

Lit Bits

Cleveland Heights–University Heights
School District

Volume 4, Issue 3

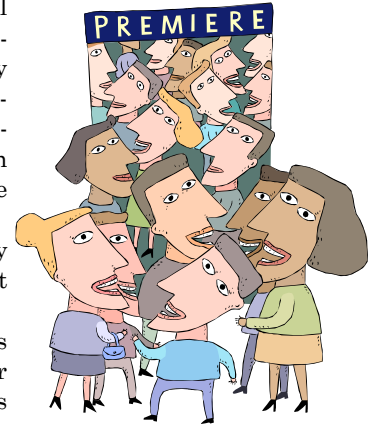
March 2007

POETRY GALA COUNTDOWN

Each school will submit the name of one student star who will perform an original or published memorized poem at our district-wide *Poetry Gala* scheduled for Thursday, May 31st from 7:00-8:30 PM. This celebration aligns with our district literacy focus on oral communications. The student's name and a copy of the poem to be performed must be sent to Taylor to the attention of Helen Hirsch by April 27th. Students will be performing at Wiley auditorium. While schools will establish their own selection process, rubrics to describe the qualities of excellent oral presentation are posted on our literacy web-site: <http://resources.chuh.org/Literacy/main.lasso>.

Additional supportive resources can be acquired by consulting with district literacy coaches. Lessons to prepare students for practiced performance poetry can be found at www.poetryteachers.com.

The selected student from each school should be prepared to introduce themselves and briefly explain why they chose the published poem that they will perform, or what inspired them to create their poem. Literacy coaches will provide opportunities for site-based rehearsals at the building level prior to the gala.



Summer Writers'

Workshop!

**OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS
WHO LOVE TO WRITE ...
AND IT'S FREE!**

CH-UH is introducing an enrichment opportunity for students who love writing and who will be entering grades six, nine, ten or eleven. The workshops will take place at John Carroll University from July 30th -August 10th. Students can choose to attend from 10:00-12:00 or 1:00-3:00.

This unique experience will provide opportunities for students to explore various genres of writing, engage in conversation with other writers, and experience a university setting. Participants will explore their voice and stretch their writing talent.

Applications have been sent to all students potentially eligible. Sessions have a **limited**

capacity, so encourage writers to sign up quickly to reserve a place. The application process includes parent permission, a signature recommendation from a teacher from the past two years, and a brief explanation by the writer about why he or she hopes to participate in the writing workshop.



SIRI A— Spring Sessions Scheduled

Middle school and high school teachers who have not participated in SIRI A (*State Institute for Reading Instruction: Adolescent Literacy: Reading to Learn across the Curriculum*) have an opportunity to enroll through STARS. Two sessions will be held. The middle school offering is scheduled on four Thursdays: May 10, May 17, May 24, and May 31. Sessions will take place at Roxboro Middle School in the Rocket Zone. The high school sessions will occur at Taylor on the following Mondays: April 16, April 23, April 30, and May 7.

This research-based professional development course provides excellent literacy resources supporting strategic instruction across content areas. It aligns seamlessly with district literacy initiatives related to writing, vocabulary acquisition, comprehension strategies, and the importance of matching text to reader.

Last year, close to one hundred middle school and high school teachers participated in Siri A. The additional courses will assure a shared vision related to supporting students with high yield instruction that promotes lifelong learning.

ELA Core Program McDougal Littell Field Test

A newly developed McDougal Littell program has joined the contenders for consideration as the ELA Task Force prepares to make a recommendation for 6-12 adoption. Teachers have been using and reviewing Glencoe and an older edition of McDougal Littell textbooks and resource materials.

The review process leading to a recommendation for the 2007-2008 school year took a turn in January when McDougal Littell presented their yet-to-be-published ELA program with an invitation to participate in three week field tests. Eleven middle school and high school English teachers agreed to examine and use a three week unit. A representative group from the ELA Task Force will have an opportunity to extend their understanding of the program with a more comprehensive look at all of the components in April.

On April 25th a district-wide after school meeting will provide an opportunity for review of the feedback for the three programs being considered.

Vocabulary Protocols Come Alive at the Elementary Buildings

At a recent reading specialists' meeting, teachers were given an opportunity to share how they are supporting their building staff with the new vocabulary protocols. Each team of Title I and board supported teachers has established a building plan in coordination with their literacy team. Teams have devised a variety of plans that suit each unique building.

Here are some building plan highlights:

- Crafting newsletters to staff with information regarding a protocol with hints and tips that are 3-hole punched so they can be easily inserted into the red binder.
- Implementing a protocol in a small class setting, then modeling it in a regular class setting, and finally sharing insights at a staff meeting.
- Facilitating discussions at staff meetings focused on results and successes related to the implementation of the protocols.
- Creating large laminated posters that support the protocols to share with building staff.
- Publishing 'Reader Tip of the Week' for staff members that includes information about the protocols and additional related resources.



Closer Examination of Vocabulary Strategies

Two professional development sessions have been held at Taylor for K-5 elementary teachers.

On January 23rd, teachers participated in an interactive session which focused on *The Knowledge Rating Chart*. One of the advantages of using this vocabulary strategy is the ease with which you can assess students' level of vocabulary understanding either as a pre-assessment or post-assessment. This strategy helps students recall prior understanding of words, generate new understanding based on the text, and discuss deeper levels of word knowledge. Teachers debated the selection of words and templates to maximize student learning.

We have placed several modified *Knowledge Rating Charts* on the literacy website to provide you with alternative formats which address specific purposes. If you have created another that you want to share, please send it to Karen Heinsbergen and it will be considered for inclusion on the literacy website.

March 20th will provide another opportunity for teachers to explore a vocabulary protocol. We will examine the use of a semantic feature analysis. Teachers will view a modeled lesson in a second grade classroom to see the strategy in action. Teachers will then construct their own *Semantic Feature Analysis* graphic organizer based on an upcoming unit.

7th and 8th Grade Students Compete in Writing Competitions

On Saturday, March 10, 2007, Wiley Middle School under the direction of Kelly Roath and Heather Penny, hosted one of the state regional tournaments for Power of the Pen. Over 200 students from 55 Ohio school districts participated with other regional qualifying seventh and eighth grade students. Prior to competing in the regional tournaments, students participated in district tournaments and the top 50% moved on to competition in the regionals. At the District Tournament, and Mariah Williams, a 7th grader at Wiley, placed 4th, and Ellie Austin, a 7th grader at Wiley placed 6th out of 90 students.

Fourteen students advanced to the regional level. This is an extraordinary opportunity to showcase talented writers from our district's middle schools. The following students represented our district: 7th Grade Monticello - Anna Claspy; 8th Grade Monticello - Katie Starr and Imani Banks; 7th Grade Roxboro Middle School - Francesca Langer and Jordan Doll; 8th Grade Roxboro - Mairi Mull and Taylor Wong; 7th Grade Wiley-Ellie Austin, Helena Soreo, Geoffrey Golden, Mariah Williams, and Rayven Moss; 8th Wiley - Gwen Donley and Vanessa Thomas.

Each student wrote three responses on three topics. Each writing session lasted forty minutes. Students were evaluated on their creative response based on voice, unity, language, and an electric idea. Ellie Austin, a seventh grader from Wiley Middle School, earned a trophy by winning 2nd place out of approximately 140 seventh graders. The seventh grade team from Wiley who included Ellie Austin, Geoffrey Golden, Rayven Moss, Helena Soreo, and Mariah Williams, earned 4th place out of 55 teams. The top qualifiers from the Regional Power of the Pen Tournament will travel to Wooster to compete in the state finals in May.

Congratulations to the advisors of our Power of the Pen Clubs at our middle schools for coaching these talented writers: Monticello: Debra Frost and Marion Kopp; Roxboro: Denise Lewis and Jennifer Collins, and Wiley: Heather Penny and Kelly Roath.

A very special "hats off" to Wiley Middle School for hosting the Regionals!



WILEY'S SEVENTH GRADE TEAM-REGIONAL 4th PLACE CHAMPS

Vocabulary Protocols to Compare Words

One high yield strategy to support vocabulary acquisition and concept understanding is the Frayer Model. The Frayer Model was developed in 1969 by Frayer, Frederick, and Klausmeier to analyze and assess attainment of concepts. Teachers across content areas will find the Frayer Model very beneficial. The teacher identifies the critical words students need to know in order to understand a concept. When used before and after reading, this powerful tool will increase a student's knowledge by relating what is unknown, to other concepts that are more familiar.

The framework of the Frayer Model focus on the concept word and displays visually characteristics of the concept word, non-characteristics of the concept word, examples of the concept word, and non-examples of the concept word. It is important to include both examples and non-examples.

First, the teacher will assign the concept word being studied, and then describe the steps involved in completing the chart. After students have been taught how to complete the Frayer Model map, students can independently mirror the process with other concepts/words. Student can work by themselves or in pairs. Through teacher-guided discussions, students can share with one another their discoveries. The Frayer Model maps can be displayed and used for student reference, and students can be encouraged to modify and add to their maps as new learning occurs.

<p>ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS Start by listing the characteristics of the key word or concept word. Ask students if they can think of any characteristics of the key word.</p>	<p>NON-ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS Next, list the non-characteristics of the key word or concept word. Ask students to think of any non-characteristics of the key word.</p>
<p>EXAMPLES In this third box, list examples of the key or concept word. Ask for student input at this point. Have students offer examples, and write their suggestions on the board or overhead.</p>	<p>NON-EXAMPLES In this final box, list non-examples of the key or concept word. It is important to include this section, so students will be able to distinguish between what the word is not. Ask for students input. Write their suggestions on the board or overhead.</p>
<p>KEY WORD Write the concept word. This is the key word or concept of the lesson.</p>	

POETRY GALA WARM-UP! APRIL 5th Deadline!

One way to get students excited about our upcoming Poetry Gala is to participate in a poetry writing contest. One to consider is the Poetry Contest described below hosted by Creative Communications.

- *All poets must be in grades K-12. (You will compete against poets in your own grade division. Your poem will be entered into the grade division you list on the entry form)
- * Only one entry per poet for each contest. Submitting more than one entry may disqualify you from the competition. Poets may enter one entry in the Summer contest, one in the Fall contest and one in the Spring contest.
- * All poems are limited to 21 lines of text.
- * Poem must be the original work of the poet.
- * Please do not type in all capital letters or double space the poem.

Additional information and entry forms are available online:

<http://www.poeticpower.com/usacontest.html>



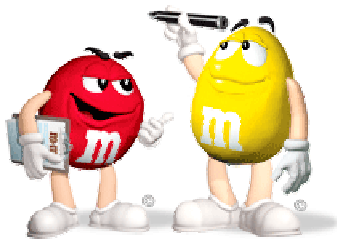
K-5 Macmillan McGraw-Hill May In-Services

ELA Core Implementation follow-up sessions are scheduled for May. Teachers have been sending writing exemplars so that we can have conversations about excellent writing. The due date for sending these gems has been extended to May 1st. Please send samples to Helen Hirsch at Taylor. Copies will be shared so that we can explore what excellence looks like at each grade level, and reflect on how we support the growth of writers vertically through the grades!

May 29th: AM-grade 2.....PM- grade 3

May 30th: AM-grade 4..... PM-grade 5

May 31st: AM-KPM-grade 1

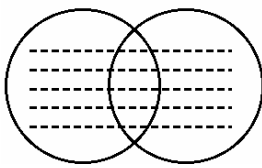


Don't forget to send your summer reading recommendations to Jeff Ahrendt at Taylor by Friday, March 23rd! Help improve our summer reading program, and earn an opportunity to win a Border's Gift Certificate!



Power Tools

Venn Diagram



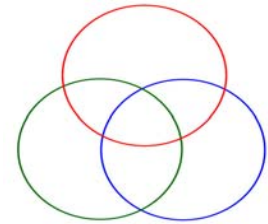
Graphic organizers are holistic, visual representations of concepts, facts, details, and other relationships within an organized structure. They help students think visually about their own thinking. Using graphic organizers in all content areas with students has many benefits. They encourage students to use nonlinear thinking. They help students to categorize information which aids in memory and retrieval. A graphic

organizer provides students with a way to analyze and construct meaning from text and represents abstract ideas in concrete forms. They support visual learners while increasing clarity and understanding. Higher level thinking skills and processes are developed through the use of graphic organizers.

Graphic organizers can be incorporated before, during, and after instruction and can be used individually or in groups. Graphic organizers exist in a variety of forms and can be used at any grade level from kindergarten to the 12th grade! The following are some of the researched-based

graphic organizers that have shown to have a positive impact on student learning: Venn diagram, array webs, Frayer Method (see previous page), T-charts, sequence charts, semantic feature analysis, cause/effect charts, and concept circles. Add these tools to your repertoire of resources.

Triple Venn Diagram



Noble Parent Achievement Academy

Noble parents of 3rd, 4th and 5th graders were invited to attend the annual Parent Achievement Academy the evening of February 22. Ms. Beers and Karen Franz started the evening off with an overview of the Ohio Achievement Test.

For the literacy portion of the night, Title I Teacher, Mrs. Mihevic, provided tips on vocabulary building

activities, such as word sorts and strategies for increasing achievement terminology and word sorts. Ms. Katz presented a list of questions to ask children before, after and during their at home reading in the form of a bookmark as a handy reference. On the reverse side of the bookmark was a list of what needs to be included when retelling a story. Ms. Glickman gave the parents a quick overview of web sites they can use at home to reinforce vocabulary strategies. (Booklets of the games, activities and web sites are still available).

The parents were then divided into grade levels for math presentations by the 4th grade homeroom teachers. The "Academy" evening was a big success for all who attended. Parents left with many good

ideas and a better understanding of what their children need to know to prepare them for the Ohio Achievement Tests coming up in May.



Literacy Website Getting Better all the Time

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights literacy website has much to offer. Beginning with the K-5 ELA core curriculum map, teachers, intervention specialists, and parents can get a quick glimpse at the weekly themes, comprehension skills, phonics/spelling focus, writing mode and trait, and grammar skill students are studying across the grade levels.

The writing topics, which are listed by grade level provide a handy reference for teachers as they are planning their instructional time to include the steps of the writing proc-

ess. A pacing chart identifies the timeline for harvesting certain writing samples to show growth over time.

Planning your calendar for the remainder of the year? A glance at the calendar identifies district level literacy meetings scheduled for the 2006-2007 school year.

Looking for an approximate grade level range for students' reading abilities? Check out the reading score conversion charts.

Interested in finding a rubric to identify qualities of a poetry presen-

tation? Try one of the two that are available. Choosing the word version of the posted poetry rubric allows you to adjust the rubric to reflect elements unique to your content and students.

Need a Cornell note-taking template and/or a brief overview of the strategy? You can find ten possible templates, half of which can be modified.

In addition to the resources described, power points and videos of modeled lessons are also available at this site. Check it out!