



VIRGINIA
ASSOCIATION OF
TEACHERS OF
ENGLISH

Call for Manuscripts

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Call for Manuscripts

Author Biography

I wonder if many of you, like me, look at the 2021-2022 academic year and feel some uncertainty and a bit of apprehension? In some ways, this year feels a bit unfamiliar even though my job description remains the same. As I ponder, process, and prepare to meet my students where they are, a passage from Melanie Shoffner's editorial in the April 2021 issue of *English Education* keeps presenting itself to the "front burner" of my brain. In the editorial, Schoffner considers our complicated world in the context of poet Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem citing the difference between what "just is" and "justice":

We do not inhabit—nor have we ever—a simple world; that, I can assure my student. We inhabit a stunningly gorgeous and fascinating world of complex injustices and inequities. History tells us and current events have taught us that quiet silences some and peace buries others, and the notions we hold of justice for all may not indeed be just.

Teaching, as I tell my teacher candidates, is a messy business. Everyone in an educational setting brings the world inside with them; students, teacher, staff, and administration. Education is not, and never has been, a simple world. Our entire histories, all of our experiences, those come to school with us along with our instructional strategies, curriculum design, resource materials, and classroom book sets. Our students bring their entire histories to school. Our administrators and our staff bring their entire histories and experiences to school. Then all these histories and experiences collide with each other all day, every day, all year long, creating a school-sized microcosm of the "stunningly gorgeous and fascinating world" that Shoffner describes, complete with "injustices and inequities."

How do educators, specifically English teachers, negotiate the difference between what "just is" and "justice" in our classrooms, schools, and learning communities?

- How can educators best identify issues of injustice and inequity in their classrooms and in their schools?
- What productive, inclusive methods are available for educators to challenge the "just is" assumptions ("that's the way it just is") in their classrooms?
- What are the pedagogical choices and/or instructional tools you use to address issues of justice in a classroom setting?
- Have your students ever identified inequity in their education or education system? How did you address the issue with your students? What action was needed to support students in that circumstance?
- What specific topics for applying the 5 C's of creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship resulted in relating the content to students' individual circumstances and concerns for justice and justice-related issues?

This issue of the *Virginia English Journal* will contain three types of articles, described below:

- **Feature articles:** These are longer articles of 3,000 to 5,000 words (including references, tables, and figures) that blend research and practice, providing educators with theoretical understandings as well as practitioner-friendly

ideas.

- **Great teaching ideas:** Shorter articles of 1,000 to 2,000 words (including references, tables, and figures) that focus on effective and innovative teaching practices that other educators can quickly put into action in their classes.
- **Budding scholars:** English and English education majors interested in sharing their ideas with an audience of fellow educators are encouraged to submit. Articles of 2,000 to 4,000 words (including references, tables, and figures) should blend research-based insights with practical suggestions for application and share unique perspectives on English instruction.
- We also invite writers to bring variety to our journal by contributing book reviews and poetry that will appeal to our readership.
- **Book Reviews:** We invite you to submit a book review 1,200 to 1,400 words, showcasing how it impacted you as an educator.
- **Poetry:** The *VEJ* wants to celebrate our poets. If you use poetry in your classroom, then please include what has worked for you along with your poems.
- **Submission deadline: November 1, 2021**
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