

LSU WRITING PROJECT

Summer Institute Anthology 2020

100% Virtual



Introduction to the Anthology

The Annual LSU Writing Project Summer Institute, typically an intimate, personalized institute, was reconceptualized due to the safety and health concerns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Sassy C. Wheeler and Dr. Courtney Brown, the 2020 summer's Invitational Summer Institute's Co-Directors and School of Education faculty, quickly pivoted and re-imagined past institutes, delivering the 2020 Invitational Summer Institute 100% web-based.

The Invitational Summer Institute's intent is to improve teaching of writing. The participants must first view themselves as writers, then teachers of writing, which ultimately, helps Louisiana students become accomplished writers and learners. Participants who complete all course requirements for the summer institute earn the badge of being a National Writing Project Teacher Consultant, signifying and recognizing their ability to deliver professional development in writing pedagogy, and earning endorsement from the LSU WP site.

As is the custom of the LSU WP, an anthology of writing submissions is compiled at the end of the institute as a presentation of the journey of the institute's participants. This year's family of writers forged forward through the pandemic to fully engage the writing process. What is represented here is truly a labor of love.

Executive Staff

Sassy Wheeler, PhD., Co-Director, LSU Writing Project
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2020 Invitational Summer Institute

Participants

Angela Bradley ~ Frankie Day ~ Ellen Daugherty

Emily DuBoulay ~ Meagan Jenny ~ Bridget Lemoine

Catherine Rosenfeld ~ Denise Shillingsburg



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My Running Shoes

By: Angela Bradley

I don't particularly love the color or style.

However, I love what they represent.

They provide *support* for me when I am most in need.

In September of 2019, I made a commitment to myself to become a runner.

Not only to just run a few times a week, but to actually *become* a runner.

And so it began...

Walk...run...walk...run

Side cramping, sore leg muscles, out of breath, charlie horses in my feet at night.

I can still hear the uneven rhythm of my feet hitting the pavement.

Don't give up. Just do it. Don't think about it. Just do it.

Just try to make it to the stop sign. Just try to run for another 30 seconds.

Day in and day out, my shoes represent my commitment to the daily grind.

I am proud of sticking with it – even when it was not easy.

9 months later, I am flying. I am free!

With my Asics on my feet, I feel rejuvenated.

It was worth every moment.

I *am* a runner.

My Family



Ellen Daugherty

I have a husband of 32 years and three grown children, ages 28, 26, and 22. On May 18, 2019, we added one more member to the family; a daughter-in-law. And on August 1st, or sometimes thereabouts, we will be adding one more addition; a granddaughter. We also have 2 big dogs; a Boxer and a Pit Bull/Lab mix. I am so proud of the family we have built and grown. Each member has a unique personality and gift. Although we don't always see eye-to-eye, at the end of the day, we all get each other. We are all independent individuals who acknowledge each other's strengths and weaknesses.

Scott and I met in college in the fall of 1985 in a bar off LSU's campus. Although he doesn't like to admit it, we were taken with each other fairly quickly. I spent Thanksgiving at his family's home in Shreveport, we went on a group ski trip together the following January, I enrolled in summer school for the first time to

remain in Baton Rouge with him, we got engaged in March, 1987, and then we married in July, 1988.

Sean was born May 17, 1992 as planned. (I timed my pregnancy to coincide with the school year.) I enjoyed time with him over the summer. By October, after the school year had started, I could no longer handle teaching all day and getting up breast feeding 3 times a night. So, the first weekend I ever left his side (to attend a Reading Recovery conference), I made the conscious decision to stop breastfeeding so I could share nightly feedings with his dad. Of course, Sean also decided that weekend that he was going to start sleeping through the night. As he has grown to be a respectable young man and husband, and soon-to-be dad, he amazes us every day with how he handles himself.

Shelby was born on April 4, 1994 (4-4-94). Planning her birth to occur one month earlier than Sean's gave me back the end of the school year with my students (that I had missed with a May delivery). Shelby has been strong-willed her whole life which is why Scott and I always knew she would do great things and be a success. At age 26, we already know how right we were. Shelby is an independent, beautiful, confident young lady. She lives on her own in a different city from the rest of us and thrives at her job. She is the daughter all parents would love to raise!

Seth is our baby! Born on November 11, 1997 (11-11-97), he came into the world on his own time, several days after we planned. Being the younger brother of two siblings, he developed a relationship with both. He always wanted to hang with the "big boys" and be as good (at everything) as they were. He also indulged his sister playing her games and watching her TV shows. Seth has developed into a unique young man. As he finishes up his last semester of college, during this unusual COVID pandemic, I know that he has his whole future in front of him and that he will soar to success!

Morgan officially joined our family last year when she and Sean got married, but she made her presence known much earlier. Although their relationship took many years to develop, I hope they both realize it was worth the journey! Scott and I saw the transformation in Sean the longer the two of them spent time together. She makes him a better person, which is what a parent could only wish

for their child's partner. We are so happy to welcome Morgan into our family web and can't wait to welcome Baby Daugherty very soon!

Roxy and Mocha are the family dogs. Roxy is the Boxer. We got her when she was just a little bitty thing and now she is a 50+ pound bundle of joy. Mocha is the Pit Bull/Lab mix. She is a rescue dog from the shelter. Scott and Seth went many weekends looking for a "friend" for Roxy. Although they didn't start off liking each other, they are inseparable now; sleeping and playing together daily.

My family is everything to me. I may not say it every day, but I love them all unconditionally and this love grows daily. I am excited to experience all of our future adventures together for many years to come!

It's Who I am....

Frankie Day

Franky Frank, Frankster, Frankie and Johnny, Fe-Fi-Fo-Frank!

How could my parents name me Frankie?

It's a boy name!

How cruel!

Nothing ever had my name on it...

For a girl, that is.

There were belt buckles, knives, hats, footballs, and more.

But, I'm a girl. A girly, girl!

I wanted things like bracelets, door hangers, and jewelry boxes with my name on it!

So, when I was little, I was embarrassed that I had a boy name.

Kids would make fun of me.

I was shy so this didn't help one bit.

As I grew older, I secretly liked my name and the thought of being named after my grandfather.

He was a kind, gentle soul and would brag that I was named after him. He was so proud!

As time passed and I became an adult, I began to “like” my name.

It was special. It was different!

Not many other women had a name like mine.

In fact, most people complimented me for its uniqueness.

I was easily remembered as...

The “girl” with the “boy “name!

Of course, I’ve heard a million times ...

“Is that your REAL name”?

Yes! It’s not Fran, Frances, or Francesca.

I was named after my grandfather.

I was going to be Frankie regardless if I was a boy or girl.

No sonograms back in the day.

My gender was a surprise...

But my name was not.

You can call me Franky Frank, Frankster, Frankie and Johnny, Fe-Fi-Fo-Frank

Or you can just call me FRANKIE!

It’s my name.

It’s who I am.



Cloudy

Emily DuBoulay

The year is 2054, and Noah lives in a house in the city. His building and the buildings all around him are an ashen gray. Out of his window, he sees the strings of lights hung over the street, the same strings of lights they have everywhere in the city. The lights are warm and dim now because it's 7:45pm. The lights are simulating sunset, which he has never really seen outside of pictures. Actual sunset hasn't been seen since 2046. In 2046, the clouds covered the sky and never uncovered them. Nobody knows why.

Noah was born years after that happened, but he was told by his parents and by older children that the sun was beautiful. It was warm, bright, and made the sky turn many different colors depending on the time of day. Noah found this hard to imagine. He always experienced a gray sky and could imagine nothing else.

Nobody knew for sure why it happened. Some say it was a divine reckoning, some say it was the environment. But nobody knows really. Any attempt to pierce through the clouds or study them has been thwarted by the elements in one way or another.

Noah wished he had been born just a few years earlier. So at least he would have known what the sun *felt* like. He sighed. He looked at the sky and thought to himself, *“Please, oh, please. Move the clouds for me.”*

Nothing happened. He sighed and closed his eyes, feeling a little sleepy, like most people did in the perpetual cloudiness.

Suddenly, light appeared behind his eyelids. His eyes popped open. In the sky, he stared, there was light. Lines of light poured out of the hole in the clouds and looked like rain. He gasped.

Two Syllables Instead of Three

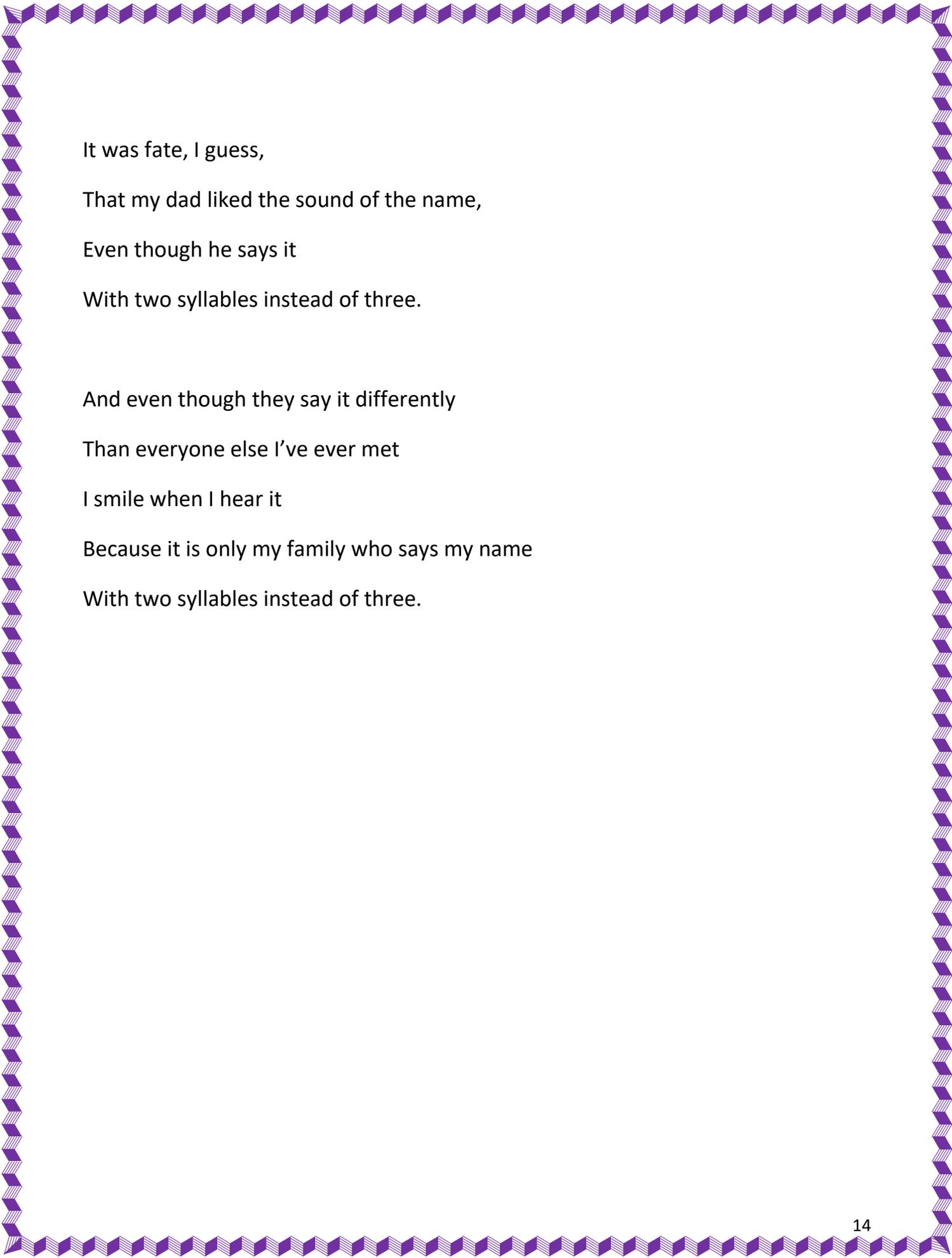
Emily DuBoulay

Emily is sometimes a hard name
For young children to say
Because three syllables are a lot
Especially when you add "Miss" to the front

But my family says my name
With two syllables instead of three.
"Em-Lee!" they shout from the kitchen
When dinner is being made.

My mother wanted to name me
But my father said it was his turn
So he named me Emily,
Because he liked the sound of it.

Only later did my parents find out
That my mother's great-great grandmother
Once also responded to "Em-Lee!"
As it was shouted from the kitchen.



It was fate, I guess,
That my dad liked the sound of the name,
Even though he says it
With two syllables instead of three.

And even though they say it differently
Than everyone else I've ever met
I smile when I hear it
Because it is only my family who says my name
With two syllables instead of three.



“My” Classroom by Megan Jenny

The thing about teaching—ok, there are many things—but today the thing I’m thinking about teaching is that the classroom is both personal and shared all at the same time.

I came into the room that was stuffed full of things—outdated materials, used and unused art supplies, office supplies, old stacks of copies, a lifeguard chair, baskets and bins, posters and anchor charts from years past, books, books, and more books. And, I cleaned and sorted and discarded. A good day was a day that ended with all five trashcans full. (And why were there five trash cans? Who needs that many?) To add to the mess, I brought some of my own things in. Things I had used in other classrooms and other schools. The perfect bin to collect student work in. Books like *Jabari Jumps* and *Crazy Hair Day* that I needed to share with my kids. My erasable pens and special anchor chart markers. Emoji-themed curtains and other décor. Of course, my coffee pot and monogrammed coffee cups. And I made it mine.

I had 130 days in the classroom with my students. We read and we did math. We had writing conferences and Zearned. We ate lunch together and talked about our lives. We laughed, hugged, and high-fived. Over that time, we came to know each other well. I struggled some days to keep them focused. Others, I felt like the best teacher in the world as all the things clicked into place. We exhausted ourselves at the Audubon Zoo and went on brisk walks on LSU’s campus to see interesting educational displays together. We practiced evacuation and shelter-in-

place drills together and had Friday afternoon meetings. They missed me, or so they said, on days that I couldn't be there and they had a substitute instead.

Coronavirus ended our year early and we moved to Google Classroom and Zoom. Our relationships continued, but our time in the classroom had ended. I struggled with my decision to pursue my PhD, but everything fell into place. My assistantship and coursework were waiting, so I let my principal know that I wouldn't be returning the following school year.

Someone has been hired. And, she's cleaning out and sorting out, too. She's texted me to ask me questions about this and that. How many rugs did I say there were? What about math—is there a set of Eureka manuals? What supplies should she consider replacing? I'm happy to answer questions, but I know she'll take down the emoji posters and curtains. It will become her room and her students. And, in the course of a few weeks, I'm gone. Was it ever really mine?

Just Another Megan

by Megan Jenny

The Thornbirds...have you heard of it? Something happened when the best-selling Australian novel became a popular international mini-series.

Oh, Meggie Cleary...beautiful and willful.

Oh, Meggie Cleary...my namesake.

A Megan of the 1980s—that's me. In first grade, there were three of us. By fifth grade, four. Sometimes less, sometimes more.

I've always been one of a gaggle of Megans.

Sometimes Megan is spelled Meghan or Megann.

But, if it's spelled Meagan, pronounce it that way.

There's Megan Fox, Megan Mullally, Meghan Markle, and Megan from *My Little Pony*. *Remember the 80s?*

I've never been Meg, or Peg, or Meggie.

Thanks, Mom.

I'm just another Megan.

Who is Bridget?

Bridget Lemoine

The name is Irish,
Meaning Strength and Power.
The girl is German and French,
But she has strength and power.

Number three in the family of four girls,
In the middle but always the leader.
A smile upon her face,
no matter the occasion.
She has strength and power.

Sister, daughter, friend, wife, mother
Mother to four but two were born damaged.
Hearts and Lungs can be mended by doctors.
But the scars on a mother's heart last forever.
She has strength and power.

Darkness enters her family,
She is alone, hopes and dreams are changed forever.
2-2-3 becomes the rotation.
An overcomer describes her now,

She has strength and power.

She looks up to find the light,

She looks up to find her joy.

He will never leave her,

He has made her perfect.

She has strength and power.

Sister, daughter, friend, wife, mother

A smile upon her face,

no matter the occasion.

He has made her perfect.

She has strength and power.

From Night to Day

Bridget Lemoine



Once upon a time there was a big brown owl named Owlbert that decided he no longer wanted to be nocturnal. He told his plan to his wife, Hootlene and she decided to join him on this adventure.

They wanted to show all the humans that lived around them just what spectacular specimen they really were, and they were unable to do this if they only came out at night. Owlbert devised a plan to stay up longer in the morning and wake up later in the night. He told Hootlene that if they could do an hour each week then they would be day ready in no time.

The first week was very hard on the Owl pair but they successfully moved their sleep time and rise time back an hour. They knew that if they put in the hard work and did a little at a time then they would be successful.

Another Owl couple observed their strange behavior and asked Owlbert what they were trying to do. Once Owlbert explained to the couple his plan and his reasons, they just laughed at him and told him he could not do it. This really upset Owlbert and he started to let their comments enter his thoughts. Maybe they were right, maybe I cannot show the world just how special we are. The next week was even tougher than the first and the couple actually went back to the original sleep pattern.

Hootlene asked Owlbert what was going on because she just did not see the motivation in him that she saw in the beginning. He explained to her what happened with the other Owls and how they made him feel like he could not do it. Hootlene was disappointed in Owlbert because he allowed what someone else thought about him become his reality. She stared him straight in the eyes and said, you are so much more than what others say about you. I know that you can do anything that you set your mind to and I am here to help you along the way. Although Owlbert was still feeling down, he also knew that Hootlene loved him and would never tell him anything that was not true.

The next day Owlbert woke up with a new mindset and was ready to crush his goal! The next couple months flew by with ease as the Owl couple slowly

converted their sleep schedule. It was not until one morning that Owlbert woke up refreshed after a long night's sleep by the sound of a nearby rooster! He woke Hootlene up and told her that they had accomplished their goal and now they would be ready to show off their beauty and uniqueness to the world.

This beautiful Owl couple was quickly sighted by the humans who lived next to the forest. They stayed along the tree line so that the humans could take pictures and share with the rest of their friends. These pictures were put on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Before the Owl couple knew it, they were “trending.”

Hootlene noticed that there were more people coming to the tree line and taking pictures. She told Owlbert that he succeeded in achieving his goal and that she was so proud of him for not letting what others think affect his decision to move forward with their plan.

Now, if you happen upon a tree line and see an owl during the day, remember that this presence did not come without a lot of hard work and determination.

Evolution of a Teacher

Catherine Rosenfield

Then:

scared, unsure, self-conscious

Now:

confident, leader, poised

Then:

worried, tired, overwhelmed

Now:

thoughtful, still tired, strong

Then:

young, naïve, inexperienced

Now:
older, knowledgeable, accomplished

Then:
routine, timid, indirect

Now:
creative, fun, relatable

Then:
pre-occupied, nervous, shy

Now:
helpful, enthusiastic, inquisitive

Then:
eager, excited, ready

Now:
eager, excited, ready

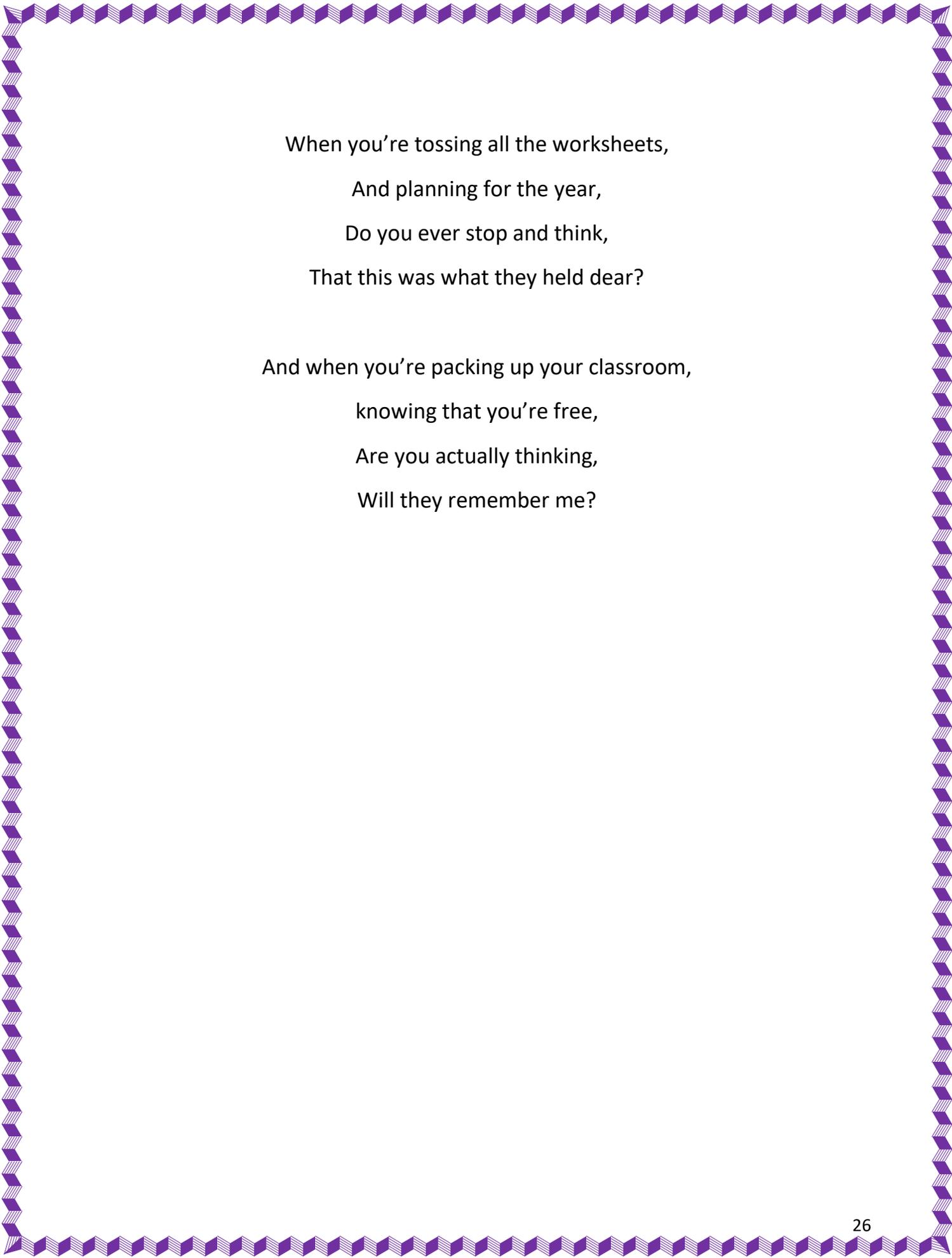
The Ghosts of Classrooms Past

Catherine Rosenfield

When you get your brand-new classroom,
Do you jump right in and start?
Or do you take a minute
And know some left their heart?

When you're cleaning off the shelves,
And putting away supplies,
Do you ever stop to wonder,
If they left with tears in their eyes?

When you're putting up decorations,
And moving tables and chairs,
Are you ever really thinking,
About the ones who used to be there?



When you're tossing all the worksheets,
And planning for the year,
Do you ever stop and think,
That this was what they held dear?

And when you're packing up your classroom,
knowing that you're free,
Are you actually thinking,
Will they remember me?



My Mardi Gras Experience

Denise Shillingsworth

There are many experiences I could write about living in New Orleans

There are many things I think about are unique to New Orleans

The food, the music, the festivals, the second lines

Of course, the one that stands out the most is Mardi Gras.

I will never forget my first Mardi Gras living in the city

I had no idea what to expect

After the first day of parades, I was hooked

I loved looking at the floats, listening to the bands, watching the dance krewes

I remember the first shoe I ever caught and the excitement that followed

Trying to get more and more throws as each parade rolled

Dressing up in costume on Mardi Gras day and venturing around in the Quarter

Seeing old friends and making new ones

Riding on a float in a Mardi Gras parade takes the cake

The thrill, elation, amusement, adrenaline and stress are all there

Seeing hands reach out towards you

Voices calling for throws

Trying to get throws out quickly

Untangling beads as you pick them up

Seeing a friend and trying to get them your best throw

Hands trying to grab something from you

Watching people scream and jump when you throw something fun

Kids smiling and saying a genuine thank you

Seeing paradegoers on the whole route

Waving to friends and strangers

Turning onto Canal Street and knowing the ride is almost over

Sharing a “cheers” with my friend, we made another ride

Throwing the last of the beads

Ready to do it all again next year!

Something Short

Denise Shillingsburg

The story is simple

Not a family name

Not named after anyone

In fact, quite the opposite

My dad wanted Susan, double S's, like my brother Steven

Mom said "Absolutely not!"

She knew a Susan she didn't care for

But she did want something short

She found the name in a baby name book and thought "that will be nice"

And before you say it, I've heard the jokes a million times

Denise, pronounced De-Nice, and "De-niece, where's De-nephew?"

Hilarious

Denise is derived from the Greek roots, "Follower of Dionysius, the Greek god of wine"

That sounds right. Maybe mom did know something

I had many nicknames in my lifetime

My cousins called me Neesey because they couldn't pronounce "de"

They still call me this

My best friend loved the nickname and picked it up as well

In North Carolina, my friends called me Shilly, no idea why
It started one day and it stuck
I've been called DD, Denny, Neese, and D by other friends
For 16 years I've been known as Ms. S
The variations on Shillingsburg were too much

Soon the last name will change
Covid-19 put that on hold,
But soon it will happen

There is a Room

Courtney Brown

There is a Room

A large room with expanded places and spaces

A room limitless where each step creates more perceptions of unending,
extended graces

There is a room

A large room where I blink to clear the traces of doubt and disbelief

A room filled with opportunity to mix, to mingle, to meet destiny and to bury my
grief

There is a room

A large room where I fit, I can't quit because my soul commits

A room that permits me to be all of me, every part, every gift

There is a room

A large room, massive...entreating me forward

A room where the smell of defeat is a thing of the past — just what my heart
ordered

There is a room

A large room intimidating at first view because it's new

A room that makes all I went through seem misinterpreted, misconstrued and
miniscule

There is a room

A large room full of supportive glances making my heart leap in hidden dances

A room that enhances and romances successes' chances in every one of my
excited advances

There is a room

A large room where I am both seen and heard

A room where I am needed, wanted, unhindered, and undeterred

There is a room

A large room with open doors which open doors to other doors

A room where I am faced with the unique decision of more, or more

There is a room

A large room where I belong because my spirit confirms it

A room where my ancestors paved a foundation for me to possess every bit, brick by brick

There is a room

A large room that I own because it was paid for in pain

A room where the stains of my past only result in exponential gain

There is a room

A large room that I can stand up and stand out in

A room that accommodates the power that I carry in one all-knowing grin

There is a room

A large room that I share with others who know that the time has come

A room that we receive boldly, each and every one

There is a room

A large room that holds the mystery of that faith

A room that manifests whenever we refuse to wait

There is a room

A large room that only the eyes of faith can see

A room that only the discerning can believe

Only the tenacious can receive

Only the faithful can decree

Only the strong will conceive

Don't you agree?

There is a room

A large room, come with me

A room made for us and us for it, called unity

There is a room
A large room, take my hand
A room where we are one, divided we fall, and together we stand

There is a room
A large room where I win and you win
A room where what we accomplish creates love in abundance again and again

There is a room
A large room, will you join me here?
A room not just for me; but, for all of us to share

There is a room

...There is a room

... There is a room

2020 Invitational Summer Institute Co-Director BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Sassy Wheeler

Dr. Wheeler brings a wealth of experiences to the 2020 Invitational Summer Institute including her extensive background in special education, proficiency with differentiated instruction, knowledge and skill in expediting multicultural education, familiarity with inquiry-based learning, expertise with at-risk student populations, and involvement in both instructional and leadership coaching. Dr. Wheeler was Co-PI of a 2017 National Writing Project Invitational Leadership grant focused on supporting effective educator development. She was also a founding Board Member of Success Preparatory Academy in New Orleans.

Dr. Courtney Brown

Dr. Brown earned her doctorate from the School of Education in 2018 and is the first returning Teacher Consultant to co-direct an Invitational Summer Institute. Her unique ability to integrate the theoretical concepts of writing with creative practical applications is a remarkable benefit to the 2020 Invitational Summer Institute. Brown brings to the Summer Institute many years of experience in teaching students from elementary through college as well as deep experience facilitating professional development for content area teachers in Caddo Parish, and community partners such the West Baton Rouge Museum and the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.