



## Friday @ the Center: May 4, 2007

### Writing for Everyone: Part 10

**GLOBAL TIP:** A key thinking and writing skill on which we need to work with our students is the ability to synthesize other material and ideas into their writing. Student writers often have difficulty smoothly incorporating data, facts, or expert opinions into their writing. Sometimes I jot on papers, “This quote is just stuck in.” Quotations generally should have some kind of introduction to provide context, authority, and flow. Look at the differences between these two examples:

Graphic sexual imagery is a literary technique that does not necessarily teach immorality. “Literature and art are not required . . . to serve up clean and wholesome stories in all times and places” (Miller 7). Disturbing images can function to call our attention to great wrongs in the world.

Graphic sexual imagery can be a literary technique that does not necessarily teach immorality. Renown American playwright Arthur Miller insists, “Literature and art are not required . . . to serve up clean and wholesome stories in all times and places” (7). These disturbing images can function to call our attention to great wrongs in the world.

**FINISHING TIP:** The tenth most frequent punctuation error in college writing, according to Lunsford’s research, is an **unnecessary shift in tense**. This occurs, for example, when a writer suddenly moves from past to present tense, or from present to future, without a good reason. For example, “Sharon **was teaching** her class when the emergency horn sounded. Then she calmly **follows** the instructions in *Stop. Think. Act.*” Obviously, there can be occasions within a sentence when the tense changes for good reason. Tense confusion, I find, often occurs when writers are writing about literary works or quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing. Simple present tense should be used in most cases (as in the Miller example above). The one exception is in scientific writing reporting on experiments or another researcher’s work, which should be in the past tense: “McFarland (2004) **noted** (not ‘**notes**’) that the mutation of the MIC-A sequence may yield mutants with a higher binding affinity.”

### May Grant Advisor Available

The May edition of *The Grant Advisor* can now be accessed through on-campus computers at <http://grantadvisor.com/tgaplus/>. It contains 20-25 full program reviews and over 300 listings of grant and fellowship programs. If it generates any possibilities for you, be sure to contact Laura Lundahl ([Lundahl@spu.edu](mailto:Lundahl@spu.edu)), the SPU academic grant writer, for an initial conversation about your ideas and the grant writing process. And remember that all faculty grant applications for external funding must receive internal approval. For a complete description of the recommended procedure for application and to download the approval form, go to <http://advance.spu.edu/corporations/approvals.asp>

## And don't forget . . .

- *Tuesday, May 8, 9:30 am.*  
**Presidential Spring Forum**  
Royal Brougham Pavilion
- *Thursday, May 10, 1:00 pm.*  
**Faculty Brown Bag on Reconciliation Blues**  
DH 353
- *Monday, May 14*  
**2008 Weter Lecture applications due**  
Office of Academic Affairs

Enjoying May,

*Susan*

Susan VanZanten Gallagher  
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Director, Center for Scholarship and Faculty Development