Role Models

By Ivy Phillips, TCTE Immediate Past President

I started my TCTE Presidential journey asking two questions in our Visions and Revisions newsletter: Who is your role model? For whom will you be a role model? I encouraged each of you to attend the annual conference (also known as our Professional Development Institute) in order to show your willingness to improve your pedagogy and in order to expand your professional learning communities. I was thrilled with our attendance, and I hope that we will continue to grow our organization as Kim Coyle plans the 2015 PDI to be held in Nashville. As Rob Wade, Executive Director, pointed out at the Memphis conference, TCTE is an organization run by full-time teachers. The TCTE Board and annual Local Planning Committee are composed of educators who are in classrooms every day, who have after-school responsibilities, and who go home to plan professional development opportunities for our members. I want to reemphasize my call for leadership as my Presidential journey comes to an end: Continue to think about who your role models are and for whom you will be role models. If you want to know how you could get involved with TCTE, contact me at jphillips@hutchisonschool.org or tcteinfo@gmail.com; I will be glad to talk through it with you.

Ivy Phillips
TCTE Immediate Past-President

P.S. Check out presentation materials from the 2014 PDI in Memphis on TCTE's conference wiki at http://tcteconferencewiki.wikispaces.com/

Visit our website (http://tncouncilofteachersofenglish.webs.com/) for more details on leadership opportunities with TCTE.
Cooking and gardening are some of the oldest and most persistent literary metaphors. In Gorgias, Plato likened rhetoric to cooking, and gardens from Eden to Frances Hodgson Burnett’s The Secret Garden have captured readers’ and writers’ imaginations. In the past year, we, a team of educators from Belmont University, have explored new connections—both practical and metaphorical—for cooking and gardening within the framework of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Texts devoted to cooking and gardening are abundant and stretch across the various subject areas. Through our experiences, we have learned that cooking and gardening not only enhances teaching and learning but builds relationships and community across disciplines.

Readers of this publication will certainly know that since the introduction of the CCSS, teachers from all disciplines are expected to integrate more informational texts into student learning experiences. For many (including those who teach English), this new expectation can be fraught with anxiety. Through the support of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, our team has developed and facilitated professional development experiences for teachers across disciplines who are interested in integrating informational texts about cooking and gardening. Belmont faculty members from the departments of Biology, Chemistry, English, and Education worked together and with 22 middle and high school teachers and administrators from Davidson County, Dickson County, Clarksville/Montgomery County, and Franklin Special School District to explore how cooking and gardening can lay the foundations for engaging lessons that facilitate student learning experiences in a variety of content areas and utilize a variety of informational texts.

Participating teachers and Belmont faculty members began the workshops by exploring the connections between the CCSS ELA and CCSS Literature for Science and Social Studies Standards, particularly the standards that lend themselves to using informational texts. All participating teachers received a library of texts that can be used for cross-disciplinary planning; see Figure 1 for a list of those informational texts.

An important aspect of creating engaging interdisciplinary lessons focused on cooking and gar-
dening is ensuring that students have the opportunity to participate in hands-on experiences related to these topics. Project participants received classroom cooking kits as well as gardening (continued on page 3) kits to facilitate the development of experiential learning experiences across the curriculum.

Such shared experiences can vary from growing and monitoring the development of certain plant species to observing the chemical reactions that take place while making pita bread. A sample lesson on cheese demonstrated the possibility of connecting chemistry, history, and a sensory writing exercise.

The lesson began with an experiential study of the chemistry of cheese and a sensory writing exercise following a cheese tasting. Analyzing a brief essay on Charlemagne’s preferences for cheese from Harold McGee’s On Food and Cooking helped enrich the chemistry lesson and the sensory writing exercise through an exemplar informational text.

On the final day of our five-day workshop, we baked bread together in a chemistry “lab” and discussed the final chapter from Michael Pollan’s The Omnivore’s Dilemma (young readers’ edition) on preparing a “perfect” meal. Pollan’s thoughtfully considered meal provided a helpful illustration of the ways teaching and learning, like cooking and gardening, are at their most dynamic when pursued in community.

Dr. Lauren Lunsford (Associate Professor of Education and Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Science) and Dr. Bonnie Smith Whitehouse (Associate Professor of English) teach and learn together at Belmont University in Nashville. They truly enjoy collaborating on scholarly work in the areas of education, English studies, and general education.

**Figure 1: INFORMATIONAL TEXT EXEMPLARS ON COOKING & GARDENING (selected list)**

- The Common Core Guidebook: Informational Text Lessons, 6-8, Rozlyn Linder
- Green Thoughts: A Writer in the Garden, Eleanor Perenyi
- The Forest Unseen: A Year’s Watch in Nature, D. Haskell
- Culinary Reactions: The Everyday Chemistry of Cooking, Simon Field
- Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation, Michael Pollan
- Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food, Wendell Berry
- Edible Schoolyard: A Universal Idea, Alice Waters
- Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life, Barbara Kingsolver
- On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen, Harold McGee
- The Omnivore’s Dilemma: The Secrets Behind What You Eat, Young Readers Edition by Michael Pollan
- The Botany of Desire, Michael Pollan
- I’m Just Here for the Food, Alton Brown
- Wicked Plants: The Weed That Killed Lincoln’s Mother, Amy Stewart
- Seed to Seed: Seed Saving and Growing Techniques, Suzanne Ashworth
Please join us for the 2015 PDI at the stately Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville.

Jumping off the Cliff: NOTES to break the fall

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To submit an article for Tennessee English Journal, please email editor Susan North at susan-north@utc.edu.

**Book Details:**
208 pages  
Suitable for Grade 5 and up

**Book Trailer Link:**  
https://www.wevideo.com/view/253460086

This historical fiction chronicles the life of 12-year-old Johnny Lequire, his enduring friendship with Yellow Dog, a respected member of the Cheraw tribe, and their spiritual connection with the allusive Shadow Dogs.

When Young John becomes an orphan at the age of twelve, he becomes caught up in a life-long web of lies and deceit and only the Shadow Dogs remain a pillar of hope. John’s determination to maintain a good name proves to be a difficult task, as he faces several life-changing decisions, including an extended separation from his Cheraw friends.

Readers will follow John on his life-long journey through the Carolina Mountains. They will also experience the joys and heartbreaks that seamlessly weave enduring relationships. In the end, they’ll discover a power of spirit that can only be found in the quiet mist of the mountains.

For more information, check out Amazon’s *Look Inside* feature at http://goo.gl/BIXpOE. The author may be reached via email at theshadowdogs1@gmail.com.

Wendy Picarella is a Pre-Service Teacher in Tennessee Tech University’s 2+2 Program at RSCC Oak Ridge. She is a wife, mother, and lover of a good read.

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT,**  
**IVY PHILLIPS!**  
**WE APPRECIATE YOUR DEDICATION TO TCTE!**
Rouse the Poet! by Jill Henderson

poetry
ancillary, expendable diversion
a lesser art
fallow ground knowingly left uncultivated

poetry
a distilled echo of one's heart
reverberated by a stranger
sung in rhythms unrehearsed, but familiar

poetry
absent in the hurried, stress-laden classroom
overshadowed
by colorful packages of dull empty fact and repetition

poetry
content connected to the soul and self
Shall we instead
embrace skill more easily defined and tested?

Revive the poet!
Rouse him from his idle slumber, and
bid him to return to his contemplation.

Revive the poet!
Invite him to parade his questions in your classroom
without clear, objective answers.

Revive the poet!
Revel with him in the chaos - momentarily and regularly.
Linger with him on occasion following his gaze across the puzzle that is life.

Leave your students with a lasting impression
that ideas, experiences, and impressions matter
and words, words can marvel, play, or lament, as well as persuade and inform.
and rhythms, mingle and align words to seduce, savor, croon, and contend.

Jill Henderson is a native Tennessean and a recent graduate of The University of Tennessee with a PhD in English Education. She is also a veteran teacher of twenty-plus years who currently teaches seniors at a rural high school in east Tennessee.
the Heart by Jill Henderson
(a poetic response to Mary and Percy Shelley as revealed in AngelMonster by Veronica Bennett)

the heart
litmus test or a deceiver
the heart
my mis-trusted, truest self
the heart
unbridled lover of self
the heart
self-love masquerades as a love for another
the heart
a ravenous beast- feeds lustfully, freely
the heart
lies recklessly - resisting no prize

the heart
captained only by its passions
is shipwrecked now!

the heart - remains
silent, lifeless, still
pleasures lie on distant shore

the heart
A traitor!
the beast has fed on itself

the heart
leaves its morose widow
staring empty at the sea

Caught by Jill Henderson
captured joys and insights
captured like a butterfly in a net
flutters before my eyes
as words of a poem
details
tasted, explored and caressed
common moments
pondered
endeared or rejected
held still
for inspection
by the poet's pen.

Image and Word By Jill Henderson
light falls on a subject
bewitching the artist
the brain shifts naturally
without conscious bidding
from moving- to still images
inspired - the artist creates

insight, intrigue, or longing
besets a moment unannounced
the poet succumbs, a willing victim,
ensnared by moments
savored, investigated, distilled
artfully - the poet records.

images of the artist
words of the poet
reflections of the world
surrounding us
and within us
I Write in Chinese Now
by Kevin Marshall Chopson

I write in Chinese now -
the original characters
for chopping wood and restore.
In a calligraphic hand,
I draw the rising sun -
a reflection shown in reverse.
A first step, a simple
step. A step toward rivers
and mountains.

I Must Crush Time
by Kevin Marshall Chopson

I must crush time and, therefore, redefine
these lines that shape our world. These shifting
shadows are but a sly forgiving dance with day,
a photograph of the sun’s moment on the leaf.

Kevin Marshall Chopson received his
M.F.A. from Murray State University
and is a two-time Pushcart Prize
nominee with nearly one hundred poems
published in literary journals,
magazines, and newspapers throughout
the U.S. and abroad - including The
Southern Poetry Anthology, English
Journal, Saint Katherine Review, The
South Carolina Review, Poetry Salzburg
Review, and Nashville Arts Magazine.
The new poems appearing here are a
result of his rekindled interest and
interaction with all things Chinese.
Chopson teaches writing at Davidson
Academy and Volunteer State Community
College.

To share your musings in poetry or prose, please
email Melissa Comer at mcomer@tntech.edu or
Kristen Trent at kpennycuff@tntech.edu
There’s An App for That

Technology has the power to open dialogue with students and to engage them more fully in the learning process (see Kearsley & Shneiderman’s research on the Engagement Theory at http://home.sprynet.com/~gkearsley/engage.htm). With this belief at the core of our teaching lives, we, Comer and Suters, strive to implement various technology components into the courses we teach at Tennessee Tech University. From this implementation, and having just received a grant for a classroom bundle of iPads, we found ourselves wondering what apps might be useful for teaching English. Working closely with three then undergraduate students (Lundy, Russell, & Wilkerson), we conducted a search of the various apps available. The process of selection for the apps was simple: Apps had to be free, user-friendly, and viable tools for classroom use. We wanted them to be accessible to teachers and students alike; we wanted them to be easy to use; and, we wanted them to be engaging with a sound educational platform.

What follows is a list, originally shared at the 2013 TCTE conference, of our favorites. This list is a growing organism. As such, we welcome suggestions for apps that do not appear on our list. Please email us with any recommendations you have for additions. Contact Melissa Comer at mcomer@tntech.edu or Leslie Suters at lsuters@tntech.edu.

LITERACY APPS

- EASYBIB
- IPOE COLLECTION
- INSPIRATION MAPS
- COMMON CORE
- GREEK GOD
- GRAMMARPOLIS
- SPELLING CITY
- GRAMMAR GIRL
- MAD LIBS
- TRADING CARDS
- READ-N-RESPOND
- NOTABILITY
- STORY DICE
- COMPARE-N-CONTRAST
- COMMON CORE
- TOOLS4STUDENTS
- TOOLS4STUDENTS2
There’s An App for That

Dr. Melissa Comer, former TCTE President, is a Professor in the College of Education at Tennessee Tech University where she teaches technology and literacy-based courses. Dr. Leslie Suters, an Associate Professor in the College of Education at Tennessee Tech University, teaches technology and content-based courses. Connie Lundy, a Resident Teacher, is part of the Tennessee Tech University 2+2 Program at Roane State Community College in Oak Ridge. April Wilkerson and Nicole Russell are recent graduates of the 2+2 Program. All are technology enthusiasts.
Visions and Revisions

Reading Fair: A New and Exciting Way to Promote Reading

BY BRANDY GATES

President Lincoln once said “A capacity and taste for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others.” He understood the importance of reading and all the opportunities it opens. I find this to be especially true in young children.

This was my opening speech to my presentation “Reading Fair: A New and Exciting Way to Promote Reading and Writing” for a TCTE conference in Memphis last month. This was to be my first time presenting in front of others in this type of setting. I had prepped for months by doing web-based research as well as research throughout the Tennessee school systems. I created a Prezi and brochures, culminating in my putting together information packets to be handed out to attendees that showcased Reading Fair projects of students that I had found to complete such an activity. A lot of work went into this presentation!

The subject of Reading Fairs is something I am passionate in learning more about and something I wanted to share. Though I am not a teacher, I am a pre-service teacher with about ten years of substitute teaching and teaching assistant experience in a few school systems, my current role in education helped me to prep for the full presentation. Hopefully, with this article I can give you an abridged version of the presentation and entice you into discovering more about Reading Fairs for yourself.

As a pre-service teacher, I have had the opportunity to observe many excellent educators who strive to do the best for their students, while struggling to teach to “the text,” teach to CCSS, teach to CFA’s, teach to RTI’s, and teach to individual needs. As I stand back and observe, I ask myself how can I teach to all those different demands and still make it engaging to students with the different strategies and assessments. If a teacher who has been teaching for ten, twenty or thirty years is struggling, what makes me different?

Nothing…I am no different but I do want to be the best that I can be for my students when the time comes. I want them to love learning and what better way to do that then to do exciting projects that tie in with all those demands. With those demands being focused on reading and writing, one way to introduce and excite children into reading is through Reading Fairs. Reading empowers us and it opens doors to our imagination, creativity, and ingenious thinking while bringing books to life.

Reading Fair was originated in the late 1990’s by Mississippi’s Education Department. The fair’s original purpose was for students to share their favorite book by Mississippi’s Education Department. The fair’s original purpose was for students to share their favorite book and complex text, students sometimes find those demands hard; however, Reading Fairs are a fun way to encourage them to read these very types of text.

By participating in a Reading Fair, students will have the opportunity to dig deeper into non-fiction and complex text. They will also learn to ask their own questions and find their own ways to answer those questions.

By participating in a Reading Fair, students will have the opportunity to dig deeper into non-fiction and complex text. They will also learn to ask their own questions and find their own ways to answer those questions.

Even though I was not able to formally present this project (unfortunately no one attended my presentation), the experience itself was still rewarding. I look forward to the day I am able to incorporate this strategy into my own classroom. Lastly, I hope that you are able to take from this something that you can incorporate into your classroom with your students as well.

Brandy’s Prezi outlining Reading Fairs can be accessed at: http://prezi.com/33s0qocudsl/reading-fair-a-new-and-exciting-way-to-promote-reading-and-writing/. Additionally, all presentation materials are located on the TCTE Conference Wiki at http://tcteconferencewiki.wikispaces.com/.

Resources:
https://sites.google.com/a/gaston.k12.nc.us/hawks-nest-reading-fair-2013/reading-fair-information
http://www.pinterest.com/holleyj/reading
http://prezi.com/ezwzwvbxxa1/reading-fair-2014/

Brandy Gates, wife and mother of two, is a Pre-Service Teacher at Tennessee Tech University. She is part of the 2+2 Multidisciplinary Education Program housed at Roane State Community College in Oak Ridge.
Visions and Revisions

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2014 NCTE Annual Convention
"Story As the Landscape of Knowing"

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Mark your calendar and register now at http://www.ncte.org/annual/registration.

Don’t forget to check out these other exciting events as well:

♦ “Risk and Reward” 2015 CCCC Annual Convention March 18-21 in Tampa, FL

♦ “Sharing Our Stories, Re-visioning Our Worlds: Reading, Writing, and Taking Action” 2015 WLU Literacies for All Summer Institute July 9-11 in Atlanta, GA

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We Hope to See YOU

TCTE Professional Development Institute

2015 in Nashville