



VIRGINIA  
ASSOCIATION OF  
TEACHERS OF  
ENGLISH

2020

## Introduction from the Editor

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## Introduction from the Editor

### Author Biography



### **Introduction from the Editor's Desk**

Two years ago, Sean Ruday trained me to be the editor of the *Virginia English Journal*, and after this issue, I am passing the torch to Paige Horst at Radford University. In these last two years, this community filled four issues of the *VEJ* while our world changed forever. COVID-19, issues of race and social justice, and the chaotic presidential transition placed teachers and students in a time of unrest. Emily Dickinson's poem "Hope is the thing with feathers" (1951) comes to mind because amidst the anguish and uncertainty, hope remained. Writing helped anchor some people during these last couple of years, and as I invite you into this issue, I want to begin with recognizing exceptional writing from 2020. Good things can come out of trying times, and *VEJ* resources – as you will see in this issue – can serve as a support.

### **2020 VEJ Writing Award Winners:**

The winner of the 2020 *VEJ* Writing Award is Sean Ruday. His article, "Grammar, Ownership, and Usefulness: Student-Centered Inquiries into Authentic Uses of Grammatical Concepts through the Grammar Inquiry Project," was published in the winter issue of the *Virginia English Journal*.

Sean Ruday taught in both public and private school in New York, Massachusetts, and Virginia. He earned his undergraduate degree from Boston College, his masters from New York University, and his PhD from the University of Virginia. He is currently an associate professor of English Education at Longwood University. Sean has published 12 books and numerous journal articles, and he serves as a consultant, giving keynotes and conducting workshops for schools and districts around the country.

### **Honorable mentions:**

The winners of the *VEJ* Honorable Mention Award goes to Courtney Kelly and Katie Dredger and Beth Lehman. Courtney's article, "A Picture is Worth More Than Words: The Integration of Nonlinguistic and Visual Representations to Demonstrate Deep Learning," was published in the summer 2020 issue of the *Virginia English Journal*. Katie and Beth's article, "Dialogic Paired Multimodal Presentations: Examining Perspective," was published in the winter issue.

Courtney Kelly, Ed.D is an assistant professor in the Language and literacy learning program in the Education Department at the University of Lynchburg. Previously, she was an assistant professor of Elementary Education at Longwood University. She has over 20 years of teaching experience, having served as an assistant professor of education, an elementary school classroom teacher, a literacy and RtI specialist, and a research assistant. She earned both her M.Ed. in Reading Educatio and her Ed.D. in Curriculum & Instruction from the University of Virginia and her B.A. in English and PK-6 teaching license from Mary Washington College.

Katie Shepherd Dredger, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and the Academic Unit Head for the Middle, Secondary, and Mathematics Education Department in the College of Education at James Madison University. A former public school English Language Arts teacher, she examines

intersections of theory and practice in today's classrooms. Her research examines adolescent, content, and digital literacies and teacher education. Recent publications include articles in *Journal of Teacher Education*, *Opera Journal*, *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, and chapters in *Writing in the Performing and Visual Arts: Creating, Performing, and Teaching and Sports and K-12 Education: Insights, Issues, and Ideas for Teachers and School Leaders*.

Beth Lehman is an Assistant Professor of Teacher Education at Bridgewater College and completed doctoral work at Indiana University. A former middle school English Language Arts Teacher, Beth seeks to advocate for authentic learning experiences and educational equity. As a Teacher Consultant through the National Writing Project, Beth facilitates professional development on writing to learn and classroom action research. Recent publications include "Relational Response: Preservice Teachers Providing Writing Feedback in Three Middle School Partnerships" in *The Teacher Educators' Journal* (2019) and an article in the *Virginia English Journal* (2018) titled "Learning in Between: Partnerships as Sites of Inquiry."

### **This issue**

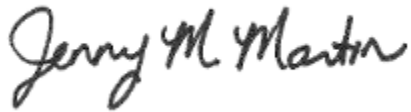
Motivation in the English language arts classroom matters, and since the summer of 2019, *VEJ* authors considered strategies related to the MUSIC Model of Motivation (Jones, 2009, 2018), which are related to research-based principles. Articles in the first three issues centered on **eM**powerment, **U**sefulness, and **S**uccess; this issue focuses on **I**nterest, and our final issue in the series will feature **C**aring. Within this issue, Barbara Wheatley and Jennifer Turner approach the pandemic by way of bibliotherapy, and they offer research and titles that will help children deal with this stressful time and other challenging times to come. Rachel Kuehl shares reading resources and writing projects that emphasize connecting to place to pique student interest. This issue will help you explore low-stakes writing activities with Lauren May and allow you to examine writing processes of Native English speakers and long-term English learners with Katie Brubaker's action research study. Finally, we enter an undergraduate lab discussion with Jim Cornett as they use poetry to apply the rhetorical tools of logos, ethos, and pathos.

In this issue, the authors focus on ways to incorporate interest into their English language arts curriculum by considering some important questions:

- What are the different ways you engage your students in the content? What do you do to pique or tap into the interest of your students? What are some ways you have structured your curriculum (in classrooms or virtual spaces) to make it interesting for students?
- When have you seen your students genuinely curious and enthusiastic about classroom topics?
- What specific topics for applying the 5 Cs of creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship resulted in relating the content to students' individual interest?
- How have you effectively helped your students gain interest by using novelty, humor, engendering emotions, controversy or providing surprising information?
- In what ways have you increased students' interest by using social interaction, games, suspense, contradiction, or a variety of learning activities?

Thank you for the reviewers and authors who made this issue possible. If you did not get a chance to write or review this issue, I encourage you to set a goal to do so for the summer issue!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny M. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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