



Kentucky Council of Teachers of English / Language Arts  
www.kcte.org

Fall Newsletter

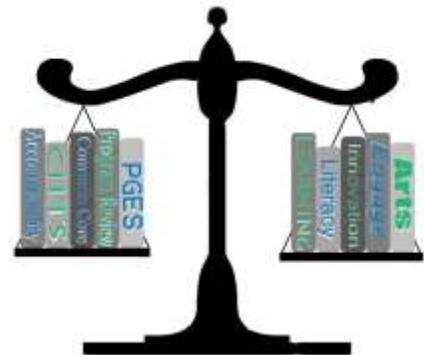
September 2014

## 2015 Conference: Balancing Practice & Passion!

Good teaching is as much about passion as it is about best practice. Now more than ever we are asked to evolve, to repurpose our practice to address the Common Core. We are asked to adapt to new evaluation systems and assessment measures. How do we adapt yet still follow the drive of our passion for learning? How do we build a culture of learning that balances passion and best practice? Join us as we learn how Kentucky teachers are leading the way in education! Visit [www.kcte.org](http://www.kcte.org) for the conference page.

### Scheduled Speakers:

- ◆ Silas House
- ◆ Frank X Walker
- ◆ Dr. ReLeah Lent (Author of *Common Core CPR*)
- ◆ Dr. Terry Holliday, Kentucky Commissioner of Education



Join us — register now!



### In this Issue

- Professional Development Opportunities
- Student Writing Contest Winners!
- Flipping the Classroom— tips and tools
- *KY English Bulletin* Call for Manuscripts

## Weekly Photo Challenge: Unexpected



If you are not familiar with Kim Douillard and the blog [Thinking Through My Lens](#), be sure to check it out. While Kim focuses on photography— Many of her ideas do or can be used for writing and literacy. What if students created a narrative of a different sort— a narrative where they photograph and discuss what they see in their everyday lives? What would the significance be? In Kim's example below, the significance was the unexpected in our day to day lives. Enjoy her blog post below:

Enjoy taking photos? Love to share them with others? Welcome to this week's photo challenge! (I post a new challenge every week...check in each week and join the fun!)

As I go through my daily life, there are lots of things, places, and people I see every day. And while they are not the same from day to day, they are quite often as I expect. But this week as I looked through my pictures to decide on the weekly challenge, I realized that instead of seeing what I usually see, this week I had opportunities to catch glimpses of the unexpected.

On Sunday I headed off to the lagoon for a walk. My husband usually pushes for the gym, but I am much happier out walking in nature than on the treadmill. The lagoon is filled with native plants and there were lots of lizards scurrying about in the mild sun. I'm used to seeing plants that thrive in a low water environment like the prickly pear cactus. But it was unexpected to see these cactus in full bloom! And what beauty these scaly, spiny plants displayed.

<< picture >>

After work on Monday I was trying to convince myself to head the gym (you might notice a theme here--the exercise habit is a hard one for me to establish consistency with!) when I remembered that the tide would be low at the time I was leaving. I rolled up my pant legs and walked along the shore, convincing myself that this would count as exercise. As I left the beach to drive home, I took a look in my mirror and was hypnotized by the beauty of the ocean in the mirror. While this photo doesn't quite do it justice...you get the idea of my feelings of the unexpected.

<< picture >>

Tuesday I had a few minutes before an appointment, so parked and decided to squeeze a quick photo walk and an iced coffee into my schedule. I took photos of some interesting buildings, a mineral water place (unexpected, but not a great photo!), and then I noticed this beautifully painted fire hydrant.

<< picture >>

Last night I had a late meeting at school, an information night for my multiage program. We've also had a heat wave, complete with scary Santa Ana winds, so when I headed out the door to head home it was still quite warm. I teach in a place where when I walk out my classroom door and head down the hall I have an amazing view of the ocean. But yesterday as I headed toward my car, the sky was painted in oranges and reds as the flaming sun dipped into the Pacific Ocean, creating this gorgeous and unexpected sunset.

<< picture >>

Continued on page 3

Unexpected– continued from page 2

And today my students reached the point in a project we are doing that they got to plan and construct the circuits that would light up their art design and writing. I knew the circuits would be tricky for little hands, and while optimistic, I wasn't sure how successful they would be, at least on their first try with these materials. The first, "It worked!" was both unexpected and amazing...and gives me confidence that this project is within reach for my young students.

<< picture>>

So this week's photo challenge is to pay attention as you go through your daily life and be on the look-out for the unexpected. Or you might look through older photographs with an eye for the unexpected. Post either the photo alone or along with writing inspired by the photo. I also invite you to use others' photos as inspiration for your own writing and photography. I often use another photographer's image as "mentor text" for my own photography, trying to capture some element in my own way.

The blog post was used with permission from Kim Douillard.

Kim Douillard Ed.D. is the Director of the San Diego Writing Project.

Follow her on Twitter – @kd0602

You can visit the original blog post [HERE](#) to see the photos that accompanied Kim's post.



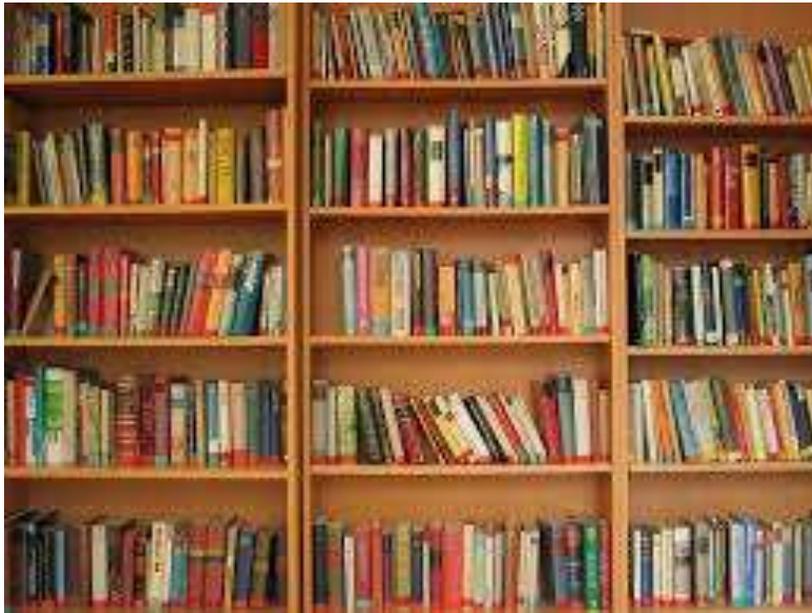
Another cool blog that challenges writers is the **Two Writing Teachers *Slice of Life Challenge***. The challenge is to write– sometimes with prompts given– share your slice with the TWT community and comment on the writing that is shared. Of course this can certainly be replicated in the classroom as well– Use Edmodo, Kid blog or your own venue or join and post to the TWT Slice Page.

You can find information about the Two Writing Teachers blog and their Slice of Life Challenge below:

Slice of Life Challenge: <http://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/challenges/>

Example: <http://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2014/04/29/its-sol-time-2/>

Slicing through the school year: <http://twowritingteachers.wordpress.com/2013/08/29/a-year-long-challenge/>



## Book Fest 2015-

Planning for BookFest—reading celebration for grades 5-8 at NKU in Northern KY— is underway. Visit the [SITE](#) for further information and email [Nancy Bowers](#) if you can help. We REAL-LY need educators to step up and take part to keep this going!

## Word Hero: A Fiendishly Clever Guide to Crafting the Lines That Get Laughs, Go Viral, and Live Forever

by Jay Heinrichs, author of *Thank You for Arguing*

I have read several books that explain and provide examples of figures of speech and rhetorical devices, but Heinrichs' *Word Hero* is by far the most engaging and entertaining. Throughout the book, Heinrichs equips his readers with “tools” (strategies, examples, explanations) and challenges them to work their way from Word Apprentice, to Word Novice, Word Artist, Word Wizard, and finally to the coveted status of Word Hero. He connects with a wide audience by providing formal terminology of rhetorical figures along with their definitions (anthimeria, antanagoge, conduplicatio, etc.) and then relating their uses to purpose and how they are employed in pop culture. The wealth of examples he provides from a wide variety of sources and the renaming/simplification of strategies used by great writers makes this book appropriate for any teacher of reading or writing and any student or adult who wishes to improve close reading or witty writing. The free companion website [www.wordhero.org](http://www.wordhero.org) offers further examples, quizzes and exercises. With clever and surprising chapter and section headings including “Putting the Sin in Synecdoche,” “Mr. Potato Head, Man of Parts,” “Consensual Socks,” “Homicidal Zombie Monetary Instruments,” and “Battle Yoga,” Heinrichs' use of language and easy-to-understand approach make *Word Hero* not only an essential educator resource but a thoroughly enjoyable read.

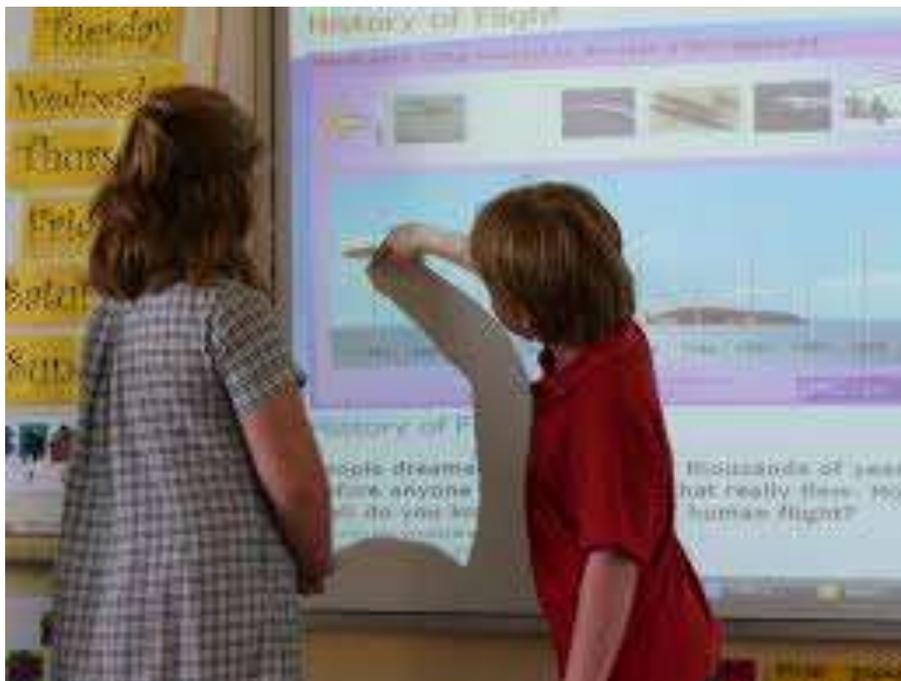
**Book review by Angela Gunter**

## Online Writing Tool: SCAN

Reading informational texts and developing good arguments are two important skills that students need to develop to reach the common core standards. SCAN is an online discussion tool that gives students a framework to build those skills. The collaborative nature of this problem solving tool gets all students engaged in the conversation in a private classroom community. SCAN lessons address standards in language arts, history, social studies, science, technology and health. With the ability to write your own lessons, SCAN can address current issues in all areas.”

Super tool that is FREE to use!

[SCAN](#)



## OKI Children's Literature Conference

The Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana Children's Literature Conference is November 8 at Thomas More College in Crestview Hills, KY.

There is a pre-conference Meet the Author event—hosting J & P Voelkel on November 7 at the Blue Ash Public Library.

This year's conference will host YA author S.A. Bodeen and YA Science genre author Sneed B. Collard III. Workshops that day include "Adventures in Publishing", "Best Practices Using Literature in the Classroom", Writing and History, Mobile Technologies and more!

There is an early bird registration offer if registered by October 10th! Visit <http://oki.nku.edu> for more information.

# The Trouble with “Word Crimes”

Lately, grammar’s been getting a bad rap, and I’m not referring to the musical merits of [Weird Al’s “Word Crimes”](#). I’m more concerned with its message: good grammar is the avoidance of errors. The song, a parody of the much-discussed “Blurred Lines”, rebukes a slew of grammatical mistakes, including homophone confusion and apostrophe misplacement. And as the school year approaches, the video’s fifteen million plus views will certainly climb again as teachers and students alike bond over its school-approved message. All of this buzz serves to reinforce grammar as a subject concerned solely with mistakes.

Indeed, many American students already have this view for a reason. The slashes and symbols of the red pen, a common classroom image, are synonymous with grammar instruction. So are mistake-ridden sentences, chalkboard models of bad writing presented as ways to practice fixing, correcting, and editing. The grammar classroom, or, more commonly, the fifteen minutes of isolated grammar instruction in the English classroom, resembles what teacher-researcher Constance Weaver calls a “**correctional facility**”.

**“Word Crimes”**, when waved as a rally towel for effective writing, perpetuates this ineffective mode of grammar instruction. It also sends a message to students: you grow as a writer by fixing your bad writing.

Many teachers who are already wary of this view, those who cherish the unfiltered, unaltered expression of a fixed student voice, are likely to attack this notion of grammar with the spirit of a reformer. They might, as a result, ditch grammar instruction altogether, teaching students to ignore the archaic, self-contradictory, and oft-broken rules of countless handbooks of grammar. In lessons that resemble pep-talks more than actual instruction, they might emphasize, instead, the notion of writing with voice, of being yourself as you write.

There is an alternative to this approach. As Timothy Lensmire proposes in his essay “Rewriting student voice”, real voice is developed from an interplay of factors: appropriation, struggle, and what results from the tension of these first two factors: becoming. Behind this refined notion of voice, the **grammar classroom can be transformed from a “correctional facility” into a “creational facility” (again Weaver’s words), an environment in which students use and experiment with a variety of forms of sentence, paragraph, and genre structures to grow as writers.**

In this kind of classroom, grammar is used to make writing. Teachers immerse students in beautiful **language rather than “Gotcha” sentences, modeling the ways in which writers act like artists to zoom in on images, build suspense, elaborate, surprise, order time, and add specifics.** Students lean on these examples to construct deliberately, developing a canvas of options to consider as they weigh **audience and purpose. This tension between borrowing and using is what leads to “becoming”;** in this case, the becoming is developing voice through knowledge of grammar.

**Used to an extreme, the “Word Crimes” approach leads to a deficit mode of thinking, a mindset that shapes instruction and ultimately who our students become.** The song’s other lesson, that borrowing can lead to the production of creative art, is a more useful one, and one that I hope starts to shift the balance in grammar instruction from correction to creation.

*Michael Mannix, a participant in the 2014 Philadelphia Writing Project, teaches 7th Grade English at Norwood-Fontbonne Academy. This year he is also looking forward to coaching soccer and baseball, moderating student council, and starting a debate club. You can reach him at [mmannix@norfon.org](mailto:mmannix@norfon.org) To view Sources used in this piece visit his doc [HERE](#).*

# KEB Call For Manuscripts

**Deadline: January 31, 2015**

**Theme: Classroom Literature**

For many language arts teachers, our developing love of reading as children was also the beginning of the path to our adult careers. The spring 2015 issue of the *Bulletin* invites you to share your love and appreciation of teaching literature in its various forms, such as picture books, chapter books, young adult novels, poetry, nonfiction, short stories, plays, canonical works, recent titles, mainstream texts, marginalized texts, and graphic novels. Which texts have proven useful, engaging, or powerful in your classroom? How do you make use of various instructional formats, such as full-class assignments, group assignments, literature circles, or individual reading? What challenges have you faced in teaching literature, and how did you overcome them? How does your teaching of literature connect with other language arts, other content areas, or other aspects of your students' lives? How have technology and various media influenced the ways you teach . . . and the ways your students learn? How are you working with teachers in other content areas who are addressing the increasing emphasis on informational texts? (For that matter, how are you dealing with the common misconception that the CCSS call for language arts classes to abandon literary texts in favor of informational texts?)

**In addition to articles, contributions are sought for standing sections of the Bulletin:**

Teachers as Writers: Poetry, Essays, Letters  
KEB Teaching Strategy Exchange  
Professional Reading Recommendations  
Humor  
What's New in Young Adult Literature?  
Speak Out: Professional Issues  
Inquiries and drafts are welcome.

The Bulletin observes MLA documentation style and NCTE's position on avoiding sexism in language. Articles from 500 to 2500 words welcome!

Electronic submissions are preferred: [keb@kcte.org](mailto:keb@kcte.org).

Hard copies may be mailed to Dr. David LeNoir, English Department, Western Kentucky University, 1906 College Heights Blvd. #11086, Bowling Green, KY 42101-1086.



E.A. Poe



Shakespeare

# 2013-14 KCTE/LA Student Writing Contest Winners

Congratulations to the following students and teachers for placing in the 2013-14 student writing contest. Be sure to visit the [KCTE/LA](#) webpage to keep tabs on our current writing contest– deadline End of May.

## Elementary Winners

### **Poetry:**

1st place Freedom is a Hard Word Jacob Daniels C. Withrow

2nd place Be Free Macy Burrus C. Withrow

3rd place Elf Natalie Boone L. Holloman

4th place Freedom Daniel Cerda C. Withrow

5th place Jesus Ben Paris L. Holloman

### **Narrative:**

1st place The Fall Na'Kyra Clark C. Withrow

2nd place The Kindness of My Mammy Maggie Blazina S. Riley

3rd place One Crucial Night Alyssa Cowsert C. Withrow

4th place Braids or No Braids? DaMone Allen C. Withrow

5th place Kindness in the Hospital Amanda Estes L. Holloman

### **Opinion :**

1st place Dear Betty Ren Right Jasmine E. Daniels C. Withrow

2nd place Dear Ronald Dahl Brandon Reichard C. Withrow

3rd place Dear American Pediatric Group Emma Williams L. Holloman

\*\*4th place My Wonderful Grandpa Charity Conyer S. Riley

5th place Papaw McCalister Caden McCalister T. Brantley

### **Informative:**

1st place Leadership: What is it? Alyssa Bozeman S. Riley

\*\*2nd place The Leader in Me Emma Waters L. Holloman

3rd place History, History, It's a Mystery Kacie Easley T. Brantley

4th place History of Downtown Marion Lily Gardner T. Brantley

5th place A Kentucky Road Trip Alyssa Bozeman L. Holloman

**Continued page 9 ...**



# KCTE/LA

## Information:

- ⇒ We are on [Facebook!](#) Like us for updates and educational information.
- ⇒ Join us on [Twitter!](#)
- ⇒ Pinterest- <http://www.pinterest.com/KCTELA/>
- ⇒ [Writing Contests](#) for students! Visit our site for information—Deadline runs through end of May. Categories are aligned to CC Writing Genres!
- ⇒ Get published in the [Newsletter](#) or in the [KY English Bulletin](#).
- ⇒ Interested in a Literary Magazine Contest through NCTE? [PRESLM](#) is for MS– HS students who compile a complete literary magazine. Contact [Fran Helphenstine](#) if you would like to participate.

## Contest winners continued...

### Middle School Winners

#### Personal Narrative:

1st: “My Warning”, Elizabeth Sandlin, Walton-Verona Middle School, Teacher: Amy Cody Clancy.

2nd: “Cheer Disaster”, Lillie Herbstreit, Walton-Verona Middle School, Teacher: Amy Cody Clancy.

3rd: “Me and My Nana”, Lamanda Campbell, Westport Middle School, Teacher: Maegan Woodlee.

4th: “Deal with the Cards Your Dealt”, Chuck Hargrove, Westport Middle School, Teacher: Maegan Woodlee.

#### Informational:

1st: “Bullying: What You Need to Know”, Alex Bennett, Walton-Verona Middle School, Teacher: Amy Cody Clancy.

2nd: “CyberBullying 101”, Cassidy Laney, Walton-Verona Middle School, Teacher: Amy Cody Clancy.

3rd: “Stop Bullying Me!”, Kaitlyn Wilder, Walton-Verona Middle School, Teacher: Amy Cody Clancy.

#### Opinion/Argumentative:

1st: “The New Advances in Learning”, Nash Ferguson, Westport Middle School, Teacher: Maegan Woodlee.

2nd: “Stand By or Defend?”, Kambree Brown, Walton-Verona Middle School, Teacher: Amy Cody Clancy.

3rd: “Same Sex Marriages in All States”, Gianna Frymire, Westport Middle School, Teacher: Maegan Woodlee.

#### Poetry:

1st: “Shaker Men and Women”, Kierra Bates, St. Albert the Great School, Teacher: Lucy Geerer.

Continued Page 10...



## Contest winners continued...

### High School Winners

#### Narrative

- #1 Jessica Caperton Where I Live and What I Love For Noel Cordle Oneida Baptist Institute
- #2 Claire Kelly Memoir: The Odyssey Todd O. Ross Paducah Tilghman High
- #3 Michael-Ellen Walden Memoir: The Odyssey Todd O. Ross Paducah Tilghman High



#### Argument/Opinion

- #1 Meg Hancock Be a Humanist Todd O. Ross Paducah Tilghman High
- #2 James Dillon Gay Marriage from the Objective Point of View of a Heterosexual Male  
Brandie Trent Fleming County High School

- #3 Julia Mikulec Cordelia, Christ, and Mortality in Shakespeare's King Lear Kelly Kirwan  
Assumption High

- #4 Jessica Caperton A Gender Role Analysis of Twilight Noel Cordle Oneida Baptist Institute

#### Informative/Explanatory

- #1 Hannah Eldridge Untitled Lindsay Johnson Rowan County High
- #2 Jacob Lindberg Untitled Lindsay Johnson Rowan County High
- #3 Calin Muse The Dark Side of Human Nature Brandie Trent Fleming County High School
- #4 Alyssa Marmon How to Survive Watching a Horror Movie Joan Altman Nelson County High School

#### Poetry

- #1 Whitney Taylore Latham Tainted Brandie Trent Fleming County High School
- #2 Mackenzie Purvis The Impossible Dream Brandie Trent Fleming County High School
- #3 Elizabeth Via Unbalanced Todd O. Ross Paducah Tilghman High
- #4 Julia Mikulec confessions in the early morning Kelly Kirwan Assumption High



# Flipping the Classroom

I have been researching more on the 'flip the classroom' concept and consequently have been experimenting with tools that might facilitate that flip. While there are many sources that discuss the pros and cons of this concept, I have discovered some of the main ideas that are important when considering the flip design.

**Keep it simple to start.** Choose one class or even one unit to flip. See how it goes, reflect on the good and bad, even poll your students to see what worked for them and what didn't.

**Pare your typical lecture down to what is most important.** I like to talk. A lot. And I suppose most educators do, but what I find is that I talk too much and if I had stopped or narrowed my ideas, it would have spent less time. Take a look at your lecture and decide what is most important to get across.

**Accountability-** What will you have your students do once they have viewed or read the flipped assignment? A journal entry, questions to answer, questions they still have, even an online quiz. There are many ideas as to what you might have your students do to show they actually did the flipped assignment.

**Assessment-** The flipped classroom may involve more assessment than usual. You might assess them at home following the flipped assignment. Then the next day, you assess them again to see what they gleaned and what is still confusing. You can group them to work on those confusing points and assess students for that point only. Regardless of how you assess, the main idea that I saw that worked is that following the lesson, you assess students (clickers or student response systems work best). You can see immediate results and can tailor that day's instruction accordingly.

**In-depth lessons.** After you have assessed student understanding, it's time to dive into the lessons. What lessons, activities or collaborative work do you want your students to do with the basic information they gained from the previous flipped lesson? Providing collaborative work also allows students to help each other and if you have that student who refuses to partake in the flipped assignment, you can have them watch the flipped assignment in class or form a small group with the teacher, while the rest of the class is doing the collaborative work.

## What Tools Are Available for the Flipped Classroom?

Jing- [techsmith.com](http://techsmith.com) offers a great recording device- it allow you to video your computer screen while talking. You can record up to five minutes for free before you have to purchase the product itself. The finished recording provides a link that you can post for student access. No one can change it or delete it, they can only view it.

[PowToons](#)- A really fun video program. You can create videos for students on any topic of up to five minutes each. Like Jing, a link is provided for student access. You can also share the video to Facebook, Google Plus, YouTube and Twitter. One other option is that you can actually embed the video!

## Flipping the Classroom Continued from page 11

[Sophia.org](#)- Sophia was pretty easy to use. You can create tutorials or playlists. Playlists basically takes many resources already made and places them in a progression for students to follow. Sophia also allows you to create classes for students to enter via a code, much like Edmodo. I like Sophia best for the tutorial option. You can pull up an image or a text to read and create up to five minutes of voice over- recording your voice for a short lecture. You can also add other materials such as embedded videos from Youtube, PDF's etc.

I also really liked Sophia because I am able to create a multiple choice quiz related to the material my students just viewed. The results of the quiz comes directly to me within the Sophia site.

[BlendSpace](#) – I think of all that I've tried this summer, Blendspace is one I like the very best. I can access materials from many sources to produce a play list of activities, reading materials and viewing delights for my students. Like Sophia, I can create classes and have students use a code to enter. I can access Google, OpenEd, Gooru, Flickr and many other online sources for materials and images. The site autosaves as I go and I can add as many layers as I want, including a quiz at the end! The results of the quiz come to me within Blendspace for quick referral. You can share the video about the same way as PowToons with the addition of a QR code to access the lesson and you can share the lesson to Edmodo. Yes, Edmodo! Since I use Edmodo, I was very excited about that!

Visit [Writing in the Middle](#) for examples of each of the above tools at

## Contact Us

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Walton-  
Verona MS

## Eastern KY Writing Conference

2014 Eastern Kentucky Writing Conference offers sessions for writers and for teachers of writing. The conference will be held 9-4 on Saturday, Nov. 8, on the campus of Morehead State University. The \$50 advance registration fee includes six hours of professional development and sessions about on-demand writing, program review, data-driven instruction, and college/career readiness as well as craft talks by published poets and writers including George Ella Lyon.

For more information: [http://moreheadwritingproject.org/?page\\_id=21](http://moreheadwritingproject.org/?page_id=21)