



2021

Cover, Editors' Note, Front Matter

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2021

VOLUME 10

NEW JERSEY COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

NEW JERSEY ENGLISH JOURNAL



COURSE CORRECTION: THE ADAPTIVE NATURE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Editors' Note

EMILY HODGE
Montclair State University

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Northern Highlands Regional High School, Drew University & Fordham University

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2021 issue of *New Jersey English Journal (NJEJ)*, our second issue as co-editors. This year's theme is, "Course Correction: The Adaptive Nature of English Language Arts." We challenged writers to reflect upon the ways in which both teaching and learning have adapted in response to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

When we composed this call for manuscripts in early summer 2020, we could not have anticipated the extent to which the pandemic would continue to upend our personal and professional lives. This year has been an extraordinarily difficult one for many educators and families, and we pause to honor the many lives that have been lost to this pandemic. We honor the resilience and adaptability of the educators who have returned to both virtual and in-person classrooms that have changed so dramatically to support both their students and their own families during such uncertain times.

In this issue, we hoped to create an opportunity for reflection on how the pandemic has changed the course of teaching English Language Arts. In our call for submissions, we asked authors,

- How did teaching and learning change during the COVID-19 pandemic? How did teachers and students adapt, both personally and academically? What lessons will we carry with us into future teaching and learning?
- How did the shift to remote instruction raise awareness of inequities within and across our schools? In what ways can educators create more equitable learning opportunities?
- In what ways do teachers respond to curveballs—both large and small—from their students, in their own lives, at their institutions, in their communities, or on a national level?
- In what ways has the ELA classroom or the role of ELA teachers evolved during 2020, and how might it continue to change in the future? How can ELA teachers adapt their methods—for example, by considering issues such as social-emotional learning, social justice, and/or new technologies—to respond to students' evolving needs and make space for new voices, texts, and approaches?

This issue features work in three genres: poetry, reflective pieces, and research articles. In response to our call, this issue addresses a variety of topics, including how COVID-19 offered new opportunities for student engagement and teacher reflection. Our authors include current teachers, teacher educators, and literacy leaders.

One set of articles from teacher educators focused on the importance of preparing pre-service teachers to adapt to quickly changing circumstances (Emily Wender, "Training Adaptive Teachers") and to be "flexible" (Elizabeth Leer, "Learning to Teach in a Pandemic: Qualities Contributing to Success").

During a time of great turmoil and danger to our physical selves, several of these articles remind us that it is ok to “let some things go” (Sheila Benson, “Maybe Elsa’s Right: We Need to Let Some Things Go”) and instead, that it is critical to care for our own and our students’ mental health and social/emotional needs. (See, for example, Latasha Holt and Teesha Finkbeiner’s piece, “Uniting in a Reading Education Course to Support Mental Health Awareness During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” Kathleen Adler’s “Reading: The Key to Addressing Students’ Social Emotional Needs in the Time of COVID-19,” and “In Praise of Poetry: Using Poems to Promote Joy, Community, and SEL During the Pandemic” by Jordan Virgil and Katie Gallagher.)

Additionally, many of our pieces offered guidance and reflection on how to use technological tools to foster student connection and engagement during remote teaching, such as Annie Yon’s piece on Padlet, “How Padlet Encouraged Student Collaboration and Engagement in My Virtual Classroom,” and Maria Geiger’s piece on the flipped classroom, “Flip Your Way Into the Future of Learning.”

This is the second year that we have published in a completely digital format. This open-access, digital format has allowed us to reach a broader audience with the content of our eight previous issues. As of June 2021, these 212 articles have 7,418 downloads from 111 different countries representing 441 institutions. We are grateful to Montclair State University for hosting our journal on their library’s Digital Commons repository through the BePress publication system, which helps readers find our pieces through search engines, institutional databases, and keyword searches.

This year’s cover was designed by 12th grader Noreen Hosny of Northern Highlands Regional High School in Allendale, New Jersey, winner of our 2020 cover design contest, who generously agreed to design our 2021 cover. We are grateful for talent and creativity, and wish her well in her future endeavors.

We would like to thank and acknowledge those who contributed their time and expertise to this issue. Special thanks to our reviewers for their quick and attentive work to our submissions during an especially demanding year. We extend our gratitude to our Managing Editor, Samantha Brannigan, who supported our authors and this issue at every turn, and to our Copy Editors, Susan Chenelle and Katie Whitley, whose attention to detail helped us to prepare the issue for publication. Thank you as well to Stephen Tarsitano for additional copyediting support. We thank Audrey Fisch, our NJCTE President, for her leadership and guidance, and look forward to working with incoming President Valerie Mattessich.

This issue will be the last with Emily Hodge in the Co-Editor role. She has deeply appreciated the opportunity to provide a peer-reviewed writing outlet for ELA teachers in New Jersey and beyond.

New Jersey English Journal

2021 Issue, Volume 10

New Jersey English Journal is a peer-reviewed publication of New Jersey Council of Teachers of English (NJCTE). This journal is intended to serve our members through the sharing and showcasing of research, best practices, and ideas related to K–12 and college English Language Arts education, and to encourage diverse discussions and inclusion.

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NJEJ seeks educators with experience in P–12 and/or postsecondary English Language Arts to serve as reviewers. Reviewers are typically asked to read and evaluate 2–3 submissions per year.

Instructions to join our reviewer pool can be found on the journal's website:

<http://digitalcommons/montclair.edu/nj-english-journal/>

WRITING CONTESTS

NJCTE offers several student writing contests. Please encourage your students to submit to them—and join us as a judge. For more information, see <http://www.njcte.org>.

AWARDS

NJCTE offers several awards for teachers. Please consider making a nomination. More information about these awards and past award winners are listed on our website: <http://www.njcte.org/awards>

- The Marcia Holtzman Pre-Service Teacher Award honors preservice teachers aiming to work at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- The M. Jerry Weiss Early Career Teacher Award honors teachers with one to five years of teaching experience.
- Our Educator of the Year Award recognizes an exceptional English/language arts educator—a dedicated, innovative, dynamic Pre-K–12 teacher, university teacher, supervisor, or administrator—whose activities have significantly and widely impacted New Jersey ELA.

BLOG

Please consider sharing your work—a project, an anecdote, some words of inspiration, a classroom story—with our members around the state by becoming a "teacher who writes" for our NJCTE blog.

Read the blog at <https://njcte.wordpress.com>. Email njcteblog@gmail.com to share your ideas.

CONFERENCES

NJCTE typically hosts fall and spring conferences, as well as virtual events throughout the year. In Summer 2021, we will be hosting a virtual summer learning series. We hope you will join us! Learn more at <http://www.njcte.org>.

New Jersey Council of Teachers of English

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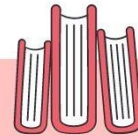
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