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The Lutheran Educator

The WELS Education Journal



The Lutheran Educator

The education journal
of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
edited by the faculty of Martin Luther College

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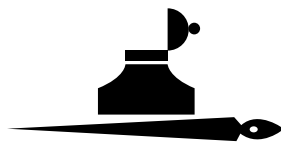
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Professionalism

People expect that those working in the business world or in the medical field will present themselves as professionals. These, I believe, are seven indicators of professional behavior.

A professional is an expert in the eyes of others. This person is viewed as one who is knowledgeable in the field of education.

A professional stays current in his field. Educators are life-long learners. Reading professional journals and magazines is one way to keep informed. Membership in a professional organization along with continued education keeps teachers current.

A professional shares her expertise. Professionals make time to share with others what is happening in their classroom. This sharing can take a variety of forms with many people, parents and colleagues alike.

A professional presents himself as confident and self-assured. Parents trust that educators have the needed competency to teach their children. A professional is able to verbalize the reasons behind classroom procedures and methodology. Enjoyment of the craft of teaching is evident along with the desire to make a difference in the life of a child.

A professional uses data to make sound decisions. What teacher has not thought, "Oh, this is the worst class I've ever had!" Emotions can run high when educators are faced with stressful situations. Teachers need to reflect daily on lessons taught and spend time observing behaviors. A professional uses information to make sound decisions based on fact. An honest look at the facts presented can help the decision making process.

A professional works cooperatively with other members of the profession. Faculty members show concern for colleagues and work to strengthen a feeling of camaraderie. Colleagues encourage one another not only in areas of strengths. Support should be evident during times of weakness to build one another. Networking with educators outside the confines of your faculty can also boost you professionally. No one else quite understands the rigors of the classroom as does a fellow teacher!

A professional does one's very best for Christ's lambs. As Christian educators, we have the privilege of being called into the public ministry. This call provides a Gospel motivation and inspires our hearts to serve. This service demands our very best. Professional behavior is a part of that service. We expect professionalism outside the educational world. Dare we expect any less of our profession?

CAL



Sing and Make Music

Introduction

Edward Meyer

This May issue of *The Lutheran Educator* features a series of articles about *Sing and Make Music*, the new music curriculum for Lutheran elementary schools. The series includes information about its inception and development, insights into its production, and reported experiences from educators currently using it. The new WELS music curriculum is “**Off and Running.**”

Educators and administrators were asked to respond to a list of questions about their experiences with *Sing and Make Music* (SaMM). As much as possible, contributors were drawn from differing school settings. Classroom teachers (Karen Livingston, Shirleen Maertz, Bonnie Pufahl) were asked to write about their expectations and experiences. After introducing SaMM into their schools, principals of Lutheran elementary schools (Dale Markgraf, Ronald Zahn) reacted to any success, or lack of it. Music educators in training at Martin Luther College (Paul Grubbs, Erin Zastrow), who had become acquainted with the curriculum in their college courses, commented about their on-campus experiences as well as anticipated use in the Lutheran elementary school. Concerning the training of future teachers of classroom music, MLC professors (Cheryl Loomis, John Nolte) reported on their use of the materials and also its possible impact on the future of children’s music learning.

On the production side of SaMM, the

music/worship editor of Northwestern Publishing House (Carl Nolte) was asked to tell about the in-house production. Also, the musician/arranger and recording expert (David Bauer) gladly related information about the work of arranging accompaniments for classroom songs, securing singers, and producing compact disk recordings for both the songbooks and unit plans. Not to be overlooked, information provided by the author of SaMM (Edward Meyer) tells of its history and development, theories of music learning, scope and sequence, content and organization, and materials.

Considering the cross section of writers who have been involved in either the production or use of SaMM, the series of articles provides readers with a comprehensive overview of the music curriculum. It comes at a time when the writing and proofreading have been completed, publication is nearly complete with most items on the market, and teachers in Lutheran elementary schools have had some experience with it.

While no empirical assessment of the effectiveness of SaMM can yet be made, certainly by the end of the decade it will be possible to obtain data revealing the successes or failures of the curriculum. Perhaps a future, aspiring graduate student completing his/her doctoral (or masters-level) studies will make the effectiveness of SaMM a topic of research. ❁

Sing and Make Music

Edward Meyer



As with any comprehensive, voluminous project, *Sing and Make Music* has a rather long and involved background. There was a decade-long series of discussions and searches for funding. A research of related literature and the content of children's texts and songbooks was undertaken before the actual writing of materials began. Data was gathered to determine needs within the WELS schools. A stated and accepted philosophy and set of objectives were prepared. Decisions regarding writers, format, a publisher, and production calendar were made. A step-by-step record of the process as it evolved follows.

Beginnings

Although a dialogue concerning the need for producing a music curriculum for the Lutheran elementary school had occurred over several years, it was not until 1983 that a formal statement was prepared and forwarded to Mr. Donald H. Zimmerman, Executive Secretary for the Board of Parish Education. In ensuing meetings, continued but cautious encouragement was provided. Further study and conversations between the Board for Parish Education through Mr.

Richard Grunze, Secretary of Publications, and Mr. LeDell Plath, Secretary of Schools, and me continued for a number of years. The Board of Control of Dr. Martin Luther College, having concurred with the need for the production of curricular materials in school music, approved part-time leaves for two professors (Wayne L. Wagner and the author) for the 1984-85 academic year. Due to on-campus situations, as well as other factors, these approved leaves were never effected. Nevertheless, an awareness of a need and the potential to meet that need grew among various boards and offices.

Although the actual production would be delayed for another ten years, the curriculum slowly began to develop. In the summer of 1986, Wayne L. Wagner and I devoted a six-week period to prepare a stated philosophy of Lutheran music education, a set of general objectives, and a scope and sequence chart. These materials spanned all levels—preschool through grade nine. Also produced at that time was a set of eight sample lessons.

Questions about the development of a music curriculum remained, however. The WELS Board for Parish Education, nevertheless, was firmly committed to its

production and kept the matter on its agenda. Although the development of the first of five levels of the curriculum did not begin until fall of 1992, summers were filled with research into elementary school song literature and the writing of sample lessons.

The development of the music curriculum was finally and firmly assured when the WELS Board for Parish Education (BPE) adopted the project as its own and made a formal request of Dr. Martin Luther College to arrange for the equivalent of one full time leave of absence for the 1991-92 school term. The cost of this action was to be underwritten by the BPE. Although the leaves were not effected until the following school term, a dialogue with Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) continued in the hope that SaMM would eventually be published. Enthusiastic support was given by Kermit G. Moldenhauer, music/worship editor of NPH at that time, and, as it is said, "The rest is history."

Not to be overlooked in preliminary work for SaMM is the importance of research completed through the office of the BPE under the leadership of Dr. Daniel M. Schmeling, Administrator. A questionnaire, called *Music Survey* 1991, was developed and the faculties of WELS elementary schools were asked to respond. It was not developed to determine feasibility or need; rather, it sought to determine matters of format, likelihood of use, and affordability. The research results indicated the desire for (1) a five-level curriculum, (2) plans, materials, recordings, and songbooks to

be used by classroom teachers, and (3) modest cost. Interestingly, 90% of respondents stated their school would possibly purchase the set of curricular materials.

Philosophy

Richard Grunze of the BPE team cited Psalm 34:11 as a basis for Christian education including music education, "Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD." This premise was expanded into the philosophical statements given below.

Music and the ability to produce music are precious gifts of God and are used for his glory and in his service. God in his Word repeatedly urges Christians to use music. "Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; make music to our God on the harp" (Psalm 147:7). "Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth" (Psalm 96:1). "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:19,20). Christians use music to worship God, to aid in building his kingdom, and to enhance the quality of life.

Christian education provides students with both the experiences and the training necessary for communicating and responding to the gospel with music. Music education is, therefore, an essential part of

Christian education.

As children become involved in making music, they develop performance skills, increase their understanding of music, and grow in their appreciation for music.

Lutheran music education provides experiences in singing, listening, reading, playing, moving, and creating. These experiences lead to understanding the concepts of rhythm, pitch, harmony, form, timbre, dynamics, and tempo.

Lutheran music education uses a variety of music types and styles, including sacred and secular, vocal and instrumental, old and new, folk music and art music.

Objectives

The philosophical statements were expanded into the following ten objectives.

Through program of Lutheran elementary music education, students

1. recognize music and the ability to make music as gifts from God.
2. use music for God's glory and in his service.
3. understand and use music in worship.
4. know and value the heritage of Lutheran church music.
5. sing, independently and with others, to the best of their abilities.
6. read music notation and use music vocabulary.
7. listen to music with understanding.
8. express musical ideas by playing

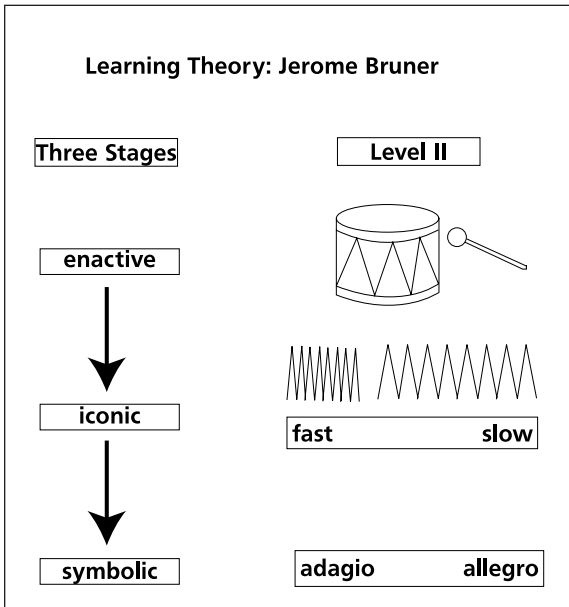
common classroom instruments, by moving to music, and by creating music.

9. understand basic concepts of pitch, rhythm, harmony, form, dynamics, tempo, and timbre.
10. become familiar with many types of music.

In retrospect, with the publication of SaMM almost complete and already in use by many WELS schools, it is gratifying to observe how well both the philosophy and objectives have served to guide the author in completing it.

Theories of music learning and method

The learning theories of Jerome Bruner and Jean Piaget are reflected in the development of the content. A three-stage music learning process, as developed by Bruner, has been followed in the development of many unit concepts—particularly in Levels One through Three of SaMM. He suggested that conceptual development moves through three stages: enactive, iconic, and symbolic. Music learning, accordingly, begins with the enactive stage in which the learner becomes actively involved in making music and/or reacting to it. As the learner continues in the music-making process, simple diagrams and pictures (icons) are used with the activity. When the learner has developed the ability to think abstractly, the “real” symbols and notational system of music are used. The three-stage process is seldom completed in a single unit but may take another unit, level, or several years to complete, as does the reading



of music notation from a full five-line staff, for example.

The four-stage theory of Jean Piaget is also found in the lesson structure of SaMM. (1) The sensorimotor stage is emphasized in the units of Level One (preschool) where the learner is involved in music-making processes without much reference to the concepts it may demonstrate. (2) In the preoperational stage, the student is introduced to simple labels and symbols (Bruner’s iconic stage). (3) In the concrete operational stage, the learner begins to classify and order some concepts of music as well as to discriminate and think logically about them. (4) In the formal operational stage, children use abstract reasoning and symbols to express music concepts. Many of the units in both Levels Four and Five were designed under the assumption that the children

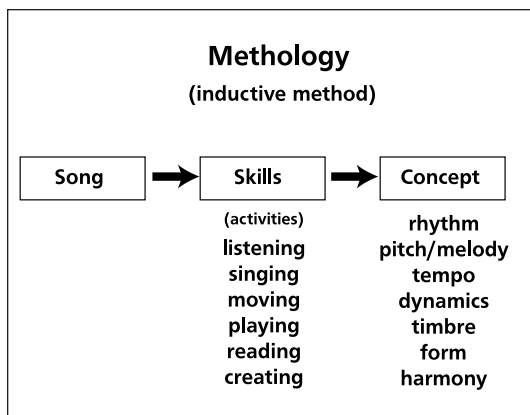
have reached this learning stage.

Both inductive and deductive lesson developments are used in SaMM. In the first three levels (preschool through grade four), most units are structured inductively. (1) The unit song (or other musical material) contains a specific concept to be learned. (2) The children experience the specific concept within the context of the song by means of music skills: singing, listening, playing, moving, reading, and creating. (3) After experiencing the concept in various forms, the children use labels and symbols, and apply it

to other settings. While abstract deductive reasoning is seldom found in the lower three levels of SaMM, in the upper two levels of SaMM (Levels Four and Five) many concepts are presented deductively; that is, concepts are learned in abstraction and then applied to songs and other musical examples.

Materials

The materials of SaMM include fifteen units and fifteen alternate units per level, each with worksheets, assessment materials, and recordings. All units contain (1) a clearly stated “Learner Outcome,” (2) “Notes for the Teacher,” (3) a listing of materials, (4) a set of classroom strategies called “Teaching Procedures” (usually more than needed and with ample opportunity for teacher modification), and (5) a



list of songs containing the same concept—"Supplementary Songs."

Typically, each unit features a song or hymn and a matching recording. For each unit song or hymn, an easy (about Grade Two) keyboard accompaniment is included. Most units also include copy masters which may be used to prepare transparencies, student handouts, or other teaching aids. Student achievement may be assessed by means of the materials included on the final copy master of each unit.

Each level of SaMM includes a supplementary songbook of about 90-100 pages. These collections, simply called *Songbook*, may be used either in conjunction with the unit plans or independently. Here one finds a variety of songs: hymns and sacred songs, American folk songs and songs from other cultures, just-for-fun songs, and old and new songs. All songs have easy keyboard accompaniments provided in an accompaniment edition. All songs are recorded on compact disks.

Through the preliminary survey conducted early in the development of the

curriculum, it was determined that a five-level organization of materials could serve the diversity of WELS elementary schools best. The levels, approximate grades, and projected publication dates are listed below.

- Level One (preschool and kindergarten), available in summer of 1997
- Level Two (Grades 1 and 2), available in summer of 1998
- Level Three (Grades 3 and 4), available in summer of 1999
- Level Four (Grades 5 and 6), available in summer of 2000
- Level Five (Grades 7 and 8), available in summer of 2001

It has been possible to adhere quite closely to the schedule as originally envisioned.

At this writing it appears that over half of the WELS schools have acquired some or all of the materials available thus far. It can be assumed many children are already singing and making music using SaMM. 🎵

Professor Edward Meyer teaches in the Music Division at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

Sing and Make Music

Sing and Make Music Recordings

David Bauer and Edward Meyer



Professor David T. Bauer was invited to undertake the massive project of preparing all recordings for the unit plans and *Songbooks* of SaMM. The following interview describes his work.

EM Specifically, what were you asked to do?

DB SaMM includes very thick three-ring binders containing all printed materials for the lessons and it also has a separate *Songbook* for each level. Included are two sets of CDs. One set goes with the unit plans and the other set goes with the *Songbook* materials.

EM Tell us about the production of the recordings for the Songbook.

DB Each *Songbook*, having approximately 100 songs, has CD recordings. Many of these songs were chosen to correlate with specific lessons; the songs may also be learned and sung independently.

Each recording is in split-track format. One channel contains the accompaniment; the other contains the vocal material. Playback equipment with a stereo balance control enables the teacher to select only the accompaniment, only the vocal part, or a mixture of both. As the class becomes confident in singing a song, the balance knob can

be turned so that the recorded vocal part is lessened or even eliminated.

The recorded accompaniments for the songs of the *Songbook* are in a great variety of styles. Country, rock, Latin, jazz, folk, classical, new age, funk, blues, waltz and gospel are among the categories. Each style was chosen to provide an attractive accompaniment for a particular song. For example, the accompanimental style chosen for “Goodbye, Old Paint” was a country style; “Michael, Row the Boat Ashore” was accompanied with a folk style. A pleasing variety, therefore, resulted. Reports from teachers indicate children like the wide variety of styles.

The production of the recordings also required a knowledge of state-of-the-art equipment. This had to be acquired. Then it was necessary to gain the technical expertise to use it to the advantage of SaMM.

Another task included locating and working with men and women who were able to sing the songs and set aside sufficient time for practice and recording sessions. Many vocal renditions were prepared and sung by WELS teachers, or former teachers. At times, however, it became necessary to seek soloists from the general public.

EM In which ways was the production of recordings for the lessons different?

DB The unit CDs contain a number of songs which are included in SaMM because they demonstrate the particular concept for the unit. For example, if the unit procedures were designed to teach the concept of syncopation, the song for the unit contains the concept of syncopation. Or, in those units dealing with traditions of worship, the liturgical songs of the hymnal are included.

In addition to the songs, there are recordings of the music examples found on the worksheets, quizzes, solfeggio exercises as well as other unit procedures. The recordings include the music and, at times, verbal directions and explanations. For each CD entry of music and instructions, a matching set of printed material, in the form of copy masters, is included. Printed sheets, therefore, are made available to each student and used as the CD is played.

Those teachers with greater musical gifts can certainly add to the written and recorded materials supplied on the CDs, or they may play the music “live” instead of relying on the CD. The less gifted may let the recordings supply the explanations, directions, and example.

EM How have you used the recordings of SaMM in your MLC instructional responsibilities?

DB Students at MLC become acquainted with SaMM recordings in many music classes. I work with the next generation of teachers in four different college courses. After we have learned songs from SaMM, practiced

them using the counting of rhythms and meters, provided note names, and sung by means of solfeggio, we “sing along with SaMM.” The lively accompaniments usually draw smiles, even from the faces of sophisticated collegiates. Songs may suggest finger play or games. There is usually a good-natured groan when I say, “And now we will play the game!” It’s fun to get these adults on their feet, into a circle, and ready for “play.” I will pick a burly football player to become the first “bluebird” going in and out the “windows” while the rest of the class sings the words of the song, “Bluebird, bluebird, through my window, to find another bird.” After the song and game are done, I ask them, “What age level will continue to enjoy playing the games that go along with the song?” I’m not surprised to hear the clever answer, “Sophomores (or juniors or seniors) in college, for sure!”

EM Are there any further comments you wish to make?

DB The recorded materials for SaMM have been carefully chosen and designed to make it user-friendly and as enjoyable as possible. May they ultimately provide students the skills and knowledge, so that they may with a joyful heart and voice “Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things” (Psalm 98:1). 🎵

Professor David Bauer teaches in the Music Division at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

Sing and Make Music

Northwestern Publishing House



Carl Nolte and Edward Meyer

It was the responsibility of Carl S. Nolte, music/worship editor of Northwestern Publishing House, to receive the author's manuscripts and prepare them for publication. This was a task consuming much of his time in the past six years.

Following is an interview with Carl Nolte about the contribution of NPH to the production of *Sing and make Music*.

EM When did you begin your work with SaMM?

CN When I was called as the Sacred Music and Worship editor at Northwestern Publishing House, one of the first projects I undertook was the music curriculum. Prior to beginning at NPH, however, I volunteered as a member of the WELS Commission on Worship to help out with the writing of worship units for SaMM.

EM Identify and discuss specific procedures

used in NPH's production of SaMM.

CNNPH began major efforts to publish music at the completion of *Christian Worship: a Lutheran Hymnal*. For the hymnal it had used the music notational program called Finale. It was a natural choice for use with the publication of

SaMM. We found the program accommodated all special requirements of the music curriculum.

Even though we had been working on *Christ-Light™*, the music curriculum was a new type of publication that needed new procedures for design and production. A consistent look

and format was developed and carried throughout all levels of SaMM.

Early on, our design department worked with Art Factory of Milwaukee to produce the logo for SaMM—a stylized face made of notes. Many designs were presented and modified until one was selected with “just the right look.” It was used with all materials. The Art Factory was also responsible for almost all draw-



ings on the worksheets.

NPH planned to publish a level in each year starting in 1997. Although schedules became tight at times, the goals, with only one exception, were attained. It is believed the last level, Level Five, can be released on schedule, which is mid-summer of 2001.

Unsung heroes of the project were the copy editors. Many hours were spent reading plans, reviewing the copy masters, listening to the CDs, and checking for consistency and teacher-friendliness.

One area of frustration was getting copyright permissions. Sometimes the selections made by the author were "just right" and highly appealing to students. Some publishers, however, wanted very high fees for the use of their songs or just said, "No."

EM What can you report about the marketing of SaMM?

CN In summer 1997, NPH marketing department sent samples of lessons and brochures to WELS schools. Although the complete series would not be available for another four years, many schools took a leap of faith and purchased each level as it was released. Reported sales by January 2001 are as follows: Level One, 239 sets; Level Two 238 sets; Level Three, 201; and Level Four, 36 sets (came out late—November 2000). In addition many copies of the children's *Songbooks* and extra record-

ings have been sold. NPH is very pleased with the level of acceptance.

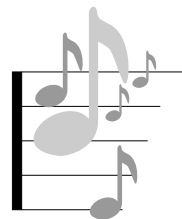
EM Tell us about plans for SaMM outside WELS.

CN Some schools in other Lutheran synods have expressed an interest in SaMM. After Level Five is released, a major marketing effort will be done to schools outside the WELS.

EM Do you have any closing comments?

CN Finally, I only regret that my present position at NPH does not allow me to use SaMM in a LES classroom. My hope and prayer is that many of our schools will make use of this series and enjoy teaching their students to "sing and make music" in praise of their Lord. 🎵

Carl Nolte is the worship/music editor at Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



Sing and Make Music College Instructors

Cheryl Loomis, John Nolte, and Edward Meyer



There are MLC professors who are providing MLC students with a rather extensive introduction to SaMM. Professor Cheryl A. Loomis, instructor of early childhood courses, and Professor John P. Nolte, instructor in various music courses, choir and piano, write about the opportunities SaMM provides them.

EM Identify and discuss how SaMM has affected your MLC instructional responsibilities.

CL Current educational practice emphasizes educating the “whole child” and music education is a part of developing the whole child. The theory of multiple intelligences states that intelligence itself is diverse and can be measured in different domains. Howard Gardner identified musical intelligence as one of these multiple intelligences. Neglecting music implies shortchanging the development of the whole child. Feeling pressures of time constraints, teachers compact the curriculum and wrestle with what to include or delete in the school day. Often music and the arts are neglected. Brain research concerning the effects of music is compelling. Memory works better when stimulated by song. Language development is enhanced as rhythms, rhymes, and

words are internalized. Music education is more than preparing a song for participation in a worship service!

SaMM has had an impact on the MLC program of early childhood education. It forms the basis of our music curriculum. SaMM offers a curriculum that can be used by teachers of varying musical ability. Student teachers gain confidence as they experience success with SaMM. It has provided a format for making music education possible in all WELS early childhood settings.

JN The mission statement of MLC affirms its commitment to the preparation of teaching ministers able to lead worship, conduct classroom devotions, and teach music in elementary classrooms. To that end, piano and preparatory music courses incorporate materials and methods from SaMM.

A collection of musical excerpts drawn from SaMM has been compiled for use on the MLC campus. Piano students use the collection as part of their lessons. The Piano Proficiency Examination requires an acceptable performance of song accompaniments from the collection. Intermediate and advanced piano students are taught to improvise (chord) the songs. In this way, almost all students gain an acquaintance with songs from SaMM.

The collection, called *Songs for Children*, is also used in many vocal musicianship classes. Through rhythm and solfeggio study, students are led to become confident singers and increase their ability to sight sing melodies and read rhythms.

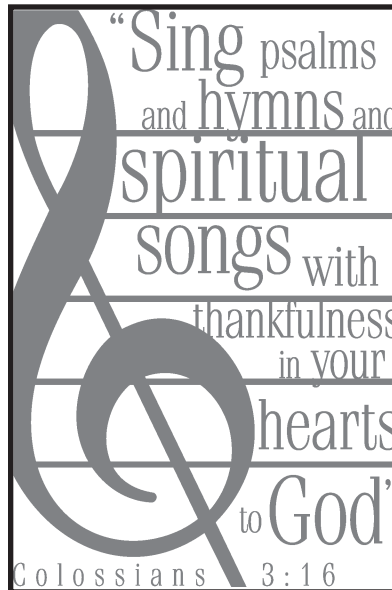
EM In which way do you see SaMM making a contribution to Lutheran elementary education?

JN Some MLC students indicate that their music and singing instruction in elementary school was limited. Hopefully, the use of SaMM on the MLC campus will make students aware that music instructional materials are accessible, and that they will acquire the skills needed to train a generation of

children in music.

CL "Singing always works" is a comment voiced by a student teacher in the Early Childhood Center. Singing can change the climate of a classroom and is an effective management technique. Singing makes learning easier and has a positive effect on changing the mood of young children. "I didn't know music would be so important" was a comment offered by another student teacher. Future teachers realize early in their experience what an integral part of the day music plays! 🎵

Professor Cheryl Loomis teaches in the Early Childhood Education program at Martin Luther College. Professor John Nolte teaches in the Music Division at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.



Sing and Make Music Future Classroom Teachers

Paul Grubbs, Erin Zastrow, and Edward Meyer



MLC students are provided with an introduction to SaMM within the structure of a two-credit course, “Teaching Music in the Lutheran Elementary School.” Students become acquainted with the philosophy, objectives, organization and content of SaMM. All students develop daily lesson plans drawn from the units of SaMM. All are required to present these lessons to their classmates.

Two students, Paul J. Grubbs of Evansville, Indiana, and Erin J. Zastrow of Hustisford, Wisconsin, who completed the course in December 2000, were invited to respond to several questions.

EM This past semester you worked with some units, songs, and recordings from SaMM. What impression have they provided?

PG As a college student, I experienced SaMM from the perspective of a teacher and a pupil and enjoyed both facets.

EZ After being introduced to SaMM during a “Teaching Music” course, I was impressed by it. My initial reaction is that it is a useful resource for an elementary music class.

EM In which way do you see SaMM making a contribution to Lutheran elementary education?

EZ I make a comparison of what is offered in SaMM and what I was offered in my grade school days. While in grade school I was exposed to music through the means of junior choir, band, and occasional singing of songs in the classroom; however, what is offered in SaMM touches so many more aspects of music than anything I was ever shown at a young age.

PG Without stifling individual creativity, SaMM brings a structure and degree of uniformity to Lutheran classrooms that might otherwise be lacking. Most important, SaMM provides a wide collection of materials, all firmly centered upon our Christian faith. The materials provide numerous options and set up a firm framework to ensure that students experience all facets of music instruction.

EM Specifically, what positive experiences have you had with SaMM?

PG I worked through SaMM as part of course activities. It was my first experience with SaMM, and I enjoyed it a great deal. In small groups we presented a wide range of lessons, sharing the ideas and lesson structures of different levels. I have always been intimidated by music instruction, but SaMM provides a well-rounded curriculum that can help

teachers approach their classrooms with a new degree of confidence and excitement.

EZ After graduation I would LOVE to have this series because there is so much in SaMM that could contribute positively to music classes. As my classmates and I were introduced to SaMM, we felt extremely excited to be given the chance to teach these lessons to children.

EM As you used the materials, where have you found weaknesses?

PG The volume of materials made wading through them a bit overwhelming at first, but as I developed an understanding of the structure, I came to appreciate the wealth of options offered to the music teacher.

EM Do you see SaMM making an impact upon the music learning of students attending Lutheran elementary schools?

EZ Students can benefit from SaMM

by being introduced to music terminology and proper singing techniques. They will see there is more to singing and making music than notes on a page. Children will see that they are music makers too! By instilling a love for music early, we will see more Lutheran music makers in the years to come.

PG Because teachers don't have to put together each lesson, students will be taught a broader set of skills using a more diverse collection of activities and methods. Because of the uniformity that SaMM provides, high school teachers should be able to make assumptions regarding the background knowledge and experiences of incoming freshmen.✪

Paul Grubbs and Erin Zastrow are students in the teacher education program at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

Little Pumpkin



Words and Melody: Lou Ruehling



Here's a lit - tle pump - kin, round and fat.
mi mi mi mi so so la la so



Make a jack - o - lan - tern, now, how's that?
la la la la so so mi mi so

Text and Tune © 1993 Edward H. Meyer

Sing and Make Music Elementary School Principals



Dale Markgraf, Ronald Zahn, Edward Meyer

Comments about SaMM were solicited from two principals of WELS elementary schools, Dale E. Markgraf and Ronald P. Zahn.

EM Before you respond to my statements below, do you wish to make some preliminary remarks?

RZ A Challenge: Name a WELS school which has no planned math curriculum. OK, name a second one! A given: Name a WELS school which has no planned music curriculum.

General musicality and a knowledge of hymnody and liturgy—these are not successfully inculcated when music instruction is left to the whim and wish of each classroom teacher and when the only music plan is the church singing schedule.

Martin Luther wanted God's people to be active in worship, not mere onlookers and spectators. Biblical doctrine of the universal priesthood and the appealing nature of music impelled Luther's desire. Luther states,

I truly desire that all Christians would love and regard as worthy the lovely gift of music, which is a precious, worthy, and costly treasure given mankind by God. The

riches of music are so excellent and so precious that words fail me whenever I attempt to discuss and describe them. . . . This precious gift has been given to man alone that he might thereby remind himself of the fact that God has created man for the express purpose of praising and extolling God. . . . A person who gives this some thought and yet does not regard [music] as a marvelous creation of God, must be a clodhopper indeed. (Buszin, Walter, *Luther on Music*, 1958, pp. 5-6).

Let's have no clodhoppers in our schools! There seem to be roadblocks to the desired goal of a flexible and functioning music program. Maybe at times we're clodhoppers ourselves! But SaMM addresses roadblocks to music instruction. Thoroughly Lutheran in content, complete with age-appropriate music, manageable accompaniments, CDs, and plans—it's there in SaMM.

Cost? Compare its cost to what you budget for referees for a season of basketball, what you pay to paint a room, what you lay out for a language text.

DM I have felt for years that our schools, with some exceptions, were

lacking a really good, comprehensive, Christian music program. Over the years I had used my own materials, that from the Concordia Music Education Series, Silver Burdett, and others. But all along I knew there could be one music curriculum that should be considered for use by all schools.

EM What experiences has your staff had with SaMM?

DM St. Paul's of New Ulm began using SaMM in grades kindergarten through two in 1998. We have since added the third and fourth grade materials. It may be too early to evaluate the impact on the children, but it is not too early to obtain feedback from teachers.

Six teachers are using SaMM. They agree that it is a strong, well-laid-out, comprehensive program, and they enjoy using it. The teachers' guides are teacher-friendly with step-by-step procedures easy to follow. Making meaningful lessons is within the grasp of even teachers with limited music ability. Our teachers like the fact that the teacher's guide presents various options for enhancing the lesson. In addition, our teachers like the fact that alternate units are available for double grade rooms. I am told the children like the songs and learn them quickly.

RZ When I teach seventh and eighth grade music, I am less concerned with teaching a curriculum than I am with teaching students. SaMM is flexible enough for me to use Level Two materials in both my second grade classroom and in my seventh and eighth grade room. Obviously, not all Level Two

material is suitable for upper grades, but one can select alternate material from Levels Three and Four. I encourage schools to have a music curriculum appropriate for students in the upper grades; SaMM, however, can open options for schools on a budget fix or those patiently waiting for Level Five.

EM Is SaMM making an impact upon the music learning of the students in your school? Explain.

RZ "Mister Mosquito! Mister Mosquito!" my third graders excitedly shout as they beg to sing one of their favorite songs. Their enthusiasm for this class never ends. This attitude is consistent throughout the four grade levels I have for music class. I believe part of their enthusiasm is a result of the curriculum we use — SaMM.

EM What feedback has come to you?

DM Our teachers have elected not to use the worksheets since they feel they are not a necessary component to the lessons. They do appreciate the black line masters for preparing transparencies, but they would also like to see large music charts created from the black masters published.

EM Are there any further comments you care to make?

RZ Teacher Friendly: We have not all been blessed with the same musical abilities. SaMM takes this into account. The lessons have many clear options on how to achieve the lesson objectives. Included are copy masters for transparencies, posters, worksheets, and

tests. Each lesson has a plethora of songs from which to make selections for the enrichment of the learning experience. These songs are included in the *Songbook*, the *Songbook* accompaniment edition, and the CDs. Because the songs are available in these ways, the teacher can choose what he/she is most comfortable with.

Student Friendly: The students love it when they are able to recognize note values, ascending or descending patterns, time signatures, or when they realize the cartoon they are watching uses a piece of classical music they are familiar with! These topics and others are included. Students learn about music theory, sight singing, classical music, music history, and our rich liturgy. I've

found that students, on their own, are able to apply these concepts to new hymns and pieces of music they've never seen before.

Our students are learning to use the skills acquired in music class to glorify our Lord and Savior, and to continue the tradition of the "singing church."

DM In summary, my faculty feel SaMM is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when the WELS finds a way to implement such projects. Thanks to all who contributed to SaMM! 🎵

Dale Markgraf is principal of St. Paul's Lutheran School, New Ulm, Minnesota. Ronald Zahn is principal of Emanuel Lutheran School, Lansing, Michigan.

Let the Savior's Mighty Call



Words: Source Unknown
Melody: Chr. Alpers



1. Let the Sav - ior's might - y ___ call Reach the hearts of
2. Far and near the good ___ news ___ bring: "Je - sus Christ is
3. May all lis - ten and ___ take ___ heed: "Je - sus is the



one ___ and all, That the ___ whole round world may
Lord ___ and King!" Tell the ___ world that God is
friend ___ we need." Spread the ___ word to ev - 'ry



know Christ is King, ___ and ___ Christ a - lone.
near; Pray the Lord ___ that ___ all may hear.
shore So they all ___ may ___ God a - dore.

Tune: © 1993 Edward H. Meyer

Sing and Make Music Classroom Teachers

Karen Livingston, Shirleen Maertz, Bonnie Pufahl,
Edward Meyer



Comments about SaMM were solicited from teachers of WELS elementary schools, Karen A. Livingston, Shirleen A. Maertz, and Bonnie L. Pufahl.

EM Do you wish to make any preliminary remarks before the interview continues with the questions below?

SM "I just love this *Sing and Make Music!* This spontaneous comment came from a second grade student in the first year we used the program. We had gone through two or three units at this time.

BP It is finally here! These are the words heard from many teachers as the new music curriculum rolled off the printing press and into the hands of teachers.

EM In which ways do you see SaMM making contributions to Lutheran elementary education?

BP In the past, teaching music was difficult and haphazard because there was no standard curriculum to follow. Each classroom was following an independent instructional program depending on the strengths and resources of the teacher. Now, if teachers follow the

course as programmed, the student should be equipped to demonstrate a high level of musicality at the end of grade school. This certainly should aid the student in further developing musical abilities in high school and college.

KL Regular and systematic use of SaMM in the lower grades should produce students who will be ready to confidently take up a band instrument and be proficient in music reading by junior choir age.

SM In the past I was frustrated when it came to teaching music. The schools at which I taught had no music curriculum. I knew the areas that should be covered but gathering materials and putting it all together was difficult. Music classes, workshops, and sectionals gave me excellent ideas to incorporate. But adding those ideas to the potpourri made the challenge of trying to pull it together more daunting. Another difficulty I faced was that the students' music backgrounds covered a wide spectrum. Those taking piano lessons already knew much of what I was teaching while others needed to learn the basics.

EM What experiences have you had with SaMM?

SM Now into my third year of using SaMM, it has become a blessing because the curriculum addresses my frustrations. Everything is put together for me. I don't have to gather materials because it's all right there. At the same time, the program is flexible. I am able to incorporate some of my own ideas. The concepts in SaMM are introduced and developed sequentially. I no longer have to figure out what to teach when. The concepts are presented in a variety of ways which enables students with different learning styles to be successful. I've found it keeps the interest of piano students who, in the past, already "knew it all."

KL SaMM shows that children can grasp music concepts at a young age. Before starting to teach first and second grade music three years ago, I thought singing *Wee Sing* songs or other short ditties was all they were capable of doing. Imagine my surprise. After teaching the so-la syllables to first graders, I put on the overhead a strip of never-seen-before so-la syllables. I gave them the starting tone and asked them to sing the line using syllables. They did so almost flawlessly and with correct syllables and pitches. It can be done! Some teachers are reluctant to use the sol-fa method and I was one of them. But I learned with the students and catch myself using the handsigns without thinking and sometimes the students do too! Or who would think that second graders could sing in four-part harmony? They do when they sing "I Like Tacos" with the ostinato patterns (Level two, Unit 13A).

EM Is SaMM making an impact upon the music learning of the students in your school? Explain.

KL We are beginning to reap the reward of using SaMM and are allowing enough time in classroom schedules for an emphasis on music. This will certainly equip our students to be more proficient in the future, whether it be as worshiper in the pew or as a classroom music teacher or choir director.

Level three, Unit 6, gives very important information on working with the child's voice. I have been in churches where a children's group has sung, and I could not pick out a melody line. What a disgrace and injustice to our students! Matching pitches is a regular part of music instruction. It can be done in a fun and non-threatening way. This year one of my fourth grade boys finally "found" his head voice and matched my pitches perfectly. The rest of the class spontaneously applauded and he grinned from ear to ear.

SM Students are definitely benefiting from SaMM. I am amazed at how well the children read music by the time they've completed Level two. They are able to "ta & ti" rhythms using whole through eighth notes. They follow melody lines and sight read simple melodies. Church choir directors would be thrilled if all choir members could read music as well.

EM As you used SaMM, where have you found weaknesses?

KL It is hard to compete with commercial texts and their state-of-art recordings. Sources other than SaMM

catch the children's interest through a greater variety and appeal. But these types of recordings are cost prohibitive to produce. Right, now, therefore, our third and fourth grades group is taught from SaMM and *Music Connections*. It's a wonderful combination.

EM What barriers still remain before SaMM will make an impact?

BP Challenges are ever present in classroom teaching situations. One is time and time management. It seems the school day is never long enough to get everything done. As technology and other twenty-first century expectations push our clocks to the wall, music is a subject that gets pushed out. From the very beginning music has had a very important role in proclaiming the Word of God. Our musical heritage needs to be maintained as an important part of our schools' curriculum. We need to thank God for the blessings the music curriculum will give our students and churches.

KL I feel every school needs to take its most musically proficient staff member and ask him/her to teach the classroom music for all others who do not feel adequate, whether SaMM is used or another text. Too often music is done if there is time. It's hard to skip a music period when the music teacher is standing at the door.

EM Are there any further comments you care to make?

KL The last units of each level deal with worship. I hope that because they are at the end of the manual they are

not being overlooked. There are some gems to be taught and that may be the child's only exposure to certain aspects of Christian worship.

Allow me to share a few personal stories involving SaMM and how the children applied their music knowledge. Mara, a second grader, said she woke up early one spring morning but stayed in bed listening to one bird singing outside her window. Soon more birds joined the one and it became quite loud. "Isn't that the same as the thin and thick sound we learned about?" she asked.

Tanner, a first grader, excitedly told me that his mailbox and Thad's were the same as so-mi. I was clueless what he was referring to until he showed me the rows of mailboxes where they kept their take-home papers. He correlated the mailboxes to a staff with notes. His and his friend's boxes did line up like so-mi on the staff!

SM I see SaMM benefiting our congregations. We have the heritage of "the singing church." With the number of times God's Word encourages and even commands to "sing and make music," it's a heritage we should strive to continue. Whether singing in a choir or participating in congregational singing, giving our children the skills needed to sing and read music will help us as a body of believers to give our God our best as we worship. Having musical skills and knowledge results in a greater number of confident singers in our churches. We haven't used the curriculum long enough to tell, but I suspect that the kind of exposure to music our children

Livingston, Maertz, Pufahl, & Meyer

are getting will also result in greater interest in music in general. ❧

Bonnie L. Pufahl teaches at St. Paul's School in Lake Mills, WI.

Karen A. Livingston teaches at St. Martin's School in Watertown, SD; Shirleen A. Maertz teaches at Zion School in Hartland, WI; and

Jesus, Lead Us On



SI:31

Words: Nicolaus L. von Zinzendorf, adapt.
Translation: Jane L. Borthwick, alt.
Melody: Adam Drese
Setting: Bruce R. Backer

do do ti do re do re mi re do

mi fa so la ti so la ti do ti do

1. Je - sus, lead us on Till our rest is won;
2. If the way be drear, If the foe be near,
3. When we seek re - lief From a long - felt grief,
4. Je - sus, still lead on Till our rest is won.

mi fa so fa mi re mi re do re mi re do ti do ti

do re mi la ti do ti do ti la so do ti la si la so fa

And al-though the way be cheer-less, We will fol - low, calm and fear-less.
Let not faith - less fears o'er-take us; Let not faith and hope for - sake us,
When temp - ta - tions come al - lur - ing, Make us pa - tient and en - dur - ing;
Heav'n - ly Lead - er, still di - rect us; Still sup - port, con - sole, pro - tect us

do do ti do re do re mi re do

mi fa so la ti so la ti do do ti do

Guide us by your hand To our fa - ther - land.
For through man - y a woe To our home we go.
Show us that bright shore Where we weep no more.
Till we safe - ly stand In our fa - ther - land.

Setting: © 1997 Bruce R. Backer

Who Will Go?

Ronald Brutlag

Somewhere on the shelf in the principal's office or the pastor's office sits a three ring binder that is asking a question. "Who Will Go?" This question is being asked of all WELS called workers and of all WELS congregations. This publication for recruitment of future teachers, pastors, or staff ministers contains information and ideas that will be helpful to any individual or group that is involved in active recruiting within the congregation.

Principals will find materials for use in faculty meetings. Pastors have before them Bible studies that emphasize recruitment. Plans for conducting a Recruitment Sunday are laid out in detail. Sunday school superintendents and teachers will find useful hints and suggestions to incorporate recruitment in their classes and lessons. Devotion suggestions are also present along with



activity sheets and bulletin board ideas. There is something for every individual or group that is interested in recruiting full-time workers for ministry.

Please take a moment to find this publication. If your copy is missing you can obtain another one by just contacting the Office of Admissions and Recruitment at Martin Luther College. Read it. Use it as it fits your situation. After all, our present called workers are the best recruiters we have at the local level. Join our synodical recruitment team through your personal efforts in your schools and congregations. ☛

Ronald Brutlag is the Director of Admission for the Studies in Educational Ministry at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.





Poets in the Classroom

Upheaval and the Process of Poetry

Rachel Ohlendorf

I've been writing for as long as I remember. Mom gave me an old typewriter when I was six or seven, and I used to pound out short, badly-spelled stories on random scraps of paper. When I was fifteen, I started writing seriously with the idea of making a career of writing. But until I was a freshman in college, I refused to write poetry. I was afraid to write poetry because I thought I would first need to know all about things like iambic pentameter and sonnet form. And the poetry I experienced in my high-school lit classes never struck a chord with me. Whittier, Longfellow, Whitman, Frost, Sandburg, and other "notable" poets fascinate me now, but when I was in high school poetry seemed remote and stuffy, totally inapplicable to my own life. Why write poetry if it's boring?

As a college freshman, however, I made friends with some poets, and came to realize that poetry can relate very closely to my life; in fact, poetry can release emotion as very few other things can. It helps me express myself to those around me and also relieves some of the tension I feel from school and just life in general.

In the two years I've been writing poetry, I've discovered there's not a set formula for how I write poetry. Sometimes a word or phrase will catch my attention and send my imagination into production. This can happen while I watch movies, read books, talk to my friends, and listen to music—basically any time. Other times I'll feel a need to express an emotion or feeling that's been bugging me.

I'm going to share one of my poems with you and explain the processes I went through while writing it. My poem "Upheaval" is typical of the process I go through. One morning I was quickly toasting myself a pop tart before class, and it broke in half and fell on the floor as I walked to the door. I made some comment to my roommates about knowing your day is going to be bad when your pop tart falls apart. One of them said, "Hey, you should write a poem about that!" That night, I did.

My first version of the poem went like this:

When your eyes have turned
To silver
And your pop tart
Falls apart,

When your yo-yo string
 Is tangled
 And your teacher hates your work,
 When your plastic plant
 Has wilted
 And your peanut butter
 Disappears,
 Then rejoice in your
 Disruption
 And give it
 One more try.

But I didn't think it jived very well, and I thought maybe the end of each four-line group should rhyme with "apart." So I decided my teachers should hate my art, not my work. The peanut butter line didn't quite work, so I changed it to "And your lemon Isn't tart." And the last two lines became "And another Poem start." Still I was not satisfied, so I tried to put a little more emotional depth into the poem by throwing out the lemon lines and replacing them with "And your head has Killed your heart" and decided rejoicing in 'upheaval' worked better than 'disruption.' In fact, I liked the upheaval idea so well, I used it for the title.

The finished product, then, looks like this:

Upheaval

When your eyes have turned
 To silver
 And your pop tart
 Falls apart,
 When your yo-yo string
 Is tangled
 And your teacher

Hates your art,
 When your plastic plant
 Has wilted
 And your head has
 Killed your heart,
 Then rejoice in your
 Upheaval
 And another
 Poem start.

This process I've briefly described here is basically what I go through every time I write a poem. A poem doesn't hit me like a message from God that I can just jot down complete and perfect. Instead, I get an idea, write what comes, revise it, revise it again, and keep revising until it is satisfactory. Some poems only need a word changed, others need lots of help. Some never do satisfy me.

But I'm not saying I have no inspiration in my poetry, or that God is not an integral part of my writing. I'm simply agreeing with Edison's idea that invention (or in my case, writing) is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration (or revisionary work). God has given me a gift for poetry and the tenacity to stick with a poem. Unfortunately, not every poem turns out well; I've written over two hundred poems in the last two and a half years, and there are maybe thirty I like well enough to share with the world. Not a wonderful batting average, but that's how it goes....

Rachel Ohlendorf is a junior at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. She lives in Taylorsville, North Carolina and is the co-editor for Inkwell, BLC's literary magazine.

Essaying into Drafts

Ramona Czer

Essay: To make an attempt at; try. A testing or trial of the value or nature of a thing. A short literary composition on a single subject, usually presenting the personal view of the author.

The American Heritage Dictionary

It's your turn to write an article for the school newspaper. You've taught the writing process to students or you buy into the concept of multiple drafting in theory, but somehow when the deadline looms, you probably write it like this: one long, frantic stint from 7 to 10 PM the night before it's due. Each sentence is corrected, augmented, or deleted as you work through your piece. You reread constantly, checking for tone, sense, and organization. Before the last edit you might get up and watch TV or eat some dinner to gain objectivity, but essentially you pull, much like my college students do, an all-nighter. Why? Why do we so often ignore the advice of writing process gurus and take the "quick and dirty" approach?

Because it works! In three hours we get a passable essay. We haven't wasted our personal lives much, the topic hasn't haunted our dreams or made us spacey around heavy machinery. We've written up to our usual level of compe-

tent, slightly boring but essentially pleasing prose, and we feel smug that once again we've pulled off a feat of brilliance by doing things "our way."

Multiple drafting was invented for lesser mortals, for students who haven't a clue what's swimming around in their fertile but formless minds, for word-neophytes who constrict themselves with their plebian vocabularies. It's not for us, well not for me anyway. I'm creative, relaxed, and intelligent enough to defy the dangers of the single draft. I'm ignited by pressure; the challenge pushes me to write my best. I'm the exception to the rule, a language magician who daily pulls miracles out of my hat..

But. Think on these things:

What young pianist would be urged to wait until the night before her recital to practice and perfect her piece?

What coach would urge his basketball team to rest up all week and then use one single hectic practice before the big game to prepare them?

Do these analogies work? Writing is a skill, much like piano playing and basketball are, made up of dozens of fundamentals that need drilling and repetition over time to develop. But a good pianist should be able to sight read a new piece competently, right? And

couldn't a well-prepared team hold their own if Coach suddenly scheduled a non-conference scrimmage? Perhaps those examples more accurately reflect our essay-writing experience—an emergency revelation of finely tuned abilities.

But. Are our writing skills so honed and practiced to be fairly compared to those of an excellent pianist or sports team? Most musicians and athletes practice daily, for an hour or more. Do we write so frequently, practicing different voices, styles, patterns, and techniques, forcing ourselves out of our comfort zones and beyond our urge to stop? Do we read daily, analyzing works like a writer or a coach scrutinizing opposing teams who execute particularly well? Naw. We're pretty lazy as writers, most of us. Teaching is a creatively exhausting profession for one thing, and literacy comes so easily for us, we take it for granted. We figure writing is like bicycling—competency always comes back with one or two turns around the block.

This is not true. Our writing muscles can get flabby, our thinking muscles even flabbier. When not challenged by writing tasks frequently, we tend to get into ruts, write the same old way, and usually tackle the same old topics. The best way to ward against this for busy teachers and students who don't have time to write an hour a day is to somehow make ourselves and them write in ways that force us out of our comfort zones, that push us beyond what we thought we knew and felt. We need to make time our ally, and musing

inevitable. Multiple drafting does all this—like magic!

This semester, ten of my sixteen students in Composition experienced the thrill of seeing their essays morph before their eyes. To varying degrees the pieces changed from boring, trite, teacher-pleasing “assignment” essays into fully-developed, fascinating and honest “real” essays. This is a much higher percentage than normal—so I was ecstatic watching it happen. I wish I could say I did something different this time. Waved a particularly wise saying, handout, or prewriting technique over their heads and presto, out popped prose I admired. Nope. They just worked hard, on draft after draft until something clicked, and then inspired each other to keep revising as they shared in their writing groups. Mostly, each student suddenly figured out what he or she wanted to say, why, and how it might be said most effectively. They got creative and animated on paper. They stopped doing it for me and did it for themselves, their families, their friends back in high school, somebody important to them. They simply bought into my oft-repeated mantra to all students: find a way to care about your topic and experiment until your reader cares as well.

Drafting simply works. Amazingly well. It makes us better than we can possibly sound in a single night. It lifts us above finite time and allows us to collaborate with others as they offer feedback and our future selves as we become more observant and smarter about this topic. It's a safety net so we can jump

off higher buildings, a longer runway so we can get up more speed for takeoffs, and it's like real wings that allow us to stay airborne longer than any circus performer or fuel-fed plane.

Four types of drafts need to be understood in order to use this process—really use it. The best way to understand it? Try it yourself! So here's my challenge: Work your way through all four kinds of drafts with some topic you'd really like to write about (see the end of this article for topic suggestions.) I believe that if you will complete all four with enthusiasm and hard work on just one topic, you'll be converted. Your writing will be transformed. You'll write better than you ever have, with more honesty, complexity, and sparkle. And the best result: you'll be a better teacher. You won't feel so hypocritical, you'll have firsthand stories of frustrations and victories to share, and you'll be able to show students four very different drafts as examples. You'll say to them with real conviction, "Hey, look what can happen when a feeble, boring mind ruminates on a topic over time—the tortoise wins!"

The Discovery Draft

It's like playing piano all alone in an empty house, improvising a tune or figuring out notes by ear; it's like driveway ball, recess scrimmages, and shooting 50 freethrows every day all summer. It's just for yourself, honest, exploratory. No need to be organized, make sense, or pay attention to grammar and spelling. Show it to no one.

The Experimental Draft

It's like piano lessons and supervised practices in a gym. It's working on expanding one's repertoire of skills necessary for this task, for this audience, at this time. It's still highly loose and low-key but more focused and disciplined too. Many drafts are often needed at this stage before you'll decide how best to play this piece, or how to win against this opponent. Experiment with tone, audience, structure, point of view. Share this draft only with trusted friends who won't scrutinize details yet.

The Feedback Draft

It's like a recital or a weekly game. It's time to show what we've learned to others, to get responses back, to share what's been learned. Not a lot rides on it, though—mostly parents and friends are watching—but the point is trying one's best. With this draft, you're ready for some ruthless, helpful, detailed critiquing. So grow a thick skin, ask pointed questions, and take notes.

The Performance Draft

It's like an adjudicated contest, a solo recital, or a tournament championship game. It's time to shine, to be the best one possibly can be, to give glory to God and honor to those who have helped one along the way to arrive at this committed, polished performance. This is when you'll be graded, promoted or demoted, published or rejected, complimented or ignored. After this draft,

after the work is “out there,” there’s usually nothing more to do. Except tackle that new topic whispering in your ear, “Are we ready to learn something more?”

For more detailed help in understanding these four kinds of drafts and how to teach them to students, drop me an e-mail at rczer@blc.edu. I’ll provide you with information for obtaining a handout and a few of my students’ drafts as well. Feel free to reproduce the handout or essays as you wish.

Your turn. Here are two ideas to get you brainstorming. Then dive in, have fun, and send me a postcard when you’ve worked your way through the whole process (I’m serious—see the note at the end).

- Pretend a prestigious magazine has

just asked you to write about a troubling problem in an organization you belong to (church, school, community group, sports team you coach, etc.). They’ve even agreed to allow you to write under a pen name.

Look at this problem squarely, unflinchingly—what are the causes of it, the symptoms, the various perspectives people have about it, and then examine how you propose to deal with it or solve it. Be humble but assertive. Be as sly as a serpent but innocent as a dove.

- Brainstorm a list of childhood happenings which affected you deeply. Think small as well as dramatic, humorous as well as frightening, strangely wonderful as well as confusing. Now from your list choose two

From a sermon by a black preacher:

And one of de disciples called Jesus
 “Master!! Carest thou not that we perish?”
 And He arose
 And de storm was in its pitch
 And de lightnin played on His raiments as he stood on the prow of the boat
 And placed His foot upon the neck of the storm
 And spoke to the howlin’ winds
 And de sea fell at His feet like a marble floor
 And de thunders went back in their vault
 Then He set down on de rim of de ship
 And took the hooks of His power
 And lifted de billows in His lap
 And rocked de winds to sleep on His arm
 And said “Peace be still.”

American Sermons: The Pilgrims to Martin Luther King, Jr. Edited by Michael Warner, Library of America, 1999.

happenings which seem opposite in some interesting way—such as being separated in time or place, or you reacted very differently to similar events, or each had a different tone or outcome—and which you’ve never told to others or probed yourself in detail before. Your task: to find a way to write about both smoothly and to teach yourself something new through your detailed exploration.

Note: I’m working on compiling a book of “transformed essays,” multiple drafts by students and teachers alike, along with process notes the writers jotted down along the way. So here’s my request: why not take notes as you explore your topic through drafting stages and consider sending me both your notes and all of your drafts when

finished? Process notes simply describe where, when, and for how long you wrote each draft, how it went, what you learned, what you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of each draft, how you intend to revise the next draft, and anything else you noticed or want to share. I promise I won’t publish anything without further permission, but I’d love to read what you write. Send essay drafts and process notes by attachment to rczer@blc.edu or as hard copies to me at Bethany Lutheran College, 700 Luther Dr., Mankato, MN 56001.

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