

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Meadow Brook Writing Project, Summer 2008

By Laura Gabrion

An invitation to join the MBWP for the summer was met with some trepidation. What would we do for four weeks? What would be expected of us?

Such anxieties were quickly dispelled as we launched into a first week packed with information and activity, and we felt that we had (as the facilitators jokingly insisted) stumbled upon a summer camp for grown adults.

Over the course of four relatively short weeks, a great deal of material was covered within the classroom. Each morning began rather quietly as we responded to prompts in our Writer's Notebooks.

Topics varied from visual prompts to written ones, and occasionally, an early morning question was posed, and we diligently set to writing down our thoughts. Mid-morning activities ranged from presentations by our facilitators to those from participants in previous summer institutes.

Each presentation was geared toward looking at ways we could enhance our own best practices by learning about best practices others had already adopted. The afternoons were spent in close contact with our reading/writing groups.

Here, the real soul-baring occurred as we exposed our written words to the gentle scrutiny of our group members. The feedback was valuable. Often, as writers, we think we have expressed ourselves clearly when in fact a portion is clear only to us. The input was indispensable, and each night we would go home to make those adjustments, reread, rewrite, and perhaps post on the e-anthology for additional feedback.

In the final weeks of the Project, we began to share not only our writing but also our own teacher presentations, allowing us to begin to rethink our approaches to teaching writing as we made our way out of these close quarters, back into our summers, and on to using those wonderful ideas as we began to prepare for the onset of fall.

Laura is a 2008 MBWP summer fellow and teacher consultant. She is also a professor of English at Macomb Community College.



Laura Gabrion

SUMMARY

Created by Lori Ostergaard (ostergaa@oakland.edu) on Tuesday, January 27, 2009
Modified by Lori Ostergaard (ostergaa@oakland.edu) on Monday, February 2, 2009
Article Start Date: Tuesday, January 27, 2009