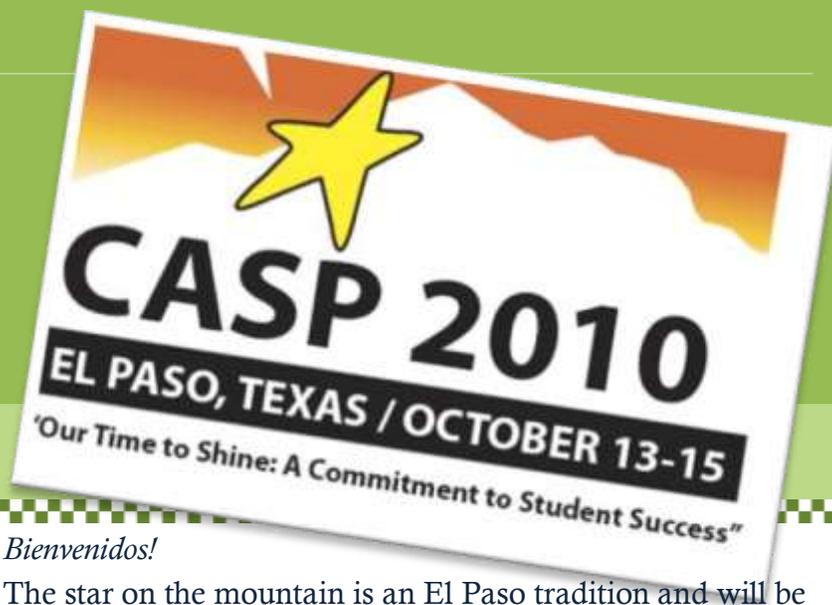


CASP News

Camino Real Hotel

101 S. El Paso St.

El Paso, TX 79901
Reservations: 915-534-3000



Inside this issue:

[CASP Conference Information](#)

[Conference Keynote Speakers](#)

[Notable Pre-Conference Institutes](#)

[Area Attractions](#)

[Hotel information](#)

[Travel info](#)

[TxCRLA News](#)

[TADE News](#)

Feature Articles:

- Transformation of South Texas College
- Growing Developmental Specialist at Lone Star College Montgomery
- The Importance of Advising
- "Observation-Interpretation": A Simple Strategy for Difficult Writing Problems

Bienvenidos!

The star on the mountain is an El Paso tradition and will be lighted to welcome you to the CASP conference in October. Our strong collaborative educational efforts including the University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso Community College, and all 12 area school districts are a shining example of our dedication to student success. From the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence established in the early 1990's to the El Paso Area College Readiness Consortium established in 2005, El Paso has developed a strong commitment to K-16 partnerships. El Paso is located at the western tip of Texas, where Texas, New Mexico, and Old Mexico meet. It is the largest international metroplex in the world and seamlessly blends cultures and traditions: from the historic Old West to the colors of Mexico, from the heritage of Native Americans to the beauty of our desert sun.

We look forward to hosting the conference at the Camino Real Hotel and providing many opportunities for professional development.

College Academic Support Programs Conference Biennial Newsletter, jointly sponsored by Texas Association for Developmental Education (TADE) and Texas College Reading Association (TxCRLA).

The CASP Conference is also sponsored by The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

CASP 2010 Conference

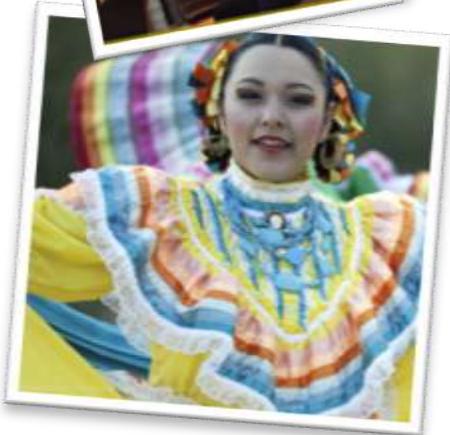
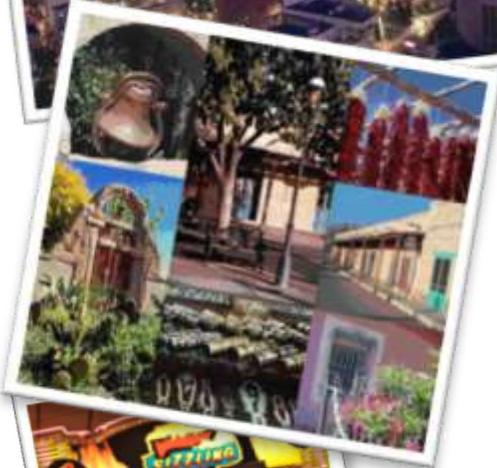
VARIOUS PRE-CONFERENCE
INSTITUTES THROUGHOUT
THE DAY
WED, OCTOBER 13

Old Mesilla Tour

WEDNESDAY OCT 13
1:00 – 5:30 PM

Opening gala Reception on
Wednesday Oct 13
6:30 – 8:30 pm

For an electronic copy of the Call to
Conference and registration information, visit
<http://www.TADE.org>



CASP 2010 Conference Keynote Speakers

Luncheon Keynote Speaker

Claire Ellen Weinstein, Ph.D

Professor-Educational Psychology

College of Education

University of Texas at Austin



Claire Ellen Weinstein is the Director of the Cognitive Learning Strategies Project at the University of Texas at Austin. The research she conducts focuses on the roles of strategic and self-regulated learning processes and skills and their impact on student learning and retention at the middle school, high school and college levels. Much of her work focuses on developing diagnostic/prescriptive assessments of students' strategic and self-regulated learning processes and skills to help identify areas in which students need to improve. She also investigates the development of curriculum materials and instructional methodologies for teaching learning strategies to underprepared students, particularly in post-secondary educational settings. Finally, she is interested in the high school to college transition, student retention and the preparation of middle school, high school, college and university teachers, and is the author of Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI).

Breakfast Keynote Speaker

Gail Heidenhain

President Delphin, Inc.

Gail Heidenhain has been consulting on the people side of the business with multinational organizations around the world since 1985. She was born in the USA and lived and worked in Germany and the UK for nearly 25 years. Her life's work has centered on helping individuals and organizations appreciate and tap into the rich diversity of their people by creating a safe and rich working environment that supports learning and inspires motivation, commitment, creativity and innovation. Gail studied international business, linguistics, and German at the University of Georgia, Universitaet Muenchen (University of Munich), and the University of Manchester Institute of Technology and is a certified Master Trainer in AL (IAL and DGSL), an NLP Practitioner, Dialogue-Facilitator (MIT) and was part of the Transformational Coaching Program with Dr. Fred Kofman and Dr. Freeman Dhority from MIT.



Gail is the current president for the International Alliance for Learning, the professional organization for Accelerated Learning (IAL), and has served on the boards of the North American Simulation and Gaming Association, the Southeast Society of Organizational Learning, the German Society for Accelerated Learning (DGSL), and the Organizational Change Alliance.

ion for Accelerated Learning (IAL), and has served on the boards of the North American Simulation and Gaming Association, the Southeast Society of Organizational Learning, the German Society for Accelerated Learning (DGSL), and the Organizational Change Alliance.

CASP Pre-Conference Institute: NADE Certification Training Institute
Presenters: Linda Thompson and Jane Neuberger
8:30 am – 4:30 pm
\$245 or \$295 with training manual

Educators, administrators, and others who are interested in assessment and evaluation of their program(s) and/or are interested in pursuing NADE Certification will have an opportunity to complete the NADE Certification at this pre-conference institute.

NADE Certification was launched in 1999 to recognize programs that meet or exceed criteria of good practices as defined by research and literature of the field. The current NADE Certification process has become a reflection of "accreditation and assessment literature and research in program best practice" (see *NADE Guides*, 2009, page 147).

NADE Certification is given for components of a learning assistance or developmental education program. While NADE does not certify entire programs, the programs eligible for certification are: Tutoring Services, Course-Based Learning Assistance (course-based study groups include those such as the Supplemental Instruction model), and Developmental Coursework. In order to be certified, a program component must demonstrate it utilizes practices found in quality services and programs by completing an Application Packet for the program component for which it is applying. This includes the following:

A summary of the results of a systematic self-study using the *NADE Self-Evaluation Guides, 2nd Edition* (2009).

Submitting evaluation data (baseline data, action plans, comparative data, results and analyses) that confirms the program component is using systematic, continuous assessment and evaluation to demonstrate that it is meeting its goals and objectives.

Providing the theoretical framework upon which the program is based.

Other requirements as specified in the individual Program Component Application Packets for which the program is applying.

This workshop will satisfy the training requirement that is part of the application process for NADE Certification. Individuals who intend to pursue certification as well as those who want to learn how they can prepare their program to become eligible for certification are encouraged to take advantage of this training opportunity.

The workshop is most beneficial for those who are directly involved in conducting the program component applying for certification and who will be responsible for coordinating the application process. It is also useful for those interested in learning about conducting program assessment and evaluation and the analysis and presentation of data resulting from such activities. Enrollment is limited to 60 participants. Visit the NADE Certification website at <http://www.nadecertification.net> for further information on certification and the training institute.

[Back to page one](#)

CASP Pre-Conference Institutes

CASP Pre-Conference Institute: Accelerated Learning

Presenter: Gail Heidenhain

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

\$145

You will experience the power and possibilities of Accelerated Learning for your students – an effective, brain-friendly and systemic approach to teaching. Instructors who apply Accelerated Learning find it is an effective map for designing instruction that dramatically improves retention and student success. You will take away practical new tools and approaches that make learning meaningful, joyful, and effective. The certificate you receive counts toward an Accelerated Learning Level One Practitioner certification. (for more information about certification, go to www.ialearn.org)

Accelerated Learning is a research based brain-friendly approach to designing effective teaching strategies that facilitate learner success and each learner's personal development. The Accelerated Learning cycle provides a proven map to guide teachers in designing effective classroom experiences and in facilitating in ways that support, challenge, guide and mentor in equal parts. Realizing that some students come to college with beliefs about themselves and education that hinders their learning, AL strategies guide student thinking in ways that facilitate learning. These methods and processes enable students to expand their thinking, develop their critical thinking skills, recognize the meaning and significance of the learning for them, and develop their capacity to learn.

Participants will experience the AL model in its entirety. With a foundation in the research and an understanding of the key components of AL, participants will be able to apply the cycle in designing their own lesson plans. They will be able to recognize and work effectively with limiting beliefs and help their students move beyond them and tap into their often unrecognized potential. Participants will be able to apply diverse approaches to teaching that appeal to diverse learners. The institute begins before the conference with pre-reading and pre-reflection and continues with some post-reading and reflection after the day is over. Each participant will receive a certificate, "Introduction to Accelerated Learning" that counts toward the internationally recognized Practitioner Certification.

Gail Heidenhain has been training facilitators in Accelerated Learning since 1985. She co-developed the highly successful Accelerated Learning Design Technology employed throughout much of Europe to design and facilitate learning in a variety of contexts and organizations. She spearheaded the DGSL (German Society of Accelerated Learning) 2-year certification program that was implemented in 1991.

In 2004, the International Alliance for Learning presented their certification program based on the German model. Gail was the expert advisor in the development of a research project to test the effectiveness of AL at the University of Munich in 1992 that was sponsored by Siemens. She has designed and facilitated programs using AL in the area of Leadership, Coaching, Team Learning, Productive Communication, Personal Leadership, Intercultural Competency and Customer Service Excellence for organizations in Europe and the US. She is currently working with higher education faculty at many institutions including Ferris State University, the Lone Star College System, and the University of Houston. (<http://www.delphin-international.com/Delphin.htm>)

For a list of all pre-conference institutes check out the electronic copy of the Call to Conference
<http://www.TADE.org>



Chamizal National Memorial

The Chamizal Convention Memorial was established to commemorate the diplomatic relations between Mexico and the United States. The Memorial's visitor center and Los Paisanos Gallery are open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and offer exhibits and films on Chamizal and border history. The Cordova Island Trail is a 1.8-mile walking trail that encircles the 55-acres urban park. Views of the Franklin and Juarez Mountains, the El Paso downtown skyline can be seen from the trail.

The Memorial is in south-central El Paso, 6 minutes or approximately 3 miles from the Camino Real Hotel. El Paso Zoo serves as a regional

El Paso Zoo

center for family fun, education, and conservation efforts for wildlife and natural resources. The Zoo is a thirty-five acre home to about 240 species of animals, including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates from North and South America and Asia. The Zoo has a carousel, as well as food and gift opportunities.

Opens daily at 9:30 am and the ticket booth closes at 4:00 p.m.

Ages 13 – 59 - \$10.00

Ages 60 and over - \$7.50

For more information call (915) 521-1850

El Paso is the home to three world-class museums, the El Paso Museum of Art, the El Paso Museum of

El Paso Museum of History and El Paso Museum of Art

Archaeology, and the El Paso Museum of History. Two of these museums are in near proximity to the hotel.

Museum Hours:

Tues – Saturday 9:00 – 5:00 pm

Thursdays 9:00 am to 9:00 pm

Sunday 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Closed Mondays

No admission fee.



CASP Conference Travel Info



El Camino Real Hotel

El Camino Real Hotel is located in El Paso's revitalized downtown adjacent to the newly remodeled convention center and is only 15 minutes away from the airport. The hotel is a shining testament of the city's colorful past and vibrant future.

Camino Real's hotel rate for CASP 2010 will be \$91 plus tax per night. Be sure to mention you are attending the CASP conference when making your reservation. Reservations **MUST** be made on the phone through the hotel by September 28 to get the CASP rate. Call (915) 534-3099 or (800) 769-4300

El Paso International Airport

El Paso International Airport (ELP) is the gateway to West Texas, Southern New Mexico and Northern Mexico. The Airport is located 7.8 miles from the Camino Real Hotel, or about 15 minutes.

Hotel Shuttle

The hotel has a free shuttle from the airport to the hotel. Shuttle runs in front of Baggage Claim every 30 minutes. Call (915) 534-3000 for pickup.

[Back to page one](#)

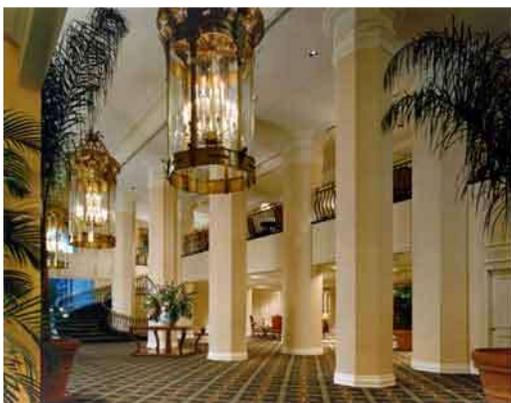
CASP Conference Hotel Info

For reservations call
(915) 534-3000



Camino Real's hotel rate for CASP 2010 will be \$91 plus tax per night. Be sure to mention you are attending the CASP conference when making your reservation. Reservations MUST be made on the phone through the hotel by September 28 to get the CASP rate.

Established in 1912, the Camino Real Hotel is a designated historic landmark located in El Paso, Texas



**Camino Real Hotel
101 S. East El Paso St.
El Paso, TX 79901
(956) – 534-3099 or (800)-769-4300**

CASP 2009 Outstanding Concurrent Session Winners

During CASP 2009, conference attendees participated in a number of excellent presentations and completed evaluations on them. Based on the session evaluations, the CASP 2009 Evaluation Committee is pleased to announce that the Outstanding Concurrent Session was “Developmental Educators’ Handbook: One

Mouse Click to Web Resources.” Betty Woodfill of San Jacinto College (Central Campus) and Jerry Woodfill (formerly with NASA).

The Outstanding Pre-Conference Institute was Denise Lujan’s “Mad Dog Math,” and she is with The University of Texas at El Paso.

The winners will be honored at CASP 2010. In addition, both the Woodfills and Ms. Lujan have been invited to give encore presentations of their award winning sessions at El Paso. Be sure to look for their presentations in the CASP 2010 program.

Town Hall Meeting

Hosted by Tamara Clunis

Director of Developmental Education and Adult Basic Education
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board THECB

Thursday, October 14, 2010 5:45 pm – 6:30 pm

[Back to page one](#)

The Transformation of South Texas College

Terrance “Terry” Miller
South Texas College

As one of Texas’ newest colleges, founded in 1993 to principally serve the populations of Starr and Hidalgo counties in the Rio Grande Valley, South Texas College, commonly called STC, now serves 30,000 students. Most students are first generation first time in college Hispanics. They collectively represent a low socioeconomic population that until 1993 was educationally underserved. Today, STC is a thriving college with two baccalaureate programs and one more in progress. The college provides a stable environment with its founding president Dr. Shirley A. Reed continuing her nationally recognized leadership role. Our graduates traditionally move on to the University of Texas at Pan American in Edinburg, or to the University of Texas at Brownsville to complete their undergraduate degree.

In November of 2006, at a teacher consortium held on South Padre Island, Terry Miller and his colleague Jorge Luis Botello, both instructors in STC’s College Success Department in the Division of Developmental Studies met and listened to a presentation on using Emotional Intelligence in the college classroom by Drs. Gary Low and Darwin Nelson, Professors of Counseling and Educational Leadership at Texas A & M University Kingsville. That chance encounter led to the establishment of a strong, collaborative enduring relationship between Drs. Low and Nelson and STC. To date Miller and Botello along with College Success Department Chair Gardner “Spud” Reynolds have made numerous presentations at CASP, NADE, and annual EI conferences hosted by sponsoring colleges including STC. In addition, as certified EI Trainers, we have served 12 adjoining public school districts training their respective faculty and staff in using the principles of EI to improve student achievement and success.

Institutionally, STC has led the way. Administrative leaders including our president have all completed Nelson and Low’s two-day certification workshop. All faculty members of STC’s Developmental Studies Division have done the same.

Having 3 certified trainers at STC, a standardization process is underway to provide outside the region access to our model for those schools interested. The schools served thus far have been served on a case-by-case basis. A need for standardization is very apparent.

Approximately 50% of our students take the College Success course, a requisite if the student is assigned to a developmental course. In the CS course the students all take the ESAP or Emotional Skills Assessment Process. This self-assessment was developed by Low and Nelson and serves as a pre- and post- self assessment instrument administered online. It has proven to be instrumental in bringing about increased student retention and achievement. We have collected data from the ESAP over the past 3 years and are very encouraged by the positive results.

In conclusion, a chance encounter at a teacher’s consortium nearly four years ago established a lasting bond between two renowned researchers, Drs. Gary Low and Darwin Nelson, and the entire community of South Texas College: a strong, mutually respectful relationship that continues today.

Terrance “Terry” Miller
Assistant Chair
Assistant Professor
College Success Department
STC

Email: tmiller@southtexascollege.edu

Phone: (956) 973-7656

TxCRLA News

What a year this has been! I always enjoy attending the CASP conference, meeting and networking with faculty and learning assistance professionals from across the State. This year, however, being behind the scenes, so to speak, during the design and development of CASP 2010 has been an experience I will always remember. Those who make up the CASP group (TxCRLA and TADE board members) are some of the most knowledgeable, helpful, and business-minded, not to mention the most humorous, people I have yet had the pleasure of working with. It has been an honor serving as your President for the 2009-2010 year.



I encourage you to attend 2010 CASP in El Paso—a 2010 All-America City winner. As always, the CASP conference will be a fabulous occasion to share research, resources, and ideas with ample opportunities for networking and professional development, as well as experiencing scenic El Paso.

Everything about CASP 2010 has star quality written all over it—from the conference theme, which is Our Time to Shine: A Commitment to Student Success, to our wonderful line-up of pre-conference institutes and concurrent sessions. Our conference venue, the historic Camino Real Hotel, has been an El Paso treasure for nearly a century. Once considered the “showcase of the West,” the Camino Real boasts an impressive grand lobby with crystal chandeliers, marble floors, gilded pillars, and one of the most photographed staircases in the Southwest. Adjacent to the lobby is the famous Dome Bar, crowned by an original Tiffany glass dome. The guestrooms offer scenic views of the Franklin Mountains, home of the Star of the Mountain, which will be lit in honor of CASP, and downtown El Paso. Conference tours and activities include a trip to the historically-rich community of Old Mesilla (“Little Tableland”) and gambling night at a local star-studded casino.

The CASP Site Committee has organized a remarkable conference, starting with the Wednesday night Opening Gala Reception—an evening of Mariachi music and good friends. We are incredibly fortunate to have Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein, author of *The Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)* and Gail Heidenhain, president of the International Alliance for Learning (IAL), the professional organization for Accelerated Learning, as our Thursday luncheon and Friday breakfast keynote speakers. Capping off Thursday’s array of concurrent sessions is the annual Town Hall Meeting, hosted by Tamara Clunis of the THECB, who will discuss plans for Developmental Education across the State and Coordinating Board funding opportunities.

El Paso has always been an oasis destination for travelers, explorers, and those of us with a passion for learning and teaching. With its classic Western geography and its shared international border, Mexico's rich culture pervades every part of El Paso, from its architecture and art to its celebrations and cuisine. Visitors will have no problem finding plenty to do in El Paso. We look forward to seeing you in El Paso at our 2010 CASP Conference. You will come away from the conference a shining star and committed to student success.

Sincerely,
Sara Weertz
TxCRLA President

Several TxCRLA Awards Available

We want to give you money! The Texas chapter of the College Reading and Learning Association (TxCRLA) is supportive of its members' efforts toward professional growth. To encourage members to pursue research and professional development, TxCRLA has established two awards—the Ann B. Faulkner Professional Development Award and the Gladys R. Shaw Professional Development Award.

Ann B. Faulkner Professional Development Award

TxCRLA established the Ann B. Faulkner Professional Development Award in 1994. TxCRLA members may apply for up to \$500, which is available annually, to further professional development and research activities related to learning assistance or developmental education. Appropriate uses of the award include graduate study, attendance at professional meetings, and research.

To apply — Applicants should provide a proposal for professional development or research, including the specific need for financial support and a budget of projected expenses. The specific amount requested and other anticipated resources of funding should be indicated. A letter of support from the applicant's immediate supervisor or a major professor should also be included. Lastly, applicants should indicate the following information on their proposal: Name, address, email address, phone numbers, academic affiliation and position, as well as length of TxCRLA membership. **APPLICATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 1, 2010.**

Gladys R. Shaw Professional Development Award

TxCRLA established the Gladys R. Shaw Professional Development Award in 2008. Current TxCRLA members may apply for a \$500 award, which is available annually, to support their travel to professional development opportunities related to learning assistance and/or developmental education. Applicants might wish to apply the award toward attendance at a conference (e.g., CASP, CRLA, NADE, or NCLCA) TIDE, the Winter Institute, or a discipline-specific workshop.

Subsequent to participation in the chosen conference or workshop, the winner will be expected to report any resulting outcomes and benefits to the membership. This report may be presented as a concurrent session, poster session, or as a newsletter/website article.

To apply — Applicants should provide a proposal indicating where and when they hope to travel; that is, which conference, institute, or training they plan to attend. Applicants should provide an explanation of their need for financial support and include a budget (or projection of expenses). While the primary purpose of this award is to mitigate travel expenses, should money remain after travel expenses are paid out, the applicant can explain how remaining funds might be used to pay for registration fees of other costs associated with attendance. A letter of support for the activity from the applicant's immediate supervisor or major professor should also be included. Lastly, applicants should indicate the following information on their proposal: Name, address, email address, phone numbers, academic affiliation and position, as well as length of TxCRLA membership. **APPLICATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 1, 2010.**

Winners of the awards will be announced at the 2010 CASP Conference in El Paso. Applications may be submitted through the mail or via email to the TxCRLA President. Current TxCRLA officers are ineligible for these awards. If emailed, indicate "PROPOSAL" with award name in the subject line. Send applications to:

Sara Weertz, TxCRLA President

ASU Station #11004
Angelo State University
San Angelo, TX 76909
sara.weertz@angelo.edu

New incoming TxCRLA officers 2010-2011



Sharon Miller
President-Elect



Essie Childers
Secretary

The TxCRLA Board of Directors is pleased to announce the results of the recent election for 2011 officers. Sharon Miller of Lone Star College-Cy Fair has been elected to serve as president-elect, and Essie Childers of Blinn College-Bryan has been elected as secretary.

Sharon Miller joined the founding faculty of Lone Star College-CyFair to teach Transitional English in 2003. Sharon has won numerous awards for teaching including the Adjunct Teaching Excellence Award at LSC-North Harris and the 2009-2010 Faculty Excellence Award at LSC-CyFair. Her colleagues have named her the campus Advocate for Excellence, Active Learning Guru, Learning Innovator, Star Morale (Builder), and the President's Cy-Fair Spirit Award winner. In 2009, Sharon spent a month at the prestigious Kellogg Institute sponsored by the National Association for Developmental Education, and also gained her Accelerated Learning Starter Certificate. She has served as TxCRLA Secretary since 2008. Sharon will serve one year as President-Elect.

Essie Childers has been a full-time Parallel Studies faculty member at Blinn College in Bryan, Texas, for 3 years. However, she comes to Blinn College with over 21 years of experience with developmental education. On the college level, Essie has taught for Austin Community College, Oklahoma City Community College and Tyler Junior College. Her current assignments at Blinn College are Reading 0306, Study Skills and Education 1300. Essie also serves as a Co-Chair of Achieving the Dream for Blinn College. In 2008, Essie was the recipient of CRLA's Professional Developmental Award. Essie will begin a two-year term as secretary of TxCRLA.

For 2010-2011, Cheryl Baker-Heller (University of Texas-El Paso) will become TxCRLA President. Sharon Miller (Lone Star College) has been nominated to serve as President-elect and Essie Childers (Blinn College) has been nominated to fill the office of Secretary (Sharon Miller's current office). Lastly Richard Trevino (University of Texas-Pan Am) will hold the second of his two-year role as Treasurer.

CRLA President Karon Mathews will preside over the installation of all TxCRLA officers at the CASP 2010 Friday breakfast, October 15.

TxCRLA Officers 2009-2010

President

Sara Weertz
 Angelo State University
 ASU Station #11004
 San Angelo, TX 76909
 Sara.wertz@angelo.edu

President-Elect

Cheryl Baker Heller
 University of Texas at El Paso
 500 W. University
 El Paso, TX 79968
 Cherylb@utep.edu

Past-President

Sharon Haigler
 Texas A&M University
 TAMU 4230
 College Station, TX 77843
 s-haigler@tamu.edu

Treasurer

Richard Treviño, Jr.
 University of Texas Pan American
 1201 W. University Drive
 Edinburg, TX 78539
 Rich_Trev@utpa.edu

Secretary

Sharon Miller
 Lone Star College-CyFair
 Tech100-F
 9191 Barker Cypress Rd
 Cypress, TX 77433
 Sharon.T.Miller@lonestar.edu

Membership Chair

Dr. Kathy Stein
 Sul Ross State University
 C-132 SRSU
 400 N Harrison St
 Alpine, TX 79832
 kstein@sulross.edu

TxCRLA Brown Bag Webinar Series

Through a 2010 CRLA grant award, TxCRLA implemented the Brown Bag Webinar Series as a way to

- 1) reach out to developmental education faculty and learning assistance professionals and
- 2) promote TxCRLA membership through free online professional development.

Our first webinar event in mid-April was an introduction to Accelerated Learning with Gail Heidenhain. The AL webinar was a huge hit, and Ms. Heidenhain has gone on to accept not only a CASP 2010 all-day pre-conference institute on Accelerating Learning but also a speaking engagement as the breakfast keynote.

Our next Brown Bag Webinar (TBA) presentation of Denise Lujan's Mad Dog Math, which won Best Institute Award at the 2009 CASP conference and will be re-presented at CASP 2010 in El Paso. While many of our TxCRLA members are unable to join us at CASP, they might be interested in attending a webinar of our more popular conference sessions.

The Brown Bag Webinars are typically one hour in length, and are hosted by Melissa Thomas (University of Texas San Antonio) who manages the online conferencing software, tracks the attendees, and monitors the webinar for problems. Look for our webinar email blast announcements coming soon.

[Back to page one](#)

Texas College Reading and Learning Association Membership Report

Submitted by Kathy K. Stein, Membership Coordinator

| THECB Region Number | Region Name | Number of Institutions | Number of TxCRLA Members |
|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | | 2009 January | 2009 July | 2010 January | 2010 July |
| 1 | High Plains | 17 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 2 | Northwest Test | 25 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 8 |
| 3 | Metroplex | 61 | 23 | 23 | 9 | 9 |
| 4 | Upper East Texas | 29 | 10 | 10 | 25 | 25 |
| 5 | Southeast Texas | 9 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 8 |
| 6 | Gulf Coast | 52 | 28 | 33 | 29 | 30 |
| 7 | Central Texas | 33 | 34 | 37 | 33 | 33 |
| 8 | South Texas | 55 | 67 | 76 | 53 | 53 |
| 9 | West Texas | 15 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| 10 | Upper Rio Grande | 10 | 13 | 13 | 18 | 19 |
| | No Institutional Association | | 5 | 5 | 11 | 11 |
| TOTAL | | 306 | 198 | 216 | 200 | 202 |

Remember: If you attend CASP 2010, then your TxCRLA (and TADE) membership is automatically renewed. If you are unable to attend CASP 2010, be sure to renew by going to <http://txcrla.org> to the membership page.



[Back to page one](#)

| TxCRLA Treasurer's Report | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|---|------------------|
| May 5, 2010-September 13, 2010 | | | |
| Submitted: Richard Treviño, Jr. | | | |
| Beginning Balance: | | | 14,034.36 |
| Deposit: Description | | | |
| | 05/05/10 | Deposit: CRLA, Reimbursement Webinar Expenses | 200.00 |
| | 03/24/10 | Deposit: Membership | 10.00 |
| | 08/24/10 | Deposit: Membership | 20.00 |
| Total Income | | | 230.00 |
| Expense: Description | | | |
| | 04/01/10 | Service Charge | 5.00 |
| 1505 | 05/21/10 | CASP 2011: AT&T Executive Education Conference Facilities Reservation | 500.00 |
| | 06/01/10 | Service Charge | 5.00 |
| 1506 | 07/29/10 | CRLA Conference Fee: Sara Weertz | 275.00 |
| 1507 | 08/24/10 | CRLA Conference Fee: Cheryl Heller | 235.00 |
| 1508 | 09/03/10 | KYD Design CASP 2011 | 100.00 |
| 1509 | 09/13/10 | BCS Trophies | 100.46 |
| 1510 | 09/13/10 | CRLA Airfare: Cheryl Heller | 340.80 |
| Total Expenses | | | 1,561.26 |
| Balance to Date | | | 12,703.10 |

*Account reconciled through August 2010 statement.



College Reading & Learning Association

43rd Annual Conference

November 3-6, 2010

Salt Lake City Marriott Downtown

<http://www.crla.net/conference/index.htm>

[Back to page one](#)

Growing Developmental Specialists at Lone Star College-Montgomery

Dr. Lori Hughes and Dr. Lana Myers Lone Star College-Montgomery

The field of Developmental Education has never received so much attention. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) Statewide strategies, counseling/academic advising, faculty development, program excellence, assessment/ placement Developmental Education Plan 2010-2011 emphasized a demand for "systemic reform" to address six core areas: "innovative program, and alignment with Adult Basic Education" (2). This systemic reform is becoming a reality at Lone Star College-Montgomery. LSC-Montgomery was recently awarded a \$1.5 million dollar grant from the THECB. One million dollars is earmarked for Developmental Education programs and \$500,000 is allocated to Adult Basic Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs. As part of one of the fastest-growing community college systems in the state of Texas, LSC-Montgomery has over 10,000 students enrolled each semester, with approximately one third of those students requiring at least one developmental reading, writing, or math course. One unique aspect of the Developmental Education Demonstration Projects at LSC-Montgomery is the emphasis on professional development for faculty.

LSC-Montgomery has developed a partnership with Texas State University – San Marcos, a national leader in developmental education. The university is providing developmental education instruction workshops to faculty, as well as the opportunity to complete graduate-level coursework in developmental education. Throughout the spring and summer of 2010, enrolled faculty members completed a hybrid course: Reading 5320 - Foundations of Academic Literacy. For this course, instructor Dr. Jodi Holschuh, traveled to the LSC-Montgomery campus for face-to-face instruction as well as provided an online component to the course. Enrolled faculty may apply to the Master Reading Teacher Certificate program available through Texas State University – San Marcos. During the two-year cycle of the THECB grant, up to five graduate-level courses will be offered to LSC-Montgomery faculty. In essence, LSC-Montgomery is growing its own developmental specialists.

As noted by Paulson and Armstrong (2010), it is a critical time for instructors to be prepared to teach postsecondary literacy. Moreover, programs need to understand the theories surrounding developmental education as well as make "pedagogical choices, improvements in the quality and quantity of teacher preparation for postsecondary literacy instructors" (p. 10). Community college instructors typically earn at least a Masters degree in their teaching field, but their graduate coursework may not include coursework pedagogically geared towards the student population most in need of, "strengthen[ing] skills [to] successfully complete college-level courses" (Bailey). With the financial support of the THECB grant to promote its developmental program, LSC-Montgomery is poised to become a leader in supporting its developmental students by providing faculty with professional development and theoretical background specifically tailored to Developmental Education.

Given all the statewide attention and financial support that Developmental Education programs are receiving, it is an exciting time to be a part of a growing Developmental Education program. Current research points to the crucial need for effective "programs [aimed at] transitioning students to upper level classes" (Paulson & Armstrong, 2010). With unique courses (including paired courses which combine a developmental reading course with a credit-level course such as Psychology) faculty members across disciplines meet to communicate about the needs of their students in order to help them successfully meet the challenges of postsecondary courses. In addition, faculty members collaborate in advanced courses (like RDG 5320) which encourage reflective practice, promote increased attention to developmental students' unique needs, improve assessment strategies, and assist faculty in developing classroom activities that help to prepare developmental students for success in credit-level courses. For more information about LSC-Montgomery's Developmental Education grant, please contact Dr. Barbara Buchanan at Barbara.L.Buchanan@LoneStar.edu.

Bailey, T. (2009, Feb). Rethinking Developmental Education in Community College. Community College Research Center. CCRC Brief. Vol 40.

Lone Star College-Montgomery Receives \$1.5 Million Grant for Developmental Student Success. Lone Star College – Montgomery. 7 July 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.lonestar.edu/15483.htm>

Paulson, E and Armstrong, S. (2010). Postsecondary Literacy: Coherence in Theory, Terminology, and Teacher Preparation. *Journal of Developmental Education* 33(3), 2-13.

Statewide Developmental Education Plan: 2010-2011 Biennium. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Agenda Item IX-C. 6 July 2010. Retrieved from http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/generalpubs/agenda/ag2009_07/IXC/IXCA1.pdf

TADE News

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you will explore the possibilities our Texas Association for Developmental Education provides. I am excited because our Fall Newsletter will be filled with an abundance of information about the “happenings” in TADE and upcoming events of interest.

As President of TADE for 2009-2010, I met several goals during this time. The first was to increase membership by encouraging everyone to investigate the institutional memberships. I discovered that there are several Texas NADE members who are not currently TADE members. The TADE organization has recruited those folks and extended invitations to new faculty at our institutions. You can continue to be a big help in this endeavor. Next I made timely applications for all grants available to our organization. TADE received four \$500 grants from NADE.



Without doubt, I wanted our organization to continue to stay politically informed and active. I feel this is necessary to make important decisions regarding the future of developmental education.

The TADE Board invited our Texas NADE colleagues to become members of TADE. As you can see there are many benefits to being a member and we welcome all of you.

TADE Membership offers many benefits:

- Opportunities for professional growth.
- Sponsored annual conferences on developmental issues.
- Updated information on TSI changes, as well as the support of a political liaison officer who monitors legislative efforts concerning TSI.
- Membership in an organization of instructors and administrators who share similar successes and challenges.
- A state organization supported by our national parent organization, NADE, which maintains and formulates initiatives and policy concerning developmental education.
- CASP Newsletter
- Call to Conference and Call for Proposals

If you are already a member, we appreciate your continued support and look forward to seeing you at CASP 2010.

Carolyn Mello
President Texas Association for Developmental Education



TADE Officers 2009-2010

President

Carolyn Mello
Lamar State College-Orange
410 Front
Orange, TX 77630
Carolyn.Mello@lsco.edu

President-Elect

Dr. Leslie Kimberling Jones
University of Texas at
Brownsville
80 Fort Brown
Brownsville, TX 78520
Leslie.Jones@utb.edu

Past-President

Dr. Laura M. Villarreal
University of Texas at
Brownsville
80 Fort Brown
Brownsville, TX 78520
Laura.Villarreal@utb.edu

Treasurer

Glenda Solomon
Collin College-spring Creek
Campus
Spring Creek Parkway
Plano, TX 78074
golomon@cccdd.edu

Secretary

Frank Cronin
Austin Community College
Northridge Campus
11928 Stonehollow Rd
Austin, TX 78758
fcronin@austincc.edu

Membership Coordinator

Denise Lujan
University of Texas at El Paso
500 W. University
El Paso, TX 79968
cdlujan@utep.edu

TADE Officer News

During the summer, Frank Cronin attended the Kellogg institute on the beautiful campus of Appalachian State University.

Frank Cronin is currently serving his first year as secretary of TADE.

Frank has tutored and taught at ACC different levels of ESOL writing, all levels of developmental writing since 1987. In addition to those courses, I have taught study skills courses. His interests include Astronomy, Benjamin Franklin baseball, politics, and Jazz. The last three he shares with his son Jonathan who is twenty-seven.



TADE would like to thank Glenda Solomon for her two years of service as TADE treasurer.



[Back to page one](#)

Apply now for TADE Awards

TADE Professional Development Scholarship \$500

Current TADE members may apply for a \$500 award, which is available each year for professional development opportunities or research not funded by the applicant's institution. This award may not be used for research related to fulfilling degree requirements such as dissertation or thesis. The funds may be used, however, for professional travel such as conference attendance not fully funded by the applicant's institution.

If you are interested, please send an email giving a short description of the conference or leave related to either learning assistance and/or developmental education.

Email: Carolyn.Mello@lsco.edu

Application deadline is October 1

TADE Tax Exempt Status Update

Last year, TADE, under the direction of Glenda Solomon and Gladys Shaw, began the process for applying for EXEMPT status as a requirement of the IRS. The IRS responded to our application for EXEMPT status and requested the re-wording of two items within the TADE Constitution.

Since the IRS requested a response from TADE by September 14, the Board presented a vote on the re-wording to the TADE membership via e-mail.

Below are the items the IRS indicated our constitution must include:

The first paragraph of Article II: PURPOSES:

TADE is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Under Article IX: DISSOLUTION:

Upon the dissolution of the TADE organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes

These wording changes were made to satisfy the IRS requirement and no other changes to the TADE constitution were made. An email was sent out to members who responded via e-mail to vote for these changes. Normally, a discussion of any changes would have been held at a state meeting, however, the deadline set by the IRS was prior to the state conference.

[Back to page one](#)

New TADE elected officers to be installed at the next CASP conference in El Paso 2010-2011



Mitchel Burchfield
President-Elect



Arlene Ready
Treasurer

Dr. Mitchel Burchfield has taught English composition for over 21 years at Southwest Texas Junior College. After spending two decades in a variety of businesses, he returned to college and earned a masters degree in English from Texas A & M University – Kingsville and a doctorate in education from Grambling State University in Louisiana. As the Director of the Academic Center for Excellence, he helped develop and now helps supervise the learning assistance efforts at Southwest Texas Junior College. He also teaches developmental math and reading as well as education courses for prospective teachers. He is coauthor, with David Sabrio, of *Insightful Writing* (Houghton Mifflin (Cengage), 2009), a rhetoric/ reader textbook suitable for either the highest developmental writing course, or the first semester college writing course.

Arlene Ready currently teaches developmental reading students at the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College. She has a M.Ed. as a Reading Specialist and is currently a doctoral candidate at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi and is working on her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis on literacy. She recently conducted research for her dissertation on the literate identities of developmental reading students from both sides of the Texas border. Ms. Ready has presented at several national and state conferences such as AERA, CRA, and CASP, as well as other local conferences within the South Texas region.

The National Association for Developmental Education's 35th Annual Conference will be held at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. February 23 - 26, 2011.

For more information visit the NADE website
<http://nade2011conferencedc.com/>





Texas Association for
Developmental Education
www.TADE.org



Supporting Developmental Education in the State of Texas

TADE
TREASURER'S REPORT
Income Statement
January 1, 2010 – July 31, 2010

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Beginning Balance 01/01/10 | | \$11,451.75 |
| Income: | | |
| Membership | \$2,320.00 | |
| CASP 2009 (Conference profit) | 9,223.33 | |
| NADE Grants (A,B,C,& D) | 1,903.58 | |
| Total Income | | \$13,446.91 |
| Expenses: | | |
| Travel/Meals | \$ 3,425.90 | |
| Seed Money, CASP 10 | 500.00 | |
| CASP 09 Speaker Reimbursement | 484.00 | |
| Reimbursement for NADE Certification | 500.00 | |
| Printing Expense- CASP 09 | 58.50 | |
| Accounting Services | 550.00 | |
| Liability Insurance | 75.00 | |
| Web services fee | 86.97 | |
| IRS Exempt Status Application fee | 850.00 | |
| CASP 2011 Hotel deposit | 500.00 | |
| Total Expenses: | | \$7,030.37 |
| Ending Balance 7/31/10 | | \$17,868.29 |

The Importance of Advising

William Yslas Vélez

As a mathematician I have been dismayed at the decrease in the number of mathematics majors nationwide. In 1985, about 13,000 bachelor's degrees in mathematics were awarded. In 2005 this number had dropped to about 12,300. During this same time period between 3000-5000 additional degrees in mathematics education were awarded each year. This drop in the number of mathematics majors is more serious than the data presented when it is recognized that there was a substantial increase in the number of students pursuing university studies during this time period. It is no surprise that minorities constitute a small proportion of these degrees. As the demographics of this country change, the mathematical enterprise is ill equipped to deal with the growing Hispanic presence in our educational system.

All of us in academia must confront the problems caused by the large numbers of students arriving at our universities and colleges unprepared to deal with college level mathematics. Remediation is a large and costly activity. Students face serious obstacles in making their way into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) careers when they arrive with serious deficiencies in mathematics. Not only is serious mathematical training required for STEM careers but mathematical ideas and tools are now part of the academic framework of vast number of academic areas. The increase in the use of data in all fields now makes data analysis critical, and that requires a more profound mathematical training. Calculus is a gateway course for these careers. It is imperative for more of our students to enroll in calculus so that they can be part of the future STEM workforce.

Increasing U.S. participation in STEM careers is a real necessity and this is particularly true for minority students. As the one and only Chicano mathematician ever in our department I am often called upon to provide advice as to how to increase minority participation. This request for advice is often couched in terms of remediation. Though providing this remediation and helping students transition into higher level is of paramount importance, I have focused my energies for the last 25 years on another task. How can I get minority students in calculus to understand how important this course is to their career and how can I help them survive and thrive in this course? An even more important goal is to get students to understand that by increasing the mathematical content of their undergraduate curriculum, they will open up a world of opportunities.

Why calculus? Students who arrive at our universities enrolled in calculus are often ignored. It is assumed that these students have arrived sufficiently prepared to enroll in this course. Yet the drop-out/failure rate for first semester calculus can be over 50%. Moreover, calculus students are not routinely provided with enough career information to enable them to understand how important this course is. One big problem that incoming students face is that they don't understand the serious transition that is about to occur as they go from high school to college. Bright students often think that the methods of studying and preparing for exams (often a review the night before the exam) will carry over to college. Employing this kind of study strategy is a recipe for disaster for many of our incoming students. Addressing these issues has been my focus for the last 25 years.

In the late 1980s I began my work with minority students. I established my Minority Calculus Advising Program. I obtain a list of minority students enrolled in our three-semester calculus sequence and a staff person calls the student and makes a twenty-minute appointment for the student to come to my office. In these twenty minutes I go over their schedule, explain university resources, and point paid internship opportunities for STEM majors. I also point out that graduate STEM education is essentially free (I want students to begin thinking about post-graduate education even though they have just arrived.). I also have the following attitude. If a student walks into my office enrolled in calculus and that student does not have a major declared, then with high probability by the time they walk out of my office, the students is a math major and I will be their advisor. I state that my duty is to find wonderful educational opportunities for them, as long as they are willing to work hard.

In 2003, I accepted the position of Associate Head for Undergraduate Affairs. In this position I am charged to work with ALL students at my university. I have adapted the ideas and techniques that I developed to work with minority students to work with all students and the results of my efforts can be seen in the following table.

Continued on next page...

| Year | Number of Mathematics majors | % of minority students | Number of mathematics minors | Number of graduates | % of minority graduates |
|---------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 2000-01 | 295 | ~15% | 199 | 46 | 13% |
| 2001-02 | 327 | ~15% | 355 | 52 | 17% |
| 2002-03 | 323 | ~15% | 390 | 59 | 8% |
| 2003-04 | 307 | ~15% | 447 | 50 | 6% |
| 2004-05 | 456 | ~15% | 531 | 65 | 20% |
| 2005-06 | 472 | 16% | 487 | 62 | 8% |
| 2006-07 | 505 | 19% | 527 | 82 | 13% |
| 2007-08 | 564 | 22% | 572 | 79 | 14% |
| 2008-09 | 567 | 22% | 562 | 70 | 21% |
| 2009-10 | 582 | 20% | 624 | 95 | 18% |

I have found that the simple act of inviting students to add mathematics as a major (I never suggest to students that they change their major.) is powerful. I now send out thousands of email messages each year inviting students to take more mathematics and to consider adding mathematics as a major.

This country needs a more technically trained workforce and mathematics is the key to that. Our students need to understand the important role that mathematics should play in their academic lives. Just as instruction in English is not designed to produce poets and novelists, but rather a population that can process the written word, so it is with mathematics. Mathematics is the language of the future and our students need to be conversant enough in it that doors are open to them to pursue their dreams and their goals.

William Yslas Vélez (<http://math.arizona.edu/~velez/>)
 Professor, Department of Mathematics
 University of Arizona
 Tucson, Arizona 85721

Future CASP Conference locations:

CASP 2011 October 23 – 25 in Austin

CASP 2012 Joint conference with CRLA in Houston Nov 7 – 10

CASP 2013 South Padre Island

[Back to page one](#)

“Observation-Interpretation”: A Simple Strategy for Difficult Writing Problems

Donald Newman

This essay outlines a simple strategy for addressing several difficulties basic writers struggle with when trying to master academic writing: they have difficulty writing de-centered prose; they have difficulty reflecting on, analyzing and generalizing from their own experience; they have difficulty organizing their discussions; they have difficulty using details and examples effectively; and they find analysis a mystery. These difficulties become especially frustrating for both students and teachers when the focus is on analysis of literary texts.

These difficulties typically are rooted in students' tendency to confuse their subject with what they have to say about it, and this confusion significantly diminishes their control over their material. Below I describe simple strategy for clearing up this confusion. I can provide only a brief sketch of it here, but what I provide will be sufficient to make use of it.

IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of this strategy is to teach students to distinguish between what they perceive and their responses to what they perceive. That they confuse the two is easily dramatized by a simple question: “Are you all looking at the same teacher?” The majority of students are likely to say they are not. It is easy to explain that they are confusing what they think about the teacher with the teacher.

To begin sorting out this confusion, it is helpful to explain what happened in this demonstration. I begin my explanation with the physiology of perception, and we focus on the two major senses, sight and hearing, as these are likely to be the most important for the writing and analysis they will be doing in college.

I help them understand the source of this confusion with a simple schematic I call “observation-interpretation,” and it is based on the principle that we must perceive something before we can respond to it. To illustrate how to distinguish between what they see and hear and their responses to it, I draw a diagram on the board: a large cross with “observation” on one side of the vertical line and above the horizontal line, and “interpretation” on the other side.

First we talk about observation, sensory data from outside that enables us to apprehend features of the external world, the objective. Since we are dealing with the external, I emphasize a couple of points which I list under the “observation” heading: (1) an observation must be the same for everyone; (2) because it is, there can be no arguments about what is observed; any disagreement can be settled by an appeal to the senses because an observation can be proven true or false with the senses; and (3) an observation has no intrinsic meaning; it is just an observation.

We then turn to interpretation. I explain that any response to an observation, even a gut reaction, is an interpretation, and I emphasize those aspects of an interpretation that differentiate it from an observation. I list these under the “interpretation” heading: (1) Any time we attribute significance or meaning to an observation, we are interpreting it; (2) The meaning or significance we attach to an observation comes from our inner world; it is subjective; (3) Because it is subjective, interpretations are necessarily not the same for everyone; and (4) Interpretations cannot be proven true or false with the senses. If we want people to accept the truth or validity of our interpretation, we must argue the point by showing the observation on which it is based.

To drive the point home, we focus on distinguishing between an observation and a concept, a mental construct and therefore an interpretation. I have a couple of favorite discussion strategies for helping them understand this distinction. I ask them to look around and tell me what they see. Invariably several will respond “students.” This answer leads to a discussion of why we can't see students: whether or not the people in the room are students depends on the definition of “student” being applied, and it is not the same for everyone. I make it clear that all they can see are specific individuals. To emphasize the point, I explain that they cannot touch a student, but they can touch Jose or Clarissa.

This discussion leads to a little true-false quiz intended to help them grasp the distinction. I ask them: is this statement—“I have a weed in my yard”—an observation or interpretation? In response to “an observation,” I ask them to describe a “weed,” and of course they describe buffalo grass, crab grass, dandelions, and so on, or they offer generalizations that can describe any plant. I then explain that a “weed” doesn't exist; it is a concept expressing a value judgment about a specific plant. I offer another statement: “She's a lady.” Observation or interpretation? The same sort of discussion ensues, with the point being that such a statement is not about the woman being observed but about the observer, who has perceived some aspects of the woman's conduct and expressed approval of it.

Continued on next page

The last thing we do is to turn interpretations into observations. I return to “she’s a lady” and ask them to turn this statement into an observation. Some respond: “she’s a woman.” This statement can’t be proven true or false either because “woman” is also a matter of definition, usually cultural. We conclude this discussion by turning the statement into an observation: “she’s a female.” Admittedly it’s a silly statement, but it can be proven true or false by the senses (though I do mention the case of the South African female athlete who needed DNA tests to determine her sex). I conclude with turning interpretations typically taken to be observations into observations: “The building is tall,” “The flower garden is pretty,” “The package is heavy,” “He’s a bad man,” and so on. All these are responses to observations, not the observations themselves. This little strategy has some powerful applications

APPLICATION

Writing

I apply it to writing by changing the terminology slightly: observation-interpretation becomes “subject-comment”: the subject is what we are talking about and the comment is what we have to say about it. I point out that this is the basic subject-predicate order of a declarative sentence (active voice) in English. The subject-comment terminology gives students a way to organize their discussion: they provide readers with what they intend to discuss (the subject), and then they say what they have to say about it (the comment).

This schematic can be used to organize the body of an essay (but not in the traditional five-paragraph format). To use it for organizing a discussion, they break the body of the essay into two sections by dividing the subject from the predicate in the thesis statement. The subject becomes the subject of the first section, which they use to describe their subject for an audience unfamiliar with it. Discussing the first section offers an opportunity to talk about descriptive writing, which I present as an organized inventory of observable features, and narrative, an account containing action, dialog and details anyone could have seen and heard. This discussion provides an opportunity to explain how to break a subject into parts for detailed discussion. If the body of the essay begins with a description of the subject, however, they need alternative strategies for writing introductions. However, once they have learned to write a detailed description, this section can be used for an introduction if they understand it well enough to shorten it effectively and can weave further details into the second section.

The second section comments on the subject described in the first section, and I urge them to repeat the predicate portion of their thesis statement as a main idea organizing this section. Here they discuss the opinion expressed in the predicate. Focusing on what is now a main idea offers the teacher opportunities to talk about comparison, cause & effect analysis, and chronology, three important ways to conceive of and organize a discussion. I also urge them to talk about the observations/details they included in section one, which ties the two sections together.

The same principle can be used to organize a discussion inside the sections. One of the major problems basic writers seem to have is mixing description of their subjects with their comments, and this turns a discussion into a jumble. If they learn to describe first and comment second, their discussions will be more organized. If they want to talk about the significance of an experience or an example, they provide readers first with the object to be discussed or analyzed, and then they explain its significance.

The emphasis on observation as the basis for interpretations has several uses. For one, the emphasis observation places on detail makes it much easier for the students to get details into their writing because they begin to see details, and their having details to use makes it easy for teachers to show them how to use those details. For another, the concept of observation enables them to treat their own experience as observations, which provides the critical distance necessary for them to reflect on their experiences and their responses to it.

Analysis

People who confuse their responses to an object with the object itself cannot see what they are looking at, and because they cannot, they can’t see details, which they must see if they are expected to analyze. Once they can pick out details, students can be shown how to interpret those details to answer broader questions, and when they explain how they came up with their interpretation, they are engaged in analysis. This discussion helps them learn to analyze their own experiences and generalize from them.

Literary Analysis

This strategy is especially useful in classes that emphasize literary analysis as students frequently confuse their interpretation of a text with the text itself. To conduct an analysis of a short story or poem, students must be able to

Continued on next page

observe textual features: plot events, dialogue, characterization, setting description, figurative language, image, and so on. There can be no disagreement about what is actually on the page. What they can disagree about is the significance of what they observe, its contribution to thematic development, how author probably wanted it interpreted, and so on.

The emphasis on the features of a text promotes an “inside-out” reading, one that begins with an examination of textual features. Students tend to interpret a text in terms of what it means to them, and then they look to the text to justify their interpretation. This is an “outside-in” reading, and while it is a reasonable approach in a high school classroom governed by the reader-response principles of Probst and his predecessors, it doesn’t hone the skills necessary for analyzing a text. Moreover, an outside-in reading causes problems reading what is in front of them: they overlook or ignore important features of the text or they add material that is not there. Either way, they end up creating their own text and the author’s.

This strategy also helps them organize their criticism. If they are discussing a feature or pattern in a literary text, they first describe the feature—a description of a character, a setting, a snatch of dialogue or an event— before they begin discussing its contribution to the story. The same strategy can be used for the study of poetry. They quote the word, the phrase, or the image and explain how it fits into a surface reading of the poem before they begin teasing out suggested meanings beyond the literal meaning. Presenting their analysis this way leads to a more organized and more insightful discussion of a literary text.

Students who can distinguish between an observation and an interpretation and understand how to handle each can’t help but notice an increased clarity and sophistication of their writing. I have used this strategy for years, and it has other applications that will become self-evident to anyone who uses it.

Donald J. Newman

Department of English

The University of Texas-Pan American



*October 23-25, 2011
Austin, Texas*

SANKOFA (pronounced san-ko-fa) represents the very purpose of educators coming together. The word comes from the Akann – Ti language spoken in Ghana, West Africa, and is derived from the words SAN (return), KO (go), FA (look, seek, and take) or more literally, "go back and take." We respectfully adopt Sankofa's symbol of the mythic bird that moves forward while looking back with an egg that represents the future. Sankofa signifies our quest for new knowledge and wisdom—using our collective 30 years of CASP experience to guide us.

SANI RETURN! While difficult to capture the true essence of the old Villa Capri, our very first and second conference hotel, and one that no longer exists, you will find appealing accommodations at the new AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center, conveniently located on The University of Texas at Austin campus.

KOI GO! Embrace Austin's multicultural community bursting with artistry, music, history, language, state government, education, scrumptious food, and that innocent affection for anything weird. The music on Sixth Street awaits you as does the Gutenberg Bible, Esther's Follies, The State Capitol, Barton Springs Pool, and our beloved colony of Mexican-tailed bats.

FA! LOOK, SEEK, and TAKE! Come experience new knowledge, models, and theories that will serve our students. Gathering are an array of state, nationally, and internationally known scholars—all with the purpose of moving Texas to the forefront of the fields of developmental education and learning assistance.

30 YEARS OF WISDOM: MOVING FORWARD, LOOKING BACK. The Texas Chapter of the College Reading and Learning Association (TXCRLA), the Texas Association for Developmental Education (TADE), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THEBC), and postsecondary education institutions in the Austin – San Marcos corridor are pleased to announce the 30th anniversary CASP conference to be held in Austin, Texas, October 23-25, 2011.



Russ Hodges and Carol Dochen, CASP 2011 Site Co-Chairs,
invite you to join CASP's 30 Year Anniversary and to embrace Sankofa!
For more information visit www.txcrila.org or www.tade.org.

[Back to page one](#)