

## **BOOK REVIEW**

Dykstra, Gerald, Richard Port, Antonette Port. **Ananse Tales**, A Course in Controlled Composition. **Ananse Tales Workbook**. New York: Columbia University Teacher's College Press, 1966, 1968.

Forty different, short, West African legends about Ananse, an almost human spider, are the basis for this controlled course in writing for students of grade 6 to adult (intermediate to advanced). The modifications and transformations that the student writer is asked to make are graduated in fifty-eight steps. Students begin with the relatively mechanical steps of copying and substitution and proceed as rapidly as possible to the most advanced steps of free creative composition. There are a number of different passages with the same numerical step to allow the student to repeat a step at a given level as often as necessary without repeating previous subject matter.

**Ananse Tales**, provides an opportunity for extensive practice in student writing with a minimum of teacher correction. The

workbook is fully programmed and provides additional practice for basic substitution, transformation, and expansions in English. An example and four or five sentences to complete are provided for each of the original steps in the **Ananse Tales**. Both the example and the sentences use different content and vocabulary from that of the folktales—advantageous in overcoming an otherwise stylistic problem in using the **Ananse Tales**. It also gives additional material in areas where the original book moves too rapidly for some students.

It would be a great help in teaching writing to have similar materials for controlled composition on all grade levels. (The authors indicate that some are in preparation for grades 1 through 10 although no publication date has been set.)