

DTWT (Do the Write Thing) is the student writing project of Central MA (CMA) SABES. SABES is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education

Dates to Remember

- Mid-April, 2008
Acceptance Letters
Sent Out
- May 14, 2008
Authors' Reception

Ready, Set, Write *Bios* by Jo Sundin

So, here we are again. Pieces have been written, submissions have been made, and now, breaths are being held. Luckily, in this waiting period from now until April, there are still things that can be done for DTWT.

In preparation for the publication process, having each of your students prepare a short biography, done as a class, is an activity that can be fun, as well as necessary. Your students find out insightful things

about their classmates through this activity.

To help you and your class get started, everyone should include name, program, and where they are from (ESL student). Other items you might consider including would be why they came to the U.S., how long they've been here, family, work, interests and goals. Their biographies should be between 20 and 40 words.

Even though only the

selected authors will have their biography published in the back of this year's edition of DTWT, it is worthwhile to have all students complete the project. All biographies and stories can be put together in a class publication for all to read!

In past years, the collection of these bios has been hectic at best, so by getting an early jump on them will really help things run much more smoothly!

The Process Continues...

The notification letters are in the mail! The editorial teams did a great job of reviewing and scoring all the submissions and we are right on schedule with getting scores tallied and letters out. Students who submitted a writing will receive a letter soon telling them if their writing will be published in the printed version of "Do the Write Thing". They will be asked to submit a picture, a brief bio, and a

reservation for the Author's Reception no later than May 5th. Remember all student writings submitted will be published on the website.

Teachers and program directors will also be receiving letters that notify them of student chosen for publication. The DTWT team continues to be grateful to you all. Teacher support is a major contributor to our (cont on pg. 3)

Sending Bios Three Options

- Send bios as a word document attached to an email (do NOT use Wordpad) to joanneh@qcc.mass.edu.
- Type bios in the body of the email and send to joanneh@qcc.mass.edu
- Put bios onto a CD and mail it to Joanne Harrington at Central SABES.

The deadline for bios is April 18th.



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Bios and Photos

You can mail your bios and photos to:

Joanne Harrington
Central SABES
Quinsigamond Community College
670 West Boylston St.
Worcester, MA 01606

Or email:
joanneh@gcc.mass.edu

Questions?
Call Joanne at
508-854-4476

Remember: Photos must be on CD or emailed. No paper photos can be accepted.

A DTWT Challenge *by Kathy McKee*

I've spent most of my teaching career helping adult students learn to read. Most of my students come to me with low self-esteem. Even though they have many, many things to be proud of, they have been stigmatized through the years because of their inability to read. Of course, I tried my best to show them all the things they've done that should make them proud of themselves. So, the most challenging aspect of including my students in DO the Writ Thing (DTWT) has been convincing them that they

have a story.

Needless to say, their comments were, "Who would want to read about me?" It would begin like this every year. So, we would talk about history, people in our past, who despite a variety of challenges had a story. As we begin to talk about their lives apart from their life as a nonreader, we discovered one story after another. For example; a mother of eight worked two jobs to bring up her family, a carpenter who taught himself how to build a house for his

family and another student who had lived in a cardboard box in New York City. The stories just kept on coming and haven't stopped.

To make the stories more permanent, those who can write, write. Those who can't, dictate to me. We don't worry about spelling or grammar. We just write. It is always amazing to me and to them to see the ideas flow.

*Kathy McKee
ABE Teacher, Worcester
Adult Learning Center*

Dear Ms. Doowrite



Dear Ms. Doowrite Right,

I guess there's no better time than now to get this off of my chest! I would like to know who in the world makes those changes to student's stories before they are published? I thought that this was a book of student work – not corrected student work!! My student last year surely didn't like the idea that his story was changed (even though it was only a slight change). Hands off please!

Worked up in Worcester

Dear Worked Up,

Pj,u hppfmrdd/ (Oops, I meant "Oh, my goodness". But I had my fingers on the keyboard wrong.)

That error pretty much is my best answer (albeit hyperbolic) to your concern! We do check each student writing for typos – those typos can cause drastic changes to the writer's meaning as you know. Sometimes typo caused changes are humorous...sometimes not...and sometimes we do err by changing a word which in fact was not incorrect. Our goal is to put a last little bit of polish on these student gems... not to edit them.

I do encourage students who plan to read their published story to practice before the reception. Also a good idea is to bring a copy of their writing with them to read. It is so much easier to read something that is a little larger print than in DTWT and at least double spaced when you are nervous. Doing this will also help the student to make sure that his/her voice rings true!

Ms. Doowrite Right

Tips for taking student photos

- Take photo of each student individually
- Use a plain background
- Take photos from the waist up
- Download the photos from your camera to your computer
- Your students photo will have a generic file name that the camera has generated for it, for example DCIN254.jpg
- Rename the photo – use the students name, for example josesantos.jpg
- Do not edit photos in any ways – do not crop, resize, change the brightness, etc. That will be done on our end.
- REMEMBER – only digital photos can be accepted. Please do NOT send paper copies of photos.

Be Prepared!

Throughout the DTWT process we are so aware that there is “just not enough time”! Do you remember last September? Your new students arrived. There was all that testing to do. You wanted to attend the “*Writing with Confidence*” training because you were planning to have your students participate in DTWT but.... Before you knew it you had just gotten back from Network, done your Thanksgiving turkey shopping and... you had two weeks to meet the submission deadline for student writings!

Central MA SABES is

happy to be able to respond to the many requests we received and offer the “*Writing with Confidence*” *Strategies to Motivate Students* workshop **again this year!** You will be all set to start working on writing with your students in September and you will also be prepared to have your class participate as an editorial team. Join Jo Sundin for this great workshop – you’ll be glad you did! You can register via the statewide calendar at <http://calendar.sabes.org>

Monday, June 2, 2008
1:00pm – 4:00pm
QCC

Sending photos
Two options

- Send photos as an email attachment to joanneh@qcc.mass.edu (do not insert photos in a word document or into the email itself).
- Burn photos onto a CD and mail it to Joanne Harrington at Central SABES.

The deadline for submitted photos is April 18th.

The Process Continues... (cont from pg. 1)

student author’s success as teachers are asked to help with submitting photos and bios and making reservations for the reception.

The process marches on... to the Author’s Reception and the web page and print publication of “*Do the Write Thing*”.

**Do the Write Thing
Authors’ Receptions**

Wednesday, May 14, 2008
9:30am – 11:30am
6:30pm – 8:30pm

Quinsigamond Community College
The Harrington Learning Center
Room 109A&B