



## YOU CAN'T GO WRONG IF YOU WRITE

BEN TAYLOR '59 came by his interest in writing quite naturally. He is the son of John I. Taylor, a former president of the Boston Globe and the great grandson of the newspaper's founder. After attending CRS, Ben attended Milton Academy and Harvard, then joined the Globe staff in 1972, working on both the editorial and business sides of the company. One of his most memorable assignments as a reporter was covering The White House during President Ronald Regan's first term from the Globe's Washington Bureau.

Ben was named executive editor of the paper by 1988 and held several subsequent executive positions, rising to president and publisher. In 1998, he was named chairman and CEO of Globe Newspaper Company, a subsidiary of The New York Times Company.

As a student at CRS, Ben thought the collection of books in the school library was amazing. In fact, he remembers it being stocked with every conceivable type of book. "The place was like never never land to me," he chuckles. He loved taking books home and reading them slowly, with great care.

The connection between reading and writing was always strong for Ben. "You can't be a good writer unless you're a good reader. You learn to write well from reading different types of books and noting the styles. CRS gave me my first real exposure to many types of literature."

By sixth grade, students were required to read one "classic" grown-up book, and with such a long list to choose from, Ben remembers it was difficult to make just one selection. He eventually settled on Dickens' David Copperfield. It was a prophetic choice, as Charles Dickens wrote for a lot of newspapers just as Ben would do one day. Dickens' chapters were short and quite manageable -- a big plus for an eleven-year-old reader. Ben's fascination with Dickens continued into high school where he studied A Tale of Two Cities and completed a writing assignment using the author's style.

Ben's world was broadened by a CRS fifth grade substitute teacher from Pakistan. "Mr. Raja taught us a unit on the sub-continent," he says. "It was his life that he brought to our fifth-grade classroom. We learned about the British, the Hindus and the Muslims and why there was enmity among them."

These early explanations of different religious and cultural points of view led Ben to a life-long interest in diversity. He has attended many workshops on the subject throughout his career and now volunteers as a writing tutor at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School in Boston, where he works one-on-one with a multi-cultural student population, including a large number of Cape Verdeans for whom English is a second or third language. Writing in English can be difficult for some of them, and Ben helps with their college essays. Sometimes he has to tease out their stories, but what they ultimately put down on paper is both dramatic and powerful.

When asked what's key to good writing, Ben points again to the connection between reading and writing that he first experienced at CRS. "I don't know how many natural writers there are, really," he says. "Is it a learned behavior? My guess is that most writers never stop writing. They learn skills. They read, read, read and then write, write, write."

Ben lives in Brookline with his wife, Kate, who produces shows for WGBH. They have three children, Abby, Sam, and Will.

(Spring 2008)