In contrast to WANDAH's whole process approach, Cynthia L. Selfe's WORDSWORTH II is a supplementary integrated program whose eight modules focus on eight kinds of writing assignments based on such current-traditional categories as narration, description, persuasion, and so on. The program offers the student assistance in a module by providing examples, reviews of classroom material, prewriting strategies appropriate for the assignment, and various guides to revising and editing. It also provides both the student and teacher with a written record of all transactions. Its rather rigid distinctions between "planning" and "polishing" and between early, middle, and final drafts are modified somewhat by the supplementary nature of the program. Like WANDAH's development, that of WORDSWORTH II reveals exemplary collaboration between teachers and software designers.

Christine Neuwirth's program, DRAFT, is aptly called a "computer-based writing environment," for it includes options that enable the student to do almost anything while writing or revising. Heuristic guidelines, organizational patterns, illustrations, analyses of drafts, and all sorts of tutorials are on-line at the fingertips of any student who feels comfortable with the relatively complex computing required to run the program. No doubt the students at Carnegie-Mellon, where DRAFT is under development, are able to manage the computing well enough to shape the program to their individual needs. In exchange for this complexity, the student gets on-line access to a great deal of information and guidance as well as immediate feedback on the emerging text. The instructor gets an opportunity to modify the program in order to accommodate special needs and is able to use a printed record of interactions for diagnostic and research purposes.

All of these programs reveal the efforts of thoughtful and talented teachers of writing to discover how technology can help them do what they know needs to be done. More experience and further development will probably help us figure out where the computer is truly helpful, where its apparent helpfulness depends on novelty, and where it is a waste of time and energy. If I had to make a prediction, I would say that the programs for guiding invention or particular types of writing assignments, or those that involve massive, networked data bases or drill-and-practice exercises have less probability of enduring than uncomplicated and flexible word-processing programs capable of easy interaction with reliable text analyzers and networked responses.


Reviewed by Richard B. Larsen, Francis Marion College

Helen Schwartz's Interactive Writing: Composing with a Word Processor is fully as much as one could hope for in the first course-usable textbook of its type from a practicing teacher/researcher (who has published on CAL and designed her own courseware). When I say course-usable I have in mind options that enable the student to do almost anything while writing or revising. Heuristic guidelines, organizational patterns, illustrations, analyses of drafts, and all sorts of tutorials are on-line at the fingertips of any student who feels comfortable with the relatively complex computing required to run the program. No doubt the students at Carnegie-Mellon, where DRAFT is under development, are able to manage the computing well enough to shape the program to their individual needs. In exchange for this complexity, the student gets on-line access to a great deal of information and guidance as well as immediate feedback on the emerging text. The instructor gets an opportunity to modify the program in order to accommodate special needs and is able to use a printed record of interactions for diagnostic and research purposes.

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ter technology. Beyond that, it is as inclusive as it needs to be without going into distracting or misplaced detail on any single aspect of either composition or word processing. For example, in the section entitled "Defining the Writing Situation," the student's attention is directed to the necessity of audience awareness in defining a situation, and the text provides several printout-style examples showing how to achieve it. Along the way, the reader encounters helpful hints and activities that can be done either in pencil or at a keyboard, but at no time does the reader feel overloaded; besides, more on audience, if it is needed, appears in a later chapter. There is some repetition of information, but always with variation appropriate to context.

The book's ten major sections range from the introductory "What is Interactive Writing?" to "Organizing Ideas" (Section 5) to the final section: "Researching with Data Bases." Each of these sections is subdivided into two to seven subsections, with each subsection further divided into short, orderly treatments of topics ranging from "Heuristics" to "Readable Phrasing." Throughout, Schwartz unobtrusively incorporates her knowledge of the latest in theory and research, and she scatters names like Burke and Pike (and Kübler-Ross and Asimov) among references to such software as THINKTANK and WANDAH. She knows, too, that the profession, like any computerizing agency, finds itself upon a Tower of Babel of hardware operating systems. Wisely, the book is not biased toward any system or word processing software; in fact, the author leaves sufficient space at appropriate points in the text for a student to enter commands specific to his or her equipment.

Although to utilize the book fully one needs access to a terminal-printer set-up of some sort, the main focus is where it ought to be in any book on how to write: on the writing itself. The overall orientation is, as I have implied, toward process-based composition instruction; yet the text is intended to be useful for a variety of purposes and methodologies. As Schwartz states in her preface:

More than most textbooks, Interactive Writing encourages you to interact—as a reader with this book, as a writer with your sources of information and the text you are writing, as a communicator with your readers.... I have designed the book so that a reader or instructor can use sections in variable order or in selectively individual ways. (viii)

Even though I have yet to use the text in the classroom, just from its layout I can see (and appreciate) its potential flexibility.

Most chapters end with suggested writing topics and a short bibliography of further readings. At all times, one is aware of the shaping touch of Professor Schwartz, who can be facilely anecdotal but who is also extraordinarily well-informed on a variety of topics, who knows what high-tech writing is all about, and who conveys here ideas in a systematic, readable manner. Two informative appendices, one constituting an entire "case for composition" on the 1981 Pulitzer Prize hoax, round out a book that is halfway between rhetoric and handbook and all the way into the computer age with its notion of "interactive writing." Still, one wonders just how ready the market is for such a work, especially considering how few composition classes are currently taught with word processing equipment.

There is an implicit lesson here. The computer revolution is not now so much a revolution as a way of life. Those of us who have been lucky enough to find the support, particularly the funding, to computerize our composition classes have been reporting the encouraging results lately in a variety of journals. The basic message seems to be that composing at a terminal somehow liberates students from writing blocks. The human short-term memory is apparently not overtaxed because of the sheer speed with which one can get words up on the screen; nor is the task of thoughtful revision, a sine qua non of good writing at any level, seen as burdensome any longer. The movement toward computerized writing will not stop, and by working together to keep it headed in the right direction, we can gain and keep control of how it affects our classes and our profession. The bottomline beneficiaries will be the students we teach, who need both our expertise and our machines.

Or one could put it in the words of another Schwartz—Lawrence—who computerized his composition classes at Montclair State College and found that,
yes, the students could write and learn better (or at least less painfully, more eagerly) at a microcomputer keyboard, all other variables being as nearly equal as possible. Writing in *Educational Technology* (June 1983), Schwartz said that he expects "access to these powerful instruments to end the so-called 'crisis' in basic writing skills." Those of us who have worked with these instruments under the right conditions and with sound teaching strategies also expect such dramatic results—over the long run. Breakthrough books like Helen Schwartz's can only move this progress along.

*Images and Words: Using Film to Teach Writing*, ed. Jeffrey Spielberger (New York: Instructional Resource Center, City University of New York, 1985, 93 pages).

Reviewed by Joseph J. Comprone, University of Louisville

Books and articles on using film to teach writing have an enormous range of theory and practice to cover. They must draw theory from literary studies, semiotics, and structural and post-structural linguistic theory. Their approaches to language and discourse must by definition be catholic, not narrowly constrained by the methods of a single medium or mode. Moving to practice, these books and articles are pulled in two additional directions: they must be knowledgeable of recent research and theory in composing processes while they consider as well the recent pedagogical practices of writing teachers.

*Images and Words* suffers, like most books of its type, from its authors' inability to integrate these three demanding directions. Its 14 brief essays are often imaginative; some are theoretically sophisticated and consistent; a few attempt to provide effective and efficient packages of theory and pedagogy. But as I read the entire book, I was struck by the absence of coherent packages of consistent theory and useful practical applications in the form of assignment sequences, interactive reading and writing exercises, and illustrations of contrastive media.

Perhaps the best way to demonstrate this general weakness in *Images and Words* is to discuss the three strongest essays in the book to show the direction that the entire book might have taken. Alice Trillin's "Film and the Teaching of Writing" describes her production work with *Writers Writing*, a series of three documentary films (*Before the First Word*, *Telling an Old Story*, and *Pieces of a Puzzle*) that were first shown on public television in 1985. In these films, Trillin presents writing as "a process of observation and speculation aimed at discovering meaning" (15) by juxtaposing the filmmaker's composing process with his or her presentation of material in the film itself. Trillin's essay shows us how a contrastive use of film and writing as process can alert students, perhaps more effectively than work in a single medium, to the intricacies of composing as process. Her approach is consistently grounded in Ann Berthoff's inquiry method of teaching writing, and it suggests numerous ideas for pointing out and using particular visual-verbal contrasts in a writing class.

Brian Gallagher, in "Linguistic Structures and Filmic Paradigms," and William V. Costanzo, in "Visual Thinking and the Writing Class," both provide excellent, specific illustrations of assignments and exercise sequences that help students to discover controlling forms in films and readings and to apply these forms in their own writing. All three of these essays are the type we need more of in writings on film and composition.

What we do not need are simple exhortations concerning the student's visual acuity compared to their literate inexperience. Nor do we need simplistic accounts of how the power of the visual image mesmerizes and energizes today's students. Unhappily, many of the other articles in *Images and Words* spend too much time doing just that. We know these things. But we still do not know very much about putting together reading, writing, and seeing sequences that will help students make all media experiences part of one integrated composing process.