Artist Portfolios

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A word about the 2016 paint-write students and course from the professor:

Welcome to what will be a most enjoyable art, literary and pedagogical view and read sent to you by the Summer 2016 Paint-Write students of The University of Oklahoma’s Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education. You will learn much about our students, a wonderful mix of working teachers and teachers in preparation, as you enter this self-selected sampling of their original paintings, poetry and applications to K - 12 teaching.

Formally titled, Creativity in Teaching Composition, this course is designed to help teachers grow their personal artistic and writing abilities as individuals and classroom teachers through deep daily writing, art and literary work that blends personal development and teaching practice to make a more sensitive, effective and compelling model for them and the children they teach as human beings and students. Paint-Write is research-based. Its teachers are deeply concerned about reaching the creative core of all students, successful and struggling, and translating the images they bring to the classroom and are capable of creating while there, visual to verbal, verbal to visual, to functional learning. Teachers who have completed this course of study have proved the formula to be true - freeing themselves to continuously focus on their own personal growth as they teach and that of their students as they learn, encouraging a way of thinking that will last a lifetime, a richer lifetime, for them and their students.

And so, we explore “paint-write, write-paint” to understand self and how to learn independently. The 2016 Paint-Write Anthology will give you a taste of how this happens. Do enjoy your journey through the artistry of our students growing themselves further as independent learning human beings and teachers. Think also about how you might come out just a bit more free to play with painting and writing towards serious personal growth at the other end. I can be reached at mangelotti@ou.edu (preferred). Thank you for the deep read of the visual-verbal artistic work of our future and current Oklahoma teachers.

Michael Angelotti

Michael Angelotti, Professor Emeritus, English Education
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William Blair

Death Smells Sweet

An Original Short Story

The heat had already become unbearable despite being so early in the day. The only respite was the occasional breeze wafting through us. The crickets, those obnoxious cretins, could do nothing but whine. There was never an escape from them or their noise on the most temperate of days. We simply had to tolerate it. The ants were quietly tending to their work. They always seemed content to complete whatever task they had. We have always had an amicable relationship with them. They are certainly neighborly enough. The trees whispered gently as the breeze helped them sway back and forth. The birds nestled with each other, coveting every patch of shade they could find. It would certainly be a strenuous afternoon. With this kind of heat, we could grow a whole quarter inch today.

That was the whole point. Day in and day out we must grow as much as we can. We weren’t sure why. It’s just what we did. Everyone seemed to have their tasks. The squirrels fought over acorns, the ants did whatever they were told to do, the spiders relentlessly built webs for shelter and sustenance. The birds seemed to just do as they please, seeking food when they were hungry, building nests, playing with each other. How luxurious a life to spend days bathing in the sun for lack of anything else. In a way we are fortunate. We have one task and all the time in the world to devote ourselves to it. It happens without thinking even though it consumes many a thought.

As the day grew on everyone agreed on one thing: misery loves company. The wind died down and the occasional breeze became nonexistent. Even the ants began to diminish the fervor with which they worked. However, there is a certain comfort in simply being stuck with others. To be the only one inspires pity. To be one of many inspires camaraderie. Shade became the one commodity no one had enough of. The ants stood among us seeking to shield themselves from the onslaught of the sun. The
crickets had finally gone silent. Even they had their breaking point. The birds and the squirrels packed the branches of the trees, agreeing to tolerate each other without saying a word. Not to say they disliked each other. Both simply preferred a great deal of personal space.

The next few days brought terrible storms. The trees always seemed to bear the brunt of whatever poor weather we had. Lightning had even split one of them straight to the ground. Fortunately, the birds and the squirrels had all managed to find suitable shelter and remained unharmed. The ants simply retreated to their home, safe beneath the ground from the tempest that raged overhead. The crickets took shelter as best they could near the base of the trees. After the second day the rain began to form large bodies among us, the ground unable to hold any more. We simply couldn’t drink anymore. We’d had enough. The storms disappeared that third day, seeming to vanish as quickly as they had arrived.

The following morning was as beautiful as we could ever remember. The sun was bright but not overly so, a gentle breeze swept over us, and the temperature seemed perfect. It appeared that the storms left a gift of a wonderful day- an apology of sorts. As the birds stopped by in search of food it happened. We had never experienced such a cacophony of noise. Almost instantly we heard a harsh, exploding being come to life. The birds and squirrels immediately ran away. Far enough that we no longer knew where they were. Out of sight, out of earshot, we were left with the bugs. The sound grew louder.

The crickets ran away not too long after. Not that it mattered. Whatever that sound was grew closer, and louder, and closer still. Had the crickets still been there we would never have been able to hear them. We had never felt anxiety or fear before, but both of these grew proportionately as the sound drew near. Even the ants had retreated to their fortresses beneath the dirt. As suddenly as that sound had come to be, we were alone. It was obvious that there was no escaping whatever came. There was no reprieve from the grip that had been placed on us by our own apprehension. As we stood there, rooted in place, there was nothing left to us but this overwhelming sense of dread. When it finally reached us, for a moment it blocked out the sun. There was no return from that darkness.
“Honey, take a break. It’s hot as hell out here. I don’t even know why you wanted to mow anyway. The builders are just going to tear up the yard as the house goes up”. Jenny didn’t seem to share the same excitement as her wife, Beth, over their new property. As long as the couple had been together they dreamed of a rural farmhouse for just the two of them. They had the rural part down; the house would certainly come in time. Jenny stood by the cooler with a green tea offered in an outstretched hand.

Beth walked over and took the tea from Jenny, secretly grateful for a break. There was something peaceful about mowing the yard, she thought. A certain intimacy to be gained by knowing each blade of grass and bump in their new, uneven yard. “Thanks honey. I was starting to think I would die of thirst out here. Whatever would I do without you”? If Beth had a first language it was most certainly sarcasm. Jenny brushed aside the comment, putting an arm around her beloved as they looked over their small patch of the world. “This definitely beats being stuck in the city all day. It’ll be easy to get used to being out here”, Jenny said to no one in particular. Turning her head to look at Beth she asked “Don’t you just love the fresh air out here baby”? Chuckling a little to herself, Beth leaned over and kissed Jenny on the cheek. “Wife, hasn’t anyone ever told you? Nothing smells sweeter than fresh cut grass”.
Stuck

Flying high, soaring free
Living as its meant to be
Fell to the ground, devoid of luck
Cruel irony, for now its stuck
Collaborative PW (feat. Abby Krach)

*Purple and Blue*

Calm and deep, dark and cool

Swirling and mixing

Feels like home
The Importance of Diminutive Celestial Bodies

Starlight pours through the windows,

But where does it come from?

Bouncing through vast swirls

The light penetrates the black and purple and blue.

BUT WHERE? Where could such beauty originate?

The progenitor of such wonder is the stars of course!

Large and small, light radiates from all.

Cause like they say, size doesn’t matter.
Teaching Practices

1. *A Moveable Feast* provides invaluable insight into both Hemingway’s thoughts but also his creative processes. One activity I would strongly encourage in my classroom is one technique he used to overcome writers block. Write one true sentence and use that as the basis or starting point for your writing.

2. Hemingway is famous for his very unique writing style. It’s clear how his time as a journalist helped to form who he became as a novelist. The one thing I have always enjoyed about his writing style is his use of short, direct sentences. To have students practice this, start with writing a sentence using fifteen words. Rewrite the sentence using twelve words. Finally, rewrite it using as few words as possible.

3. One thing that struck me in *True Secret* is the idea of doing as many exercises as one can. I am a very big fan of writing prompts and one exercise in particular made its way into my curriculum from the text. Sitting down somewhere in public, practice writing observations. However, you must avoid injecting any opinion. Simply write what is happening.
The following personal poem is a found word poem inspired by the “Getting The Knack” instructional novel. I created my poem completely from lines that I “found” in
another work, “Crazy Brave” by Joy Harjo. I pulled each line, not randomly, from her memoir to create “Na-Kev-Ho-Eyea-Zim,” a poem about returning home.

“Na-Kev-Ho-Eyea-Zim”

East is the direction of beginnings

I followed sound to the beginning, to the birth of sound

Secret longing

And I still hear it

Songs for falling in love

Songs for falling out of love

Songs to endure the purgatory of longing
Improvisational swing jazz

And every soul has a distinct song but

Because music is a language that lives in the spirit realms

We cannot hold it in our hands

I was entrusted to carry voices, songs and stories

I am not special

We have each our own individual soul story to attend

My generation is now the door to memory

That is why I remember

Stories can be demanding

This is my soul, it is a good soul

This is my song, it is a good song

I return back home.
“Veggies”

Green, orange, purple, yellow

They plop into the machine

Inhale the fresh scents

Lid

Latch

Button

Blend

Juice cascades into your glass

Bubbling bright and ready

To make all of this right

Take a sip

And you feel like life

God’s natural remedy

The road ahead

Uneven

Unpaved
Uncertain

Uncontainable

But your soul is wild

Nourish it like so

Drink in the change

You are stronger

Your heart, be still

Your lungs are bird cages

Your feet can be wings

This isn’t about weight loss

It’s about life.

**Practice One**

Hemingway’s Moveable Feasts is an excellent place to begin understanding and emulating the complex grammar used in classic English novels. For the first lesson, aimed towards 12-grade senior students at high school level, a student will choose a paragraph from Moveable Feasts. It is ideal to lead these teaching lessons while reading the book, because grammar becomes worthwhile when we put it to work in a meaningful text. Next, provide students with multiple colored pencils for underlining and marking. Allow students 5 minutes to select a paragraph, and another 5 to underline the nouns, verbs, predicate clauses, pronouns, or any other
grammar devices that you would like, keeping in mind what the students are familiar with. A quick grammar lesson may be necessary. After the students have done their underlining, ask the students to form groups and share their work, explaining 1) what grammar parts Hemingway uses in the paragraph and 2) why or why not the style, grammar, and content work to strengthen the paragraph.

**Practice Two**

* For the second lesson, continuing from the first Hemingway lesson, ask the students to briefly look over their work from the previous grammar tutorial to refresh them on the work, or not if this is done during the same day. Now, individually ask students to be greedy with Hemingway, and copycat him as closely as they can in grammar. Allow time for them to write their own paragraphs reflecting on the grammar styles they chose from Hemingway. When that is done, and by all means it doesn't have to be perfect, ask them to write their paragraphs again, making changes where desired, allowing them to break away from the grammar rules of copying Hemingway.

**Practice Three**

* Hemingway Lesson pt. 3. Part of being a teacher is forming a relationship with your students, which means also establishing mutual respect in the classroom. Learning to respect a student's opinions about the work they do in the classroom is a great way to work towards establishing a respected classroom environment. Hemingway is one of the greats, but that doesn't mean students will think he is that great, just because his work is famous. For this exercise,
Collaborative Paint-Write-Paint-Write

Paint 1, Trent, 6-24-16
Write 1, Paige, 6-24-16

AWPW Collab w/ Trent

We make them in many colors. (Turquoise?), golden, brown, or blue. Our pottery spreads color in our village as effortlessly as it spreads water to my people. My clay is the color of earth. Deep red clays that make our homes. Bright orange flowers that grow wild by the rivers. Moss green that covers the slippery rocks surfacing the edges. Black berries, like my skin and my mother’s hands or my father’s feet. I love my pottery, decorating it with smudges, symbols, growing life. I hold a bowl in my hands, warm from the sun, chanted after clumps of wait. I wonder what to use it for. To smell. For water, too flat for eating. Then, while I turn it over and over in my hands I sigh and agree with my conscience. It’s worthless for me. I add it to the failed pile of pots and bowls. I’ll sell it to the white women who come off the train tomorrow. It’s worthless, anyway.
Paint 2, Paige, 6-24-16
heat rising off the sand, with figures standing against the horizon. I was not prepared for the screaming voice in my head telling me to lay down, to relax, to stop.

So I stopped. The sand burned against my back for a few seconds. The sun burned my face and chest and arms and legs for more than a few seconds. There is water near. I can hear children playing in the shallows. I am thirsty.

Dark clouds pass in front of the sun, casting long shadows across the sand. I no longer hear the people on the beach. I have forgotten which direction it was from here. Rain drops begin to fall on my face. I open my mouth. I am glad I stopped here.
Abby Krach

Personal Choice Paint/Write Reflection Combo

Tiny Kingdom

Five and a half gallons of green and red life

Small subjects scurry about on official business

One takes off to swim crazily through the water

Another skitters in the sand, sifting for food

A castle with dozens of small kings and queens
A never ending commotion in a miniscule overgrown forest

Reflection on *Tiny Kingdom*

I have a small planted aquarium at home with red cherry shrimp in it and I love how it looks so I decided to paint it. The aquarium is only 5.5 gallons but there’s at least 50 or so shrimp in it because they’re less than an inch long full grown, so when they’re all swimming around or foraging for food they look a little chaotic. There’s a very specific shade of green that plants get underwater and the bright red color of the shrimp really pops out against the green and the black of the gravel. The aquarium is on my kitchen counter and it’s very peaceful to watch, I often stand there and just observe the shrimp climbing and swimming while I’m waiting for something to cook. I tried to convey the sense that the aquarium is its own little world in my painting, and the castle in the aquarium inspired me to paint/write about it as a tiny kingdom.

Collaborative PWPW
by Will Blair (writer) and Abby Krach (painter)
Planet

“Purple and Blue”

Calm and deep,

dark and cool,

swirling and mixing

feels like home.
“The Importance of Diminutive Celestial Bodies”

Starlight pours through the windows,

But where does it come from?

Bouncing through vast swirls

the light penetrates the black and purple and blue.

BUT WHERE? Where could such beauty originate?

The progenitor of such wonder is the stars of course!

Large and small, light radiates from all.
Cause like they say, size doesn’t matter.

*A Diminutive Celestial Body*

*(final piece)*
Solo Piece Student Choice

*Floating*

by Abby Krach
My first project was a painting that I did over three or four different class periods. I actually found that when I let my mind wander freely while I paint, I usually end up painting the top half of my paper some shade of purple and the bottom half of my paper some shade of green. So I have a number of different projects in my collection with this same basic color scheme. Anyway. I ended up taking a bunch of scraps of ripped paper and paint shreds and other table junk to make it look even more hectic. When I finally finished, I was reminded of a quote by Will Rogers about how dark it was during the Oklahoma Dust bowl, and my free writes about the quote and the painting yielded this poem:

Deep water
Maelstrom, torrent, flood.
Soaked, lost/alone, looking for a light
Straining my eyes to see the sun,
"looked like a cigarette burning and you couldn't see your hand before your face"
Surfacing
Project 2:
The following images were part of a collaborative paint/write/paint I did with Elizabeth in class. The first is an image that I made:

Title: Mud/Apple Pies
Next, Elizabeth did a free write about my painting:

We make them in many colors. (Turquoise), golden, brown, or blue, our pottery spreads color on our village as effortlessly as it spreads water 1 to my people. My clay is the color of earth. Deep red clay covers most our homes. Bright orange flowers that grow wild by the rivers, moss green that covers the slippery rocks surfacing the edges. Blackberries, like my skin and my mother's hands or my father's feet. I heat my pottery, decorating it with smudges, symbols, growing life. I hold a bowl in my hands, learn from the sun, dried after clay of wait. I wonder what to use it for.

I smell the water, too flat for eating. Then, whilst I turn it over and over in my hands, it high and agree with my conscience. It's worthiness for me. I add it to the faulted pile up pots and bowls. I'll sell it to the white women who come off the train tomorrow. It's worthiness, anyway.
Lastly, I did a paint based on Elizabeth’s write.

Title: It’s Worthless, Anyway
Project 3:
Since Hemingway was a constant theme for me in this class, I decided to take a few Hemingway quotes
that I was particularly fond of from other works and do free paints over them. This one was inspired by
the quote below from The Sun Also Rises, and is titled “Deciding Not to Be a Bitch”.

"You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch."
"Yes."
"It's sort of what we have instead of God.”
Project 4:
Title: Things I Found On the Way to Class

Because of our intensive study of Jackson Pollock, I was inspired to collect found objects to create found art. So, on my way to and from class every day, I would pick up objects that I found interestingly. Also, as luck would have it, I found my canvas on my way to class as well. I found a patch of concrete that was splattered with two different colors of blue paint. —JACKSON POLLOCK WAS HERE— Once I found my canvas, all I had to do was place my found objects on the surface and take the photo.
Teaching Practices:

- We closely studied Hemingway’s writing in this class. In the spirit of Hemingway’s dialogues, I would challenge students to do their best to write down a real conversation that they actually had. All the details don’t have to be exactly the way they happened, but like Hemmingway says, all you have to do is write one true sentence. In my experience, when you write down a true dialogue, the narrative that surrounds the quotes sort of creates itself. Then, after students wrote down a true conversation, I would ask students to make a painting or series of paintings that illustrate the setting of the conversation.

- The activity from this class that I absolutely will use in my own class is the idea of Paint/ Write/ Paint/ Write. I think that having students collaboratively paint and write together, moving back and forth between drawing and writing, is one of the best ways to analyze and shop our own work together. Although a classroom gallery is another great way to make sure that students are exposed to the art of their peers, having them actually sit down to do a “write” based on a “paint” that one of their classmates made is invaluable in the composition classroom.

- I would encourage students to make as many paintings as they could over the course of the unit. At the end of the semester, I would have them to analyze their own work and look for methods or practices that they used consistently. For example, my paintings were frequently half purple and half green. Sometimes it can be difficult to see patterns in our own writing, but paintings are very visual, and their patterns are very visible. I would have students write an analysis of their own work, and about what those patterns could imply.
Madison Oriente

1. Solo paint-poetic write combo

Titled: "Silence of Shadows"
Silence in Shadow 4/21

Natalie Goldberg says that silence can be the door to listening, which is one of the great cornerstones to writing.

What would it look like to be silent for an entire day? What would it feel like to take in sounds but not give them verbally? Would it feel and look meaningful? Would it be limiting or isolating or freeing? Maybe it isn’t right to give words to a wordless experience.

2. Collaborative pwpw combo

Titled: "Collaboration in Color"

By Madison and Lexie
Lexie’s response:

Colors splashed across the sky like

an abstract piece

the day fades away and I watch the night

roll in

in the moment I am thankful

for all of these different hues

it’s the beautiful chaos of color that brings peace to me.
Madison’s Response: Rain on a stained glass window creates swirls of colored, blended light. Reflections and shadows mix to form lines that have never been painted before, and lines that create movement. Movement is key. Because of movement each shade and drop and line is unique like the reflection on a stained glass window.
Madison’s response to painting #2:

A river of soft color slowly trickles along the countryside.

Birds humming, bees buzzing, a lazy Sunday teaming with quiet,

Soft and tranquil life.

When the river widens,

The water swirls and

life chirps up again.

Energy sways like

The wind or the movement

Of a flowing river.

Madison's painted response:
Lexie's written response to M's paint #2:

The leaves are changing colors
from green to orange to red
summer transforms into fall
instead of feeling the cool breeze
rustling through the leaves
a fire is manifesting in my soul
for there are things that I have to change
but I’m figuring it out as time passes

3. Solo piece

Titled "A Wine Like Sunflowers"
Madison Oriente - 3 Teaching Practices

1. **Poetic painting:** Painting and poetry compliment each other. Showing my students that if they can write, then they can create visual expressions of their writing, and vise-versa, is a good tool to use for developing better writers. For each poetry unit I can assign one poetic PW.

2. **Daily logs:** Daily logs help writers by allowing us to note important things that may by writing inspiration later on. It is important to note important learning moments and anything else that strikes the brain while in the classroom, so I will have my students create short logs each day in order to track their writing progress and to remember those important inspirations.

3. **Taking from authors and artists:** Emulating renowned artists and authors such as Pollock and Hemmingway stretches students in a way that nothing else does. It brings out better ideas, different perspectives, and more room to play with individual expression. I will walk my students through emulations of famous writers from both the past and present in order to introduce them to different styles of writing and new ways to express themselves on paper.
Audrey Rother

Visualization

“Grass Fire”

Dancing flames writhe and soar,
    sounding like a thunderous roar.

Spreading at an inconceivable speed,
    trying to fill its insatiable need.

    Leafless trees, burnt and charred,
    earth consumed, marred, and scarred.

Devastations left in its path,
    evidence of its endless wrath.

Death, chaos, destruction too,
    but also love and life anew.

~6/15/16
Initial Collaborative Paint
“Not What It Seems”

by Kara Stoltenberg, Audrey Rother, and Dr. Angelotti

“Not What It Seems” Reflection
Kara and I were really enjoying this paint and we were being very meticulous with what we were doing. We didn’t have a plan per se, but we were definitely getting towards one. Then, Dr. Angelotti came over and started flinging paint of different colors onto our masterpiece. We were both initially very upset as he used colors we didn’t plan to use. I believe it has grown on both of us though and has prompted some great writes and paints.
My Write Based on Collaborative Paint

“Alternate Universe”

We live in a mystical world,
where imagination grows.
And where the sky is almost always
as emerald as the snow.

As I look around our world,
things aren’t what they seem.
I see fantastic images,
as if I’m in a dream.

Sometimes, though, these images
turn frightful and unreal.
As people turn to wickedness
and maim, and steal, and kill.

When I look into the mirror,
I oftentimes will find,
the grass is really purple
and I always bear in mind,

we live in a mystical world,
where imagination grows.
And where the sky is almost always
as emerald as the snow.

~6/29/16

“Alternate Universe” Reflection
When I looked at our collaborative paint, I began to see an alternate universe. I struggled to create a poem for it and had multiple beginnings of poems. I ended up combining them all and editing quite a bit to get this poem. I really like it.

**Kara’s Paint Based on “Alternate Universe”**

“Emerald Dreams”

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My Poem Based on Kara’s Paint

“Chaos is Beauty”

flowers blooming bright
sky above swirls with emerald
chaos is beauty

~7/06/16

“Chaos is Beauty” Reflection
Kara’s painting really reminded me of Willy Wonka’s chocolate factory, but I couldn’t think of how to come up with a write based on that, so I decided to write a haiku, since it also reminded me of nature. I really like the colors she chose, especially for the sky. While it was chaotic, I found it beautiful too. I enjoyed writing about someone else’s paint.

Kara’s Write Based on Initial Collaborative Paint

“Cave Drawings”

Stumbling into the dark cave suddenly I
am blinded by color and light.
From rock bottom to the top, there are
drawings brightening up the stoic walls.
I see mountains, rivers, grass, and sand.
I see journeys, expeditions, and memories.
I see life and people living and enjoying
the world around them.

As I continue moving through the gallery,
I notice dots of red darkening the bright images.
They grow and cover the life-filled drawings,
bringing violence to the simple scenes.
I see intentional smears of blood.
I see hate and devastation.
I see death and people taking lives that are
not their own.

~6/28/16

My Paint Based on Kara’s Initial Poem
“Mountainous Destruction”

“Mountainous Destruction” Reflection

This was a fun painting. Kara’s writing made it easy. I started with the colorful background based on her line about being blinded by color and light. Then, after it dried, I began adding the other pieces of the poem, grass, river, sand, mountains, and the violence. I really like this paint, even though it looks kind of messy.
Kara’s Write Based on “Mountainous Destruction”

“Rainbow Mountains”
Colors surround me
As fire falls from the sky
Lighting up the world.
~7/6/16

Personal PW

“Fairies in the Night Sky”
“Neverland”
The journey to Neverland
arrives only in dreams,
where happy thoughts
come easy it seems.

Second to the right
gives imagination free reign.
Straight on till morning
and bliss you will attain.

The lost boys and Redskins
play capture the “man.”
Fairies and mermaids,
and, of course, Peter Pan.

But if you’re not careful
nightmares will invade your mind.
Beasts of the night hunting
and pirates that are always unkind.

Returning from Neverland, if you desire,
can be quite easy if you believe.
All you must do is open your eyes
and wonder if anything is as you perceive.

~6/16/16 Teaching Practices

- I would like for my students to participate in a collaborative paint, write, paint, write. This is a great way to students to be creative and express themselves. Students will create a classroom collaborative Jackson Pollock-style paint. After we finish the paint, I will have the students do a free write or poem about the paint or the experience. Then, I will have students share their write or poem with a partner. Students will create a painting based on their partners writing. After they paint, they
will share their painting with their partner and each will do a new free write or poem about their partners paint.

• I would really like to use Goldberg’s “Six-Word Memoir” in my classroom. I would have students write six words about anything. I would have them do this multiple times until they had quite a few six-word memoirs with which to work. This would be a great and non-intimidating way to get students more comfortable with writing. After having students write their six-word memoirs, I would have them choose the one they liked the best and expand on it to create a paragraph, or a story.

• To help students create believable characters, I would like for them to observe someone they do not know, as Hemingway did. They could do this at school or on their own time. They would take notes while observing them, being as detailed as possible about what they looked like, how they behaved, and what they are doing. Later, they would create a character or story about that person’s life.

• Getting the Knack has really great ideas for poetry activities. One activity I would like to do with my students is a Found Poem. These are great because students don’t have to start from scratch. Students can bring materials from home, such as newspapers, magazines, phone books, or even old reading books. Then, they would go through and cut out everything that’s boring or doesn’t sound good. They can cross these out in the actual text or write the passage they are editing on paper. If they like the way the words left sound, they can leave it as is. Otherwise, they can rearrange them to what sounds best to them. The final step is writing it in a poetic form and they are done. I think students would really enjoy this activity and it would help them realize that poetry and beauty is found all around us.
Kara Stoltenberg

“Child’s Play”

Colors flash, mix, and move
Combining, separating, and making new.
Shouting as they scream their tune
Creating joy and finding room.
Pulling out of my driveway,
  I’m ready to conquer the day.
Right, left, right,
  And then someone gets in my way.
No blinker, no purpose, no care at all.
  They don’t even realize they’ve slowed down to a crawl.

They drive as though they’re completely alone.
  Inconsiderate, oblivious, texting on a phone.
Regardless of rhyme or reason
  They shouldn’t put their keys in.
They’re a danger to those around us
  And I hope they get hit by an empty school bus.*
*Note: This is a reference to Mean Girls. I do not actually hope anyone gets hit by a bus.*

"Not What it Seems"

(Collaborative Paint Write)

"Cave Drawings" (Kara):

Stumbling into the dark cave, I am blinded by color and light.
From the bottom to the top, drawings brightening up stoic walls.
I see mountains, rivers, grass, and sand.
I see journeys, expeditions, and memories.
I see life and people living.

Moving through the gallery, I notice dots of red.
They grow and cover the life-filled drawings, bringing violence instead.
I see darkness, spots, and smears of blood.
I see hate, despair, and fear.
I see death and people killing.
“Mountainous Destruction”

“Rainbow Mountains” (Kara)
Colors surround me
As fire falls from the sky
Lighting up the world.

Audrey
“Chaos is Beauty” (Audrey Rother):

We live in a mystical world,
Where imagination grows.
And where the sky is almost always
As emerald as the snow.

As I look around our world,
Things aren’t what they seem.
I see fantastic images
As if I’m in a dream.

When I look into the mirror
I oftentimes will find
The grass is really purple
and I always bear in mind.

We live in a mystical world
Where imagination grows
And where the sky is almost always
As emerald as the snow.

Sometimes, though, these images
Turn frightful and unreal
As people turn to wickedness
And main, and steal, and kill.
“Emerald Dreams”

“Chaos is Beauty” (Audrey)

flowers blooming bright
sky above swirls with emerald
chaos is beauty
Teaching Practices:

1. **Cafe Day**: This activity is used in both the Goldberg and Hemingway texts. Using this in class, I would extend the experience to any setting where the student spends time—such as the gym, cafeteria, home, etc. What I really like about this activity is that there is so much a student can focus on. If they are intimidated by the what to write, they can simply write down dialogue or a list of items they see. As they begin to feel more confident, they can include descriptions of the people or imagery of the location. This activity reaches each student where they are and gets them to write OUTSIDE of the classroom.

2. **One True Sentence**: In the chapter “Miss Stein Instructs” I love when Hemingway writes about his writing process. I plan on sharing this short section with my students, prior to their research papers (or early in the year) to help them overcome their writer’s block. There is a misconception with many of my students who believe that writers just have this innate ability to create. That there is no struggle, no revising, and no writer’s block. Helping students to not get overwhelmed when they are struggling to write, is one of the hardest things to do. There has to be trust and at times students are so frustrated that they don’t want to hear the teacher’s advice. Showing students this excerpt, written from a professional and successful writer, I think will help them to start grasping the complexities of composition. Hemingway explains so simply, that when he is struggling he tells himself: “Do not worry. You have always written before and you will write now. All you have to do is write one true sentence.” This mantra will help students to gain some perspective. I hope it empowers them to keep going and to keep working through the struggle. After students have read the excerpt and we have had a class discussion about the writing process, I will ask them to write one true sentence about writing. Then, as the week progresses and the research paper continues, I will share those truths when students seem to need them most.

3. **Exotic Locales in Your Hometown**: As *Conversations in Paint* explains, “thoughts of exotic locations seduce us” and while Oklahoma doesn’t always seem to fit into that category, it would be fun for students to choose a place in Oklahoma they’ve visited, that they believe could be considered “exotic” to a newcomer. What I really like about this activity is that it doesn’t isolate anyone. Students aren’t being asked to write about a vacation or another country or state that they’ve visited, instead they are being asked to write about what they know. This helps those who have never had the luxury of going on a vacation, feel as though they can contribute. I would have students freewrite first about the place, focusing on sensory details and why they chose it. Then I’d give them an opportunity to capture the essence of that place in a painting—whether that is a realistic portrayal or more abstract.
June 16, 2016- “Technicolor Dreaming”

Into the Mystic – a Van Morrison song,

and a feeling I have as the evening drifts on.

Red fades into pink and the
darkness
creeps in.

The stars light up my night,

my dreams just begin.
Collaboration in color by Lexie Wolfe and Madison Oriente

Lexie’s response to “Collaboration in Color”

Colors splashed across the sky like

an a b s t r a c t piece

the day fades away and I watch the night

roll in

in the moment I am thankful

for all of these different hues

it’s the beautiful chaos of color that brings peace to me.
Madison’s response to “Collaboration in Color”

Rain on a stained glass window creates swirls of colored, blended light. Reflections and shadows mix to form lines that have never been painted before, and lines that create movement. Movement is key. Because of movement each shade and drop and line is unique like the reflection on a stained glass window.
“Collaboration in Color Pt. 2” response by Lexie Wolfe

The leaves are changing colors
from green to orange to red
summer transforms into fall
instead of feeling the cool breeze
rustling through the leaves
a fire is manifesting in my soul
for there are things that I have to change
but I’m figuring it out as time passes
Madison’s Response to “Collaboration in Color pt. 3”:

A river of soft color slowly trickles along the countryside.

Birds humming, bees buzzing, a lazy Sunday teeming with quiet,
soft and tranquil life.

When the river widens,
the water swirls and

life chirps up again.

Energy sways like

the wind or the movement

of a flowing river.

Café Conversation- June 24, 2016

A guy came into the café and ordered a cup of coffee. He carried a guitar and the expression on his face implied that he was waiting for someone, but overall he was peculiar. Peculiar in the sense that he wore a fur coat in the middle of a hot May day. That was irrelevant because when he began to strum at his guitar, the book you were reading became less interesting. You put it down and waited to interrupt the music and discover the story that was saved within his soul.

He was not from around here and he didn’t really belong really belong anywhere. He was a wanderer and he decided that Stillwater, Oklahoma might be a good place to settle down and after hearing the news you masked your shock with wonder at a man who was certain he found his real home and an opportunity to pursue his passion of music.
**Favorite Place:** Using an idea from True Secret, I want each student to write about his or her favorite place. There is great importance in writing about a great place as one will truly desire to utilize their senses. What does the student see, smell, hear, taste, or feel? Students should consider how using the senses to describe enhance their overall writing experience. How will it inspire your future writing projects?

**Collaborative Visualization:** Students will participate in a collaborative paint-write exercise. In one instance, they will use emotion as a fuel to create a certain image. In the next phase of the exercise, they will pair with a student, who will then write a response to the picture. Finally, they will collaborate and discuss their final thoughts. Reflect on Jackson Pollock and the technique that he used.

**Seven Ways to Use Paint/Writing:** There are seven ways to use painting (color pref., local color, space/atmosphere, emphasis, emotion, rhythm, and formal). How can a student use these seven factors to enhance their writing? Considering this, students should complete a paint and write. Which parts did they utilize the most? How did it chance their writing or painting experience? Students should understand how developing painting and writing techniques are quite similar.

**Poetry from Paint:** Using their own painting, students should create a four-line poem. After the paint is complete, students should first give it a short title. The second line should consist of an action phrase. What is happening in the painting? Following that, students should connect the action to a simile. Then on the fourth line, they should retitle the painting. What kind of poem did the image invoke? Students should consider how the painting and poem work together. This idea was inspired by Image to Word.