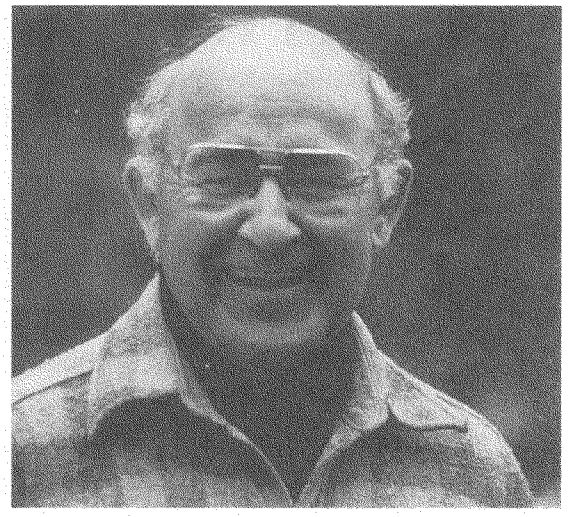
DONALD GRAVES: OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS

REGIE ROUTMAN



Editor's note: This year marks the inauguration of NCTE's Award for Outstanding Educator in the Language Arts. This award, proposed by the Elementary Section Steering Committee of NCTE, recognizes a distinguished educator who has made major contributions to the field of language arts in elementary education. In order to win this award, one must have (a) dramatically influenced classroom practice, (b) made ongoing contributions to the field of language arts, (c) obtained national and/or international influence, and (d) contributed a body of work that is compatible with the mission of NCTE. I can think of no one more deserving of this award than Donald Graves, whose keen observations of elementary school writers and their teachers have revolutionized the conceptualization and teaching of writing at the elementary level in many countries throughout the world. Don will be honored with the award at the Elementary Section Get-Together at this year's NCTE convention in San Diego. We thought it fitting also to honor him in the pages of *Language Arts*. Regie Routman, an outstanding language arts educator herself and member of the Elementary Section Steering Committee of NCTE, graciously agreed to compose this profile of Don. I hope you can join us later this month in San Diego to celebrate Don's achievements, and I also hope that this profile of him serves to contribute to honoring this outstanding language arts educator. (WHT)

Donald Graves—writer, teacher, thinker, researcher—has spent his whole life attempting to do what's right and just for children. But it is not just children who have benefited from his wisdom. His earnest voice has given so many of us teachers the courage to take risks in our classrooms. He has invited us and shown us how to find our own literate voices so that our students can do the same. He has traveled throughout the United States and the world speaking not only about writing but also about critical issues confronting us and our students. He is a kind and caring man, treating all teachers with respect, valuing our worth and ideas, and answering questions with gentle wisdom and humor.

Before Don was celebrated for his landmark work, *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work* (1983), and before he worked as a professor and member of the writing community at the University of New Hampshire, he spent many years working as an educator and seeker of truth and justice. Like all of us, his personal stories and longings helped shape his life and define his goals. His early working years laid the groundwork for his future contributions to untold numbers of children and teachers.

After graduating from college with an English literature degree, Don entered the Coast Guard, where he studied Russian and anatomy books and thought about a possible career in foreign service, government service, or medicine. With one child at home and one on the way, he needed to make a living. He knew he wanted to do something to help people but was totally uncertain about what career direction to follow. He took a quick course in teacher training and became an elementary school teacher and later a principal in Fairhaven, Massachusetts.

Then Don worked in a Presbyterian church in religious education in a little town in western New York. He taught Sunday school; he taught lay people to run classes; he taught teenagers how to teach remedial read-

ing. He was part of the educational ministry for about 6 years. During part of that time he got involved in a settlement house in Lackawana, New York, a town that had huge numbers of immigrants working in the steel mills. Don showed church people how to work with the immigrants. He taught English, did language training, showed others how to tutor and help. Later, he moved to working in the local public schools where he was a reading supervisor and curriculum supervisor.

But it was not until Don was in his early 40s that he decided to go to the University of New York at Buffalo for his doctoral degree. His spirited wife Betty returned to nursing to keep the family out of debt while they were raising five children. Don's decision to work on his doctorate in writing was the beginning of a remarkable transformation in humanizing the teaching of writing everywhere.

Today Don spends his time felling trees and trailblazing on his beautiful New Hampshire property, observing nature, writing poetry, cross-country skiing and hiking, enjoying friends and family, and speaking to educators across the globe.

I interviewed Don Graves in Anaheim, California, in May of 1995 and, with his approval, also wove in many comments from his session at the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English in November of 1994.

RR: How did you get started working with writing?

DG: It was spring of 1971. I was taking courses for my doctorate and having to decide what to do. Four of us doctoral students had put together a picnic and had driven up to Niagara Falls. We were sitting around talking; it was sort of like the movie "Marty," if you remember. "Hey, what are you going to do tonight?" "I don't know. What are you gonna do tonight?" They were all going to do something in reading, and I was the last one. They came 'round, and I just said, "Writing." That's how the whole thing began. It wasn't anything I'd thought about. I just pulled it out of the blue. So much for intense thinking about your dissertation. Then I did an independent study reviewing the research on writing, and I got really interested. But when I first said it, I didn't know what I was saying. We don't know what some decisions will grow into—like throwing words into the air. When I reviewed the research on writing, no one had ever sat next to kids and watched what they did when they wrote. Janet Emig had sat next to 12th graders, but I didn't know it at the time. I was heavy into Piaget. I couldn't believe no one had actually sat down next to kids; so I did it.

RR: What did you find when you sat down next to kids and did the study for your dissertation?

DG: Children will write without assignments. The amount of writing is inversely related to the number of assignments. Also, children are great problem solvers. I sat next to them and recorded details of their problem solving as they wrote. In addition, there was an enormous difference between young men and young women, and that still holds true. The writing conference

When I reviewed the research on writing, no one had ever sat next to kids and watched what they did when they wrote.

favors boys because they need it so badly. Young women are already reflecting, but boys aren't doing it without the conference.

RR: What happened after you finished your dissertation?

DG: I got an award for it, which absolutely stunned me. I never expected anything. It was the Promising Researcher Award from NCTE.

Then I went to a National Institute of Education conference, and I talked with Donald Miller from the Ford Foundation and George Miller, who was from Harvard. It was August 1973. I had been invited to be part of a group sponsored by the NIE to meet for this 4-day intensive planning for the future of literacy in the 1970s and 1980s. There were panel after panel after panel of psycholinguists, reading experts, clinicians, all kinds of people from psychology, linguistics, ethnography—the full works. There we were in this pressure cooker, thinking. And, as usual, I just felt completely out of place. I said, "You know, this conference is all out of whack." Don Miller said, "Oh?" I said, "This whole thing is focusing on literacy, and there isn't one single session here having to do with writing. In other words, we are all 'het up' on the ability of people to receive information. There isn't a thing here looking at a person's ability to send information." He said, "Oh, gee. I never thought of it that way." And we were talking all about this imbalance between sending and receiving and the whole focus being on just that. And the conversation ended, and Don said, "I'd like to get your address," and so on. And that was it. I always wondered about that, and one year later I got a call from Don Miller, who

said, "Remember that breakfast we had?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "I'd like you to do a study for the Ford Foundation on this imbalance question."

RR: How did you proceed with your research for the Ford Study, and what did you find?

DG: In 1978, I ended up publishing a 27-page report (cut from 120 pages) that stated the need to rethink the imbalance between reading and writing. I received the David H. Russell Award (an award for distinguished research) in 1982 for that work. I interviewed people from all over creation, looking at the questions of balance; and at that time, for instance, I was just curious as to how much writing was going on. One of the ways we got at it was to call office suppliers and look at what kinds of paper people were using. And it was curious to see what was happening over a 5-year period. If you were teaching then and remember, ditto paper was going out of sight. You know, the purple-passion blue sheets. And the use of lined paper was going down. It was just a little index to see that actual writing was going down, assuming that writing was going on lined paper. We also took a look at courses, and what was provided for people in writing and reading. In looking at 36 universities, we found that 169 courses were offered in reading, 30 in children's literature, 21 in language arts, and 2 in writing. This was in 1976.

There was another flag that went up. We interviewed people from all walks of life, chatting with them about writing; and one of the things we were asking them was, "Tell us about a teacher of writing who saw something in you worth saying and then helped you to say it. Sixty-five percent of all the people—and this is all the way from those with doctorates to kids in school—adults, men, women, the works—65% had no teacher ever who saw something in them and helped them write. And I think another 30% had one teacher. Five percent had two. No one had more than two teachers in a lifetime who ever saw something in them worth saying and then helped them to say it. The other side, though, is this: If they had one teacher like that, it made all the difference. Strangely, all you needed was one. And I suspect if you think back in your own life, if you can nail one, you can say, "Yeah, that's where it began. And I was able to go on from there." But most kids, most adults, even at the doctoral level, had not had even one. And those who had not had even one hated writing with good reason. They could talk about all kinds of punishment about writing. "The teacher made me stand up and read aloud my mistakes." "The teacher made me go to the board and write my errors on the chalkboard." To show you the predicament we're in, at the end of these interviews we asked this one question: "Tell me, if you were to stand in a school doorway today, and you could choose any grade level you want, and look in on the class, and say what you'd like to see going on, what kind of description would you want to give?" And they said, every time, "We want those kids to sit up straight, keep quiet, and by God, if they make mistakes, you get 'em." And these are the same people who are saying they hated writing, that writing was punishment, and that they were terribly embarrassed by those days.

RR: What happened after the Ford study? How did you continue to study writing?

DG: The government was not spending any money to research writing. Up until 1979 all of the research from the National Institute of Education had gone to reading. There wasn't a single study on writing to that point. Not one. Fortunately for our New Hampshire group, we were funded to study children's writing, and that started us on the way. That was the NIE study at Atkinson, New Hampshire. We decided to sit in classrooms next to kids, observe what they were doing, try to trace out some of the developmental roots that went with writing, and listen to them. We learned a lot by listening to the children, and Mary Ellen Giacobbe's room was a great help to us. Lucy Calkins and Susan Sowers were there as part of the team. We all got in there and spent a lot of time, and we were amazed at what children could do. We had a lot of growing pains in doing that. We were very strongly influenced, of course, by my colleague Donald Murray; and I would say that from that moment on, we, in New Hampshire anyway, have been heavily influenced by what professional writers do. I think that is a very neglected area of study—looking at what professional writers have to teach us. It is interesting; we've always gone to people who don't write to find out what to do in the teaching of writing. But in that study we were amazed by listening to the children in Mary Ellen Giacobbe's classroom.

Up until 1979 all of the research from the National Institute of Education had gone to reading. There wasn't a single study on writing to that point. Not one.

Mary Ellen went down to Belmont and ran into a teacher who had been influenced by Carol Chomsky, and they were using invented spelling. She came back

to the classroom and told the class the children down there were writing in this way (using invented spelling). And the children were quite insulted that she had gone down and was coming back to report to them things that obviously they could do if they wanted to, given the chance. And so they did. And it took off. And we learned still more about what children could do. It was an exciting study over that 2-year period. We had an awful lot to learn about children at that point. We had two books that came out of that: Lucy Calkins' (1983) *Lessons From a Child* and my *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work* (1983). We stressed children choosing topics, all of those things, and we said that children would write if you gave them a chance, and they sure did.

RR: Were you surprised at the enormous success of Writing: Teachers and Children at Work?

DG: I was astounded. It was November 1982 at NCTE, and the book just disappeared. I had three columns of information in *Language Arts,* sharing information before the book came out. Your mother never prepares you for anything like this. She had told me, "The trouble with you, Donald, is you never finish anything." I had a loving mother. She had high standards. As a kid, I was always trying one thing after another and never finishing. They worried that I'd never finish college. And now that book has had at least 17 or 18 printings and has been translated into Spanish.

RR: Were you a writer as a child?

DG: Compared to some kids today, I wasn't a writer. In seventh grade, Albie Underwood and I decided to write a bestseller about a young man going to West Point. I think we quit on Chapter 2.

RR: Do you remember having teachers who encouraged you?

DG: Not until I was a sophomore in high school.

RR: I've heard you speak often of Donald Murray as your mentor. Yet many elementary teachers don't know his work. What has Murray's influence been on you?

DG: He's the consummate writer who teaches writing, as I put in the dedication to Murray in *A Fresh Look at Writing* (1994). Early on, Murray responded directly to my texts.

RR: How did you meet him?

DG: In a hallway at the University of New Hampshire, when I was doing my research for my dissertation. I was going through the microfiche and came across "Your Elementary Pupil and the Writer's Cycle of Craft" by Murray, and I thought, "Holy cow, can this guy write!" His bio said he taught writing in the Bowdoin Summer Writing Program. At the time, I was looking for a position in Early Childhood Education at the University of New Hampshire. I'm standing in the hallway, and someone introduced me to Professor Murray, who was walking down the corridor. I asked him, "Are you the Donald Murray who wrote 'Your Elementary Pupil and the Writer's Cycle of Craft' that appeared in *Connecticut English Journal* in 1967?" He said yes in a dumbfounded way; and I said, "It's a hell of an article, one of the few worth reading in my research." And Murray replied, "Well, if you take this job, I hope you'll get in touch with me."

One of the wonderful things about writing is that you can put voices side by side, different opinions, and begin to work your way through and learn from these voices in order to come out with a change in your own voice. To me this is the heart of what our country so desperately needs.

Well, I got the job, but I didn't look him up at first. I was too busy surviving. The following spring we connected. And we've been in daily communication for 21 years—by fax, by modem, by telephone, by mail. He's my closest friend. We don't exchange text any more, except for poetry. We zap poetry back and forth. We talk politics and baseball. We are constantly talking books. We don't talk as much about writing as we talk about life.

RR: In your address at fall NCTE in 1994, you spoke passionately about voice and about the need to tolerate a multiplicity of voices. Can you elaborate on that?

DG: To look at voices in such a way that one voice tolerates other voices is so important. Can this voice look at itself and bring in another point of view simultaneously in order to reflect on the meaning of differences? Indeed, differences are there. In fact, in the marvelous pluralism that could be our country, how much can we tolerate a range of voices? One of the wonderful things about writing is that you can put

voices side by side, different opinions, and begin to work your way through and learn from these voices in order to come out with a change in your own voice. To me this is the heart of what our country so desperately needs.

The thing that upsets me so much about the last election is the quality of voices that are around. They do not listen to any other voices. That's dangerous for America, and we'd better sit up straight and pay attention. This has nothing to do with being a Democrat or a Republican. What it has to do with is the quality of voices, the tolerance of other voices, and the multiplicity of voices that must be heard in this country. If we don't pay attention, we're going down the tubes. What strikes me in looking at letters to the editor and listening to talk shows is once again the voices, the lack of voices of reason. "I don't want any part of that," say the voices. "Oh no, I don't want to get dirty with that. No, no, we will stay over here, and we will maintain our purity and not get mixed up in that." That happened in Germany in the 1930s. We'd better not forget it.

RR: What should we be thinking about and doing in our schools to be sure we respect and learn from all the voices of diversity?

DG: What do we need to think about? We need to think beyond the classroom. There are two schools with which I'm somewhat acquainted: the Manhattan New School in New York City and the Center for Teaching and Learning in Edgecomb, Maine. What strikes me about these schools is the quality of literacy, the quality of voice, that permeates everything. It could be as simple as saying something to someone in the hall; it could be as simple as listening to a child read something; it could be as simple as a note from the school head to a child or to a parent. It is this quality of respect for the multiplicity of voices that produces this incredibly rich context.

In these top schools, teachers are instinctively bringing kids in touch with the land. They are getting to know everything that's moving and breathing and living, where they are. In the city, it's the homeless person on the corner; it's the man who is in the deli across the street. That's the real world.

But what's still around and doing well is the extinguishing of voices. How much are we listening to the voices of persons who are not just linguistically different, but culturally different? Many of our approaches to assessment are not accommodating multiple voices in the least. I think that through many of our approaches, we learn to extinguish voices. My favorite question about any kind of assessment is, "What's it for, and what do you hope will happen for the sake of the learner in the future?" That's the heart of it. Will this enhance or extinguish the voice? Will what you're doing today be so wonderful that tomorrow your student will want to get up and do it again? How can we work at that?

RR: I have heard you say that the essence of art is knowing so well what's important that you know how to delete. What do you mean by that?

DG: Art is more what you don't do than what you do. For example, conferring with children requires so much artful teaching. When I confer with a child about her piece of writing, I need to know the child and the field of writing itself. I need to listen very carefully to what the child says, then help the child to see clearly what her intentions may be. What I say in response to the child must be quite economical and based on a broad understanding of many things. In short, out of 30 things I might have said, I choose just one to help the child. Artful work in any field comes from a rich understanding of the subject.

I've always advocated choice for children's topics and for many of their decisions. Unfortunately, what was lacking in my work until my latest book . . . was that I didn't show teachers how to help children with choice.

RR: Speaking of choice, what are your beliefs about giving children choice in writing?

DG: I've always advocated choice for children's topics and for many of their decisions. Unfortunately, what was lacking in my work until my latest book, *A Fresh Look at Writing* (1994), was that I didn't show teachers how to help children with choice. After so many violent pieces with human dismemberments or innocuous topics like Care Bears, I think teachers would like to string me up. And I don't blame them. I realize now that by showing them how I "read the world" to discover topics and how I fit genres to go with topics, I have discovered that there's been an awful vacuum for kids and teachers both. Help was needed, but they didn't get it.

RR: How else have your beliefs about writing changed since Writing: Teachers and Children at Work *was published in 1983?*

DG: Every study we've done since that first study in Atkinson has underestimated what kids could do, as well as the energy they bring to learning. I have continued to change every year since that first big study.

RR: Teaching children to revise is one aspect of writing that you've clarified since your early research. Specifically, how have your views about revision changed?

DG: Lucy's Calkins' work, in particular, showed that we had much to learn about where children were in revision. Unfortunately, due to our own naiveté, suddenly the word went out: Children can revise. And all across America, children were being stuck in a corner and forced to revise. Just because kids could revise didn't mean they should.

Further, the writing process, which should be artfully taught, was turned into a paint-by-the-numbers, mechanical process: Monday, prewrite; Tuesday, first-draft; Wednesday, second draft; Thursday, proofread; Friday, publish; and so on. Othodoxies have sprung up: Grammar and spelling aren't important; don't ever tell the child to do anything; never give assignments. The list could go on and on. Obviously, all of the above are important in their place.

RR: You mentioned conventions. I noticed your latest book, A Fresh Look at Writing (1994), *suggests more teaching is needed.*

DG: Far more conventions need to be taught than they have been. Lucy's approach with mini-lessons has been a great service to the country in that it really focuses on conventions. I like to use the word *conventions.* As Frank Smith says, "Everything you do in writing is a convention." Conventions exist to allow for good, crisp thought. If they are missing, then the thinking can be sloppy. The writer needs them just as much as the reader.

RR: How have your views on conferring in writing changed and evolved?

DG: As you know, we placed great stress from the beginning on the conference and listening to children. We still do. But the mistake that we made in the beginning was that we tried to do everything in the conference. It can't be done. Teachers were saying, "I hate publishing. I can't get to all the children." Of course, once again they were right. The conference should be used to help children keep their thoughts moving, to solve minor problems, to hear their own voices, and to sense where they are going. The other work gets done through mini-lessons or, especially, kids helping kids. This is a pretty simplified statement I've made here. It took a whole chapter to get at it in the book.

We placed great stress from the beginning on the conference and listening to children. We still do. But the mistake that we made in the beginning was that we tried to do everything in the conference. It can't be done.

RR: In your later work, you talk more and more about the relationship between reading and writing, but at first you spoke only about writing. How and when did you recognize the interconnection?

DG: I remember when I went to the United Kingdom in 1980. I was at the London Institute, and Professor Margaret Spencer said to me, "Well, what did you notice about the influence of reading on writing?" I responded naively, "Well, I didn't see an influence." Of course, I wasn't looking for it. One of the common problems researchers have is that they tend to ignore information unrelated to their research question. Margaret responded with a graceful, "Oh," knowing full well there are many connections, since she had examined them herself.

We placed great stress from the beginning on the conference and listening to children. We still do. But the mistake that we made in the beginning was that we tried to do everything in the conference. It can't be done.

Still, her question sowed seeds of doubt in my mind. Two years later Jane Hansen and I began to study reading and writing together in Ellen Blackburn Karelitz's first-grade classroom. Naturally, we saw connections and influences at every turn. All of our research since that time has focused on their relationship. Indeed, the interrelationship spawned the five books in my *Reading-Writing Teacher's Companion* series (1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1991, 1992); and Jane Hansen tried to show the interconnectedness in her book, *When Writers Read* (1987), written after our next study at Mastway School in Lee, New Hampshire.

All of this work has shown us how important it is to have a reading-writing block and not just reading and

writing done separately. Each contributes so much to the other. Sadly, I see this particularly happening in many departmental structures in elementary and middle schools in which each is taught by two different teachers.

RR: How can teachers help children find their own literate voices?

DG: The voice of the teacher is so connected to the literacy of the teacher. That is the voice of the teacher as she reads, as he reads, or as he or she writes. There's something about continually shifting and working with your point of view as you read and write that affects your work with children. When you are before children and listening to them, you can accommodate voices very different from your own and begin to help those voices become more authentic. It is our own reading and writing with the students, with the children, that I still say is the most powerful force.

When I was writing the introduction to Nancie Atwell's (1987) book *In the Middle,* what struck me was not her methodology; it was the highly literate way of looking at the world out there that was so powerful. The kids just couldn't wait to be part of that literate world that Nancie exuded. What happens is that the student, the child, also becomes part of that fascinating world. Like Frank Smith says, it's the literacy club. You can't ask kids to be part of a club that you don't belong to yourself.

RR: Do you believe a teacher can get kids to write well if he or she doesn't write?

DG: You don't get kids to read, and you don't get kids to write. The quality of top teachers has always been one of invitation. You're listening, no agenda, except to point out there is a wonderful place to go. There's a whole world there to explore; come on in. And the invitations are quite varied, depending on the kid. But you can't invite them to go where you haven't been. You can go up to a point, but for most, there's a level of excellence that's denied to them. We settle so quickly for so little.

RR: In your latest book, A Fresh Look at Writing (1994), *you say, "If students are not engaged in writing at least four days out of five, and for a period of thirty-five to forty minutes, beginning in first grade, they will have little opportunity to learn to think through the medium of writing" (p. 104). What do you say to teachers who say that increasing curricular demands make it difficult to take time to foster quality writing?*

DG: I think we need to look realistically at all the ways we waste time. When we don't listen to kids, we're wasting their time and ours. If we're not observing kids and adapting our teaching accordingly, we're wasting time. We waste enormous amounts of time by expecting kids to do things that are impossible. And we waste time by asking kids to do things that are beneath their intelligence. And we waste time by not allowing kids to reflect on what they're doing. When a kid can't reflect on the meaning of something, then it doesn't have meaning. After we get through looking at how we waste time, maybe we'll find more time than we ever thought we had. Or if a kid is on a track where he never sees himself as a lifelong reader or writer, that's a waste of time for that kid. That's the short list.

We also waste time by doing too much for children. They could be taught to take much more responsibility for running our rooms and helping other children. We need to make a list of all the things we do for children that they are perfectly capable of learning how to do. Have grade-level meetings where teachers actually share the responsibilities they've delegated, as well as share how they taught the children to assume them. All of this takes a big time investment, but when we slow down to teach them, it saves time in the long run. I say, "Let's slow down so the children can hurry up."

RR: What are your thoughts about the writing process movement today?

DG: I don't think of it as a movement. In fact, I rarely use the term *writing process.* I simply say *writing.* The term *writing process* is all worn out. It has had so many bizarre interpretations (a good number due to my own mistakes) that it is best to say *writing.* Still, we do have a philosophy of teaching children that is revealed in the way we teach writing. I'm still very concerned about how little writing is taught, how little time is provided for children to write. And when time is provided, I don't see children challenged by teachers who have been prepared to teach it through the teacher's own high level of literacy.

RR: When you began the Ford Study, you noted the imbalance between reading and writing. Are things any better today? Are universities and colleges offering more courses in the teaching of writing?

DG: Carl Wilcox and I donated our eyes to research by going to the microfiche at the University of New Hampshire Library. We sat there nonstop, looking at what course offerings were present at the 50 leading state universities in the country. In this case we were

focusing on elementary education, going through and looking at what the course offerings were. We found 250 courses in reading development, 95 courses dealing with the clinical side of reading disability, 33 courses in reading and writing (that's a change I'm glad to see), 66 courses in children's literature, 82 in language arts, and 35 in writing. So there is a change; however, there were 23 of the 50 state universities who had no course offering in writing. There is some minor improvement, but the imbalance favoring reading in a major way is still present. Obviously, I don't think there should be a battle between the fields of reading and writing. Nevertheless, there should be much more balance than is presently the case.

RR: You once told me that there was more writing going on in classrooms but that the writing wasn't getting any better. Yet, you never seem discouraged. You always seem optimistic about the future of writing and teachers of writing. What are your hopes for teachers and for children?

DG: Well, my optimism is based on what teachers like you and Carol Avery, Jack Wilde, Nancy Atwell, Linda Rief, Maureen Barbieri, and Tom Romano, and countless others are doing. They are writing the books that teachers really want, because they give the inside story of literacy in their classrooms. They are very literate people who write with a sense of optimism about what their children are doing, based on the actual performance of their students. We need more of this.

As teachers witness the writing and publishing of others, they'll say, "Heck, I can do that." And they will. Teachers will outflank universities that don't offer courses in writing by helping each other and by publishing what professors are not getting into print. Also, I'd definitely say that there is now a core of high quality teachers of writing in the country who have children producing some of the best writing we've ever seen in any century. Finally, I wish that all teachers could see themselves as intelligent persons who have everyday experiences worth writing and sharing with others. It's coming. If I get in a hurry, I become a pessimist. However, I may be slowing down in my old age, and that's why I'm optimistic.

References

Atwell, N. M. (1987). *In the middle.* Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook.

Calkins, L. M. (1983). *Lessons from a child.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1983). *Writing: Teachers and children at work.* Exeter, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1989a). *Experiment with fiction.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1989b). *Investigate nonfiction.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1990). *Discover your own literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1991). *Build a literate classroom.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1992). *Explore poetry.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1994). *A fresh look at writing.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Hansen, J. (1987). *When writers read.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Murray, D. (1967). Your elementary pupil and the writer's cycle of craft. *Connecticut English Journal, 2,* 3–10.

Books by Donald Graves

Graves, D. H. (1978). *Balance the basics: Let them write.* New York: The Ford Foundation.

Graves, D. H. (1983). *Writing: Teachers and children at work.* Exeter, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1984). *A researcher learns to write.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1989). *Experiment with fiction.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1989). *Investigate nonfiction.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1990). *Discover your own literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1991). *Build a literate classroom.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1992). *Explore poetry.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1994). *A fresh look at writing.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H., & Stuart, V. (1985). *Write from the start.* New York: E. P. Dutton.

Graves, D. H., & Sunstein, B. (1992). *Portfolio portraits.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Hansen, J., Newkirk, T., & Graves, D. H. (1985). *Breaking ground.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Regie Routman is a language arts resource teacher in the Shaker Heights, Ohio, City School District and author of several books on teaching and learning.