



Learning TC3 LENS

A Focus on
Exemplary Practices

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What's right with this picture?

The Writers Guild is a strong, on-going community of learners - bringing together not just students and English faculty members, but also faculty from other disciplines, staff members, alumni, and community members. This breadth of participation and the active roles all take as both teacher and learner increase learning for everyone involved. Research finds that the most decisive factor affecting college outcomes is the connections a student makes to the college and its programs like the Writers Guild - connections that also act to increase the responsibility students take for their own learning. More info and resources are available at *Turning Teaching into Learning: The Role of Student Responsibility in the Collegiate Experience* at: <http://www.ericdigests.org/1995-1/role.htm>

The structure of the Writers Guild's meetings models and develops reflective skills, an integral element of the learning process and the development of metacognition (the ability to think about and be aware of your thinking processes, learning to learn). These skills translate directly to successful learning outcomes, both inside and outside the formal classroom. For a discussion of the role of critical reflection and learning to learn in adult learning, see *Adult Learning: An Overview* by Stephen Brookfield at: <http://www.nl.edu/ace/Resources/Documents/AdultLearning.html>

Got a great learning idea?
Share it with the *Learning Lens* by contacting Kris Altucher at x4392 or Groupwise KAA.

An atmosphere of fearless sharing

The poet distributes copies of his poem to the group and then reads it aloud. When he's finished, members of the group comment on such things as the visual appearance of the poem on the page, its spacing, the number of words on a single line — too many, too few, the intent of a word choice or a phrase. The poet listens, responding sometimes in agreement and appreciation and sometimes by asserting the intent of his choices. When the discussion ends, group members return their copies with their comments to the poet, and another writer takes her turn.



This is a typical exchange at the weekly meeting of the Writers Guild.

Writers Guild meets each Friday at noon to “engage in the difficult task of trustworthy literary discourse . . . through writing, discourse, editing, rewriting, more discourse, more editing and rewriting,” according to Professor Ron Starmer, who co-advises the club along with Dr. Bernard Earley, adjunct professor of English at TC3. The Guild was chartered in 1993 by FSA, and includes students, alumni,

staff, and faculty. Members develop the necessary skills to perform close readings and to think critically about their own, and each other's, work. Paul McCabe, a TC3 alumnus and continuing member, describes Writers Guild as an “atmosphere of fearless sharing and commentary” where “you read your piece, then quietly take feedback for a few minutes. No disclaimers! No explanations until everyone has had a chance to comment on your writing. It's not easy to sit and listen to others interpret your work, but it gives you an unbiased insight to what your particular words might be doing on, and off, the page.”

The creative work of Writers Guild finds public expression in Reader's Corner and *Re-Visions*. At Reader's Corner, held once a month, two members of the club and an outside guest read from their original manuscripts before an audience. *Re-Visions* is the annual literary magazine of the work of students, alumni, faculty, staff and guest writers.