Streams of Color: Poetry in the Classroom
Jeff Oliver

"Shall We Their Fond Pageant See?" Shakespeare with Children
Mary Jo Moore

Remembering More
Ned Ryerson

The Enlargement of the Esthetic
David Hawkins

The Normal Psychological Growth Process
Frederick H. Allen

The Science and Ethics of Equality by David Hawkins: A Review
Lillian Weber

OUTLOOK, The Mountain View Publishing Company, 2929 6th St., Boulder, CO 80302. Issue No. 34, Winter, 1979. Published quarterly (March, June, September, December) by the Mountain View Publishing Company in association with the Mountain View Center for Environmental Education. Second class postage paid at Boulder, Colorado. Subscriptions: United States and Canada, $8.50 a year, $14 for two years. Institutions: $12 a year. Rates in other countries are the equivalent in local currency of the dollar rate. Back issues: $2.25 each; three or more copies, $2.00 each; six or more copies, $1.75 each.

Tony Kallet, Editor
Jeff Oliver ("Streams of Color") has taught a combined fourth and fifth grade class at Lincoln School in Boulder for the past three years. He previously taught at the Misty Mountain School. Born in Virginia, he took his undergraduate degree at Virginia Commonwealth University. Among his interests are music, writing, photography, basketball, and tennis.

Mary Jo Moore ("'Shall We Their Fond Pageant See?'") directs a combined fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classroom at the Pincushion Hill Montessori School in South Natick, Massachusetts. She writes: "I have also taught a Montessori preschool class, as well as kindergarten, college, high school, and junior high in that order. Another favorite Shakespeare teaching experience occurred in Nigeria in the sixties where I found myself teaching Julius Caesar in a climate of political unrest which was moving toward assassination and civil war."

Ned Ryerson ("Remembering More") writes: "I began teaching in Korea in 1946. After the war I taught junior high and high school levels. In 1965 I organized, with parents and faculty, the Palfrey Street School, an alternative high school in Watertown, Massachusetts, and was its director for ten years. After leaving Palfrey Street I taught three-year-olds in the Eliot Pearson Children's School at Tufts University. 'Remembering More' is a section from a longer piece about teaching and learning."

David Hawkins ("The Enlargement of the Esthetic") is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Colorado and Director of the Mountain View Center.

Frederick H. Allen ("The Normal Psychological Growth Process") was born in 1890 in San Jose, California. At the University of California he was an outstanding athlete, representing the United States in the broad jump in the 1912 Olympics. He took his M.D. and did his psychiatric residency at the Johns Hopkins Medical School and in 1925 was appointed as the first Director of the All Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic. In addition to Psychotherapy with Children, from which the chapter we reprint is taken, he wrote Positive Aspects of Child Psychiatry, published in 1963, the year he died.

Lillian Weber ("Review") is Professor of Elementary Education at City College of the City University of New York, and is Director of the Workshop Center for Open Education. She has been the Director of the Advisory Service for the Open Corridor program which has worked with schools since 1968. She has written about informal education in English infant schools.
Sometimes an editor gets lucky and, *pace* Murphy, things go right, better than planned. A year ago we asked Jeff Oliver to share with OUTLOOK's readers some of the remarkable poetry the children in his class were writing, and to discuss the ways he helps them become poets. While we were preparing this article for publication, Mary Jo Moore's "Shall We Their Fond Pageant See?" arrived, unsolicited; it complements Oliver's article in a way which could hardly have been improved upon by design. The children in Moore's class fell in love with Shakespeare -- the cadences of the language fully as much as the plots and the action -- and performed a remarkable *Midsummer Night's Dream*. It would be as fascinating to see the poetry these children might write after their immersion in Shakespeare as it would be to see what Jeff Oliver's children, attuned to their own images and rhythms, could do with Shakespeare's.

Arriving at about the same time as Moore's Shakespeare article was a long essay by Ned Ryerson on some creative teaching with high school students. We have abstracted from this essay a section about a writing assignment requiring careful observation, abstraction, and description. It is the kind of task which good teachers might well find exciting for younger children, perhaps especially those already caught by language as were Moore's and Oliver's, as well as for the older students whose writing Ryerson presents and discusses.

Another happy coincidence was the arrival of Lillian Weber's review of David Hawkins' book *The Science and Ethics of Equality* in time to appear along with Hawkins' important new essay "The Expansion of the Esthetic." David Hawkins succeeds in rescuing and redefining the term "esthetic education," and makes a strong case for considering all good teaching as a high art, and all good art as having an important teaching function.

Finally, by no coincidence at all, we celebrate the long-delayed and awaited republication of Frederick Allen's classic *Psychotherapy with Children* by reprinting the chapter "The Normal Psychological growth process." That celebration is in order, Frances Hawkins makes clear in her introduction to the chapter.
discrimination in their daily work with children, which global test averages do not provide."

The issues of individual differences and community or fraternity are, in Hawkins' view, inseparable:

_We learn in the context of associated behavior in which knowledge possessed by some is expressed, is externalized in relation to problematic situations jointly shared....We need to know about each other in order to organize our shared endeavors for educational efficiency and success._

To my many prior expressions of respect for Hawkins's work, I wish to add a salute to this book. His terms -- equality and fraternity, diversity and difference that is not equated with inequality, the "jagged profile" representing a child's evolving history and calling for a case study, observational approach, the importance of pursuing the child's possibilities -- are also our terms and speak to the practice and the theory of the work here at the Workshop Center and in public schools connected with our program. We can now draw new strength from Hawkins's arguments, which stand on biological data. Our arguments for heterogeneity grouping, for educability, developed from analysis of the shortfall in educational response and structure, developed because we saw too much evidence that failure could be accounted for by the social and organizational conditions of a child's life at home and in school, can now rest on a firmer foundation.
STREAMS OF COLOR: POETRY IN THE CLASSROOM

Jeff Oliver

My formal introduction to poetry didn't come until the ninth grade at James Blair High School in Williamsburg, Virginia. Our English teacher assigned poems in anthologies, to read and interpret. She loved Emily Dickinson; she even looked like Emily Dickinson. Her criteria for good poetry were not the same as my classmates' and mine. She guided us to the "correct" interpretations for each poem and our opinions swayed her little. Under her guidance we ripped away at the flesh of a poem and masticated each bit thoroughly. We were left with a meatless carcass. My first experience with poetry left a bad taste. It has taken me until now to give Dickinson's poems another try.

I probably had heard poetry in elementary school, the kind that trips lightly over the tongue and out of the mind. I'm sure I never wrote poetry. I don't remember thinking it possible for the lay person to write poetry until my last year of high school.

I transferred to Woodberry Forest School, an "exclusive" boarding school in Virginia, where I spent my last three years of high school. I tried to stay clear of any course that might include poetry until I stumbled onto the work of e.e. cummings. Here was something other than sonnets and iambic pentameter. I saw cummings' poems as challenging puzzles; some couldn't even be read until deciphered. I was attracted to this poetry for its human quality. The people he wrote about were flesh and bone, real people one might meet on the street. He pulled all the stops. He even used the way the type was set in creating a poem. He capitalized only when he thought it necessary. A rebellious chord in me resonated. In exploring cummings' poetry I began to understand the medium. Until then it had been beyond me why anyone would want to hide what he or she was trying to say in a poem.

I was motivated enough, and the school was flexible enough, for me to set up an independent study of cummings' poetry. I worked with Mr. Malcolm Moore, a composition and visual arts teacher. He helped bring about a marked change in my attitude toward poetry. His experience with the visual arts gave him a unique perspective. He was a gentle and humble man, willing to explore and learn with me. I remember a
lot of laughter as we uncovered some of cummings' tricks. Mr. Moore also encouraged my first serious attempts at writing poetry. It was important to him for me to be satisfied that I'd said what I meant to say. As I look back, I see this as a crucial time in the development of my attitude toward poetry. My first efforts as a poet were tentative and fragile and could easily have been crushed by scholarly criticism. But Mr. Moore was a good teacher. He supported those first ventures and his criticism was constructive. At the end of my senior year at Woodberry I felt good enough about writing poetry to put one of my poems next to my picture in the yearbook. Poetry had become a medium I could use.

Poetry is not generally part of the program for elementary education majors; it wasn't until my junior year at the University of Colorado that I had a poetry course and I had to get special dispensation from the School of Education to take it. John Wrenn taught the course and he presented the classical works in a way I could appreciate. We were encouraged to write poetry. The class was small, seven or eight of us, and our analysis of each other's work could be on a personal level. Mr. Wrenn valued our analyses and he didn't try to convince us of the accuracy of his interpretation. He acted as the facilitator of group discussion, not the director. I learned a good deal about the elements of poetry and the course marked for me the beginning of my development as a serious poet.

I finished my certification program at Virginia Commonwealth University where I focused on the logistics of instituting an elementary curriculum. I returned to Boulder and was fortunate to get a job teaching a fourth and fifth grade combination at Lincoln School.

II

Another turning point in my involvement with poetry came when I met Florence Becker Lennon. I took a day of professional leave from my class and visited Craig Yager's classroom. Craig is a good friend of mine who then taught at the small elementary school in Jamestown. I planned my visit to coincide with a workshop Florence was doing there with the kids that afternoon. I expected a prim and proper old lady.

She shuffled into the room and sat down with a sigh. She adjusted her hat and gazed through thick glasses into the faces of the children in front of her. "I have a little trouble getting around these days but that's all right, I brought my horse." She paused. "She's got only one leg, but I have
two and that makes three." She calls her cane Peggy, short for Pegasus, the flying horse from Greek mythology. After this introduction, she read some of her favorite poems. We finished the afternoon by sharing our own work.

The following school year I asked Florence to visit my classroom. It was such a good experience that I asked her back and her visits became regular. She now visits once a month. She begins by reading poems, usually by other authors including kids at other schools she's visited. Sometimes we decide on a theme or concept ahead of time, sometimes she reads what strikes her fancy at the moment. Then she gives the kids time to write their own poetry. After about twenty minutes we gather to share what we've written. Florence started the practice of applauding after each poem is read.

During one memorable session Florence read this poem:

LETTER FROM A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

If you must plant me, let it be in wood That crumbles back to feed the needy soil; Do not distress yourself that "I" shall spoil - That is no longer I, that maggot's food. We prodigals have never understood: Since living feed upon the dead, why foil The useful worm? Only his humble toil Grinds out from what remains a little good.

And since that is not I, you need not weight It with a granite shaft that says "Here lies Old so-and-so," complete with name and date. Come - let it mould, and feed a tree, to rise and stretch, to hold a robin's nest, to mate and scatter apples for your children's pies.

Florence Becker Lennon
Forty Years in the Wilderness,

The kids became deeply involved in a discussion of what could be the best thing to do with the body after death. Melanie recalled her love for an old, dilapidated tractor on a farm she had visited when she was younger. She could think of nothing better than to have her body plowed under by that tractor. This led to an emotional discussion about death and what it meant to die. Some of the kids had strong opinions. Most
were amazed at the range of beliefs expressed by their classmates. After a discussion, the kids wrote. Two of them worked
on the following poem:

The dark is coming closer.
The dark is coming near.
The very simple reason is that I am 89.
My spine is growing benter, my back is growing weak
And when I move my legs I know it's coming near.
It's surely to be here by the time that I can hear
Crystal sounds inside my ear.

Ben Phelan and Dylan Warren  
*Nature's Shadows*, LPC*, 1978

No matter how much she'd complain about dragging herself
up the stairs, Florence always seemed to light up as she was
greeted by the kids. She gave us the following short poem to
let us know how she felt about one visit:

I thought I wouldn't make it through the morning
But the breezes from the kids blew to me
And held me up.
I hope you didn't miss the support you gave me.

Florence Becker Lennon  
*Nature's Shadows*.

Here is Kathy Brodhead's tribute to Florence:

Old, lame, you're breaking down
Voice so weak, hearing not so strong
But you're alive you have life in you
And that's the only thing that counts.

Kathy Brodhead  
*Peaches, Pears, Poems and Plums*
LPC, 1979

I write with the kids and share what I write with them.
This is one of my poems about Florence:

*The Lincoln Publishing Company (LPC) is a project begun by
Jean Gore, a teacher at Lincoln School. The children submit
manuscripts to be edited and illustrated by other children.
The edited manuscripts are then typed by an adult aide and are
bound by the children. One copy goes to the author, the other
is kept in the school library.*
FOR FLORENCE

When you die, you will live
In the children you have touched.
They will know how to be old
And alive.
And they will touch children
And when they die
The grass will be green on their graves
As it will on yours.

Jeff Oliver
1979

I began to see what an appropriate medium poetry is for kids and started each day by reading a poem or two. Shel Silverstein's *Where the Sidewalk Ends* is our most used and best-loved poetry collection. Kids have a lot to say, and poetry is one way for them to speak out. Their lives are full of meter and rhyme. A jump rope jingle can be remade as a poem that rhymes and in which key phrases are replaced to change the meaning. (Previous experience with poetry leaves many children with the idea that a poem *must* rhyme. The best way to change this notion is to read good poetry that doesn't rhyme.)

You may recognize the first two lines of Shasta's poem as the first two lines of Joni Mitchell's song, *Circle Game*, which we sing in class:

*A BOY FOUND A DRAGONFLY*

A boy came out to wonder
Caught a dragonfly inside a jar
As he watched it flutter
He saw streams of colors
dance upon the sunlight
The streams of light fluttered
about the boy's hand
Lost in his dreams he's flowing
On the streams of color of the dragonfly.

Shasta Meek
Peaches...
LPC

Writing poetry was, at first, mainly a word game for many kids. One by one they were grabbed by an image or idea they heard in someone else's poem, or perhaps they wanted a way to get out some anger. It's hard to know sometimes what sparks a
particular child. Poetry soon began to be a medium for serious expression. When a class member was touched by an event outdoors or perhaps felt love for a friend, it began coming out in poetry.

I didn't have to fake appreciation; I was amazed at what the children wrote. The kids in my class were good at showing appreciation for their classmates' work. Poetry became an integral part of our classroom.

It wasn't hard to find stimulation for the kids. Many didn't need it from outside. For some, the spark was provided by Florence's visits, even though some days I'm not sure many kids hear much of what she has to say. A few listen intently. It doesn't seem to matter. The presence of such a live eighty-four-year-old woman is enough. Other kids have been inspired by visits to a wooded creek near the school. Sometimes class discussions suggest ideas for poems, or perhaps hearing someone else's poem strikes a sympathetic chord.

When we first started working with poetry, only a few kids were confident enough to read aloud to the group what they had written. The others began to express genuine appreciation and the kids began to see poetry as something they could do. When Florence introduced applause as a means of expression approval reluctant readers were soon jumping at the chance to read their work. Sometimes Florence or I would agree to read a poem for a child if he or she would read the next one. Some kids wait to be asked to read. A soft prod often helps but putting pressure on a child who is not yet confident may cause him to stop writing for fear of having to share. It's part of the teaching art to know when a child is ready.

It is important to begin offering constructive criticism when a child is confident about his or her skill as a poet. Again, readiness must be gauged by the teacher who knows the child. Kids want their work taken seriously, and they need suggestions for improvement. Unwarranted praise and a lack of criticism can still a child's motivation.

There are as many different levels of involvement with poetry as there are children in the class. For some, poetry continued as play. Deep emotion began to flow through the pens of other young poets. Some were good at humorous poetry, some at haiku. Some used rhyme well, and some kids didn't particularly enjoy writing poetry. I don't force them to write, but I don't think I've had a child in my class who hasn't tried.
AT THE CREEK

Bonnie dropped her pencil
and it floated away.
She didn't have anything to write with
so she didn't write today.

Laura LaParle
Peaches...

ZOO

At the zoo I see monkeys swinging,
Then I see birds flying and singing,
But the best I see is the tiger with a key
Locking the janitor in his cage.

Sylvia Stone
Nature's Shadows

The creek has its emotions
And so do I have my emotions.

Danielle Kerms
Nature's Shadows

RAIN

The sun is out
chasing away the memories
of a thousand
tears.
The world is happy again.

Laura LaParle
Peaches...

HAIKU

The mountains are gone.
They have been erased by the fog.
Then spring writes them back.

Sylvia Stone
Nature's Shadows
IF I WERE A ROSE

If I were a rose, then I suppose,
I'd live on a hill with another rose.
I'd rather be free sitting on this hill,
than to be held in a pot
on a window sill.

Thistle Neuchatz

YOU

I have other things to do,
besides think of you.
But, I think of you
more than I do things.

Laura Edlin
Nature's Shadows

VOLCANO

The hot blazing lava bursting down the hill.
Lightning striking at the trees and
telephone poles.
The earth quakes like an old lady
frightened to death.

Joseph Atta
Peaches...

III

Throughout the year, many activities lead to poetry. Our
walks to Boulder Creek stimulate much good writing. When we
call there we gather on a bridge and talk for a bit about what
the kids observe. Then the children all find places to write;
on boulders, stumps, logs, etc. We take ten or twenty minutes
for writing. When we return to the classroom we share what
we've written.

SNOW

Mother Nature covers Sister Earth
with a blanket of fluffy, white wool.
Not a speck of her is seen.

Laura LaParle
Peaches...
One way of taking some of the risk out of poetry writing is to write group poems. One way I do this is to use an adaptation of Musical Chairs. Each kid gets out a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil and writes the first line or two of a poem. When I start the music they stop writing and move around the room. When the music stops they find the nearest poem and continue it. I repeat this four or five times. Finally, each person goes back to his or her original place and finishes that poem. (I also use this activity for narrative writing.) Here is one group poem:

The rain drops hang on parachutes
Ready for take off in the wild blue yonder,
Taking a last deep breath,
They hurl their bodies over,
Flying, flying, clouds, blue sky
Then the sun puzzles them as they fall through space.
It is a new experience for the younger ones,
But not for the elders,
Who have so many times fallen and so many times risen
Blown to and fro as they travel the world.

Sylvia Stone, Sonja Toutenhooft,
Ben Phelan, Robby Carpenter,
Thistle Neuchatz, Kelmie Johnson.

An activity I learned in Tony Kallet's writing course at the Mountain View Center is good for developing imagination and learning to use metaphor. Start with three to six interesting, colorful photographic slides. Project the first one completely out of focus and ask the kids to write guesses about what the picture is. Then bring the slide a bit closer to focus and collect more guesses. I usually try three focussing steps before bringing the slide into sharp focus. We share our guesses at each stop. I use slides from the school library of butterflies, tigers, birds, landscapes, and cityscapes. To add humor and surprise I sneak in one of me, one of the kids, or one of someone we know well. I emphasize the use of imaginative, descriptive images. The class enjoys the suspense and surprise, and there are many "oohs" and "aahs" as the slides come into focus.

The circle poem is another source of some good poetry. Each kid thinks of an object and writes its name in the middle of a large circle on a piece of paper. I tell the kids to visualize the object. (For some it's easier if the object is in front of them so they can look at it.) Then they have one minute to write in the circle all the words and phrases they
can think of to describe the object and another minute to write words and phrases describing their feelings about the object. Finally, I ask them to write down two or three other things the object could be. I supply a couple of examples the first time. I then say, "Put your words and phrases together any way that sounds good. You can add words or leave words out." The circle poem is a good activity for developing skill in writing observations. Variations on the idea can provide different focuses, such as not using visual images. Shasta put together this circle poem about strawberries:

STRAWBERRY

It looks like a ladybug crawling along the bush.
It looks like a little head coming out for a stretch.
It looks like a red world in a green universe.
It looks like a sun looking down upon the ground.
It looks like people
swimming about through the trees.

Shasta Meek
Peaches...

It's important to provide ways of sharing poetry outside the classroom. We publish a class magazine, Fire Flame, that includes poetry, stories, comic strips, puzzles, and games. Four editors from the class are responsible for collecting and editing material and producing thirty-five copies each month. These are distributed throughout the school and are sent out to a few friends of the class.

Each of the past two years we have compiled an anthology of our best poems which has been published by the Lincoln Publishing Company, mentioned above. Four kids and I choose the poems we like, discussing whether they are good enough for the book. The book is then typed and the kids illustrate and hand-bind it. We make copies for the school and class libraries and each year we make another copy as a gift for a special person. Our first book was dedicated to Florence, our second to Lincoln's principal, Naomi Grothjan, who supports our efforts as poets. Publishing our books has been a high point of each of the past two years for me. The first was entitled Nature's Shadows, the second Peaches, Pears, Poems and Plums. Parents and staff were delighted with the books and the kids and I are proud of them.

The parents got into the act when we held our first poetry breakfast. We invited parents to come in and share breakfast, then held a poetry reading. The theme, "Flight," was announced
ahead of time. The kids wrote many good poems and were enthusiastic about reading them to the group. Gregg wrote this:

A bird passed by and I don't know why,
A plane passed by and I do know why
because a bird passed by.

Gregg Fish
Peaches...

Here are some more of the children's poems.

TIME
Does time pass?
or does it float away?
Does time go,
or does it stay?
Is time low
or is it high?
Does time walk,
or does it fly?

Sylvia Stone
Nature's Shadows

BIRD
Bird, fly looking down on me.
Your wings carry the spirit of nature.
You give me a feeling to run and play.
As I breathe the trees and all around them.

Robby Carpenter
Nature's Shadows

HELLO, YOU BIG BIRD
Hello, you big bird, old and wise,
Your eyes go round and round
and change their size.
Never, never big old big bird,
Never grow extinct.

Michele Hall
Nature's Shadows

SNOW
Snow puts clothes on the trees
And blankets on the rivers.
The bushes are snug in their snow coats.
No snow flakes are the same.
When snow falls it makes it so quiet
You can hear your feet hitting the snow.

Gregg Fish
Peaches...

In my classroom poetry is basic. It provides a vital outlet for creative expression. Many academic skills develop through writing poetry but for me the greatest thrill is the feeling in the classroom after one of the kids reads a poem and there is the silence of awe before the spirited applause.

Another school year has drawn to a close since I began writing this article. One of the proudest and most emotional moments for me came when the kids presented me with a book of poems about me entitled *Jumping Jeff*. Through misted eyes I read this poem:

Dear Jeff,
We have had some trouble, I know,
But through my mistakes I've begun to grow.
Pencils are now helpful tools
For writing down memories
That are more precious than jewels.

Love,
Laura LaParle
REMEMBERING MORE
Ned Ryerson

Once I taught a boy who used to come to my office to sit on the edge of the desk with his hands around his knees, or in the morris chair beside the desk with his legs stretched out. Sometimes he stood by the open door, looking in on the classroom. His classmates were working and talking with each other, comparing the results of their work.

"What do you think," he asked me on the last day of school."When people grow up do they get to be different and forget what they used to think? Or do they stay the same, only different?"

I thought he wasn't waiting for an answer, so I asked him about his future. He was fourteen and was saying goodbye.

One day, almost a year later, he came back for a visit. I asked him how he was.

"Have you every thought about studying memory?" he said. "Why do people remember what they remember?" He was sitting in the same position, in the same place. There was a different group of students working in a study period beyond the open door. Perhaps Peter had come back to see what he had been like, wondering how long he could remember it. Perhaps he already understood the questions he had asked and was asking.

I had left a wicker basket in the classroom, filled with abused and textured things that a friend who has a feeling eye had given me; pocked and smooth stones from a beach; clinkers thrown out from a coal furnace; cedar pegs that once had held the glass insulators on the cross piece of a telephone pole; conch shells and limpet shells turned to the color of sand; a rusted railroad spike; pieces of twisted, live wood from an orchard in Italy. They were things to hold and look at and to find in their grain and form the history of their weathering. It was hard, I thought, to see and feel them without some curiosity.

Peter looked into the classroom he had been in the year before. "Do you think that people remember more than they think they do?" he asked me.

I could see the students handling the things from the basket. I saw Julie standing at a desk, holding a clinker in her hand and looking puzzled.
"I don't know," I said, "but Julie's stuck and I'd better see what the trouble is. Come back," I said. "Maybe you can tell me what the answer is." He lingered in the office for a while after I went into the classroom.

"What's this?" Julie asked, showing me the clinker. It was coarse and scratchy, like a piece of lava. Bits of burned-red sand or clay were imbedded near the surface. It was as light as a bone and as dry, the color of ash and molded by fire. In her hand it was as alien as a skull.

"It's a clinker," I said. "It's coal that didn't burn completely in the furnace. They throw them away when they clean out coal furnaces because they're no good for anything." I thought she was annoyed with its uselessness, but she kept feeling and poking the scratchy surface. Others were tracing the grooved threads of the cedar pegs, and holding the shells to their ears to hear the ocean, or had closed their hands around the smooth stones.

"What does it make you think of?" I asked Julie. "Where do you think it's been?"

Louis Agassiz had given his graduate student a fish. "Look at it," he had said, "and write down what you see and don't stop until you've seen everything." That had been a different kind of taxonomy and a different kind of teaching. I had asked for associations. Perhaps by holding a clinker in one hand and writing with the other Julie could find some, out of her own experience.

Mary was sitting in a chair pushed away from the desk. She held a shell in her lap with her hands over it. She lifted it up slowly and put it on the desk where it seemed surrounded by inviolate space. She made some circular drawings in fine black ink and let her pen trace lightly drawn words on the paper:

```
time
less wrinkles of life
unfold
and fall
back in place
in ancient patterns
that wait
to be discovered
death, in the end,
to be forgotten
```
But Julie was stuck. Perhaps it wasn't the uselessness of the clinker that bothered her but a conviction that she could not trust her associations. Perhaps she was shutting her mind off from all the "wrong" associations that she had; the clinker was ugly and scratchy and useless. It wasn't beautiful or important.

No, it wasn't beautiful or important, and Julie was impatient. "In my opinion," she finally wrote, "this is a worthless exercise. If one is going to learn how to write one needs to be given direction." She had come to the school as an activist, having worked hard with student and parent organizations to improve the quality of public education in her own community. She knew how much change was needed. I respected her and admired her work. It's important to encourage associations in order to escape from the rigid measurability of right and wrong responses, but if Julie was annoyed, others must be too. The clinkers were irrelevant. The exercise seemed suddenly precious, like a lonely old person reminiscing gently about a box of mementos. We needed something more immediate.

"Think of the corner of Mt. Auburn Street where the bus from Watertown Square stops," I said. "Make a list of everything you can think of about that place and everything it makes you think of."

We talked together about that corner and I made notes on the blackboard. It was crowded with details of people, of sounds and motion, of the noises of trucks and cars, of buses that were full or empty. It was like a small child's reading book: big cars, little cars; old people, young people; buses and trucks and policemen. The recollections first came in stereotypes but as we kept adding details the scene became a particular one and the people became real.

I divided the class into four groups of five. "Look at the list on the blackboard," I said, "and agree as a group how you can reduce the list by half without losing anything important. You'll have to let some items stand for other items, or think of words that will include several items. Reduce it by half again. Keep reducing it until you are down to two or three words. Maybe they'll contain or express the whole list, maybe they won't."

That was hard. They had to generalize or use symbols. They had to agree on what items could be grouped together and what could be made to stand for the group of items. Somebody had to keep track of what they were doing. There were arguments.
It was possible for someone in a group of five to be silent, but it was not likely. They had a limited time to come to an agreement. There were no wrong answers. There were four different results, each of them justified by agreement within each group.

"Now do the rest of the work individually," I said. "Take the few words that you've agreed can stand for the whole list and let them suggest other things to you. Start building up a list again in whatever direction is suggested by the new starting place. Then write about your new list from three different points of view, or bring out three different aspects at one particular time."

The collaborative part of the work, in a study period that had turned into a class, was done. They had begun their work in school and could finish it later. They could bring their writing back to class and share it with an audience that anticipated pleasure in reading it. When we met on the next class day, Julie read aloud what she had written:

There were two of them, a man and a woman, both blind and holding white sticks. She was older, about forty, and heavy. Her eyeballs which rolled erratically were repulsive to look at. She kept attempting to begin a conversation with her companion. The man with her was in his late twenties. He appeared nervous. He held the stick tightly and moved it back and forth a lot. These two people stood outside the Sunnyhurst store waiting for the bus.

The sub shop is a small place. There are two tables which can seat two people each. It is crowded only at lunch time, at other times usually there are high school students at the tables or standing around. They put money into the juke box and choose the loudest song. Beside our table there is a pistachio nut machine which costs 50¢ for some pistachios. Near the other table is a coke machine. There is a young woman behind the counter waiting for customers. She cleans the counter, arranges things or goes in the back. Two men help her at lunch time. On the wall are the names of all the different subs, which can be either large or small. Besides subs, one can buy junk such as hostess fruit filled pies and Devil Dogs, as well as potato chips.

While I am waiting for the bus to go home I look across Mt. Auburn Street and see (from left to right) a convalescent home, a nursery school, a church, a high school,
and a cemetery. The order of these things can be changed; a nursery school, a high school, a convalescent home, a church, a cemetery.

Each of us knew the corner that Julie had described. We talked about her story and what she had made us recognize. The assignment was intended to let us know how Julie had seen a familiar place. This was a high school classroom, not a writers' workshop; therefore we were validating each other as well as the writing that had been done. We were also learning how much there is to see at a familiar street corner. Each reader, in turn, asked someone else to read; we heard as many descriptions as we had time for. We were doing something more important than looking at clinkers and had to continue our work into other class meetings.

Paul wrote:

Looking through the big plate glass window, seeing almost anything that can be seen in the sub shop, the people all Watertown natives except some strangers here and there. Juke box not being used, people looking at you as you look in and you catch their eyes and look right through them for a second, and then all of a sudden they tighten up and look another way. Looking right through the counter and seeing all the subs, greasy with oil, being made. Seeing the back room with a dart board hung up, the kid who works there is talking to the boss about chicks and the boss is giving him advice, you can see right through these people.

The high school, big, brick, dirty with the American flag atop it, blowing in the wind, the bell rings, and for a second you can see the kids piling out, screaming, jumping free at last then all of a sudden there they really are, millions of them, and you catch eyes, hair, noses, legs, clothes, and you know you look right through all those. But suddenly the door shuts again. The flag is alone, weak, you want to see through it but it's hard, made of tough cloth, so you shoot it.

A blind person walks down the street, feeling his way, perking up his eyes and ears, using all his senses but sight. Sometimes singing, sometimes mumbling, sometimes crying. You look at the eyes, nothing comes back, look through them, they're like big iron doors, all of a sudden they open, the nose sniffs as if coming from a rabbit, the mouth manages a little smile, he sees right through you and you see right through him. Who shuts
DIRECTORS OF THE MOUNTAIN VIEW PUBLISHING COMPANY

David Hawkins, President
Henrietta Garcia, Secretary
Tony Kallet
Mary J. Surguine

STAFF OF THE MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER

1979 - 1980

*Maja Apelman
*Joyce Colton
Ronald Colton
David Hawkins
*Tony Kallet
*Yvonne Mayer
Kathy Woodward

*on leave

Illustrations: Front and back covers, photographs by Betty Kellogg.