that story!'

When my two sisters first read the published piece, we were gathered in my parents' living room. As they read, they both laughed and cried at the great memories. And although my dad would never want us to see him cry, we all like to think he shed a few tears."

Critical Event

Danielle identified Melissa's narrative experience the critical event because her experience accomplished the course's ultimate goal – teacher-writers achieve publication. Also, Melissa's original goal in the course was publication, per her following pre-interview statement when Danielle asked her how she would teach writing, "Providing good models and good examples for my students and letting them see like what it takes to get to an end result. That it's not just one day and you're done. That it takes time to produce that. And showing them that a published piece can mean a lot to someone and holds special value. Showing that it's gone through the whole writer's process." Thus, Melissa's hopeful goal, even before she discovered the piece she would write, was publication for an authentic audience.

To argue this event is a critical event, Table 2 highlights like and other events (Webster & Mertova, 2007) and discrepant events (Smagorinsky, 2008).

Table 2

Like, Other, & Discrepant Events from Data Set				
Event	Author	Audience	Selection Topic	Task Context
Like	Jennifer*	Parents and son	Self-reflective piece as a young mother	Previous college experience
	Elizabeth*	Former professor's students; required reading for course	Journals detailing spiritual development	Previous college experience
Other	Ali*	Girlfriend's son	Children's book	F'14
	Melissa	Unidentified	Poem about running a race	W'13
	Melissa		How-to piece for caring for dogs	W'13
	Elizabeth*		Narrative of emergency room	W'13
	Jennifer*		Narrative of a teacher's influence	W'13
Discrepant	Lisa*	Desired, but did not seek publication	Two-voiced poem for son & students	
			How-to piece for parenting	
	Elizabeth*	Wrote teaching tip for <i>The Reading Teacher</i> ; did not revise nor submit	Poem, narrative, expository piece for music and literacy	W'13

*Pseudonym

Discussion

Writers remember their first publication experience. Collier and her team (2015) stated, "As is known, a first question asked of any individual who identifies as a writer is 'What have you published?'" (p. 97). When asked this question, Melissa responds, "I published a story titled *More Than Just Puppy Love* in my dad's favorite magazine, *Hounds and Hunting*." Publication experiences like Melissa's are memorable.

Because Melissa's publication experience stood out to Danielle as a critical-incident (Webster & Mertova, 2007), Danielle chose to use narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) to detail Melissa's development as a teacher-writer. Writing the narrative for an authentic audience, her father, and then achieving publication for a national audience positively impacted Melissa's teacher-writer identity, beliefs, attitude, and pedagogy.

As the course's ultimate goal, Danielle hoped students would publish for wide, authentic audiences. Publication expands the authenticity spectrum from completing a final draft to share with the teacher to submitting to a national publication outlet (Kohnen, 2013). In her final reflection, Melissa stated, "I never imagined I would try to

submit a writing piece to get published. Nonetheless, that is exactly what has happened! I couldn't be more excited at the thought of my writing getting published in a magazine. I am holding out hope that my piece will get published in *Hounds and Hunting* magazine, and that my dad will be pleasantly surprised as he reads that edition of the magazine one day!" This quote demonstrates submitting the writing piece for publication impacted her positively. A publication acceptance is the reward, but the publication process begins with taking a courageous step to submit a piece.

To deem Melissa's publication experience a critical event, Danielle explored like and other events to demonstrate verisimilitude (Webster & Mertova, 2007). Other researchers have explored pre-service or in-service teachers' experiences in university literacy courses designed to support their teacher-writer identity through required writing tasks on personal topics and purposes for authentic audiences (e.g., Morgan, 2010; Stockinger, 2007; Street, 2003; Street & Stang, 2008). Like events are evident in research with the audience specifically identified; the audience extends beyond the course context.

Research Literature's Like and Other Events

A like event is shared in Whitney, Hicks, Zuidema, Fredricksen, and Yagelski (2014) where the authors mentioned Whitney's and Zuidema's "university courses for teachers include explicit attention to professional writing, with articles for publication as final products" (p. 179). Similarly, Street and Stang (2008) required in-service secondary teachers enrolled in their graduate course to submit professional writing products, either an article or a grant proposal. Also, Morgan (2010) found pre-service teachers remembered key writing experiences when the task created an authentic product, especially one they could gift to friends or family.

Kelley (2009) required pre-service teachers to write a children's book. Kelley highlighted two teachers who expanded the writing task beyond receiving a grade and wrote for personal audiences and purposes; one wrote the children's book for her daughters to explain their father's suicide, and another wrote a first-lost-tooth tale to honor her niece's milestone. Kelley revised the children's book writing assignment; she required students to write for the children in the field placement. However, the teachers did not have free audience choice.

Collier and her team's (2015) study demonstrated a mixture of like and other events. They highlighted writing products elementary pre-service teachers personally chose to write about important topics concerning life's challenges. The products included "poetry books, expository student teaching survival guides, persuasive essays, [and] memoirs....For example, one student wrote about a close aunt who had died from cancer, another wrote a fashion book for full-figured women, and another created her own modern-day fairy tale" (Collier et al., 2015, p. 99). However, the audience was unclear. If pre-service teachers wrote these writing products for families or other student teachers, then the events are like events. If pre-service teachers completed these tasks only to meet course requirements and envisioned their audience as their peers or professor, then the events are other events.

Gerla (2010) required secondary pre-service teachers to write one piece for an anthology publication shared with course participants – an other event since the audience did not expand beyond the writers' peers and professor. Martin and Dismuke (2015)

required elementary pre-service teachers to complete five selections (two poems, memoir, interview, and travel brochure) to be used as mentor texts for future students. Zimmerman, Morgan, and Kidder-Brown (2014) required early childhood pre-service teachers to create self-published books filled with poems, memoirs, and a personally chosen fiction genre shared with their peers. Because the topics were personally chosen and important for all of these students, it is possible the pre-service teachers shared their pieces with others outside of the course. As these examples demonstrate, other events do not specify an authentic audience, although the tasks may provide authentic purpose.

Authentic Audience

Writers write to communicate with authentic audiences, paramount in any authentic writing task. Authentic writing tasks engage students in authentic purpose and authentic text real writers experience outside of a school context (Duke, Purcell-Gates, Hall, & Tower, 2006; Wiggins, 2009). “To write without an audience in mind is to miss an important element of any writing situation” (Gaillet & Eble, 2016, p. 239). During the first interview, Melissa stated, “You’d much rather be writing about something that you know more about or for someone you care more about rather than just being assigned something.”

Teacher-writers choose their audience. Kelley (2009) redesigned the children’s book assignment to specify an audience - the children in the field placement. On the contrary, Danielle stressed the teacher-writers write first for someone they cared for outside of the course. Thus, Melissa wrote with her father as her primary audience to receive the narrative assignment grade. Then, to meet another course requirement to submit one piece (narrative, poetry, expository/informational) for publication, per her father’s interests, she revised the piece for *Hounds and Hunting* readers, a magazine in publication since 1903.

Teacher-writers need to venture into the publication process. Adhering to their audience’s expectations allows them to write for an authentic purpose (Wiggins, 2009). During the post interview Melissa stated, “An excellent piece of writing is one that goes through the full writing process. So, kind of like my narrative piece just brainstorming an idea, developing it into a rough draft, revising, editing, and then becoming a final published piece, and I would also say one that’s organized...because that’s what sticks in my mind.” In her reflection she stated, “The project from this course that means the most to me is my narrative writing piece titled, *More Than Just Puppy Love*. This writing is a great example of a piece that has evolved through the stages of the writing process. The piece started out as an idea on my authority list, developed into a rough draft, went through many revisions and the editing process, to a final piece that I am hoping to get published. Students need experience with all of these stages of the writing process, and I am excited to have a writing piece to share with them that has gone through the full process.” Thus, authentic writing experiences impact teacher-writers and their future students as teacher-writers carry their experiences into their pedagogical practices.

Teacher-Writer Identity & Pedagogy

Melissa developed her teacher-writer identity, abilities and pedagogical practices through completing the writing methodology course. During the post interview, Danielle asked Melissa Street's (2003) question, "As you think about your professional life as an educator, what sorts of written contributions do you see yourself making...?" (p. 50). Melissa stated, "I would say just working on writing more pieces for myself and taking them through that full writing process and then having them as examples to share with students one day." Also, during the post-interview, Danielle asked Melissa, "As you think about yourself working with students and helping them to develop as writers, what do you see as your strengths?" Melissa stated, "I would say helping them to organize their writing in a structured manner, and I would hope that I would learn from kids even more of letting my voice come through and using creativity [by] just seeing their writing. So learning from each other...exposing them to the writer's workshop and encouraging them to be writers...letting them see myself as a teacher of writing and showing them that it's important and that's how you get better and develop your skills."

Addressing her teacher-writer identity during the post interview, Melissa stated, "I'm not an exceptional writer. I'm not a poor writer. I'm just average, but I feel like after taking this class, I've strengthened my writing abilities just from all the different things that we've done and being exposed to you modeling writing and taking part in the tutoring sessions and doing writing at home on my own. So, I feel like I've developed my writing skills better than what they were...by using the writer's notebook and making myself write...I've always been very structured...so it's helped me...become a little bit more flexible."

Melissa often felt tentative as a teacher-writer. She primarily used graphic organizers, cookie-cutter writing supports (i.e., the five-paragraph essay), to craft her work. In her final reflection, Melissa stated, "My narrative writing piece has helped build my confidence in my own writing abilities. I never imagined I would be capable of producing a well-written piece such as this. The piece allowed me to extend beyond my structured frame of mind...[and] reach beyond the limits of an essay format with an introduction, body, and conclusion. I have always felt that one of the hardest parts of writing for myself is...letting my voice shine through...I was able to take a whole summer's worth of memories and capture them in this one piece."

Through her course experience, Melissa grew as a teacher-writer. She learned important writing pedagogy to implement with her students. For example, she planned to share her own writing with her students as mentor texts. In her final reflection, Melissa stated, "Although it was difficult at times to make revisions, I certainly feel that those revisions helped to make [my narrative] into such a well-written piece. I'm sure many students struggle with the idea of revising their writing. Now I can share with them how I felt the same way with this piece, but realized those revisions are what helped to make it into a publishable piece." Also, Melissa transferred her teacher-writer experiences to curriculum she designed with a peer, a four-week how to / explanatory unit of study for third-grade students (Morgan, 2010). Also, per Table 3, Melissa highlighted pedagogical methods she learned in two formative assessments.

Table 3
Melissa's Formative Assessments

Task	Date	Data
Personal Letter	Feb. 2013	Dear Melissa: You have learned...the importance of including a writer's workshop...[which] does not seem impossible like you once thought. You have also become aware of how important it is to include mentor texts to teach students how to become better writers. Never did you think to use great reading to teach great writing! Also, you have seen how almost any writing issue can be made into a focus lesson....Additionally, you have been reading about how important revision is to the writing process. Revision is something that takes days, not just five minutes. You need to model and show your students how a good writer revises.
Top-Ten List	Mar. 2013	(1) The format of writer's workshop; (2) Teaching tips for handwriting; (3) What a mini lesson looks like; (4) Using mentor texts; (5) Benefits of teachers writing alongside students; (6) Creating anchor charts with students to display in the classroom; (7) We are teaching the writer, not the writing; (8) Teaching points from mentor texts (e.g., thoughtshots, dialogue); (9) Using authority lists so students have ideas for writing topics; (10) Using conferences with students to guide planning for mini lessons.

Within her current in-service teaching position as a special education para-educator for third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students with cognitive impairments, Melissa has transferred instruction experienced in the writing methodology course, supporting her students' writing development through freewriting, revision, editing, sharing, and feedback. Although she still supports students' organizational skills, especially with graphic organizers (e.g., the 5 W's), the experience writing her narrative helped her write without the five-paragraph structure; thus, she does not feel as reliant on the five-paragraph essay format to support her students' writing.

A Need for Writing Methodology Courses

Melissa had never been taught how to teach writing explicitly. On her pre-survey (Gallavan et al., 2007) she stated, "Teachers are able to teach writing to their students, but they may not feel like they are the most prepared for it....Writing can seem like such a dueling task to many teachers who are not comfortable with it, so they feel like they cannot provide as much support and guidance in writing to all students as they would like." On her post-survey she stated, "Many teachers...do not have enough training in how to teach writing...or do not write enough for themselves." In her final reflection, Melissa stated, "The course, 'Exploring Writing with Children and Adolescents,' is the only education class that I have taken that has really explored the topic of teaching writing. I feel I learned so much about writing in such a short amount of time. I have a

better understanding of what a writing workshop should look like and have gained some confidence in my own writing abilities.” Melissa’s previous lack of training in writing methodology is not unique, especially for elementary pre-service and in-service teachers.

Elementary in-service teachers in Dismuke’s study (2015) “called for the addition of a dedicated writing methods course for certification” (p. 126), because they did not feel prepared to teach writing even after completing their course and practicum experiences. Dismuke (2015) stated, “Despite exposure to writing methods in their reading-focused literacy courses and years of experience in the classroom, these teachers did not feel they had learned to teach writing” (p. 126). Although research has explored in-service teachers’ professional development experiences through university courses (e.g., Street and Stang, 2008) and the National Writing Project (e.g., Whitney, 2009; Whyte et al., 2007), little research has been conducted for elementary pre-service teachers (Martin & Dismuke, 2015). Morgan and Pytash (2014) found only 31 studies published from 1990 to 2010 focused on pre-service teachers’ writing instruction preparation.

Writing methods courses need to be required for undergraduate and graduate programs to meet pre-service and in-service elementary teachers’ needs to effectively teach students to write (Dismuke, 2015; Martin & Dismuke, 2015; The National Commission on Writing in America’s Schools and Colleges, 2003). All teachers need to be required to develop their teacher-writers’ craft personally and professionally. In her final reflection, Melissa stated, “I feel it is absolutely essential for educators to have more training and professional development in teaching writing. When teachers become better writers themselves, they will feel more confident in their ability to teach writing. I certainly feel more confident in my own writing just by taking the time to write more.” In reflecting while writing this article, Melissa stated, “Well by the end of the course, I had not only learned a lot about teaching writing and incorporating the writing workshop into a classroom; I also learned that I was more of a writer than I had ever imagined.”

Limitations and Future Research

Generalizability cannot be assumed due to one case study’s critical incident; however, Patton (2015) stated, “*Logical generalizations* can often be made from the weight of evidence produced in studying a single, critical case” (p. 276). Melissa’s critical case of writing for an authentic audience, her father, and then publishing her piece in *Hounds and Hunting*, highlights how she grew to identify herself as a teacher-writer. Because Melissa’s narrative highlighted positive emotions, writing the narrative and seeking publication may have been easier (Juzwik, Whitney, Bell, & Smith, 2014). This positive publication experience and course participation helped her connect her personal writing experiences with her teaching experiences.

Future research will explore pre-service and in-service teachers’ writing instruction longitudinally to determine transfer of learning across university and classroom contexts (Martin & Dismuke, 2015). The redesigned course will ensure teacher-writers write professionally for authentic audiences and purposes within persuasive and informative genres (Bush & Zuidema, 2013; Gaillet & Eble, 2016; Wiggins, 2009). Also, children’s writing development in teacher-writers’ classrooms

needs to be studied further to understand effective writing instruction that transfers between instructional and assessment contexts (Troia, Lin, Cohen, & Monroe, 2011).

Conclusion

Because “narrative inquiry begins and ends with a respect for ordinary lived experience” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 18), this research methodology highlighted Melissa’s experience in a K-8 writing methodology course as she developed her teacher-writer voice. Atwell (2015) stated, “Every teacher deserves a story about his or her growth and fulfillment as a professional, just as every student deserves a great education” (n.p.). Throughout her course experience, positively, Melissa learned to identify herself as a teacher-writer and believe in her abilities to write. Her personal beliefs transferred to understanding how to implement similar writing experiences to support her students’ writing development. The ultimate publication experience further solidified her stance as a teacher-writer for personal and professional purposes.

References

- Aharonian, N. (2008). Teacher writing for professional learning: A narrative. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 7(3), 115-125.
- Atwell, N. (1998). *In the middle: New understandings about writing, reading, and learning* (2nd Ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Atwell, N. (2015, October 17). Why kids still need ‘real books’ to read – and time in school to enjoy them / Reporter: V. Strauss. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved 11/18/2015 from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/10/17/why-kids-still-need-real-books-to-read-and-time-in-school-to-enjoy-them/>
- Baker, W. D., Brockman, E., Bush, J., & Richmond, K. J. (2007). Composition studies/English education connections. *The Writing Instructor*, Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ824629.pdf>
- Barnard, I. (2014). *Upsetting composition commonplaces*. Boulder, CO: Utah State University Press.
- Boscolo, P. (2008). Writing in primary school. In C. Bazerman (Ed.), *Handbook of research on writing: History, society, school, individual, text* (pp. 293-310). New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Brooks, G. W. (2007). Teachers as readers and writers and as teachers of reading and writing. *Journal of Educational Research*, 100(3), 177-191.
- Bush, J., & Zuidema, L. (Eds.). (2013). Professional writing in the English classroom. *English Journal*, 102(6), 94-97.
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc.
- Collier, S. M., Scheld, S., Barnard, I. & Stallcup, J. (2015). The negotiation and development of writing teacher identities in elementary education. *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*, 4(2), 90-112.
- The Commission on Writing Teacher Education. (1998-2016). Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/cee/commissions/writingteachered>
- Conference on College Composition and Communication. (1982). *CCCC position statement on the preparation and professional development of teachers of writing*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/statementonprep>
- Conference on College Composition and Communication. (1989/2013/2015). *Principles for the postsecondary teaching of writing*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/postsecondarywriting>
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J., (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2-14.
- Conway, C., & Christensen, S. (2006). Professional development and the beginning music teacher. *Contributions to Music Education*, 33(1), 9-25.
- Cremin, T., & Myhill, D. (2012), *Writing voices: Creating communities of writers*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- DeFauw, D. L. (2016a). Fourth-grade students’ perceptions of their teacher as a writer. *Michigan Reading Journal*, 48(3), 7-16.

- DeFauw, D. L. (2016b, April). *Writing with families in response to picture books to support their children's writing development*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.
- Delpit, L. D. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, 58(3), 280-298.
- Dismuke, S. (2015). It's a matter of practice: Influences of a writing methods course on in-service teachers' dispositions and self-efficacy. *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*, 4(2), 113-138.
- Duke, N. K., Purcell-Gates, V., Hall, L. A., & Tower, C. (2006). Authentic literacy activities for developing comprehension and writing. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(4), 344-355.
- Ede, L., & Lunsford, A. (1984). Audience addressed/audience invoked: The role of audience in composition theory and pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication*, 35(2), 155-171.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 32(4), 365-387.
- Frank, C. R. (2003). Mapping our stories: Teachers' reflections on themselves as writers. *Language Arts*, 80(3), 185-195.
- Gaillet, L. L., & Eble, M. F. (2016). *Primary research and writing: People, places, and spaces*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Gallavan, N. P., Bowles, F. A., & Young, C. T. (2007). Learning to write and writing to learn: Insights from teacher candidates. *Action in Teacher Education*, 29(2), 61-69.
- Gerla, J. (2010). Madelyn, a pre-service teacher becomes a writer. *Southeastern Teacher Education Journal*, 3(1), 131-140.
- Gibson, S. (2003). Narrative of a pre-service teacher. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 2(3), 35-46.
- Graves, D. H. (1983). *Writing: Teachers & children at work*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann.
- Hayes, J. R. (2000). A new framework for understanding cognition and affect in writing (pp. 6 - 44). In R. Indrisano and J. R. Squire (Eds.). *Perspectives on writing: Research, theory and practice*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- From Levy, C.M., & Ransdell, S. (Eds.). (1996). *The science of writing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Juzwik, M. M., Whitney, A., Bell, A. B., & Smith, A. (2014). Re-thinking personal narrative in the pedagogy of writing teacher preparation. *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*, 3(1), 27-35.
- Kelley, K. S. (2009). Practice what you preach: A teacher educator is reminded of important lessons. *The Clearing House*, 82(3), 145-151.
- Kohnen, A. M. (2013). The authenticity spectrum: The case of a science journalism writing project. *English Education*, 102(5), 28-34.
- Lenski, S., Ganske, K., Chambers, S., Wold, L., Dobler, E., Grisham, D. L... Young, J. (2013). Literacy course priorities and signature aspects of nine elementary initial licensure programs. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 42(1), 1-27.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

- Lindblom, K. (2015, July 27). School writing vs. authentic writing. *Teachers, profs, parents: Writers who care: A blog advocating for authentic writing instruction*. Retrieved November 23, 2015 from <https://writerswhocare.wordpress.com/2015/07/27/school-writing-vs-authentic-writing/>
- Locke, T. (2015). *Developing writing teachers: Practical ways for teacher-writers to transform their classroom practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Martin, S. D., & Dismuke, S. (2015). Teacher candidates' perceptions of their learning and engagement in a writing methods course. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 46, 104-114.
- McCurrie, M. K., Doherty-McDowell, C., Richmond, K. J., McDermott, M., & Olsen, A. W. (2015, November). *Practicing what we teach in writing methods: Crossover strategies for preparing elementary and secondary language arts teachers*. Presentation at the National Council of Teachers of English Conference, Minneapolis, MN.
- Measor, L. (1985). Critical incidents in the classroom: Identities, choices and careers (pp. 61-77). In S. J. Ball and I. F. Goodson (Eds.). *Teachers' lives and careers*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.
- Morgan, D. N. (2010). Pre-service teachers as writers. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 49(4), 352-365.
- Morgan, D. N., & Pytash, K. E. (2014). Preparing pre-service teachers to become teachers of writing: A 20-year review of the research literature. *English Education*, 47(1), 6-37.
- Murray, D. M. (1982). Teaching the other self: The writer's first reader. *College Composition and Communication*, 33(2), 140-147.
- The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges. (2003). *The neglected "R": The need for a writing revolution*. New York, NY: College Entrance Examination Board.
- The National Council of Teachers of English. (2008). *Writing now*. Retrieved January 7, 2016, from http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Magazine/Chron0908Policy_Writing_Now.pdf
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common Core State Standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Washington, DC: Authors.
- National Writing Project. (2016). Retrieved from <http://www.nwp.org/>
- Ong, W. J. (1975). The writer's audience is always fiction. *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 90(1), 9-21.
- Park, D. (1982). The meanings of "audience". *College English*, 44(3), 247-257.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Robbins, B. W. (1996). Teachers as writers: Tensions between theory and practice. *Journal of Teaching Writing*, 15(1), 107-128.

- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Schaafsma, D., & Vinz, R. (2011). *On narrative inquiry: Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education & the social sciences* (4th Ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Smagorinsky, P. (2008). The method section as conceptual epicenter in constructing social science research reports. *Written Communication*, 25(3), 389-411.
- Spiker, A. (2015). Building a bridge through writing: How teachers can practice their own writing to benefit their students. *Literacy Today*, 33(2), 34-35.
- Steinbeck, J. (1975). The art of fiction No. 45/Interviewers: G. Plimpton & F. Crowther. In *The Paris Review*, 63, Retrieved from <http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/4156/the-art-of-fiction-no-45-continued-john-steinbeck>
- Stockinger, P. C. (2007). Living in, learning from, looking back, breaking through in the English language arts methods course: A case study of two pre-service teachers. *English Education*, 39(3), 201-225.
- Stotsky, S. (1995). The uses and limitations of personal or personalized writing in writing theory, research, and instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 30(4), 758-776.
- Street, C. (2003). Pre-service teachers' attitudes about writing and learning to teach writing: Implications for teacher educators. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 30(3), 33-50.
- Street, C., & Stang, K. (2008). Improving the teaching of writing across the curriculum: A model for teaching in-service secondary teachers to write. *Action in Teacher Education*, 30(1), 37-49.
- Thomas, S. (2012). Narrative inquiry: Embracing the possibilities. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 12(2), 206-221.
- Troia, G., Lin, S., Cohen, S., & Monroe, B. (2011). A year in the writers workshop: Linking writing instruction practices and teachers epistemologies and beliefs about writing instruction. *The Elementary School Journal*, 112(1), 155-182.
- Tulley, C. E. (2013). What are pre-service teachers taught about the teaching of writing?: A survey of Ohio's undergraduate writing methods courses. *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*, 2(1), 38-48.
- VanderStaay, S. L. (2002). Critiquing process: Teaching writing methods as problem solving (pp. 95-104). In R. Tremmel and W. Broz (Eds.). *Teaching writing teachers of high school English & first-year composition*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Webster, L., & Mertova, P. (2007). *Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Whitney, A. (2009). Writer, teacher, person: Tensions between personal and professional writing in a National Writing Project summer institute. *English Education*, 41(3), 236-259.

- Whitney, A. E., Hicks, T., Zuidema, L, Fredricksen, J. E., & Yagelski, R. P. (2014). Forum: Teacher-writers: Then, now, and next. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 49(2), 177-184.
- Whyte, A., Lazarte, A., Thompson, I., Ellis, N., Muse, A., & Talbot, R. (2007). The National Writing Project, teachers' writing lives, and student achievement in writing. *Action in Teacher Education*, 29(2), 5-16.
- Wiggins, G. (2009). Real-world writing: Making purpose and audience matter. *English Journal*, 98(5), 29-37.
- Writing Study Group of the NCTE Executive Committee. (2004). *NCTE beliefs about the teaching of writing*. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/writingbeliefs>
- Zimmerman, B. S., Morgan, D. N., & Kidder-Brown, M. K. (2014). The use of conceptual and pedagogical tools as mediators of pre-service teachers' perceptions of self as writers and future teachers of writing. *Action in Teacher Education*, 36(2), 141-156.

Appendix

More Than Just Puppy Love

By Melissa Smith

“We’ve got five—two males and three females!” Dad shouted from the back door.

I jumped out of the blue recliner and pulled my Sony headset off my ears. I had been waiting for weeks for this moment. The beagle puppies had finally arrived!

As we walked out to the barn through the damp grass, Dad cautioned, “Now don’t be too loud. You don’t want to scare the momma. She’s just learning how to take care of her pups.”

Dad slowly lifted the wooden lid on the dog box. I climbed up on my stepstool and peered over the edge.

“Awww! They’re so little,” I whispered.

I carefully watched as the momma beagle finished cleaning her newborn puppies. Small white markings were scattered across the black and brown pups, decorating their paws, ears, tips of their tails, and around their eyes. One male stood out to me as the biggest of the litter.

Several weeks passed, and every moment seemed special as the puppies grew and developed. Their eyes opened, they began to hear, and eventually they began walking. The transformation from little newborns into innocent, playful puppies amazed me.

Their playfulness invited my sisters and I back to their dog box again and again. We always tried to open the lid to their dog box quietly. The slightest creak had the puppies standing alert, ready to play. That darn creaky lid always woke those pups from a deep slumber.

As we gently lifted each puppy out of the pen, we laughed at their high-pitched barks as they waited for their turn to be taken out, terrified of being left behind. Getting the puppies out of the barn and into the yard always seemed like such a process.

“Come on puppies, come on, this way. Over here!” my sisters and I called as we shepherded them to the backyard. My sisters led the pack, while I stayed back and picked up any stragglers. Every once in a while, the whole pack would hear me from behind and come running back my way. Sometimes, we even had to put them all in a cardboard box and drag them out to the yard. Once we had them all together, we would find a shady spot to lay our blanket in the lush grass and spend the day playing with them.

“Which one is your favorite?” my sister Julie questioned.

“I love the big, chunky male. His wrinkly face is just soooo cute!” I replied excitedly.

“So cute...I could just rip his face off!” my sister and I chimed in at the same time.

“Moose!” I yelled. “Come on Moose, over here buddy!” It was the perfect name for this plump little fellow. He definitely had not missed any feedings. He had chocolate brown fur, a light canvas brown face, silky ears, white paws, and a white tipped tail. Those floppy ears, and his plump belly that skimmed the manicured lawn as he ran, would melt anyone’s heart. I, for one, had a soft spot for this “big guy.” Although I loved them all, he quickly became my favorite.

“Toss it this way!” my sister Jennifer hollered. Old Hanes socks tied together in a knot easily became a tug-of-war toy for the puppies. We would tug on one end, while the puppies playfully growled and yanked on the other. Eventually they learned how to play tug-of-war with each other.

Weeks of long summer days passed by, and every day I looked forward to waking up and spending time with those pups, especially Moose.

Sprawled out on the ragged blanket under the old hickory tree, I squealed, “You have puppy breath!” I felt Moose lick my cheeks. “I wish you could stay a puppy forever,” I thought to myself.

After a full day of playing, there were times in the evenings when I would sneak out to the barn, call for Moose, and take him out to play...just me and him. He was my special pup, and I knew I needed to spend as much time with him as I could before that day arrived – the day he would be going home with his new family.

“When are they coming?” I nervously asked Dad.

“They should be here anytime.”

“Do you think I can go see him for a few minutes?” my voice cracked.

“Go ahead!” Dad replied.

“Thanks!” I blurted out as I took off, backdoor slamming behind me, running full-force to the barn. All of the other puppies had gone to live with their new families, and my “big guy” was the last to go.

I picked him up and squeezed him tightly in my arms. Big, splashy tears rolled down my cheeks. “I love you Moose...always remember that,” I whispered softly.

His little tongue began to lick the tears as they fell, too numerous to count. The sweet, innocent smell of puppy breath filled the air around us. I brushed my face against his silky brown ears. The tips of them felt crusted, plastered with food collected from brushing around in his food bowl. My Moose devoured each soggy meal of puppy chow like a starved animal. I gently placed him on the cold, cement floor and began calling his name as I skipped out the barn door into the yard. “Come on Moose! This way buddy!” I

had said these same words so many times that summer. His high-pitched bark slightly bellowed in the warm summer air. I knew his bark wouldn't sound like that much longer. Too soon, he would have a long, deep baying voice – like that of a true rabbit dog. I cherished those last few minutes with Moose. It was almost as if we were frozen in time.

Boom! Boom! Two car doors slammed shut in our driveway. Dad quickly rushed out to these strangers – the people that would be Moose's new owners.

My tears choked me. I sprinted toward the house, unable to say goodbye, but I had to watch him go. I peeked through the kitchen window as they strolled out to the barn with Dad. There he was – my Moose – running around and jumping up on the ankles of his new owners. He seemed happy and that's all that mattered. I continued to watch from the window, popping up and down, in hopes that these people didn't see me watching their every move.

I tried to hide my face from Dad as he walked in. "I told them you had named him Moose, and that he responds to that name. They decided to keep calling him that!" Dad said, with a hint of excitement in his voice.

A warm smile stretched across my face. "Really?"

I realize this story seems to be about Moose. And, it is. However, this story is more than just puppy love. I had Dad to thank for these memories. Without Dad having the passion of a beagler, so many of my childhood memories would not have been made. Now as an adult, I secretly hope one day that I will be as passionate about something as Dad is about his beagles. You see...he doesn't just raise these litters of puppies for nothing. I didn't get to gather these memories as a child "just because." As an accomplished beagler, with two field trial champion dogs under his belt, he raises pups in hopes that they will continue the champion bloodlines. I am so thankful for the pups he has allowed me to care for, pups like Moose, and I am so proud of his commitment and hard work in earning all those trophies, ribbons, and medals that plaster the walls of his barn. Of course it looks a bit cluttered, but that clutter has created so many memories that I will always cherish. Raising beagle pups is a huge part of his life, and I am so honored to be a part of it.

This story was written in honor of my dad, John Satterwhite, a proud beagler and member of Great Lake Beagle Club.

From "More Than Just Puppy Love," by M. Smith, 2013, *Hounds and Hunting*, 110(7), 43-44. Copyright 2013 by Hounds and Hunting. Reprinted with permission.

About the Authors

Danielle L. DeFauw is an assistant professor of reading & language arts at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Her research interests focus on writing instruction, including teacher-writers and using authentic writing tasks to enhance instruction.

Melissa Smith is a special education paraeducator in South Lyon Community Schools. She works with third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade cognitively impaired students in achieving their academic goals.