

ON THE SAME SIDE:
EMULATING A WRITING LIFE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSROOM

By
TAYLOR PATTEN WYATT

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of English
And the Clark Honors College of the University of Oregon
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of
Bachelor of Arts

June 2008

An Abstract of the Thesis of

Taylor Wyatt for the degree of Bachelor of Arts
In the Department of English to be taken June 14, 2008

Title:

ON THE SAME SIDE: EMULATING A WRITING LIFE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Approved: _____
Professor Suzanne Clark

This thesis suggests that a modification in the way writing is taught at the high school level can make the subject more worthwhile and accessible to students. A look at the current English classroom shows that students are removed from their writing and disinterested in the subject. The aim of this study is to create an in-class writing environment that emulates the writing process, as it is practiced by professionals, using the strategies of accomplished authors as a model and incorporating ideas gleaned from educational materials as well. An incremental change made to the teaching of high school writing, one that allows students to interact with the material on a more individual basis and in an authentic way, may result in more capable student writers and also present them with the opportunity for personal growth.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Professor Suzanne Clark for her confidence in my project and her wisdom regarding all things related to the study of literacy. Likewise, my sincere appreciation goes to Professor David Frank and Mr. Paul Dresman for their advice, questions, and encouragement. Thanks also to my friends, especially Trevor Cartales for his assistance and great patience. For his critical reading and insight, I thank my dad, Dr. Frank Wyatt, and for her willingness to help on all levels, I am indebted to my sister, Laura Wyatt. And, of course, for infecting me with his love of reading, writing and teaching, I thank my English teacher, Mr. Steve Brown.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction	2
II. Current Curricular Issues In The English Classroom	7
The Material	8
The Expectations	12
The Use of Writing	16
III. Writing To Care	20
IV. Writing From Experience	24
V. The Writing Process	26
The Pre-Writing Stage	29
Keeping A Writer's Notebook	31
The Writing Project	36
Revision	38
Publication	43
Assessment: The Writing Portfolio	44
VI. The Role of The Teacher	48
VII. Conclusion	50
VIII. Works Cited	54