Meet the Authors

Barbara Anderson

The seed idea for DLI germinated during summer lunches with my 3-4 teaching team at Van Arsdale Elementary in Jefferson County, Colorado. We looked, without success, for more effective instructional resources to use for teaching writing conventions and began to experiment with new strategies. When I retired, my team encouraged me to take these strategies to the next level by developing and publishing DLI. Over a six-year period, partnerships with Aurora, Cherry Creek, and Douglas County Public Schools in Colorado provided opportunities for collaboration with some wonderful educators and led to the development of editions for Grades 1-6. Laura Swanson, my friend and co-author, joined the effort in 2006, bringing many talents. With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, writing conventions has become an even broader body of content. I feel very fortunate that DLI has provided the opportunity for me to continue to participate in education and to support teachers in giving students the tools they need for their "writing toolboxes." In addition to DLI, our life includes a little travel and quality time with an aging parent and our three grandsons.

Laura Swanson

I became a fan of DLI as a teacher participating in the pilot for the Grade 5 edition. I was impressed with the quality of the materials and the fact that they were based on a thoughtful sequence for skill development, with practice, maintenance, and assessment woven right into each week. So, when the opportunity arose to help write materials for Grade 2 DLI, I eagerly jumped in to lend a hand. Since that time I have also been involved with the writing of the Grade 1 and Grade 6 editions. The past few years have resulted in tremendous learning in combination with wonderful friendships. I know as a busy classroom teacher, I never had the time to pull all of these skills together into such a cohesive approach for teaching and practicing the skills of writing conventions. Making this available to teachers has been a professional labor of love.

I enjoy living on the plains of Colorado, training for The WriteTools, spending time with two adult daughters and a quirky husband, xeriscape gardening, and traveling.