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Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College. I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Kathy Short  
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to the many people who have helped in making this study possible. My sincere appreciation and aloha to my dissertation committee, especially my chairperson, Dr. Kathy Short, who provided me with valuable advice, continuous guidance, and supportive encouragement. I could not have done it without her. Dr. Dana Fox's thoughtful perspective, kindness and ever-supportive comments gave me new insights and understandings. Drs. Ken and Yetta Goodman, who took me "under their wing" as a young graduate student, enabled me to find a sense of empowerment and the confidence I needed to grow as a learner. I deeply respect and value their suggestions, probing questions and nudges along the way.

My deepest thank you goes to Charlene Miyashiro who graciously invited me into her classroom. Her friendship, guidance, and collegiality are genuinely appreciated. I am also thankful to my principal, Annette Yamaki, who welcomed this study at the school site.

A big mahalo nui loa to the students - Alex, Courtney, Jenna, Kaipo, Robert and Tatyana, who made this study possible. Their willingness to give of themselves and open their hearts and minds pushed me to grow and consider literature and learners in a new light.

I am forever grateful to my friend and confidant Gloria Kauffman who graciously housed me during my trips to Tucson and continuously pushed my thinking as an educator and researcher. I also wish to thank Karen Onofrey for her quick e-mail responses and phone conversations which gave me the suggestion I needed at just the right time. I certainly couldn't have completed this dissertation without the perceptive insights of Alice Kawakami, my mentor right here in town and Aunty Kiki Mookini who offered her loving and intellectual expertise on Hawaiian culture.

I wish to thank my parents who have always been the backbone of my support system, offering unconditional love and encouragement, not to mention the many nights they provided dinner and countless small favors so I could work on this dissertation.

To my husband and "true companion" Jesse, who traveled with me to Arizona and who always seems to understand and remind me of the important things in life. I am forever grateful for his unwavering love and encouragement and for helping to make this journey all possible.
DEDICATION

To Jesse and Jamie
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the content of children's responses to culturally relevant literature in Hawai'i and how their individual understandings and responses evolved over time.

This study utilized qualitative research methods and ethnographic techniques. A case study group of six students, three girls and three boys of differing ethnicity, was selected from a fifth grade class in Hawai'i. Children participated in four different literature discussions, a short story, novel study, text set study, and class read-aloud. Data collection included transcripts from literature discussions, interviews, observational field notes, and collections of written artifacts. Categories were constructed through inductive analysis of data.

The findings showed that through literature discussions of culturally relevant literature the children defined what it means to belong to their local culture in Hawai'i, refined their beliefs about the concept of culture, used their knowledge about history to build
understandings, and shared how they connected with the literature. As a result of the literature discussions, individual children were able to identify with the literature and came to new understandings about themselves and their cultural lives.

Children should be encouraged to read books that show representations of their cultural lives. However, merely reading literature is not enough. Children need instructional and teacher support so that they may engage in thoughtful discussions about the literature and find issues that are meaningful to them. Providing opportunities for children to find and discuss personal and cultural issues, establishing a supportive environment to talk about literature, and using powerful selections of literature are ways teachers help children engage in discussions about culturally relevant literature.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE

We local. We feel proud to be local. We feel like we belong here. We're people that live on the islands, not necessarily being only Hawaiian but immigrants from other countries. These books are a part of our culture, because they are in Hawai'i. It's all about the islands. It tells about island life. It's what we do, how people in Hawai'i live. It's about how people bond together from different races.

We can relate to these books. We understand more. Yeah, because we live here!

(Written using statements by Kaipo, Robert, Alex, Renee, Kris, and Debbie, Blue Skin of the Sea discussion)

Growing up in Hawai'i, like the children above, I have always felt a deep sense of pride in belonging to the local culture. However, unlike these children, I did not have the same opportunities to read or see reflections of my culture represented in literature. As a person who only later in my educational life had the experience of feeling empowered by "living through" (Rosenblatt, 1995) the literature of my culture, I was excited by these children's comments that seemed to express a genuine relationship with and an empathetic understanding of the literature. As an educator in Hawai'i, I wondered how culturally relevant
literature could be used as a place to build upon children’s experiences and whether this literature could provide the vehicle through which children begin to explore their cultural lives and make sense of the complex world around them (Rosenblatt, 1995).

This chapter introduces the purpose of the study and describes the influences that guided me to my research questions. I identify and define concepts that are specific to Hawai‘i’s context, followed by an introduction to Hawai‘i’s literary history. In the latter part of the chapter I explain in detail the professional, political, and personal influences that inspired me to pursue this study. Then I discuss the significance of this study.

Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this study was to look at the content of children’s responses when they have opportunities to engage in dialogue about literature of their culture. I wanted to investigate how the children’s understandings and responses to this literature evolved over time. I was particularly interested in looking at how culturally relevant literature generates a “lived through” (Rosenblatt, 1978, 1995) experience in children. I believe
that if children make meaningful connections between literature and their lives, they may come to realize the potential of literature to make sense of and come to new understandings of the world around them. Rosenblatt (1983) contends it is "through books the reader may explore his own nature, become aware of potentialities for thought and feeling within himself, acquire clearer perspective, develop aims and a sense of direction" (p. v). As children learn through the experiences of the text they begin to think critically and deeply about the relationship between literature and their lives. To examine this relationship I studied fifth graders of differing ethnicity who were born and raised in Hawai'i and who were participating in literature discussions about their local island culture. I generated the following research questions:

1) What is the content of children's responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature?

2) How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time?
To address these questions, I studied a group of six students as a case study who were selected from a fifth grade class on the island of Hawai'i. Three males and three females of different ethnic groups participated in four literature discussions from January 1999 through June 1999. The research took place within the classroom, a naturally occurring setting. Data appropriate to ethnographic inquiry were collected: data from transcripts of the literature discussions and interviews, observational field notes, and student's written work. The data was analyzed through inductive analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Defining the culture of the children was a daunting and challenging task. In this study, culture was defined as "the ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and world view created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors that can include a common history, geographic location, language, social class and religion" (Nieto, 1999). This study examined fiction (written in the English language) about the life in the local culture which some consider representative of the many different ethnic cultures present in Hawai'i (Lum, 1998).
The word Hawai'i is both the name of one of the eight major islands and the name of the state. To avoid confusion throughout the text, when Hawai'i is used it refers to the state rather than the island unless specified.

Culturally relevant literature (K. Goodman and Y. Goodman, 1978) in this study are stories that illustrate representations of the children’s local culture in Hawai'i. The primary characteristics of the stories selected are books in which the setting takes place in Hawai'i and the main character grows up in the islands. In this study the term “local literature” includes literature from the native Hawaiian culture, but is not exclusive to native Hawaiian culture. For the purposes of this dissertation, I use the label “local literature” (Talk Story Conference, 1978) to define culturally relevant literature. It also includes literature from a range of ethnic groups that reside in Hawai'i. Further details explaining the use of the term “culturally relevant” and “local literature” in this investigation are presented in Chapter 2. The term “local” is further defined in Chapter 2. For the purposes of this chapter it is useful to keep in mind that in Hawai'i the expression “local” is not simply defined in terms of
locality or area, but used to describe or refer to persons who feel a sense of belonging to the island culture of Hawai'i as a whole. Use of the word "mainland" by the children refers to the contiguous 48 states of the United States and Alaska.

In the title I use the term "talking story." "Talk story" in the Hawai'i pidgin dialect means, "Talk, gossip, shoot the breeze" (Simonson, 1981, unpaged). Sumida (1991) writes:

A pidgin expression, 'talk story' characterizes a widespread and sociable form of oral, animated exchange. 'Shooting the breeze' or 'chewing the fat' are the term's kin, except of course, for the important fact that 'talk story' is Hawaii's own, this verbal style being neither quaint nor 'waste time.' And the term could be transferred from the transient word of mouth to the durable printed page. We were already finding by mid-1978 that 'talk story' also characterizes much of Hawaii's contemporary written literature: anecdotes, vignettes, sketches, short fiction, both lyrical and narrative poetry, monodramas filled with the central characters' reminiscences directly addressed to the audience, and entire novels told by a speaker whose genuine voice sounds like someone talking story. (pp. 240)

For the purposes of this study I use the term "talking story" to refer to both the pidgin expression to depict a group of children gathering to talk about literature and the "talk story" which has come to characterize Hawai'i's literature as described by Sumida (1991).
The term "talk story" has also been used in discourse analysis studies to describe specific types of speech acts with part Hawaiian children (Watson-Gegeo & Boggs, 1977). Other research studies on the discussion of literature with native Hawaiian children have used "talk-story" to characterize specific speech patterns which encourages children to engage in text discussion compatible with those patterns experienced outside the classroom (Au, 1980; Au and Mason, 1981; Au and Kawakami, 1986). According to this definition of "talk-story" students present their ideas without teacher intervention and permits a balance between teacher and student talk (Au, 1995). While this study does not attempt to look exclusively at native Hawaiian children's speech patterns, the teachers and students in the study engage in dialogue that allow children to talk without much teacher intervention.

Throughout the text, words from the native Hawaiian language are written in italics. I have attempted to preserve the traditional Hawaiian spelling unless cited directly from the literature or in a reference. The kahako, or macron is a short, horizontal line that appears over some of the vowels. It indicates an increased duration for the vowel that it appears over. The 'okina is
the single, open quote that appears frequently before vowels. It indicates a glottal stop, a clean break between vowels. The presence of the kahako and/or 'okina affects both pronunciation and meaning of words that contain them (Kulanono, 2000).

**Historical Influences**

Although literature seems to be an integral part of culture, it is only in the last twenty-five years that literature for local people in Hawai'i has been available. For many years until the 1970's, literature written by and for the local people of Hawai'i had been ignored and all but denied the right to be of value by the population at large (Chock, 1986; Sumida, 1981). For further details see Chapter 2.

In the 1970's a group of Hawai'i writers emerged and called attention to the fact that literature for and by the local people of Hawai'i had been disregarded and underrepresented in schools and the community at large. These writers began to question and assert their beliefs and began to initiate conferences (Talk Story Conference, 1978), form organizations (Hawai'i Literary Arts Council & Bamboo Ridge) and publish the works of Hawai'i's writers (most notably through the Hawai'i Review and Bamboo Ridge
Press). In 1980 Eric Chock addressed a group of two hundred people at the Hawai‘i State Capitol Auditorium:

I believe that this is part of not a revolutionary process, but an evolutionary process. And I hope that this is a process that will eventually lead to local literature being taught in the schools in Hawai‘i. . . . Because it will lead to more pride among Hawai‘i’s people, and an awareness of Hawai‘i’s directions, past, and present, and it will provide more opportunities for people, like me, who grew up here and want to be writers and who need clear models for exactly what that is – a Hawai‘i writer. (p. 6)

Today these local writers have begun to make their mark in Hawai‘i’s literary history. Stories of Hawai‘i written by people of Hawai‘i are being used at the high school and university level in ethnic studies departments both here and in the mainland U.S. (Motooka, 1998; Bacchilega, 1994).

The effect of the growing pride and popularity of Hawai‘i’s literature is also apparent upon entering a bookstore in Hawai‘i. The casual browser is immediately struck by displays of the various publications from Hawai‘i such as - The Musubi Man (Takayama, 1996), Hawaii State and Local Politics (Wang, 1998), and Small Kid Time Hawaii (Chock, 1981) which advertise and entice buyers with autographed copies of the texts. Right beyond the displays and bargain book table is a very popular section labeled,
Na Puke No Hawai‘i Ne‘i – Hawaiian Books. The increasing number of books and prime location of the books in the stores reflect the growing interest in books of Hawai‘i. Much of the popularity can be credited to the “Hawaiian Renaissance” or the revival of pride in native Hawaiian music and culture and the movement of local Hawai‘i writers. This pride in Hawai‘i’s culture is also present in the children’s section of the bookstore where more and more literature about Hawai‘i adorn the shelves.

Traditional Hawaiian tales, Hawaiian versions/variants of fairy tales, non-fiction books on the flora and fauna of Hawaii, ABC books (Hawaiian style), and fictionalized stories of life in Hawai‘i fill an entire section of the bookshelves. Although this recent interest has invariably increased the number of books on Hawai‘i for adults and younger children, only a few books can be found for intermediate age children or adolescents. These books are difficult to find, often misplaced amongst the other books in the fiction section for young adults, in the Hawaiian literature for young children section, or the section on Hawaiian literature for adults.
Professional and Political Influences

Although books written about Hawai‘i are becoming more accessible in local bookstores and libraries, the lack of literature of Hawai‘i available to children still plague educators.

In my professional work as a teacher, I have observed other teachers encouraging students to build from and value their life experiences. I have noticed some public schools on the island of Hawai‘i move toward literature-based approaches to reading instruction. Teachers have utilized books from other racial and ethnic cultures but have had limited access to books about the local culture present in Hawai‘i. Typically available is literature from other Asian cultures, by authors such as Yoshiko Uchida or Lawrence Yep in which the characters are children of the same ethnic origin as children living in Hawai‘i but who are born and raised on the mainland United States. Their experience is different from and may not be characteristic of the lives of children in Hawai‘i.

Although “good” literature with depth for discussion may be hard to find, I also believe this resistance to using literature from Hawai‘i has to do in part with a concern about meeting mainland standards. These books may
not have been used by teachers in instruction because schools have generally not considered this kind of literature to be of serious educational merit or equal to those books from the mainland (Chock, 1986). Often cited as evidence that the children of Hawai‘i are behind or failing are the reading scores of students in public schools in Hawai‘i. These scores fall below many other states in the U.S. (Ballator, Jerry, & Rogers, 1999). The blame is usually placed upon the pidgin dialect spoken in Hawai‘i (Dunford, November 28, 1999). Filled with fears of inadequacy and fighting against the mainstream mainland standards, children are often led to believe that if they try hard enough they might succeed like children on the mainland. Eric Chock (1986) states:

In all these factors, the main underlying point is that we in Hawaii are expected to believe that we are subordinate to the mainland. At best, we are expected to believe that we are really no different here and can even be like the mainland if we try hard enough. We are asked to reject the feeling that Hawaii is special. And when we become numbed and lost the feeling it then becomes possible to accept mainland history and mainland culture as our own. (p. 8)

Even though people in Hawai‘i must fight to overcome this belief, others feel that, “life is different here and the literature reflects it” (Lum, 1986). Rather than exclusively using books from mainland culture, children in
Hawai‘i need to see reflections of themselves and their lives in the literature. Rudine Sims-Bishop (1997) argues that children who do not see accurate reflections of themselves may come to understand that they have "... little value in society in general and school in particular" (p. 4). Although children in Hawai‘i seem to carry a strong sense of pride in their culture, this pride may have developed as a resistance to external societal pressures (Hara, 1994) to "accept mainland history and mainland culture as our own" (Chock 1986, p. 8). Imposing mainland culture and literature upon Hawai‘i’s children’s could “... contribute to children’s understandings of how they are viewed and valued by the school and the society of which schools are reflections” (Sims-Bishop, 1997, p. 4) and in effect deny the cultural differences that makes life in Hawai‘i unique.

**Personal Influences**

Historical, political, professional influences have all played a role in bringing me to this study. Together they have affected my personal and intellectual being. I believe that collectively these influences have played a critical role in the development of my personal life and ultimately these influences led me to this study. In this
section I situate myself as person, sharing part of my identity and define my existence in Hawai'i's culture.

Living in Hawai'i has been an interesting journey for me. As a child I did not reflect much upon my culture or race. Surrounded by the many other Japanese-Americans and other ethnic groups in Hawai'i, I did not have many opportunities to think about myself differently. I felt safe and comfortable within our island community. I realized that I looked different from people in books and television and I wanted to be like them but never felt treated like a "minority." Like the children in this study, my experiences involved going to the beach, taking part in potlucks after sports events, attending family parties, and such. I realized that there were different ethnic groups around me like our close Chinese family friend who is also the family dentist, my best friend who is Hawaiian-Caucasian-Japanese, our Caucasian neighbors, the Portuguese lady who worked with my grandma and made great bread for us during the holidays, our Filipino governor, Anglo and African-American basketball players from the University who often visited our home, and of course the children of many different racial origins who were my friends in school. However, at that elementary
school age, I do not recall giving much thought to the differences between racial groups and interacted with those around me seemingly blind to racial and ethnic differences. I now know that my world was filled with stereotypical and inaccurate conceptions about other racial groups. I accepted the labeling of race and the stereotypical comments that went with them. It was common at the time (and still appears to be common) to label a person by race. Those around me, even as children knew exactly what their racial or ethnic origin was and upon talking about or with someone new we thought of them or identified them by their racial origin. Although not necessarily intended in a negative manner, racial jokes and comments were commonplace and some fears about stereotypical images in folk knowledge seemed to override factual information. I learned to accept these images as "just the way it is."

I thought culture was synonymous with race. As a youngster I believed that because I was of Japanese ancestry, then Japan was my culture too. But I realized it was not the same as the Japanese culture in Japan. I was Japanese but not like a person from the "authentic" Japanese culture; neither did I identify with the term "Japanese-American" which seemed to be more in line with
those people of Japanese ancestry living on the mainland United States. I knew I was a Japanese person from Hawai'i and therefore I identified more with the Japanese and other ethnic groups living in Hawai'i than with another person of Japanese ancestry from Japan or the mainland United States.

As a child I remember feeling like television shows and books were “out there” and always about someone else’s life. I was not truly that character and sometimes felt that I stood as the outsider looking into someone else’s life. I did feel for and could empathize with the character but the character could never really and truly be me because that wasn’t what my life was like. I did not look like the characters, I did not speak like the characters, and I did not live lives like those characters. Even if I understood the human emotions and universal feelings of the characters, they still felt distant; they were not really me or represent what my life was like. I read books by Beverly Cleary, E. B. White, Roald Dahl, Judy Blume, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and Maude Heart Lovelace. While I was able to “travel to other worlds” through reading and relate to those issues common to the human experience, I do not remember having literature available which was specifically relevant to my culture.
Back then, there weren't many stories written about and for children of Hawai'i. The substitute was other Asian-American literature, and even that was sparse. I loved those books because the characters looked like me and some of the cultural traditions were ones I knew. *Dance Dance Amy Chan* (Hawkinson, 1964) was a book I read time and time again. In elementary school I was fascinated with *A Pair of Red Clogs* (Matsuno, 1960) which I recall thinking were like the ones my grandmother had in her basement.

My parents understood that I was very naive growing up in our sheltered world protected from the pain of discrimination or prejudice. They insisted that we travel to see different parts of the United States and that I attend college on the mainland to be exposed to a world beyond my own.

College in Oregon took me outside my safe world. Although television and books had provided images of other places, they did not replace the growth I experienced by living somewhere new. I was exposed to people and lifestyles different from what I had known. As a Japanese-American from Hawai'i, it was the first time I was a minority and experienced differential treatment as I
traveled to new places. These realities opened my eyes and began to alter my naïve view of the world.

My college experience also created an opportunity to reflect upon life "back home" and step outside my culture in Hawai‘i. This opportunity away from Hawai‘i seemed to create a conscious awareness of the many things not seen while living as a member in the culture. It generated a deep awareness of place that I had taken for granted all my life. Like many students who travel to the mainland for college, I joined the Hawaii Club. Somehow, when living on the mainland, coming into contact with another from Hawai‘i created an instant bond between strangers. Being from the same island community seemed to give us a sense of belonging and a place with which to identify. We often gathered to share the food and music of the islands, talk about places that were familiar, and share the warmth of aloha or the spirit of love and kindness known to people in the islands. Much of our time was spent together "talking story" about things that we missed and longed to return to.

College gave me the opportunity to step outside my life as an insider to Hawai‘i’s culture and look at it with a new perspective. After school in Oregon, I moved to Arizona where I actively studied language and culture in a
graduate program. There I gained new knowledge and consciously examined my beliefs and culture more deeply.

When I returned to Hawai'i from Arizona for brief breaks, I observed with new eyes. What had previously gone unnoticed were now unique aspects of the culture in Hawai'i. I noticed and embraced what I considered the finer aspects of the culture like the warmth and sharing between different people. Yet, I noted many stereotypical statements and racial tensions around me that I was unaware of before. My naive perception of “living in harmony” as a melting pot was shattered. I no longer saw that we “treated everyone equally.” Even if the images of a multicultural paradise were gone, the promise of living in an ethnically and racially tolerant world was still conceivable.

After studying language and culture in graduate school in Arizona, I returned to my hometown to teach. As a first grade and third grade teacher, I observed that the children in my classes had the same innocence I once had. But again, immersed in the situation and within the culture, my vision and ability to see as an outsider were blurred. I found it difficult to look within myself and also step
outside of the culture. Once again, I was immersed in the culture and living as a member of the culture.

More Professional Influences

Many of my third grade students appeared to remain distant from their readings. Stories seemed “out there” and beyond the experiences of the readers I lived with in the classroom. Much like the reader I had been at their age, they did not seem to connect with the text and the “capacity to savor all the words can signify of rhythm, sound, and image . . .” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 48) seemed to be missing. In other words I realized that I needed to provide an environment so that students would bring out “the sensuous quality of experience” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 48). I had no doubt that many of them could comprehend the story and connect with the character’s feelings but I did not observe a "coming alive" or "living through" of the experiences of the characters. Although the characters in the books experienced similar universal human problems, they were still set in places far removed from many of the children’s experiences. I began to wonder how children could examine their quality of experience using books from their cultural experience. The Hawai‘i books I did use
seemed to generate an increased interest in my students and
I was intrigued by their delight with these texts.

**Professional Influences become Personal**

I continued teaching for five years in the elementary
school when I felt it was time for me to renew my
perspective and again take that step outside of my culture.
I needed to once again see and appreciate aspects of my
culture which could not be accomplished while immersed in
it.

I returned to study language, reading, and culture at
the University of Arizona. I was empowered with the
knowledge I gained and the people who helped bring me
there.

I believe that the courses I took, the people I talked
with in Arizona, and the historical, political,
professional, and personal influences I experienced brought
me to this research study. Although exciting and
challenging, this experience has not been a smooth journey
for me. I was compelled to critically examine my cultural
beliefs and values. I found that in order to complete this
research study I had to physically and mentally step in and
out of my culture. Having to step in and out of culture
gave me two lenses through which I conducted this
investigation: living as an insider and looking at my culture as an outsider. These dual roles were impossible to separate and I found myself struggling at times. There were instances when I wanted to engage exclusively as participant in the culture and adhere to the rules and subtleties as any insider would. At other times, I had to mentally distance myself and step outside my cultural world to try and understand the situation from a new or alternate perspective. I have found both roles beneficial, my status as an insider privileged me to insider information that would be difficult for an outsider to access and stepping out of the context helped me to see things I was unable to identify while immersed as a participant in the culture.

As I read other writers who have attempted to define local culture in Hawai‘i I learned how to express and think about my culture in new and different ways. Along with the children in this research study, I believe this investigation helped me discover a deeper sense of place and construct new understandings of the culture in which we live.

Presently, I find myself falling in and out of my roles. I look at different issues dealing with our language and culture with renewed eyes. With each of these
journeys in and out of my culture I feel that I have been transformed and these transformations have brought me to this study. I believe it represents the evolution of my thinking about my culture.

Significance of Study

Currently in the United States educators are required to meet state standards, mandated restrictive curriculum, and political agendas are imposed on educational curriculum and instruction (Taylor, 1999). These initiatives are aimed at bettering our schools, however they sometimes overlook or neglect the diversity of many cultures present in schools. In this study I explore the content of responses of children to culturally relevant literature and how their understandings evolve over time. I hope that this study will contribute to increased awareness of the need to address the diversity of children in our nations schools. Due to the nature of the study, I realize that I looked at one particular genre in one particular classroom, thus I cannot presume to generalize beyond that particular classroom. However, I hope implications for this study will be extended to the field of education as a whole and in particular to educators and the people of Hawai‘i.
In the state of Hawai'i I hope this study has an impact upon educators and the general public by contributing to the awareness of the significance of Hawai'i's children reading and responding to fictional books about their culture. For the local literature genre, I hope this study supports and promotes the progress and development of local literature and in turn encourages Hawai'i writers to continue sharing and publishing their work. For classroom teachers, resource teachers and curriculum specialists in Hawai'i I believe that the instructional practices in this study informs the Response and Diversity strands currently written in Hawai'i's State Language Arts Standards (Department of Education, 1999). This study serves as an example for other classroom teachers to draw from and act as a resource for teachers to share its implications with others.

For the state of Hawai'i and beyond, I hope to contribute to the field of multicultural education in demonstrating the need for books from underrepresented cultures. I plan for implications of this study to speak directly to classroom teachers, resource teachers, curriculum specialists and policy makers to include books in the curriculum that represent the culture of children
who have typically been underrepresented in the past. Curriculum specialists and policy makers should consider allowing the decisions of specific literature curriculum open to those who directly work with and know their students rather than mandating restrictive curriculum that does not allow for the differing needs of students.

Overview of the Study

This dissertation is organized in the following fashion: There are seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and sets the purpose for the study. Chapter Two is a review of the literature. The review of literature is organized into three areas -- Hawai‘i’s historical and cultural context, multicultural literature, and literature discussions as placed within Reader Response Theories. Chapter Three explains the methods of data collection and analysis of the data. Chapter Four presents a history of the curriculum that supported the study. Chapters Five and Six discuss the analysis of the data and address the questions of this research. Chapter Five highlights the major categories generated in the case study group’s discussions. Chapter Six presents profiles of each of the case study members and how each member came to understand
and responded to the literature over time. Chapter Seven brings together the strands of the study and draws implications for further research and discusses the educational merit of the study.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study focuses on the responses and perceptions of fifth grade readers to culturally relevant literature. The review of the literature presents existing research related to this study and situates the focus of my research within historical and theoretical frameworks. Through reading the work of others I learned about the cultural history of Hawai‘i, complexities surrounding multicultural literature, and the transactional nature of the reading process. As Hawai‘i born and raised and the fourth generation immigrant of Japanese ancestry, readings on the history of Hawai‘i created a new awareness of existing social and cultural relationships around me. Readings about multicultural literature, representation and authenticity in literature, critical responses to literature, and reader response theories along with the readings on Hawai‘i raised new issues and questions that prompted me to examine my role as a teacher and a learner.

The task of defining culturally relevant literature in this study proved to be complex. As the study progressed it became increasingly important to define the specific meanings of culturally relevant literature as applied to
this study. In order to understand the cultural perspectives of children in Hawai'i I begin by reviewing the pertinent historical and cultural understandings relevant to this study. The historical understandings build a framework for the reader to be aware of the cultural context. The role of language development and the emergence of local culture and local literature are briefly discussed to aid in defining the use of culturally relevant literature for the students in this study and provide additional background knowledge to understand the cultural influences present in Hawai'i. The study is then placed within the larger theoretical framework of multicultural literature and due to the large population of Asians in Hawai'i focuses specifically on Asian American literature. Issues of accuracy and authenticity, and challenges faced by educators in selection of multicultural literature are discussed. Finally, reader response theory and the transactional nature of reading serve as the theoretical framework for examining students' responses to literature.

Historical and Cultural Context of Hawai'i

Defining literature that is specific and "culturally relevant" to the reader poses some challenging issues. I
believe it is important to be aware of Hawai'i's historical heritage to understand the diverse population of people present in Hawai'i.

Hawai'i possesses a unique island culture. It is the fiftieth state of the United States and is the only region in the U.S. "where all racial groups are minorities and where the majority of the population has roots in the Pacific Islands" (Nordyke, 1989, p. 1).

According to legend, the first Polynesians sailed to Hawai'i from the Tahitian Islands around 750 A.D. They emigrated to the Hawaiian Island chain, which numbers over 200 islands total, but is comprised of eight major islands (Kaua'i, Ni'ihau, Moloka'i, Lana'i, Maui, Kaho'olawe, O'ahu, and the island of Hawai'i, also known as the Big Island).

The native Hawaiians (also referred to as Hawaiians), descendants of Polynesians, developed a unique culture and language and fully functioning systems of economics, agriculture, aquaculture, religion, and education (Kawakami, 1999) which sufficiently served a population of at least 300,000 by the mid-1700's (Stannard, 1989).

Upon the arrival of Captain James Cook in 1778, Hawai'i was acknowledged by and opened to the Western World
and in the 1820s the first missionaries came to the Hawaiian Islands to share their religion.

Utilizing its convenient location in the Pacific and year-round warm tropical temperatures, Hawai‘i first developed a trade industry, then built its agricultural base with major industries including pineapple and sugar cane. The white businessmen who came to the islands were called "haole," originally the Hawaiian word for stranger (Bickerton, 1998) or without breath, because they could not speak the Hawaiian language (Haas, 1998). Today, haole is typically used to refer to one of Caucasian ancestry.

Waves of immigrants from China came to work on the pineapple and sugar plantations during the early and mid-1800s, followed by the Japanese right before the turn of the century, the Koreans in 1903 and Filipinos in 1906 (McDermott, 1980). Many of the immigrants established new lives and thus, became permanent residents of Hawai‘i.

Evolution of a Diverse Society

The different ethnic groups that immigrated brought with them their unique culturalheritages and languages and joined the existing Hawaiian and Caucasian culture, thus creating an even more diverse population. Historically Hawai‘i has been depicted and generally referred to as the
“Aloha State” where people of different ethnicity live in relative harmony. Since the early 1900's Hawai'i has often been characterized as the “melting pot of the Pacific.” Scholars have studied Hawai'i as a model for racial relations, “indeed most scholarship - whether 'main'-land haole, Asian American or Local - posits that race relations in Hawai'i represents the 'answer'” (Chang, 1996, p. 1).

In the early part of the twentieth century a group of prominent sociologists came to Hawai'i to conduct research on race relations at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. They viewed Hawai'i as ideal to study race relations because they saw it as a place where different ethnic groups coexisted peacefully. Here in this “racial laboratory” the sociologists studied "racial unorthodoxy" and egalitarian cultural blending. However, because they “... offered a vision of benign empire, in which American 'practicality' always won out over Native insurgency” (Chang, 1996, p. 6), the study left America's imposing position as a colonizing power largely unquestioned and unproblematic.

This view of the islands “as the magnificent bridge between oriental 'East' and modern 'West' . . .” (Chang, 1996, p. 7) was further substantiated late in the 1950s as
Hawai'i approached statehood and other mainland writers including Michener (1959) appealed to the Local and American imagination (Chang, 1996). Images of Hawai'i as an exotic paradise was magnified and maintained by the tourist industry and is predominant worldwide today. Scholars presently continue to challenge these ideas and write about the realities of Hawai'i's ethnic and racial problems (Okamura, 1982; 1990; 1998; Morales, 1998) and through literature [write against American representations] question the issues behind the implications of America's role in Hawai'i as a colonizing power (Sumida, 1991).

Although writers and scholars write about Hawai'i's challenges and raise issues that identify racial and ethnic injustices in hopes of creating a more equitable society, Hawai'i is still recognized for its strengths as a multicultural society. Michael Haas (1998) writes:

. . . [E]thnic groups in the Aloha State take pride in their cultural heritage, speak the language of their ancestors, have developed a unique "local culture," and yet coexist with those who practice a "mainland culture" in the Islands. That Hawaii is a case of successful multiculturalism is also evidenced by high rates of cross-ethnic intermarriage, a lack of out-group scapegoating, and absence of recent violence along ethnic lines, and a lack of cultural malaise amid diversity. (p. 5)
Hawai'i faces many racial and ethnic challenges and the image of Hawai'i as an exotic paradise still prevails. However, I believe by considering Hawai'i’s racial and ethnic problems along with the pride and development of local culture others can look at Hawai'i as a place where many people of different ethnic groups coexist together and demonstrate successful multiculturalism.

Language Change

The transformation of language played an integral role in the growth of culture in Hawai'i. When Westerners first arrived, the Hawaiians had their own spoken language. It was originally believed and reinforced by studies done until the 1990s (Reineke, 1969) that after Western contact the Hawaiians began to speak a form of pidginized English. However, recent research (Roberts 1995a; 1995b; 1997; cited in Bickerton, 1998) indicates that from the 1780s a form of pidginized Hawaiian was used between the Hawaiians and the Caucasians (Bickerton, 1998).

As the immigrants arrived, each spoke their own native language. Life on the plantations made it necessary for them to communicate with the native Hawaiians and the plantation owners. They used a pidginized form of the Hawaiian language but as more immigrants began to arrive,
Hawaiians became a minority and by the mid-1880's a macaronic pidgin (structureless jumble of words drawn from several languages) resulted (Bickerton, 1998). According to Day (1983), "If there is neither time or resources to learn the language of the host culture, a pidgin develops, which serves as a contact language, and is not usually the native language of any of its speakers" (p. 12). Due to the influences of the English-speaking bosses on the plantations, English began to play an increasingly larger role. The Hawaiian language was banned in schools and the native Hawaiians concealed their use of the Hawaiian language. English became the official language after the fall of the Hawaiian monarchy.

The children of the native Hawaiians and immigrant workers then transformed this "undeveloped" or macronic pidgin into a creole language commonly known as pidgin by people in Hawai‘i or Hawai‘i Creole English (HCE) (Bickerton, 1998). The school system at that time played a critical role in the creation and transmission of this pidgin dialect (Reineke, 1969). Sato (1985) reports that in the mid-1930s HCE usage was at its peak. By then HCE or pidgin had created a bond between people from Hawai‘i,
regardless of skin color, cultural heritage, or other factors (Bickerton, 1998).

Although pidgin has successfully created a bond between people and provides a unique way of speaking in the islands, since the very creation of the language there have been efforts to stamp out and eliminate pidgin in Hawai'i through the public school system. Many Hawai'i born children and adults still communicate in [some form of] pidgin, however it is often perceived as designating a "low class" status and uneducated speech. A comprehensive review of research on pidgin was conducted by the Department of Education to decide whether or not to adopt a policy on the use of pidgin in public schools (Hawaii DOE, 1988). The research question that drove the review was: "What does research tell us about relationships between students' use of 'pidgin English,' standard English, and school achievement in Hawaii?" (Hawaii DOE, 1988, p. 4). The review of research could not find conclusive evidence to support abolishing pidgin in schools and instead suggested that "... limiting or prohibiting use of HCE is not indicated. Rather, the child's use of HCE could be used to bridge the gap between home and school" (Hawaii DOE, 1988, p. 30). Despite conducting this comprehensive
review of research the findings were not highly publicized. Negative attitudes toward the language still remain in the general population and continue to plague the public school system.

The news media serves to perpetuate this negative attitude towards the language and school leaders continue to place the blame for low performance on pidgin. In September 1987, eight articles concerning pidgin in the public schools were printed in the front pages of Hawai‘i’s two major daily newspapers. The story, “Panel wants pidgin kept out of schools” (Reyes, September 2, 1987) reported that a Board of Education Curriculum Committee meeting “. . . approved guidelines to ensure pidgin is kept out of the classroom and standard English is used to teach students in Hawai‘i’s public schools” (p. A-1). Recently when national test scores were printed in the newspaper, the low percentage of island students performing at proficiency levels on national writing tests and standardized exams led school leaders to “focus on pidgin as the culprit” (Hawaii Tribune-Herald, p. 1, November 28, 1999). The state’s local governor, who admits to using pidgin himself, is quoted in the newspaper media as saying, “Why do we keep fooling ourselves that somehow pidgin will be good for the
kids in the schools?" (Dunford, November 28, 1999). In the days that followed these statements, the press was filled with editorial comments both arguing in favor of and against the value of speaking pidgin.

This language controversy does not warrant a simple answer for it is appreciated as "... a sign of class, skin color, of oppression, and ultimately of a hybrid solidarity" (Bickerton, 1998, p. 13), yet it is also looked upon unfavorably at the same time. Bickerton (1998) states, "... HCE is at one and the same time (and often by the same people!) despised as some kind of uneducated 'broken talk' and admired as a bonding mechanism among the locally born as well as a mark of working-class toughness and anti-haole solidarity" (p. 63). Therefore, while HCE remains controversial, Bickerton (1998) predicts HCE will persist as long as those born and raised in Hawai'i identify with the local culture and use it to distinguish themselves from the mainland population.

Language is one aspect in defining local culture, however it is merely one of the many complex criteria to define and describe the concept. In this study the use of pidgin in the literature played a role in the selection of the literature and was a significant part of the literature
discussions. The short story “J’Like Ten Thousand” was written in the pidgin dialect and in the novel studies pidgin was used to characterize certain individuals in the story. In the discussions I did not want to focus upon perpetuating the negative attitude towards the use of pidgin that permeates the schools, rather I wanted to encourage children to value the language of their culture.

Defining Local

Over the past thirty years sociologists, writers, and other scholars have attempted to define the term “local,” describe the significance of the concept in Hawai‘i, and determine who “locals” are (Okamura, 1980; Imada, 1993; Chang, 1996; Lum 1986; Yamamoto, 1979; Sumida, 1991). The complexity that is implied by this term and the difficulty in defining it due to the continuous evolution of its meanings leads Imada (1993) to conclude, “its history suggests that the only thing constant about ‘local’ is that it is never pau, or finished” (p. 4).

Despite the questions as to the history and meaning of local, it is frequently used in everyday speech and its meanings are commonly understood by people of Hawai‘i. Certain behaviors are typically believed to be characteristic of local people. Teter’s (1998) survey of
his high school students found that local has to do with attitudes, experiences, and values. These include a love of the land, appreciation for different types of food, respect for diversity, and having a particular voice — pidgin. A local person always takes off his/her shoes when entering into someone’s house or eats local food like chicken long rice, sashimi, lumpia, kimchee, and Spam (Imada, 1993) or understands the meaning of "Never Turn Your Back To the Ocean" after being thrown around in the surf for the first time (Lum, 1986).

Okamura (1980) hypothesizes that perhaps part of the reason for the search to find a term to identify the people of Hawai'i is that there is no commonly used corporate designation for the wide range of ethnic groups in Hawai'i and the term "Hawaiian" is used for people of that specific ethnic group. Therefore, it is difficult to designate a term that can include the wide range of ethnic groups with different status, beliefs, activities, and experiences in Hawai'i and at the same time represents the shared attitudes, experiences, and values of the people of Hawai'i (Okamura, 1980).

Although the term "local" does not represent all people in Hawai'i, it is frequently used to refer to people
born and raised in Hawai'i (Okamura, 1980) and in its broadest use means a resident of Hawaii (Imada, 1993).

However, implications of this term extend beyond the idea of being born and raised or resident of Hawai'i. Okamura (1980) writes:

Local has become a symbol of the common identity of people who appreciate the quality and style of life in the islands and who therefore attempt to maintain control over the future of Hawaii and its communities. This shared lifestyle and its associated behaviors, values, and norms is popularly referred to as "local culture." (p. 122)

**Emergence of Local Culture: A Culture of Resistance**

The historical accommodation processes that resulted in local culture started in the early nineteenth century (Okamura, 1980). When the missionaries arrived in 1820, there were many changes that were introduced into the Hawaiian social system; these changes ultimately resulted in the emergence of a local culture (Okamura, 1980). These differences included changes to the Hawaiian religion, education, language and land tenure system. In 1893 Americans succeeded in overthrowing the Hawaiian monarchy. As a result major social processes in government, economy, law, education and language changed from primarily Hawaiian influences to American ones. Thus, the major influences upon culture in Hawai'i came from America and other values
on the lower levels of social organization for local culture came from the native Hawaiian values (Okamura, 1980).

When the immigrant laborers began arriving in the mid 1800s through the 1990s, they found a native Hawaiian culture that respected and demonstrated love for the land and valued interpersonal relationships (Lum, 1998). "Their [immigrants] own values of family loyalty, obligation, and reciprocity coincided with those of the native Hawaiians: an orientation that valued harmony between people, minimized personal gain or achievement, and shared natural resources" (Lum, 1998, p. 12). The mutual values between "... a convergence of working-class cultures—including Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Puerto Rican, and Spanish -- oppositional to haole rule" (Chang, 1980, p. 13) led to the development of a local culture. According to Okamura (1980):

[v]iewed historically, the emergence of local culture and society represents an accommodation of ethnic groups to one another in the context of a social system primarily distinguished by the wide cleavage between the Haole planter and merchant oligarchy on one hand, and the subordinate Hawaiians and immigrant plantation groups on the other. (p. 122)
Lind (1980 as cited in Imada, 1993) wrote that one of the first formal uses for the term "local" was the Massie trial of 1931. It was used in the newspaper to describe the Hawai'i born group of boys of Hawaiian, Japanese, and Chinese ethnicity who were accused of raping a Caucasian military officer's wife. When thousands of military service people came to Hawai'i, local was used to distinguish between the Caucasian newcomers from the mainland and people from Hawai'i. Therefore, local became a term that distinguished between outside groups and those born in the islands.

The emergence of local culture and identity was based on the subordinate status of the immigrant groups and the Hawaiians to the economically and dominant Caucasian population (Okamura, 1980). Due to the historical impact of the Caucasians they have not been traditionally identified as local even if they have been in Hawai'i longer than other immigrant groups and have influenced the institutional structures in Hawai'i.

Although Caucasians have not been historically recognized as local, due to the changing nature of the term there are several factors to be considered. Sumida (1991) says that "it is possible for a newcomer to become a local
when he or she considers him or herself a participating member of Hawai'i's society" (p. xvii). Some individual Caucasians are considered by local people to be local due to their personal orientation towards the behaviors, values, and beliefs considered a part of local culture (Teter, 1998). Special designations of the word Haole suggest different meanings dependent upon degree of "localness" or how much one fits into local culture. The term "local Haole" is sometimes used to distinguish between Caucasians who were born in Hawai'i and those who are "mainland Haoles" or recent arrivals from the continental United States. The term "Kama'āina Haole" is used to refer to Caucasians whose ancestors can be traced back to those who first settled in Hawai'i during the monarchy and married Hawaiian noblewomen (Okamura, 1980) or kama'āina which means native born, one born in a place (Pukui & Elbert, 1971).

The concept of local may have developed as a resistance to white dominance and "... is deeply bound to collective memory, racial and cultural difference, and historical struggle" (Okamura, 1980, p. 3). Yet at the same time it is believed that:
the concept of local transcends ethnic diversity to incorporate groups and individuals of differing ethnicity into a greater social and cultural complex in which commonalities are emphasized and differences are disregarded. As such, the term local does not refer to or imply any one specific ethnic group, but rather the common experiences, values, activities, and beliefs among groups. (Okamura, 1980, p. 131)

"Local" has been historically traced as a term that identifies inequities that existed in the plantation system and at the same time has served to bring together a sense of community in the islands. Despite its use to create a sense of pride in the islands, it is apparent that there is some negative exclusionary dimension to the concept of local (Imada, 1993; Morales, 1998; Okamura, 1980). Okamura warns (1980) that because of the inclusionary and exclusionary implications associated with local and local culture there is the danger of polarizing the Hawai'i community between in and out-groups which could heighten ethnic tensions. On the other hand he also sees that because "local represents a coalescence of ethnic groups, that it can transcend ethnic differences" therefore, it is possible for the concept of local to come to represent all of the people of Hawai'i (Okamura, 1980, p. 132).

When I began this study I believed that the concept of local simply meant born and raised in Hawai'i and
represented the different ethnic groups present in Hawai'i. As I read more literature I began to learn more about and to interrogate the danger of the inclusionary and exclusionary implications behind local and local culture. I came to realize that although local can be a unifying concept, it can work to separate and exclude certain people. In this study the concept of local is particularly noteworthy because the children define their perception and understanding of local. I think that greater understanding of the concept of local and awareness of the inclusionary and exclusionary implications can lead to local representing all the people of Hawai'i.

**History of Local Literature**

The local literary movement of the 1960s and 1970s was developed as a part of the Hawaiian Renaissance. This movement "produced much local writing and a surge of interest in traditional and modern Hawaiian arts, song, and dance" (Imada, 1993, p. 5). At the heart of the local literary movement, is the belief that the people of Hawai'i need opportunities to tell their own stories and see images of themselves in books. Local writer Lois Ann Yamanaka (1998) states that in her childhood she did not have the experience of seeing herself in literature and was denied
opportunities to read her language or speak about it because it was non-existent in the literature. Up to the 1970s and 1980s the stories of Hawai'i told by the people of Hawai'i had not been recognized or celebrated, but were largely shared by the outside writers such as Michener (Sumida, 1991). Burgeoning local writers began to voice concerns as to the lack of recognition for writers born and bred in the islands. The climate was ripe for the establishment of a literary genre written by and for the people of Hawai'i.

In 1978, a pivotal moment in Hawai'i's literary history occurred. Marie Hara, Arnold Hiura, and Stephen Sumida, cofounders of Talk Story, Inc., sponsored the Talk Story, Our Voices in Literature and Song: Hawai'i's Ethnic American Writers' Conference which brought together many local writers for the first time to promote and celebrate literary writing by and for the people of Hawai'i.

Identification of the term "local" was used to describe the literature highlighted at the conference. Definitions of local in 1978 at the first Talk Story Conference, included "everyone who wants to be included" (Chock, cited in Imada, p. 13). However, based on its history, "local also means, 'non-haole'" so " . . . 'local'
had to posit itself against haole writers from the mainland or tourist writing, ‘local’ had to exclude to some extent” (Imada, 1993, p. 13). Imada (1993) states that the Talk Story Conference of 1978 provoked more literature activity and discussion and since “neither the writers nor critics had one definition of local writing, leading me to believe that local is a process, changing according to each particular situation” (p. 13). Thus, the challenge of defining what can be included or excluded under local literature continues today.

There were several positive results of this conference. One of these results was the publication of Talk Story: Big Island Anthology (1979), a collection of fiction and poetry by local writers. Also born from this conference were several independent journals that published local literature in the islands. The most successful presses to come out of these journals was Bamboo Ridge which has become one of the most recognized publisher of local literature. Editors Darrell Lum and Eric Chock continue to run the press and provide the means through which local individuals can empower themselves through publication of writing.
In 1986 Bamboo Ridge published the now widely used collection of local writing, *The Best of Bamboo Ridge*. The final piece of the collection written by Stephen Sumida (1986) offers some insight as to why local literature may have previously been overshadowed and "denied to exist" (p. 302). Sumida's widely cited article suggests that outside Caucasian writers such as James A. Michener who released *Hawaii* in 1959 and A. Grove Day and Carl Stroven, authors of *The Hawaiian Reader* (1959), may have played an influential role in the attitude towards local writers and local literature. Sumida (1986) writes that these two books "were ostensibly summations of nearly two centuries of written literature and many more than that of the native Hawaiian oral tradition. And yet they made it seem somehow that nothing of real literary consequence was ever created in Hawaii by Hawaii's people" (Sumida, p. 302). Even though the *Hawaiian Reader* included works written by Hawaiians, in the forward Michener excludes any acknowledgement of writing by immigrants. "Having arrived in the islands as laboring peasants, these Orientals did not produce a literature of their own . . ." (p. 304; cited in Sumida, 1981). This inspired Arnold Hiura and Sumida to challenge Michener's assertion and in 1979 they published
Asian American Literature of Hawaii: An Annotated Bibliography highlighting literature from immigrants arrival in Hawaii through the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Sumida, 1996).

The historical exclusion and struggle of local writers continues to inspire local literature in Hawaii. The growing availability of local literature and publications about Hawaii written for and about Hawaii’s people is evidenced by the increasing number of publications in bookstores and increased popularity of local writers like Lois Ann Yamanaka to both local and mainland audiences. However, the rise of local literature has not gone without criticism. Lorna Hershinow’s (1994) letter to the readers of the collection of published articles and poems from the Hawaii Literature Conference invites readers to “Bring your own book, your bottle, your balls. We have a deal to celebrate” (Introduction). Her statement speaks to the struggles Hawaii’s literary community has faced, to the strides they have made, to the emancipation of previously silenced writers, to the examination of the writing, and to the response to critics that have arisen as local literature continues to flourish and grow.
As suggested in Hershinow’s invitation, local literature has gained critics along with its successes across the state and across the mainland. Bamboo Ridge Press has been criticized for including primarily Asian American literature and under representing other marginalized groups such as native Hawaiians and Filipinos (Morales, 1998). Other Hawai‘i writers, like Lois Ann Yamanaka, have been controversial in their representation of different ethnic groups in Hawai‘i. When the Filipino community staunchly opposed Yamanaka’s representation of the older Filipino men in her fictional piece entitled Blu’s Hanging (1997), the Association of Asian American Studies rescinded its 1997 award from her. Her work has brought out heated and highly publicized controversy about stereotypical depictions of different ethnic groups in Hawai‘i (Trinidad, 1998; Motooka, 1998; Muramoto, 1999).

Despite criticism and challenges facing the writers of local literature there is increased support and public popularity to encourage the people of Hawai‘i to write and share their stories. Eventually writers hope that local literature will be taught in schools in Hawai‘i, “Because it will lead to more pride among Hawaii’s people, and an
awareness of Hawaii's directions, past and present" (Chock, 1986, p. 6).

Even though local literature has it's criticisms, I believe that it is important for local literature to continue to grow and flourish. I think that this genre can contribute to the cohesion and recognition of the different ethnic groups that reside in Hawai'i as a part of local culture. I see it as critical because local literature allows children to see images of themselves and the life that they experience growing up in Hawai'i.

Defining Local Literature

Sumida's (1986) definition for local literature includes the use of local settings, situations, and the pidgin language. I used this definition as the basis for selecting books for this study. However, defining local literature is not as straightforward as it seems. Much like the highly contested term "local," its meanings implicate different interpretations for different people. Imada (1993) writes, "What can be in/excluded under the title of local continues to invite discussion to this date" (p. 8). For example Lum's (1986) definition in "Local Literature and Lunch" hints at the sense of community - shared experiences, history, sensitivity to environment,
sense of personal lineage, and language suggests that "... one must be local, must belong, and in order to produce local literature" (Imada, 1993, p. 15) raising the issue of authenticity. Imada (1993) points out that, "it is important to remember that for the 'authentic' definition to work, someone must decide what and who is authentic enough, and this judge may decide that local culture is not inflected by class, ethnic, or gender complications" (p. 16). She warns that readers must "... remain careful of local and local literature's usage and be willing to interrogate these terms" (p. 16), for the term "local" inherently leads to class, ethnic, and gender complications. "There is no one true local person, there cannot be one hegemonic local literature" (p. 17).

Prior to embarking on this inquiry I did not realize that the term "local" had such a history and wide reaching implications in its use. I had not been familiar with the complexities behind local literature and had assumed that culturally relevant literature for children in Hawai‘i would undeniably be included under the category "local literature." Since completing an in-depth and critical look at local literature and what culturally relevant literature might mean for children in Hawai‘i I have come
to a deeper understanding of the history and the complexities behind interrogating such terms. At this point I believe that the use of culturally relevant literature and local literature are parallel in this study. The definition of culturally relevant literature used in this study includes literature by and for people of Hawai'i that reflects a commitment to a shared sense of place, shared history in the islands, and use of pidgin language.

I would like to mention there is an increase in books written in the Hawaiian language, reflecting native Hawaiian culture, oral traditions, and protocols. Although I deeply respect and honor the increase in interest in native Hawaiian literature it is not the focus of this study.

My intentions in this study were to select books to reflect issues and life experienced by local children of different ethnicity in the case study group; in effect, books that mirror the local cultural experience. The primary selection criteria for culturally relevant literature in this study was the aspect of place -- books selected for the literature discussions were set in Hawai'i. Age and sex of the main character were taken into consideration. Issues with regard to multiethnic
illustrations and use of pidgin (Wellington, 1999) were considered, but they were not the primary tool for evaluating and selecting the books.

In a miscue study (K. Goodman and Y. Goodman, 1978) readers used culturally relevant materials with second language Samoans and Hawaiian pidgin speakers in Hawai‘i. Each subject in the study read a standard story and a story that represented the cultural background of the eight different populations in the study. Criteria for selection of culturally relevant stories in this study included social-cultural factors, setting, time, age/sex of main character, language, and theme. In this study, like the K. Goodman and Y. Goodman study (1978), I considered social/cultural factors, setting, time, and age/sex of the main character. However, in this study I designated the setting to drive the selection. The findings in the K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1978) study revealed complex results depending on the nature of the text and grade level of the students in the study. The researchers found that "the degree of relevance of the literature to the reader aids considerable in its predictability. However, relevance to readers is a complex set of relationships" (Y. Goodman, 1982, p. 302).
I realize that my definition of culturally relevant literature in this study has shortcomings. I did not highlight many books of native Hawaiian culture and language (Kawaharada, 1994; Morales, 1998). Also, I did not fully interrogate the implications behind the “authenticity” of the authors. For the short story and two novel studies—Blue Skin of the Sea and Dance for the Land, I did consider the author’s knowledge and experience with local culture in selecting the texts, but the “authenticity” of the author was not the deciding factor behind the final selection.

The readings on the historical and cultural context of Hawai‘i, language development, and emergence of local culture and local literature provided me with a great deal of background information for this study. I was pleased to find so much information and writing available to help me to interrogate and better understand the terms I used. The literature on Hawai‘i helped me to understand the context in which local and local literature developed and I believe that through the readings I could define culturally relevant literature for the purposes of this study.
Multicultural Children's Literature

Literature is viewed as an enculturating agent (Rosenblatt, 1995) and plays a critical role in shaping the perceptions of children. Literature has been offered as a vehicle through which adults promote understandings, values, attitudes, mores, and philosophies of life (Norton, 1991; Sims Bishop, 1994). Through literature students can engage in thoughtful discussions (Rosenblatt, 1995) which have the potential for eliciting multiple perspectives and multiple voices in pursuit of understanding (Sims Bishop, 1997). Rogers & Soter (1997) share that it is the power of literature as artistic and cultural text that persuades students to look deeply at the aesthetic and cultural meanings and from there students can begin to look outward to their social meanings. Sims Bishop (1997) writes:

Literature educates not only the head, but the heart as well. It promotes empathy and invites readers to adopt new perspectives. It offers opportunities for children to learn to recognize our similarities, value our differences, and respect our common humanity. In an important sense, then, children need literature that serves as a window onto lives and experiences different from their own, and literature that serves as a mirror reflecting themselves and their cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors. (p. xiv)

While the power of literature as an enculturating agent seems to be a shared belief among educators,
discussions over the meaning of multicultural literature has surfaced and "no consensus has been achieved" (Cai, 1998, p. 311). This debate "... is not just bickering over terminology in the ivory tower of academia, but rather is concerned with fundamental sociopolitical issues" (p. 311).

Cai and Bishop (1994) discuss the challenge of defining multicultural literature. Cai (1998) writes, "At present, defining multicultural literature is still a matter of determining the parameters of the prefix 'multi'" (p. 312). Definitions range from "books about people of color" at one end and "all literature is multicultural" (Fishman, 1995, p. 79 cited in Cai, 1998) at the other end of the spectrum.

Cai (1998) identifies three views about the definition of multicultural literature. In the first view, multiple + cultures = multiculturalism, means that multicultural literature should include all cultures without distinguishing between the dominant and dominated. The second view concentrates on racial and ethnic issues and the third view holds that "all literature is multicultural" (p. 313).
Cai (1998) argues that the first view, multiple cultures = multiculturalism, is "inconsistent with the fundamental assumptions of multiculturalism" (p. 313). If multiculturalism is about diversity and inclusion then "its goal is not just to understand, accept, and appreciate cultural differences, but also to ultimately transform the existing social order to ensure greater voice and authority to the marginalized cultures . . ." (p. 313). Including all cultures leads to a loss of the meaning of multiculturalism (Cai, 1998).

The second view holds multicultural literature as works that focus on "people of color" (Kruse and Horning, 1990, p. vii) or "books other than those of the dominant culture" (Jenkins 1973, p. 50). Multicultural literature is viewed as being about "some identifiable 'other' - persons or groups that differ in some way (for example racially, linguistically, ethnically, culturally) from the dominant white American cultural group" (Cai and Bishop 1994, p. 58). The center of controversy in this view was debated in a 1994 edition of the Journal of Children's Literature between Violet Harris, Rudine Sims Bishop and Patrick Shannon. All three agree on the purpose for multiculturalism - " . . . changing the definition and
reality of America until they stand for equality, freedom, and justice" (Shannon, 1994, p. 5), however it is the focus of multiculturalism they disagree upon. Harris (1994) believes that multicultural literature should "concentrate on those who are most excluded and marginalized" (p. xvi) and along the same line Sims Bishop (1994) contends that we need to "... call attention to the voices that have been traditionally omitted from the canon" (p. 7). Shannon criticizes both Harris and Sims Bishop for focusing their attention on race and "people of color." He argues that focusing on people of color leads teachers to shy away from multiculturalism and that instead educators should discuss the cultural aspects of any children’s literature. He finds it problematic when multiculturalism is only focused on race. In Bishop’s (1994) reply to Shannon she warns that being all-inclusive and not focusing on people of color will reduce multicultural literature to children’s literature. Cai (1998) writes that Shannon should not dichotomize between reading all books multiculturally (Hade, 1997) and reading books about people of color. He argues that reading books about people of color is inclusive of Whites and they need to confront those racial issues even if it may be uncomfortable.
In Schwartz’s (1995) analysis of the debate she questions, “Why is it that neither Bishop nor Harris seems to grasp that Shannon is calling for a struggle against the canon, a struggle to foster an inclusive multiculturalism within a full-fledged social analysis of the relations between language, culture, and power?” (p. 637). Schwartz makes the point that Bishop, Harris and Shannon are all dedicated to multicultural education, but “their underlying belief systems, values, and social analyses differ substantially. While Bishop and Harris are functioning within the broad paradigm of modernism, Shannon has taken (or is in the midst of) an epistemological leap into a critical postmodernism. Thus, this emerging controversy is representative of the broader social transition from modernism to postmodernism in multiculturalism . . .” (p. 637).

The third view “all literature is multicultural literature” denies the need for creating a special type of literature about different cultures (Cai, 1998). There is a need to have books about underrepresented cultures. Cai (1998) finds that “multicultural literature is still a much needed separate category of literature, if its existence
poses a challenge to the domination of all-White literature" (p. 316).

As the debate on multicultural literature continues, like Harris and Bishop, I believe that children who have been underrepresented in the past need to see representations of their racial and ethnic cultures within literature that represents their world, reflecting their images and voices (Cai, 1998). I think that there is still a need to have a separate category for multicultural literature so that the distinction between multicultural literature and all literature is not lost. In this study I focused upon this separate category of multicultural literature that I believe Harris, Bishop, and Cai are emphasizing. In particular I selected books that represent the culture in Hawai‘i to examine children’s responses when they have opportunities to discuss literature that mirrors their own culture. Through focusing on this separate category for multicultural literature I hope to encourage the use of multicultural books for children who have been underrepresented in the past and challenge the "... domination of all-White children’s literature" (Cai, pg. 316). I have found Klassen’s (1993) ideas about
multicultural literature particularly insightful to this research inquiry:

Literature that is multicultural provides students with opportunities to reflect on their own cultures (mirrors) and examine other ways of perceiving the world (windows). Specific cultures explored must be examined through multiple viewpoints that investigate their unique, diverse, and universal characteristics. Of equal importance to the selection of multicultural books is the multicultural experience with these books. As students and teachers maintain a reflective stance toward ideas shared in books, they critically consider new information in light of prior understandings. Literary experiences with literature that is multicultural transform students’ and teachers’ orientation toward multiculturalism and creates a critical consciousness of their world experience. (p. 283-284)

**Asian American Representation in Children's Literature**

Until recently children of color have been virtually invisible in books or projected as stereotypes. Although in the last thirty years there have been greater numbers of children’s literature with children of color portrayed in a positive way, Sims Bishop (1994) estimates that books relating to people of color constitute three to four percent of the fifteen to eighteen thousand new books published. Yamate (1997) writes “in any given year, while four to five thousand new children’s books are published, fewer than ten are by or about Asian Pacific Americans” (p. 97). Bishop (1994) reports that folktales account for
about 20% of the total number of books from Asian American cultures. "That means that children of Asian Pacific ancestry are still more likely to find books featuring anthropomorphic animals and creatures of fantasy than people who look like them or their families" (Yamato, 1997, p. 97). Bishop (1994) mentions that in Asian American literature the place of origin and setting of the tales are often outside the United States. This is significant because while they offer a sense of some of the traditional values, they do not necessarily reflect the lives of contemporary Asian Americans that have been in this country for several generations. In Hawai'i where over 60% of the population is of Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry (source: U.S Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, Hawaii, 1990 CP-1-13 [June 1992], p. 48.), this issue is particularly noteworthy. Due to its geographical location and unique history, Asians in Hawai'i do not necessarily consider themselves Asian Americans, rather they associate the term "Asian American" with Asians from the continental United States. This means that while few books are available for Asian Americans in general (Aoki, 1992; Yamate, 1997), those children of Asian ancestry in Hawai'i
may see even fewer images of children whose lives reflect their own in literature.

The "majority cultural group" is not always synonymous with "dominant white cultural group" in Hawai'i. For example, in Hawai'i, Caucasian residents make up 33.4% of the population and 60.5% of the population are categorized as Asian or Pacific Islander (source: U.S Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, Hawaii, 1990 CP-1-13 (June 1992, p. 48). Therefore, even though the white cultural group is not the major cultural group, the white group still holds a position of power and literature of the outnumbered white group dominates the books available in the schools. Children who are Asian Americans or in Hawai'i consider themselves local either do not see themselves in the literature or, as in the past, they are not portrayed in a positive light. Sims Bishop (1997) feels that the message for children who rarely see anyone in a book who "resembles themselves and who share their cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors, or in which children see themselves portrayed as laughable stereotypes, is that these children do not count and are not valued by the society at large" (p. xiv).
The teaching of Asian American literature is also complex due to the fact that there are many Asian cultures with distinctly different beliefs, traditions, and literary heritages that fall within the category of Asian American literature (Reimer, 1992; Yamate, 1997). This potentially poses problems for teachers who in earnest try to present literature which represents their students cultural and religious heritages, but at the same time are unaware of their own unquestioned assumptions about a homogeneity in people's cultural heritages (Dudley-Marling, 1997).

While Asian American literature advocates are still disappointed with the disproportionately low number of books now available, Yamate (1997) finds "... the depth and breadth of those books that are available is more promising" (p. 98). She notes that there is a greater diversity in the different ethnic groups appearing in children's literature and that there are more able and talented authors of Asian ancestry interested in writing about their community (Yamate, 1997). As the number of authors and interest in Asian American literature continues to grow it is hoped that publishers like Polychrome Publishing will continue to publish and distribute books that "identify issues and articulate concerns that come
from the heart of the Asian Pacific American Community” (Yamate, 1997, p. 99) which includes Asian Americans in Hawai‘i.

**Issues in Accuracy and Authenticity**

Noll (1995) writes that it is the social responsibility of authors and illustrators to present accurate and authentic depictions of children’s cultural backgrounds. When children see images of themselves that are incorrect or warped, their attitudes and understandings may be negatively influenced (Noll, 1995; Sims Bishop, 1992).

Currently, there are several issues raised with respect to the accuracy and authenticity of cultures in multicultural literature. Questions as to “Who will produce the literature of parallel culture? An author of the character’s own particular culture – or anyone?” (Mikkelsen, 1998, p. 3) are of concern to scholars, writers, educators, literary historians, and critics. Some claim that only insiders should portray a culture for they feel that “... no one but me can tell my story” (Woodson, 1998, p. 36). If this is true then the fact that current multicultural books about minorities are written
predominantly by European American authors (Reimer, 1992), then the outsider’s perspective can be problematic.

Some feel that it is possible for outsiders to successfully write about others’ cultural experiences (Sims Bishop, 1992). This raises new questions: "What makes a story good? Replicating reality to the fullest? Getting the facts and feelings right? Suppressing or distorting reality to make us think and feel differently? But good for whom? Writers who want or need freedom of expression? Publishers who want the story to sell? Readers who want to find themselves in a book? Readers who want to find others in a book?" (Mikkelsen, 1998, p. 33).

Katherine Paterson (1994) who is recognized for her ability to provide accuracy and authenticity in literature outside her own culture, claims that as an author of fiction her goal is to "mirror the human experience" which may unearth hard truths instead of "suppressing or distorting reality to make us think and feel differently" (Mikkelsen, 1998, p. 33) or supporting a politically correct point of view. Taxel (1995) states that authors like Paterson “have demonstrated consistently that there need be no conflict between aesthetic excellence and more
honest, inclusive, and culturally authentic portrayals of the diverse peoples that comprise our nation” (p. 165).

Cai (1995) argues that literary merits should not be privileged over cultural authenticity. “Cultural authenticity is the basic criterion in the sense that no matter how imaginative and how well written a story is, it would be rejected if it seriously violates the integrity of a culture” (p. 3). Therefore, it is not so much an issue as to whether or not the writer comes from the ethnic group, “[b]ut the key issue is how strong and how authentic that connection is” (p. 5). Cai (1995) contends:

In order to give authentic representation of an ethnic culture, an author must make the effort to enter that culture. That world cannot be entered just on the wings of imagination, no matter how imaginative the author is. ‘Insiders’ who want to write about their own ethnic cultures have great advantages over ‘outsiders,’ but they also need to observe and learn. (p. 7)

Mikkelsen (1998) also goes beyond the ethnic experience, accepting it as a given that those who “lived the black experience . . . can still do the job better” (p. 48) but in order to examine literature it is best to include the spectrum of other writers so there is “diversity within authenticity.”
Smolkin & Suina (1997) argue that cultural authenticity should not be based solely on the author’s insider perspective because “no culture . . . is monolithic; therefore, no single member of that culture can be seen as able to issue a final assessment of the cultural authenticity of a text” (p. 315). Smolkin & Suina (1997) identify other challenges in determining accuracy and authenticity:

1) Limited experiences of outsiders with the culture they are trying to depict.

2) Complexities in determining “insider” and “outsider” status.

3) The experiences of each individual will be authentic in its own context.

4) Complexities in recognizing offensive images and language outside authors and illustrators own cultural experience.

5) Multicultural reviews may contain inaccuracies.

6) The act of analysis may be culturally and traditionally inauthentic.

There seems to be no one simple answer to determining the accuracy and authenticity of multicultural books, for “there is no one way to create a multicultural book . . . .”
(Mikkelsen, 1998, p. 35). Yet, as the discussion of creating authentic and accurate depictions of different ethnic groups continues, new and compelling arguments and issues are brought to light. Hopefully these discussions serve as a place to help educators learn to make knowledgeable and informed decisions about the literary experiences with multicultural literature available in classrooms.

In this study I did face some of the difficulties mentioned by Smolkin & Suina (1997). I found it difficult to find information on the experiences of the author and determine "insider" and "outsider" status. Like Cai (1995) I believe that it is possible to write outside an author's ethnic and cultural experience if he or she authentically represents the culture. Through these research studies I was able to examine authenticity and representation in a deeper way. I believe that the studies in this review of literature increased my awareness of the complexity behind the terminology. I realize that discussions on authenticity are on going and will continue to raise new issues and understandings.
The Use of Multicultural Literature

Multicultural literature is seen as an excellent resource for literacy instruction by educators. However, this multicultural movement "... has, in practice created a paradoxical situation where multicultural literature runs the risk of being trivialized and misused. ..." (Fang, Fu, & Lamme, 1999, p. 259). Often teachers provide children with access to multicultural stories but they "... generally treat multicultural books as disembodied texts and use them as a springboard to contextualize traditional reading/writing skills instruction" (Fang, Fu, & Lamme, 1999, p. 264). Teachers may also undermine their goal of teaching children to respect the diversity of other cultures by distorting the complexity of the people they are trying to represent (Dudley-Marling, 1997). Merely providing children with access to the right book provides a superficial or "tourist view of multiculturalism" (Hade, 1997) which may increase students' awareness of cultural differences and diversity but runs the risk of reinforcing negative stereotypes (Fang, Fu, & Lamme, 1999).

One of the reasons these problems arise is that elementary teachers often do not have experience with the
critical tradition of cultural studies and literary analysis and multicultural education is often oversimplified through the teaching of difference through celebration of ethnic holidays (Fang, Fu, & Lamme, 1999). Other reasons include the contention that some white teachers feel hostile towards multicultural children’s literature because they may feel threatened by “The Other” taking away what they have. Some white teachers see teaching multicultural literature irrelevant to their teaching because they “stand apart from culture and lead ‘normal’ lives” (Shannon, 1994, p. 1).

Simply reading multicultural books for pleasure can be limiting (Yenika-Agbaw, 1997). In addition to reading for pleasure children need opportunities to engage in critical literacy (Creighton, 1997) which comes from a critical view of reality. Shannon (1991) writes:

A critical view of reality challenges the injustices and inequalities of the status quo by asking the question, Why are things the way they are? . . . . The intent of this question is to illuminate past and current injustices, to document their consequences on our lives, and to identify the contradictions within our current relations as opportunities for change toward more just relations. (p. 518)

When reading multicultural literature teachers need to help children become critical readers by asking questions
about situations they encounter in the text which will lead
to critical understandings (Simpson, 1996; Yenika-Agbaw,
1997). Students need to read multiculturally or "... read
against and around the text in order to uncover
ideologies of domination and resistance embedded within
texts" (Yenika-Agbaw, 1997, p. 450) or read to be critical
of their own culture. "Reading is inherently social and is
dominated by culture. And the meanings we hold about race,
class, and gender (many of which may be stereotypes)
mediate how we interpret text" (Hade, 1997, p. 235).
Multiculturalism is not just about learning about others
and tolerating difference, it is about justice (Hade,
1997). Hade (1997) argues that it is the responsibility of
the educator to confront students' assumptions about race,
class, and gender and expose injustices rather than
learning about others and tolerating difference.

The readings on multicultural literature helped to
increase my awareness and understanding of the complexities
of the issues surrounding multicultural literature. I
wanted to use multicultural literature as a separate
category of this literature review because this study
focuses upon those who have traditionally been
underrepresented in literature. I found that the issues
and challenges facing advocates of Asian American literature were similar and apply to the many Asian people living in Hawai‘i. Through readings about accuracy and authenticity in multicultural literature I was able to refine my decisions about the books I selected for this study. As I conducted readings on the use of multicultural literature it informed me that I needed to go beyond the "tourist view of multiculturalism" and provide the children with engagements to explore different multicultural issues that were relevant to their lives.

Reader Response Theories and Research

Response to literature has been of serious interest to teachers and researchers in the past thirty years (Probst, 1990). Reader response theories concerned with "how readers make meaning from their experience with the text" (Beach, 1993, p. 1) have done much to enrich understandings of the reading process and student response to literature.

Rosenblatt's seminal work, Literature as Exploration (1938) identifies her as one of the earlier writers of reader response. Her influence on understandings about literature in classrooms continues to inspire teachers to think about the possibilities of reader response theory yet
to be realized (Probst, 1990). Her transactional theories serve as the basis of this study.

Rosenblatt (1978) credits the concept of "transactional" to John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley. She states, "Dewey and Bentley sought to counteract the dualistic phrasing of phenomena as an 'interaction' between different factors, because it implies separate, self-contained, and already defined entities acting on one another . . ." (p. 17). Transaction suggests, "an ongoing process in which the elements or factors are, as one might say, aspects of a total situation, each conditioned by and conditioning the other" (p. 17). Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional theory states that reading is a transaction; meaning is not held exclusively by the text or the reader, but in the process of transacting both the reader and the text are changed and create something new. The term "transaction" suggests the dynamic nature of reading. The meaning that is created by the reader through the transaction will vary because the reading involves bringing to and taking meaning from the text. The reader plays an active role in creating the text rather than passively receiving information from the text.
In his "Unity in Reading" paper (1985) K. Goodman describes the transactional view of reading:

A transactional view of language . . . assumes that meaning resides neither in the environment nor totally in the head of the language learner. Language is seen as open, and meaning is seen as triadic, the result of a mental setting actively attempting to make sense of a print setting. (p. 57)

The transactional view of reading considers the reader's social and cultural and literacy experiences as a part of meaning construction (Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984). I believe that the social and cultural meanings and experiences brought to the text played an active role in the case study students' transactions with the text in this study. In the process of transacting with the text, the children brought meaning to and took meaning from the text.

Rosenblatt's transactional model of reading (1978) defines stances readers may take while reading. In efferent readings, attention is focused on concepts, solutions, or information to be "carried away" from the text. When reading aesthetically, the reader's attention is centered directly on what is being "lived through" as readers experience the text. While readings can be more aesthetic or efferent in nature, positioning oneself to
take a stance is dynamic and a reader may take a range of stances at different points in the reading. The transaction itself is a relationship with, and continuing awareness of, the text. In producing “the Poem,” readers sense, feel, imagine, and synthesize ideas, and the total attention is on the actual experience being lived through (Rosenblatt, 1978; 1995).

K. Smith (1993) writes that “the difference between an aesthetic and efferent experience is centered in the reader and in classroom situations, and it is often influenced by a particular teacher’s purpose for reading a particular text” (p. 27). The literature discussions students participated in during this study were grounded in a transactional view of reading. The discussions were not focused on guiding students toward a predetermined meaning, but rather creating an environment that encouraged students to negotiate meanings of the story together. The intention was to provide aesthetic purposes for reading so students could “savor the images, the sounds, the smells, the actions, the associations, and the feelings the words point to” (Rosenblatt, 1991, p. 447).

Studies on children’s responses to literature have come out of reader response theory. Probst (1990) points
out that the concept of response has posed problems for teachers because planning instruction is difficult. Response can be unpredictable, diverse and digressive making it difficult to plan for instruction and design curriculum. While response poses problems for teachers it is even more challenging for researchers because it is hard to find and difficult to assess. Despite these challenges there are numerous studies that have provided insight into the complexity of response.

Early work conducted by Purves and Rippere (1968) provided a way to analyze the content of responses. Through studying written responses to literature they devised an extensive list of statements that numbers over 100 to identify the kinds of responses that may be made. The statements cluster into four major categories: Engagement-involvement, Perception, Interpretation, and Evaluation. Applebee (1977) summarized studies that followed or modified Purves and Rippere’s work. The most important finding from his summary was that “the approach to literature adopted by the individual teacher does affect the content of the response from the teacher’s pupils” (p. 256) implying that patterns of response are learned.
Four years before Purves and Rippere (1968) had analyzed students' written responses, Squire (1964) examined students' oral responses to literature. He interviewed students after reading sections of short stories, thus looking at reading as a process rather than a product.

Many researchers have been interested in exploring the relationships between response and reader factors, text factors, and context factors. These studies have provided knowledge about and information to support the teaching of literature response in school. A number of studies on reader beliefs and expectations, socioeconomic status, cultural background, personality, cognitive development, sex, and personal style (Applebee 1978; Cullinan, Harwood, & Galda, 1983; Hickman, 1983) have contributed to reader characteristics that influence response.

Applebee (1978) was one of the first to study the developmental differences in children's response to literature. Looking at the responses of six-, nine-, thirteen-, and seventeen-year-olds, he found differences across children's objective responses and personal responses. Cullinan, Harwood, and Galda (1983) also looked at developmental differences in response to literature.
The children at grades four, six, and eight read two books and were asked to tell about the story following the reading. Like Applebee (1978), Cullinan, Harwood, and Galda (1983) found that children at different ages use different processes in recalling stories.

Hickman (1981) also examined developmental patterns in children’s responses to literature. However, her work is particularly noteworthy because she was the first to look at children’s responses in naturally occurring contexts. In her study she used ethnographic research methods to identify significant factors that influenced children’s responses and through her field notes, taped interviews, and photographs she was able to tap into new aspects of response.

Other studies on reader factors include questions about the experiences a reader brings to a text. Hynds’ (1985) research suggests that readers’ experiences with literature may affect their social understandings and that literary experiences may have implications for the way students handle social situations. “Literature provides a vehicle for enlarging students’ understanding of the people they are likely to encounter in the social world” (p. 399). Her later work (1989) further explored the connection
between social and literary understanding. Hynds looked at how adolescent readers used their understandings of people as they read and also looked at the influence of other experiences on attitudes toward reading.

Langer (1995) focused on what students do with the text rather than on what they bring to the text. She had students in grades seven through eleven think aloud as they read six texts. She described the nature of the literary experience in terms of the "stances" students create as they enter the alternative imagined world. She found that as students were actively engaged in the reading and in the process of creating meaning their stances changed. This change in stance created a different dimension to the reader's understanding of the piece. Studies of reader's experiences such as Langer's have provided insights into the process of response.

As indicated earlier, researchers explored different characteristics or patterns in children's responses to literature. Researchers have identified different contextual situations within the school and home setting that influence children's responses as well. Hickman's (1981) work focused upon the naturally occurring responses in the school setting. As a result of her study she
identified different strategies used by the teachers to organize their classrooms.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the different contextual factors surrounding children’s responses to stories read to them at home and in school. Investigations of parents and teachers reading aloud describe the interactions that occur during story reading (Altwerger, Diehl-Faxon, & Dockstader-Anderson, 1985; Barrentine, 1996; Leung, 1992; Morrow, 1988; Myers, 1990; Oyler & Barry, 1996). In addition, attempts have been made to show the importance of the role of the teacher in demonstrating thoughtful responses and questions and in building literacy (Hoffman, Roser, Battle, Farest, Myers, & Labbo, 1991; Hoffman, Roser, & Farest, 1988; Martinez & Teale, 1993; Roser, 1987).

While the physical classroom setting and the emphasis placed upon literature established by the teacher plays an integral role in response to literature (Keifer, 1983), the social community of the classroom established by students also plays an important role in response to literature. Eeds and Wells (1989) present evidence that indicates that children who take part in a literary community can support each other to take part in “grand conversations.”
Along with reader and contextual factors, considerations of different types of texts affect children's responses to literature. Studies have looked at how the content of stories influences students' reading interests (Purves and Beach, 1972). Research in this area has focused on the content and genre of literature in which children are interested. In general, elementary-aged children are interested in adventure, fairy tales, making things, humor, biographies, true-event stories, and animal stories (Martinez and Roser, 1990). In this inquiry, the focus of response is upon culturally relevant texts, therefore I wanted to look at how children respond to texts set within their own cultural experience.

Researchers have studied the different ways in which children respond to literature. Studies have provided valuable information about various reader, context, and text factors that play a role in influencing children's responses to literature. These research studies have helped my development as a collaborative researcher in this study and informed me of the many factors that affect response. These studies have led me to think about the different ways the context of the classroom, reader
factors, and textual factors play a role in the outcome of a study.

**Literature Discussion**

One of the ways children respond to literature is through discussion. In literature discussions, children explore their "rough draft understanding of literature with other readers" (Short, 1995, p. xi). Literature discussions have the potential for children to expand their understandings about reading through dialogue with other readers. This discussion, "... requires acute listening as well as thoughtful speaking. It is a dialogue of ideas, one thought building on another, a concert of thinking as individuals present their conceptions in relation to those of others" (Y. Goodman, et al., 1987, p. 118).

In literature discussion teachers and children come together to discuss a book they care about in depth. Children and teachers can look carefully at ideas, significant events, and issues while reading the book. It provides a time to trace ideas that are significant, yet unclear. In literature discussion, "we can rethink possibilities, thus giving all of us an opportunity to create new meanings" (K. Smith, 1990, p. 22).
The focus of the discussion is not upon extracting the information comprehended by students in the text or discussing the interpretation the teacher wants to hear, or learning about literary elements. "Instead of finding hidden meanings, they enter into literature to enjoy the story world and to learn about life" (Short & Klassen, 1991, p. 1). "Literature [discussion] circles offer readers the opportunity to become literate. We want our students to not only become readers who love to read, but to become active, critical thinkers about their reading" (Short & Klassen, 1991, p. 3).

Eeds and Peterson (1997) identify foundational beliefs about reading and learning that are a critical part of literature discussions. "Our goal is to invite all children into the world of story, first so they can lose themselves in it, and second so they have the opportunity to examine their responses in the company of other thoughtful readers . . ." (p. 50). Another belief is that "each child will bring a contribution at his or her own level, and through the interaction with other children and with the teacher in acts of mutual helpfulness, will grow and develop understanding and ability" (p. 50). They also support reading as transaction and believe in the
importance of interpretation where "... each reader must interpret the world of text" (p. 50).

Different research inquiries have been conducted to explore the use of literature discussion in the elementary school classroom. Eeds and Wells’ (1989) study of fifth and sixth graders participating in literature discussions reveals that children of varying abilities participated in rich discussions of literature. In these discussions they 1) shared their construction of meaning, but changed them as they heard other views, 2) shared personal stories which inspired other group members, 3) participated as active readers as they read, 4) valued and evaluated the text as literature.

Lewis (1997) found that the social roles and relationships of students during peer-led discussions can affect and may adversely influence how students engage with literature, however other studies (Eeds and Wells, 1989; Gilles, 1993) report that community members bring together their insights to generate new understandings. As a community, both teacher and students need to work, "... to bring the literature to life for each other and ourselves. By exploring our different reactions to the texts, we experienced richer readings, and we grew
increasingly more conscious of how we read. Students
gained confidence in themselves as readers, as interpreters
of texts" (Fox, 1991, p. 177).

Gavalek & Raphael (1996) have found that multiple
opportunities for students to engage in talk about text and
establishment of an environment to invite discussion is
critical. Learners must have opportunities to "talk with
others in order to work at understanding" (Mitchell-Pierce,
1995, p. 16). "[T]hese social settings are the very means
by which students come to acquire and construct new
knowledge, new meanings, and new interpretations through
interactive use of language" (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996, p.
184).

Karen Smith (1993), one of the early practitioners and
researchers of literature discussion, conducted a study of
her sixth grade readers across ten literature discussions.
She found that although students' collaborative talk
appears unorganized and unfocused, it often leads to
thoughtful and complex understandings. Roller and Beed
(1994) discovered that through reflection "... rather
than judge children's talk according to our adult
standards, we must listen carefully to the ways that
children interpret text in order to understand how they are using literature talk to build meaning" (p. 513).

The role of the teacher is critical in establishing the environment for talk. In studying interactions among children in student-led discussions, teacher talk played a crucial role in the students' development language of talk about text (Gavelek and Raphael, 1996). Several studies have explored the role of the teacher in literature discussions (Freeman, 1993; Kauffman, Short, Crawford, Kahn, and Kaser, 1996). Some educators believe that teachers should be present (Roser & Martinez, 1995) and others feel that teachers can have a negative influence on students' constructions of meaning (Barnes, 1992). Kauffman et al.'s (1996) research observed that when teachers were present, the groups considered a wider range of alternative perspectives and more critically considered their interpretations of literature. When teachers were not present, students discussed "kid" topics and developed the ability to facilitate and sustain discussions without the teacher.

Through talking about books with each other, readers are given the time they need to absorb and savor a book so that the book becomes a significant part of their life.
experiences (Harste, Short, with Burke, 1988). "In essence, talking about literature is a form of shared contemplation" (Chambers, 1996, p. 12). Talking about a piece of literature with others gives readers time to explore their ideas, to expand their understandings of literature, and to become readers who think critically and deeply about what they read.

Since talk plays such an integral role in the learning process in literature discussion, "talking well" about books is important (Chambers, 1996). "School is where people are expected to think, to explore, and in the process, to create meaning. Talk is fundamentally connected to that creation. It follows, therefore, that the classroom is, or should be, the most conducive and inviting setting in which to promote the human act of talking" (Watson, 1993, p. 3).

Through literature discussion, participants' voices are heard and valued for their multicultural diversity. Literature discussions allows a diversity of perspectives and offers multiple view points so students can examine potential growth (Klassen, 1993) and address complex social issues (Crowell, 1993; Johnson, 1997).
The literature on reader response helped inform this research study through providing me with a greater understanding of the transactional view of reading and how children construct meaning. I learned about the many different kinds of studies that have been conducted on literature discussions and I used this information to help guide me as I considered different possibilities for the literature discussions in this study. The information on literature discussions guided my decisions about the grouping of the children, how discussion groups were conducted, types of engagements selected, and environment established in the classroom.

Conclusion

Each reading event is multicultural in nature and includes the ideologies expressed within the cultures of the text and the reader and writer. Pushing beyond reader-response to become critically literate would well serve young readers. (Johnson, 1997, p. 90)

By engaging in thoughtful and meaningful discussions, children can begin to place themselves within their social, cultural, and historical context. As children come to see themselves in literature and question their own position, they may come to appreciate and realize the position of others in society.
Through reading and participating in discussion of their own culture, they "expose injustices" (Hade, 1997) and develop a deeper and more critical understanding of the complex world around them. As Mitchell-Pierce (1995) states, "I believe the quality of literature available to us will lead into discussions about ourselves, our world, and potential worlds we might have a hand in creating ... I believe these literature groups will have the potential to change the ways we look at ourselves and our world, and the ways we choose to act" (p. 23).

In this study I explore the content of children's responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature and how the understandings and responses of individual children evolve over the course of the study. The readings included in this literature review have helped guide me as I made decisions about this research study and helped expand my knowledge base in areas related to the study. Readings about Hawai'i provided me with the necessary background knowledge to better understand the historical and cultural context in which the study took place. I was able to learn more about the specific terms to help define "culturally relevant literature" which was important to understanding the questions asked in this
study. The literature about multicultural literature informed my decisions about authenticity and accuracy, helped me understand the debates that come with use of the term "multicultural literature," and refined my beliefs about the issues that surround these areas. Reader response theories and research on literature discussions provided me with a foundational understanding of reading as a constructive process and guided my understanding of the research as I made my way through the study. The literature review built my knowledge base and clarified issues so I was able to come to deeper understandings and new insights in the areas of Hawai'i's history and culture, multicultural literature and the complexities that surround it, reader response theories and literature discussion and how children learn through talk.

In this chapter I reviewed the literature that was relevant to the study. The chapter opened with the historical and cultural context of Hawai'i which included a description of how different cultural groups immigrated to Hawai'i, the development of the pidgin dialect, a definition of the term "local," the emergence of a local culture, and the history and definition of local literature. Following the description of Hawai'i's context
was a review of multicultural literature including Asian American literature, issues in accuracy and authenticity, and use of multicultural literature. Finally, I discuss reader response theories and research, and literature discussions. In the next chapter I will discuss the research methodology for this study.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study explores children's responses to literature written about their culture. The focus of this study, to look at fifth graders' responses to literature placed within their own cultural context, was suited to a naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) using qualitative research methods (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The questions for this research inquiry were:

1) What is the content of children's responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature?

2) How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time?

Since the questions that guided this inquiry pertained to students' responses to culturally relevant literature and their perception of how they used the literature of their culture to better understand their lives, I drew from the methodological techniques used in ethnographic study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). I believe this particular study was ethnographic in nature because the description and analysis were conducted with respect to responses made
by students when reading literature about their culture which inevitably involved aspects about the culture in Hawai‘i.

I selected a naturalistic approach to this inquiry because I wanted to study students within a naturally occurring setting, since context is so heavily implicated in meaning (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used methods appropriate to human inquiry: interviews, observations, and document analysis. Purposive sampling, inductive analysis of the data sample, development of grounded theory, and steps in a constantly emerging design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) guided this research. Throughout the inquiry the data and interpretations were checked with respondents. The information was then used to develop a case study (Merriam, 1988) of a group of students. The case study was used as an interpretative instrument of what was found. Trustworthiness was tested by naturalistic criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I consider this a cooperative study where the teacher was an active participant in the research process and collaboratively planned the curriculum with the researcher. Together with Mrs. Miyashiro I carefully considered
instructional decisions as the research study progressed. Mrs. Miyashiro and I collaboratively planned engagements for literature discussions, selected texts for the study, and facilitated the whole class discussions. Her expertise and knowledge as the classroom teacher along with the research perspective I brought created differing perspectives that worked to influence the research and learning process that occurred in this study.

What follows is a description the particular research site, data collection, and data analysis. The explanation of the site includes the steps taken to obtain access, the methods for the selection of cases, and book selection process. I introduce the classroom teacher, how the student participants were chosen and the selection of stories and books. I talk about primary and secondary data sources and how they were used in the study. I also include a discussion of the analysis processes that were used to create categories and guide me as I interpreted the data collected during the interviews and the literature discussions.
Obtaining Access

For this research, getting permission from Waineki Elementary School (all names and places are pseudonyms with the exception of the classroom teacher and the principal) was the first step. I had to find a site that was suitable for the study and one that allowed for the time constraints I had working full-time. Prior to leaving the school to study at the University of Arizona, I taught third grade at Waineki Elementary for two years and co-chaired the Literacy Committee. I returned to the school as the Title I Schoolwide Coordinator in 1998 providing me with information about and access to the school. The Principal, Mrs. Annette Yamaki, was aware of the possibility of conducting my dissertation research, however, she was not aware of the specifics of the study. In November of 1998 I met with Mrs. Yamaki and gave her a brief description of my proposed study. I proposed several research options and together, we decided that working and researching in one classroom setting would potentially be the greatest source of information to share with other teachers at the school and would suit the methodological needs of the study. We agreed that the research could be collected during school
hours from January 1999 through June 1999. I agreed to share the results with the teachers upon completion of the study.

After gaining consent from the Principal, I gained permission from the classroom teacher. Written consent from the parents of all students in the class was granted prior to the study (see Appendix A).

**Description of the Setting and Participants**

With approximately 850 students, Waineki Elementary School is the second largest public elementary school on the island of Hawai‘i. (Note: Hawai‘i is both the name of one of the eight major islands and the name of the state. When necessary a distinction will be made between referencing the island of Hawai‘i and Hawai‘i as a state.) Waineki Elementary serves a heterogeneous student population in Grades K-5. In the school year 1998-99 48.9% of the total student population received free and reduced meals, which qualified the school for Title I funding. Located in the more populated area of a city of approximately 40,000 people, it represents a culturally diverse population. According to the 1990 census data, 61.8% of the residents in the state of Hawai‘i were of Asian and Pacific Islander origin. The remaining ethnic
make-up included 33.4% White, 2.5% Black, 0.5% American Indian, 7.3% Hispanic, and 1.9% other. These statistics include those of military status numbering close to 90,000 people living in Hawai'i (State of Hawaii, 1996). The following table identifies the breakdown of the 61.8% Asian Pacific Islanders in the state of Hawai'i (persons of mixed race classified by self-identification or by race of mother):

Table 3.1. Asian Pacific Islanders Distribution in Hawai'i

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1998 Waineki's ethnicity distribution was as follows:

Table 3.2. Waineki Elementary - Population by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population by Ethnicity at Waineki Elementary</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Hawaiian</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Waineki Elementary School encompasses 8 acres, of which 3.75 acres are set aside strictly for school use. The remaining 4.25 acres are used as a playground by the school and the County of Hawai'i.

Waineki Elementary was originally said to have been a two or three room school. In 1919 it was moved a few blocks from its original location to its present site. It is one of the oldest public schools in the city; thus the varied construction style of the buildings reflect the additions made over the years. Three long one-story buildings run parallel to each other at the center of the school. Another three multi-leveled buildings sit at the west-end of the long one-story buildings. These multi-leveled buildings also run alongside a busy street that creates a boundary for the school on the west-end. At the east end of the school, there are two portable buildings, a small cafeteria and the office building which fronts another busy street. The air-conditioned library shares a common wall with the office.
Residential homes encompass the school on the north end, and a gymnasium and field operated by the county is adjacent to the school campus on the south end. The added benefit of the gymnasium in a wet tropical climate provides students with a place to play and participate in physical education activities on rainy days. The gymnasium also provides Waineki with a facility to accommodate general assemblies that involve the entire school.

As a K-5 elementary school in the community Waineki is generally considered a "good school" as evidenced by a positive response in parent surveys, number of students requesting a district waiver exception to attend Waineki School, and by "word of mouth." Waineki is also known in the local community for its active parental support and involvement.

In 1998-1999 the faculty included 36 regular education teachers, between five to seven teachers in each grade level, five special education teachers, one music resource teacher, one technology resource teacher, two gifted and talented resource teachers in math and science, one librarian, two counselors, one Title I resource teacher, one vice principal, and one principal. The gifted and
talented program at the school offered pullout programs for students in math and science.

Finding a Classroom

When I set out to conduct this investigation, one of my goals was to select a "regular" classroom and observe students within their natural school setting. The primary reason for selecting a regular education classroom was so that it would reflect a "typical" public school classroom experience in the state of Hawai‘i. The site for data collection was Mrs. Charlene Miyashiro’s fifth grade class. Charlene Miyashiro is a well-known and well-respected educator in Hawai‘i Island District. She has a wealth of teaching experience on the island of Hawai‘i where she has taught preschool, speech, grades 1, 4, 5, and 6. She also has experiences in various resource positions. She worked for a year as Language Arts Resource Teacher at the Hawai‘i Island District Office and held a Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher position at an elementary school before returning to the classroom to teach. In 1995 she transferred to Waineiki to teach fifth grade and has been in that position since.

I consider Mrs. Miyashiro to be a lifelong learner; she continuously challenges herself to be an active learner
by engaging in professional reading, attending conferences, and reading children’s literature. Currently, she is compiling a portfolio and applying for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification. Both in and out of school Mrs. Miyashiro is a natural leader. In school she is a member of the Gifted and Talented Cadre which plans programs in our district, serves as a Schoolwide Committee member to plan for the improvement needs of the school, mentors prospective university student teachers, and co-chairs the Literacy Committee. She leads an active church life outside the school, continues to sit as a board member in the Hawai‘i State Teachers Association (teacher’s union), is a member of the board of Directors for Project Keiki, Inc. Day Care, and holds office in Delta Kappa Gamma Society (women’s educational sorority).

Mrs. Miyashiro and I had been friends for four years prior to the study. Over those years I had grown to know her as a friend and respect her as a colleague. At the time of the study she was a master teacher of 21 years and recipient of the Hawai‘i Island District Teacher of the Year Award in 1990, I highly respected her knowledge of curriculum and expertise with children. In 1996-97, Mrs. Miyashiro and I had the opportunity to co-chair the
Literacy Committee together. At Waineki the Literacy Committee is comprised of grade level representatives, therefore the committee discussed and made decisions regarding issues of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the language arts and social studies. Due to our shared responsibility and similar philosophical beliefs about language and learning, Mrs. Miyashiro and I engaged in many conversations and established a dialogue journal. In the dialogue journal we conversed about issues related to curriculum and instruction for the school and shared concerns about our own classrooms. We planned for activities between Mrs. Miyashiro's fifth graders and my third graders. My class served as an audience for the fifth graders' literature circle presentations and Mrs. Miyashiro's class came to my class to teach the third graders about literature discussion circles. The work we did and the dialogue journal presented here is background information on knowing Mrs. Miyashiro prior to this study and was not part of this study.

While I was away attending the University of Arizona in 1997-98, Mrs. Miyashiro and I communicated through e-mail and briefly over the phone. When I returned the next school year, we reestablished our ties. Mrs. Miyashiro's
role as Literacy Committee Co-Chairperson at Waineki and my position as Title I Schoolwide Coordinator gave us additional opportunities to work together to communicate about curriculum, instruction and the school initiatives for literacy.

Because of her background and trying to find a classroom for my research study, Mrs. Miyashiro’s class seemed to be the perfect place. Her own Master’s thesis research on children’s responses to multicultural literature paralleled many of my own research interests. Since Mrs. Miyashiro had a strong knowledge about learning theories and had been teaching children through literature discussion circles for six years, it provided an opportune setting for me to observe children’s talk about literature.

**Classroom Description**

During the study the class was comprised of twenty-nine students including four special education students who left for Language Arts and one 504 student (eligible for accommodations in the regular classroom based on an “impairment [that] substantially limit[s] one or more major life activities”) who was mainstreamed all day. There were 15 girls and 14 boys in the class. The students ranged in age between nine and eleven years old.
When I asked Mrs. Miyashiro to describe her classroom she shared the following description (written in italics):

A community of learners was established from the first day of school to encourage risk taking, respect and trust in the classroom. Various learning strategies were used daily to develop an atmosphere of a collaborative community of learners. Students were given opportunities to get acquainted with each other through community building activities, interviews, sharing of past and personal experiences, presentations, small group and partner activities and periodic changing of partners.

A climate of trust and risk taking developed each day as I demonstrated appropriate behaviors by offering opinions and open-ended questions. I allowed students to ask questions at any time and showed respect for those ideas, questions, and opinions offered by all students. Taking time to know individual students and hearing each student’s individual voice is very important to me.

I read aloud each week followed by whole group literature discussion circles (Short and Harste, with Burke, 1996). Discussion included students sharing their reactions, feelings and dialogue about characters, plot and
topics of interest. Students responded in literature journals and shared them in large group discussions.

The language arts curriculum is literature-based with trade books, text sets -- two or more texts that are conceptually related in some way (Harste and Short, with Burke, 1988) -- and selected pieces of literature from a Houghton Mifflin Reader. Literature pieces we have used thus far have focused on the historical fiction genre with an emphasis on American Folktales, tall tales and Native American legends. Students worked in large and small groups reading and discussing their ideas. During the literature discussions the students shared reactions, feelings, discoveries, developments, characters, plot and any other areas of interest or concern. My role was to facilitate discussion with open-ended questions and/or sharing of opinions or insights to stimulate discussions. At the end of the students' readings and discussions, they creatively planned for a presentation of their understandings of the literature.

Students conducted mini-research on Native Americans based on their questions and the research culminated with a group presentation of their findings.
Monthly book talks were given by students to share a book of their choice with a creative project. Students could draw, paint, construct mobiles, dioramas, puppets, or games to share their book with the class.

During the second semester I focused the literature around the theme of relationships. Generalizations of learner outcomes included: values, beliefs, and traditions affect our relationships and behaviors; People affect and are affected by universal needs and problems; Relationships affect interactions between people, cultures and environment.

Literature Discussion Time

I visited Mrs. Miyashiro’s classroom five times a week from 10:30-11:45 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and from 8:15-9:00 on Tuesday and Thursday during their literature group time from January through June 1999. Since I also occupied a full-time position at the school, I worked out an agreement with the principal to compensate the school for the time spent in one classroom. Each day I took a working lunch break to replace the time spent to collect data within the school day. My work schedule as Title I Schoolwide Coordinator allowed me the flexibility to do this. There were several days that I was not able to be
present in the classroom due to periodic school-wide activities and workshop commitments demanded by my regular job.

During their literature period the students read the culturally relevant texts used for the study either independently or with a partner, participated in small group discussion or engaged in some of the following literature response activities: Say Something, Sketch to Stretch, Webs, and Written Conversation (Short, Harste, with Burke, 1996). Since I worked with two separate groups of students, the case study group would meet one day and the other group (Group II) would hold discussions the next day. During the periods where we had over an hour, each group could hold a discussion on the same day. I taped discussions for both the case study group and Group II. When one group was discussing, the other group responded in their journals or worked on other options Mrs. Miyashiro had listed on the chalkboard (Read chapter 1 and 2, sketch a picture, work in writing folder, have a written conversation). Group II was made up of six students, three girls and three boys of mixed ethnicity and varied reading proficiency levels. Even though I collected data on Group II, I only transcribed and analyzed the data for the case
study group. The reason I collected data from Group II was that I did not want Group II to feel isolated or left out of the study and in case I needed the data.

Mrs. Miyashiro and I agreed that our role at literature discussion time was to actively participate in the discussion and facilitate discussion as necessary. At times we used guiding open-ended questions (Tell me what you think. Explain what you mean. What are you feeling about this story? Why do you think this is happening? How would you evaluate this book?) to generate discussion. Discussions usually started with encouraging "students to share their feelings and discoveries about the reading" (Miyashiro, 1993, p. 40) and we worked to generate deeper discussion by asking students to extend their responses and asked questions to push students' thinking. As participants in the discussion, our role included sharing our personal opinions, connections and interpretations of the text, bringing "different . . . potentials for social interaction and negotiation of meaning" (Kauffman, Short, Crawford, Kahn, and Kaser, 1996, p. 373) and we also questioned students so that the discussions would move beyond the sharing of impressions and reactions and
students could consider more critical perspectives and deeper interpretations of the text.

Role of Researcher

I considered myself an insider in the school. After having taught at Waineki Elementary for two years and spending one year as Title I Coordinator, I felt that I had insider information about and access to the school. As the Title I Coordinator, I was responsible for collecting and analyzing the data on parent, student, and faculty attitudes about the school, collecting and analyzing all schoolwide assessment data, and coordinating the school improvement efforts.

When I began the study, Mrs. Miyashiro provided me with access to information about the children and the classroom. We spent approximately 1½ hours a week planning, debriefing about what had happened in the literature discussions, and sharing general observations about the students. We made time before, during, and after school, and in the evenings we conversed on the telephone about the students and the study.

In the beginning I believed that the children saw me as an outsider. Two of the children in the class had been my students in third grade so they saw me as a teacher but
the others had only seen me as another adult around campus. When I entered the room, half the school year had already passed and I was an outsider who came into their established community. Gradually, as I spent time as a part of their community, I believe the students began to see me as a part of and an insider to their literature discussions. By the end of the study they invited me to their informal gatherings and presented special gifts to me at the end of the school year.

Limitations

Although I considered myself an insider in the school and eventually in the classroom, there were unavoidable constraints in data collection. Firstly, I was restricted by time. Since this study was conducted during the literature discussion time, I was in the classroom for 75 minutes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and 45 minutes on Tuesday and Thursday, totaling six hours a week. Although I did communicate with Mrs. Miyashiro on a regular basis, time constraints and other job responsibilities did not allow much contact with or observations of the children outside the literature discussion time. Occasionally, I observed the children at recess and in passing, but I was limited by the time I spent with the children.
Secondly, at times I struggled to find my role — Was I a researcher or a teacher during the time I spent in the classroom? I knew what it meant to be a teacher and sometimes I knew I did things as a teacher would. However, both students and I realized my primary purpose for being in the classroom was to conduct research. I tried to engage in discussion with the students as I would if I had been the regular teacher. Even though I felt like a regular classroom teacher when I worked with the students, Mrs. Miyashiro helped by making sure that I was not responsible for discipline or grading the students in any way. At the same time I realized that Mrs. Miyashiro entrusted me with her students and the teaching of literature and I felt obligated to teach. Even if I felt like a teacher at times, I was both a teacher conducting research and a researcher teaching literature. Eventually I think the students came to see me as a researcher who collaborated with the teacher.

Thirdly, I struggled with the concern that I had unfairly imposed on the regular classroom curriculum. I realized that, at times, the class needed more time to complete other on-going projects and the time I spent may have taken away from their existing curriculum. Due to the
amount of time I did spend in the classroom over the school year (approximately one hour per day from January through June) my presence and research purpose inevitably affected Mrs. Miyashiro's regular literature curriculum.

Fourthly, I had limited communication with parents. Mrs. Miyashiro and I agreed that since she was the regular classroom teacher and had established a positive relationship with the parents of the students in her class and they trusted her, it would be best to communicate through her. At the end of the study I did have the opportunity to meet the parents and briefly talk with the parents of the students in the case study group.

Participant Observation

As a participant observer (Spradley, 1980), my role changed over the course of the data collection period. When I entered the class in January I began as a passive participant (Spradley, 1980) sitting in the back of the classroom noting student behavior and the expectations established in this classroom culture. I was introduced as a teacher who was working on a doctorate and interested in learning more about their literature discussions. Students seemed to accept me and acknowledged my presence. I was given a book to read along with the students. Gradually,
Mrs. Miyashiro and the students began to pull me into their literature discussions and invited me to join in the group discussion. After the first month of being a passive participant, my role increased to that of moderate participant (Spradley, 1980) balancing my role between insider and outsider. I stood alongside Mrs. Miyashiro, participating in discussions and began to give instructions and facilitate the engagements. Sometimes I would share my observations and at other times I would add my personal opinion as a participant.

At times I saw myself as an active participant (Spradley, 1980) in the classroom culture. In one sense I believe that it was not possible to become a full and active participant with students because I was not an equal or insider participant to students as an adult researcher and teacher within the school. In another sense I believe that during the hour I spent daily in the classroom I was an active participant who fully participated, taking part in engagements with the teacher and students. Mrs. Miyashiro allowed me the freedom to ask children to engage in various curricular engagements as the need arose in the literature discussions. She shared information about
children and we often talked about the children and discussed their progress as individuals and as learners.

At the outset of my entering the classroom, the children were aware that I was conducting a research project. They seemed unsure of my role and what to expect of me. As time passed and I became a part of their classroom community I believe that the children began to see me as an active participant who was doing research in their classroom. As a participant who played such a role for approximately one hour daily I realize that I grew to know and care for the children and became an integral part of their classroom culture.

**Selection of Cases**

Two different books were used for the first novel study. Since choice and ownership were valued in the classroom it was critical that students were given the opportunity to select a book of their choice following a book talk. To work the study into the existing structure of the classroom Mrs. Miyashiro and I agreed that she would facilitate discussion for one book and, at the same time, I would facilitate discussions for the other text. Each of us worked with twelve students or half the class. The twelve students I worked with met in two groups of six to
discuss Blue Skin of the Sea (Salisbury, 1992). I selected one group of six students whom I studied in-depth. These case study students participated together in the same small group from January 1999 through June 1999. Although literature discussion circles are usually associated with small groups of four to five students, they can number six or seven. Mrs. Miyashiro and I agreed to number the literature discussion groups at six because of the logistical constraints and the research that maintained that in discussion groups of six or seven many topics are raised and more perspectives can be brought to the discussion (Hanssen, 1990). I also decided to collect data on six students to give representation of at least four different ethnic groups, and at least three of each gender in the case of attrition.

A criterion-based sampling (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993) was used to select the six of the twelve students who chose Blue Skin of the Sea. I gave the students brief descriptions of the two book choices in the novel study - Blue Skin of the Sea and Under the Blood Red Sun. Each then wrote his or her choice on a piece of paper. Mrs. Miyashiro and I met to sort the students by their choice and were pleased to find that ten students selected Blue
Skin of the Sea and the others (fourteen students) Under the Blood Red Sun. Mrs. Miyashiro moved two students from the Under the Blood Red Sun group to the Blue Skin of the Sea group because these two students had read and presented Under the Blood Red Sun to the class earlier in the year. This evened out both groups so that Mrs. Miyashiro and I had twelve students in each group. Out of twelve students who chose Blue Skin of the Sea, I selected six students for the case study group. I identified the following criteria to select students for the case study group:

a. Student choice - students who selected Blue Skin of the Sea as the novel they wanted to read.

b. Teacher recommendation - The case study group represented a range in the level in reading proficiency (High, Average, Low) and level of participation in class discussion.

c. General observations - general rapport (willingness to participate in discussion, open to answering questions and taking part in informal conversations) with researcher. Observations were taken during the first few weeks of the research study.

d. Ethnic distribution - representative of the cultural diversity and demographics found within the school and the neighborhoods represented in its population.

e. Gender - three girls, three boys.

For a detailed description of the process used to select students, see Chapter 4. A brief description of each student which includes information about the sampling
criteria is presented here. They will be described in more
detail in Chapter 6. All students' names are pseudonyms
and were self-selected.

Courtney

Courtney is Portuguese, Hawaiian, Chinese, and German. Her dark shoulder length hair with soft curls at the end sweeps around her deep dark brown eyes accentuating her smooth complexion. She appears very quiet and unassuming in class, yet raises her hand and asserts herself in the literature discussions. Initially rated as low average in reading proficiency, Courtney reads the texts in the study independently. At ten years old, Courtney dresses like the other girls in shorts and T-shirts or tank tops and often uses the many colorful pens and pencils kept in her fancy pencil holder. Her parents, concerned about her transition into a large intermediate school and her academic performance, transferred her into a small private school after her fifth grade year.

Tatyana

Tatyana’s dark brown eyes and smooth brownish complexion are characteristic of her rich ethnic mix — Japanese, Chinese, English, Irish, Scotch, German, Hawaiian, Puerto Rican and Indian. A self-confident
individual, Tatyana reads at an average level for fifth grade. She often wears her long dark brown hair pulled back. Tatyana dresses in shorts and a tank top with popular beaded or gold jewelry hanging from her neck and wrists. Although sizably shorter than her classmates, she carries herself with pride and was selected by her peers to be an island princess in the Royal Hawaiian May Day Court.

Robert

Robert's straight jet-black hair and light skin are characteristic of his Japanese ancestry, however it is his Filipino last name that gives away his half-Filipino background. In class, this ten-year-old is conscientious, neat, and responsible for his work in school, yet he is also a fun-loving and popular individual who was selected by the other fifth grade students to represent them as an escort in the Royal Hawaiian May Day Court. Robert reads at a high-average reading level for fifth grade. Like the other boys, Robert dresses in shorts, a T-shirt, and athletic shoes. He is active in sports, athletic, and plays the trumpet in the school band.

Kaipo

On special occasions Kaipo spikes his dark brown hair with reddish highlights. His light complexion, large eyes,
and dark brown hair make him appear to be ethnically “mixed.” Although Kaipo is not exactly sure of his racial background, he knows that he has some Hawaiian and Chinese and has a Hawaiian last name. Kaipo struggles with his reading, and is viewed as a low reader for fifth grade. He is always dressed immaculately in shorts, a T-shirt, and the slip-in sandals popular at the time. The care he takes in his appearance match his neat and careful handwriting. Occasionally I’d observe Kaipo in trouble in the office or visited by the counselor for his inappropriate behavior in and out of the classroom.

Jenna

Jenna often wears her thick, long black hair pulled back like the other girls in class. Jenna is of Japanese and Chinese ancestry. She is well liked and admired by her peers and is always selected for citizenship awards and as student council representative. Jenna appears very shy and quiet in class discussions but seems to be comfortable in sharing and talking with her peers. In class she is conscientious and is a high-average reader for fifth grade. Jenna was selected by her peers to be a princess in the prestigious Royal Hawaiian May Day Court. She is responsible for her class work and always turns in
assignments on time. Jenna dresses in the latest fashion — shorts, T-shirts and high heeled sneakers and often has a Beanie Babies key chain attached to her shorts. Like the other girls in class she keeps a colorful collection of fancy pencils and erasers in a pencil box.

Alex

Alex is considered a “bright kid” by his peers and teachers and is in the gifted and talented math program. He is referred to as a high or proficient reader as a fifth grader. Alex is always willing to share his thoughts and opinions with the rest of the group. His light skin, dark brown hair, and lightly freckled face are typically characteristic of his Caucasian-Japanese ethnicity. Each day Alex comes to school dressed in long baggy shorts, a loosely fit athletic T-shirt, and slippers (thongs). He is bigger than the other boys his age and is very active in sports, especially basketball.

Research Design

The book selections played a critical role in the development of this study. Due to the focus on literature specific to the culture in Hawai‘i, care was taken in selecting the literature for the study. Refer to Figure
3.1 that outlines the order and organization of literature discussions conducted in the study.

![Literature Discussion Flow Chart](image)

**Selection #1 - Short Story Discussion of “J’Like Ten Thousand”**

We began the study with a short story, “J’Like Ten Thousand” from *Pass On, No Pass Back!* by Darryl Lum (1990). This story, set on the island of Oahu, is descriptive of
the typical New Year's celebration anywhere in Hawai'i. The story begins with criticism of a young boy's father and culminates with an appreciation of their relationship at the New Year's celebration. Lum crafts the story by highlighting the nuances of the language and tells the story in the local creole dialect (pidgin) spoken colloquially by many people in Hawai'i. Lum tells of his holiday experiences growing up in Hawai'i. He plays upon the common "pake" (frugal) stereotype, describing how his father refuses to buy firecrackers because he is "too tight." Then he shares his extended family Christmas traditions of how Santa presents them with firecrackers. It ends with an appreciation for his father, even if he is "too tight" to buy lots of fireworks at New Years.

Selection #2 - Novel Study of Blue Skin of the Sea

After discussing Lum's short story we moved into a novel study. Due to the length of the book and the time available we selected six stories from the book Blue Skin of the Sea, an award-winning novel by Graham Salisbury. I selected the particular stories based on the depth and richness of the writing, the powerful use of the local language, and the stories that seemed most appropriate to the age of students in the study. Stories from this book
were also selected because of the numerous awards including An American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults, A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year, the Bank Street Child Study Children’s Book Committee Award, and the Parent’s Choice Award for Literature.

Salisbury masterfully creates eleven stories about a young boy’s life growing up in Kona on the Big Island of Hawai‘i. Although each story is unique and can stand alone, at the same time the stories are brilliantly woven together and flow as a complete whole. This book describes the main character’s life as he comes to grips with his fears on the Big Island of Hawai‘i. Written about life in the early 1950’s Salisbury captures his readers with the issues universal to the human experience, yet flavors it with experiences unique to Hawai‘i’s island culture. The six particular stories selected were – “Deep Water” (1953), “Malanamekehuluohemanu” (1956), “The Year of the Black Widows” (1958), “You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town” (1960), “Blue Skin of the Sea” (1963), and “Islanders” (1966).

Mrs. Miyashiro facilitated the discussion for Under the Blood Red Sun (1994) also by Graham Salisbury. We agreed to select two books by Salisbury because he is one of the few authors of intermediate/young adolescent fiction
written about Hawai‘i and common issues were present in both books. By using books with common issues we hoped it would allow the entire class to hold discussions which would enrich the talk in small group discussions. Under the Blood Red Sun won the Scott O’Dell Award for Historical Fiction and is on Hawai‘i’s Nene Award List, a booklist based on children’s choices. Under the Blood Red Sun (1994) is told from the perspective of Tomi, an adolescent Japanese-American boy living in Hawai‘i. It vividly describes the confusion and suffering he faces as his father and grandfather are arrested following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Despite the trials he experiences as a Japanese-American during the war, Tomi is strengthened by the deep loyalties shown by his friends, both Japanese and non-Japanese.

In both books Graham Salisbury does a brilliant job of illustrating the events in lucid detail and characterizes the people and cultures in Hawai‘i with remarkable depth and accuracy.

Selection #3 - Text Sets on Students’ Issues

Upon completion of the novel study for the case study group, Blue Skin of the Sea, I read through the transcripts and generated a list of topics and issues. Then the entire
class met and shared the issues raised in their discussion groups. We cross-referenced the list I generated and the student lists. The students then took that cross-referenced list of issues and generated questions about these issues. Together the class met and categorized their questions by issue. Finally the students selected four major issues which we used to build the text sets. For a description of the identification of issues driving the text sets see Figure 3.2.

I identify a list of topics generated through reading the novel study transcript

Students generate a list of issues raised in their novel studies.

We cross reference lists: student issues with my list from novel study.

Students generate questions for the issues from the cross-reference list.

Students categorize questions into issues.

Select four issues guiding Text Sets

Figure 3.2. Selection of Text Sets

Initially the criteria I set for books in the text set were that they had to be books about Hawai‘i. However, due to the quantitative lack of books about Hawai‘i that related to the issue driving the text sets, books from other ethnic cultures were used to supplement the guiding
issue. Since I did not have access to enough books about Hawai‘i, the major criteria for selection became books that addressed the specific issues identified through the process in Figure 3.2 -- culture, relationships, war and power, and racism -- and would allow students to explore these issues in greater depth. Other considerations I used in selecting books were: cultural consistency (the activities, attitudes, people, places and things were portrayed in a manner traditionally found within local culture [Wellington, 1998]); multi-ethnic illustrations (the illustrations portray the character from various races and cultures, characters were portrayed in a respectful and culturally appropriate manner [Wellington, 1998]); and books with both female and male characters.

The complete list of books used by the class is provided in Chapter 4. Figure 3.3 shows the books read and discussed by the case study group. I rated the books on the following scale Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor in the areas of cultural consistency and multi-ethnic illustrations and checked yes or no for both female and male characters. The children in the case study group had three days during the literature discussion time to read as many books in the Text Set on Culture.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title, Date, Author</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cultural Consistency</th>
<th>Multi-ethnic illustration</th>
<th>F/M characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Kids (1998) by R. Fassler</td>
<td>A celebration of diversity, filled with photographs of children in Hawai'i, each photo identifies the ethnic background of the child.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii is a Rainbow (1985) by S. Feeney</td>
<td>A photographic color book of Hawai'i. The colors of the rainbow are used to organize and depict the different kinds of people, places, plants, and animals of Hawai'i.</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutū and the Ti Plant (1993) by S. Goforth</td>
<td>Tutū (grandmother) uses the threat of a hurricane as a time to educate her grandchildren about Hawaiian life and values in old Hawai'i.</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luka's Quilt (1994) by G. Guback</td>
<td>A story about the relationship between a grandmother and granddaughter separated by their different perspectives on a traditional Hawaiian quilt.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>Character Dominates</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the Colors of the Earth (1994) by S. Hamanaka</td>
<td>Told in poetic form, the author uses the colors of the earth to celebrate the diversity in children.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose Slippers are Those? (1988) by M. Kahalewai</td>
<td>A simple story depicting diversity in Hawai‘i through different kinds of slippers worn.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Hate English (1989) by E. Levine</td>
<td>A girl moves from Hong Kong to New York and struggles with losing her language to learn a new one.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alii Kai (1992) by R. Matsuura</td>
<td>A simple story of Hawaiian values shown through the honor and respect paid to a generous and unselfish man.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gift of Aloha (1996) by G. McBarnet</td>
<td>A tale of the flower lei as one of the loveliest gifts of aloha.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgivings at Obachans (1994) by J. Mitsui-Brown</td>
<td>Using food, the author shows how the character’s Japanese culture is celebrated as a part of a traditional American holiday.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumpling Soup (1993) by</td>
<td>This fictional story tells of New Year’s tradition.</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
J. Rattigan and celebration in Hawai'i. It expresses the warmth and affection among family and friends, celebrates the mix of foods and customs from different cultures.

| The Prince and the Li Hing Mui (1998) by S. Takayama | A Hawai'i variant of the fairy tale The Princess and the Pea. The author humorously plays upon the language and culture present in Hawai'i. | Good | Good | Yes |

| Sumorella (1997) by S. Takayama | A Hawai'i version of Cinderella, playing on the food, language, people and culture in Hawai'i. | Good | Good | Male Character dominates |

**Figure 3.3. Text Set on Culture**

**Selection #4 - Read-Aloud of Dance for the Land**

The final text used for the study, *Dance for the Land* (McClaren, 1999) was published during the course of the study. When I first received the book I was concerned with the authenticity and author's length of time spent in Hawai'i, but after reading it, my fears were alleviated.

The present day setting, the focus on current issues facing children in Hawai'i, the female perspective of the main
character, the character's age being close to the children in the study, the authentic feel of the author's understanding of language and culture in Hawai'i, and Mrs. Miyashiro's enthusiasm about the book convinced me that it was important to include it in the study.

The main character, Kate, is hapa haole (part white and part Hawaiian) and moves from California to Hawai'i with her dark skinned father and brother. Kate's own light complexion and resistance to her Hawaiian heritage complicate her struggle to fit into a culture foreign to her. As this thirteen-year-old faces the adjustments of a new school and new life, she learns about and comes to appreciate her heritage through the hula and becomes the nucleus of peace in her quarrelsome family.

In the next section I explain the methodology and data collection techniques used in this research study. A description and discussion of each data source follows Figure 3.4 which lists the sources, methods, and timeline of data collected. After the discussion of each source of data the data analysis for the research questions is described.
Methodology and Data Collection Techniques

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<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>February, 1999</td>
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<td></td>
<td>March, 1999</td>
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<td>April, 1999</td>
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<td></td>
<td>May, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-interviews</td>
<td>January, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Representational Interviews</td>
<td>March, 1999</td>
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<td>Post-Interviews</td>
<td>June, 1999</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary Sources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Literature Journals</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observational Field Notes</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Reflection Journal</td>
<td>On-going</td>
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<td>Class Charts</td>
<td>April, 1999</td>
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<td>Photographs</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar of Events</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.4. Sources, Methods, and Timeline of Data Collection Methodology and Data Sources

The methods that seemed to match the purposes of this inquiry included audiotapes of discussion transcripts (Hubbard & Power, 1993); interviews (Seidman, 1991); artifact analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992); and personal reflection through journal writing (Hubbard & Power, 1993).

To understand the participants I began as an observer and then moved into the role of participant observer (Spradley, 1980). I used the information from my field notes, audiotapes, videotapes, pictures, and class handouts to create a context for this study.
Primary Data Sources

This section describes the primary sources of data followed by an explanation of the secondary sources of data used in this investigation.

Literature Discussion Transcripts

Transcripts of the literature discussions served as a primary data source that was critical in developing an understanding of how children identify with and responded to culturally relevant literature.

All of the literature discussions that the case study group participated in were audio taped and transcribed. There were a total of 24 literature discussions ranging from 20 to 60 minutes in length. This included one transcript for the short story (whole class), eleven transcripts for the novel study, Blue Skin of the Sea (case study group), two transcripts of text set discussions (case study group), and ten transcripts for the Dance for the Land read-aloud (whole class) which totaled 170 pages. Each twenty-minute transcript took approximately two hours to transcribe. Most of the transcripts were completed within two weeks of the discussion. A few were transcribed within a month of the discussion and all transcripts were transcribed by the end of June 1999. I conducted all
transcribing myself using a Sanyo TRC 8030 standard cassette transcribing system.

**Interviews**

I conducted interviews with each case study child three times during the course of the study — at the outset of the study a pre-interview was conducted, during the study Symbolic Representational Interviews were given, and at the end of the study a post-interview was conducted.

Both group and individual interviews were conducted in the library conference room for audio taping purposes. This 20 x 10 room was positioned on the inside of the library, with a glass window on the door and away from all the normal traffic of the library. The conference room provided a quiet place to conduct the interview where the voices of the interviewer and interviewee could be clearly heard and not be interrupted by anything occurring in class. I decided to conduct the interviews in the library conference room because I did not want the children to be distracted from other activities in class or feel self-conscious by others watching them during the interview. I wanted an environment suitable for an interview.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggest that different
settings induce talk due to the possibility of being overheard or due to distractions.

At the end of the study I individually interviewed each of the case study children to identify their perceptions about literature of Hawai‘i as a primary source of data. "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Siedman, 1993, p. 3). I believe the interview was an important opportunity for students to reflect upon and voice their experiences with literature relevant to their culture. The interview gave me another perspective and way to see into the students' perceptions about the literature.

**Pre-interviews.** At the time of the pre-interview I was unfamiliar with the children and had not selected the case study group. Due to the challenge of interviewing all twenty-four students and my concern with making the students feel comfortable, the pre-interviews were conducted in small groups of three. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) claim that group interviews are common in ethnography because they allow for a greater number of people to be interviewed at the same time and have the advantage of making the interview situation less strange.
The interviews were open-ended and informal and took on a conversational tone. My major task as interviewer was to "build upon and explore their responses to those questions" (Seidman, 1991, p. 9). See Appendix B for pre-interview questions.

Each pre-interview was approximately 30 minutes in length. The pre-interviews were transcribed within two weeks of the interviews and took a total of 12 hours to transcribe.

**Symbolic Representational Interviews.** Another primary source of data were interviews conducted using the Symbolic Representational Interview (SRI) method (Enciso, 1990) where each case study student was audio taped and videotaped. The purpose of these interviews was to verify and further develop my understandings of students' engagements with culturally relevant literature. All students in the class participated in the interviews during the initial short story, "J'Like Ten Thousand," to learn the interview procedure. The case study students were interviewed together after reading the chapter "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town" in Blue Skin of the Sea. They sat around a round table and took turns being interviewed one by one. The total group interview was approximately one
hour and fifteen minutes in length. At the end of the entire novel, Blue Skin of the Sea, each case study participant was interviewed individually once in the library conference room. Each of these interviews was approximately 20 minutes to 30 minutes in length.

In her dissertation, Patricia Enciso (1990) created the Symbolic Representational Interview in an attempt to enter a child's world of engagement with text. She hoped that this procedure would serve as a window into the mind of a child as he/she entered into the story world. She interviewed students by having them manipulate colored paper cutouts while they were reading a story. After giving the student a packet of colored construction paper she asked the student to choose a color and to cut out a shape that represented each character in the story, as well as a shape for themselves as a reader, for the author, and for the narrator. She found that the children were able to demonstrate the subtle relationships, feelings, predictions, concerns, and memories they experienced as they read by manipulating the cutouts.

In her rationale for using symbolic representation as a compliment to introspective verbal reports, Enciso cited the work of Margaret Donaldson (1979) who recognized that
children may demonstrate a greater capacity to understand perspectives if both the task and researcher’s language make sense to the child. Enciso claimed that at times children may be able to read and not be able to talk in great detail about reading, and, even if they do, it might not represent their actual experience. She cited Rosenblatt’s (1978) argument that language-based responses to literature move the reader from the primary aesthetic experiences (evocation) to secondary abstractions (response). While both are critical, in this study the primary aesthetic was the focus so I sought some tool in addition to verbal descriptions.

I asked children to select a particular chapter in Blue Skin of the Sea. The children were supplied with nine different colors of construction paper -- black, white, blue, yellow, red, purple, orange, green, and brown. Then they were asked to select specific colors and shapes to symbolize the characters, objects, or scenes that played a role in the story and cut out a shape symbolizing one as a reader. Upon completing the cutouts the children were interviewed. They were asked to describe each cutout, explain why he/she shaped the cutouts as such, and explain why he/she selected the specific colors. Then the child
selected a section of the chapter that was powerful to him/her and read aloud one page (approximately 200-300 words). As the child read the text I asked him/her to show me what was happening in his/her mind. I asked the child to explain why he/she moved the cutouts as he/she did and to explain what was happening as he/she reenacted the events. The child also moved the cutout to show where he/she was in relation to the story events and characters (See Appendix C for interview questions).

**Post-interviews.** Post-interviews were conducted individually with the case study participants. Each interview was approximately 30 to 40 minutes in length and these interviews were transcribed within a week of the interviews. Total transcription time was approximately 22 hours. (See questions in Appendix D).

**Secondary Data Sources**

Secondary sources of data were used to support the primary sources of data. In this investigation I used the primary sources of data to create the categories for analysis and secondary sources of data were used to support the categories.
Student Literature Journals

A secondary data source included children’s written work in their literature journal. Class members had journals to share their reactions, responses and reflections to the literature. Each child in the case study group responded in their literature journal at least ten times over the course of the study. The children drew a few sketches, conducted two written conversations, wrote their questions as they read, noted particular quotes from the text that moved them, and reflected upon the reading through writing.

Observational Field Notes

Observational field notes served as a secondary source of data. Detailed field notes were taken during the first month of the study when the initial observations were conducted. The extent to which I took field notes changed over the course of the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) write that observations take different forms at different stages of the inquiry. I took careful notes in a black composition tablet. Each day the date and time was recorded along with a description of the activity occurring at the time. I also noted the assignments written on the chalkboard. The first fifteen observations I made were
literature discussions that involved the entire class. Although I audiotaped these discussions I only transcribed two discussions and instead relied heavily on my field notes. Each day I drew a vertical line down the center of each sheet of paper. On the left half of the sheet I recorded the child speaking and his/her statement as best I could. On the other half of the paper I wrote my personal observations and opinions about the discussion (Hubbard & Power, 1993). For example next to the children's statements on January 13 I noted, "Great open-ended discussion, children making connections to the reading and comment on author's style and craft. Talk shows excitement and enthusiasm for this book. Words used - intense, want to read, lots of action, powerful, anxious, leaves you on a hook" (Field notes, January 13, 1999).

As the study evolved I became more of a participant than observer, hence it was difficult for me to take detailed field notes and participate in discussion at the same time. The extent of the field notes changed and I relied on the audiotapes and transcripts to record the literature discussions. During this period the written field notes were limited to the date, the list of participants and a few written notes about the literature
discussion. For example on 2/17/99 I wrote, “Issues: Alex: Bet-mean, Courtney: wanted to get back at those who teased, stand up for rights, Kaipo: culture - doesn’t matter who are.”

On one occasion the audiotape did not record and in my field notes I had to recall the discussion to the best of my memory immediately following the discussion.

Field notes also included a brief description of my plans. For example, Monday -- children read, 10:40-11:30, read and jot down notes on post-its (reactions, thoughts, questions, issues). Twice I could not be present in class due to workshop obligations so I wrote the children a note and asked them to participate in written conversations with each other. These notes were glued into my field note tablet.

**Personal Reflection Journal**

My personal reflection journal was an important secondary data source which served as a place for me to write about what happened and describe people, places, and events, in addition to ideas, strategies, reflections, and patterns that were emerging (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Hubbard & Power, 1993). I expanded upon ideas in my field notes in a personal reflection journal that I kept at home on my
computer. There were a total of 55 written entries in the reflection journal. During the first month, I reflected weekly because most of my thoughts and observations were included in my field notes. From the second month when I became a participant through the end of the study, I wrote in my reflection journal every day after we tape-recorded a discussion. Each entry included a description of the events and my personal reactions and thoughts. I used the reflection journal to expand upon my thoughts and think through the events that had occurred that day. I also included possible ideas and plans as a result of what I observed. I believe this journal became an important tool in supplementing my field notes. It was a more detailed record and expansion of what I observed and my personal thoughts as a participant. Each reflection journal entry was completed the same day as or within a week of the visit to the classroom.

Class Charts

Other sources of data included student webs and charts created during the novel study. Students documented issues that surfaced in their reading on chart paper while they read. Later during the entire class discussions students added to their lists of issues, categorized the issues, and
generated questions about the major issues. These issues and questions were listed on new charts and hung around the classroom to guide students as they read through the text sets. These class charts and webs were collected and used as additional sources of data.

Photographs

Three rolls of photographs were taken of the students while they engaged in literature discussions. I took pictures of the children periodically during the study. I photographed the students reading, discussing, participating in drama engagements, and sharing artifacts. These photographs were used to help me create a context for this study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Calendar of Events

Another source of data later became very useful in helping me organize the data. I kept a calendar of events in which I recorded my visits to the classroom. In each block I wrote a brief description of the engagement that day which included what happened, the chapter number we read or discussed, and the group who participated. After I transcribed the audiotapes I highlighted those dates in pink to help me record the specific date and number of tapes that were transcribed. I also noted each date that I
made an entry in my reflection log. This calendar became a reference source for me because it provided an overall view of the study.

Figure 3.5 matches the research questions with the qualitative methods of data collection used in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the content of children’s responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature?</td>
<td>Literature discussions, interviews, written reflections, field notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time?</td>
<td>Interviews, literature discussions, written reflections, field notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.5. Research Questions and Methods of Collection

With the first question my intention was to look at the content of children’s responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature. Through in-depth analysis of the transcripts and interviews I looked at the content of their responses to the culturally relevant literature. The second question sought to address how the individual understandings and responses to culturally relevant literature evolved over time. In question one I wanted to look at the content of their
responses and what they talked about when responding to culturally relevant literature. In question two I concentrated on the interviews to see how individual students perceived literature from their culture, and how they used their understandings of literature to think about their own lives.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis or "seeing and then seeing again" (Hubbard & Power, 1993) occurred as the data was collected and in-depth analysis of data occurred after the collection of data was completed. Merriam (1988) states that in qualitative research, "the process of data collection and analysis is recursive and dynamic" (p. 123).

The data analysis consisted of coding and interpreting the data. The actual process of analysis began with transcribing the tapes. Karen Smith (1993) cited Benton et al. (1988) and Edelsky (1981) who found that transcribing their own tapes gave them "a sense of the richness of the responses and made them more attentive to content, implications and assumptions" (p. 67). The transcription of audiotapes was a lengthy and tedious process; however, it provided an opportunity to conduct an initial analysis
of the content of the discussions. As I transcribed the literature discussions I made notes about the content of the discussions in the margins and wrote notes in my reflective teacher journal (Hubbard & Power, 1993). After data collection was completed I made several copies of each set of transcripts to work with. I kept an original set of all transcripts in a binder organized chronologically. Once the data was transcribed I analyzed the data according to the research questions. To review, the questions guiding this research investigation were:

1) What is the content of children’s responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature?

2) How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time?

**Analysis for Question One**

With the first question I explored fifth graders’ responses to culturally relevant literature. To generate categories for this question examined the thirteen literature discussion transcripts in which only the case study group participated (Blue Skin of the Sea, text set on culture). I did not use the literature discussions that
involved the entire class to create categories. See Figure 3.6 for the process used in analyzing the data for the first research question. Due to the nature of the literature discussions and to facilitate the analysis process, I separated the transcripts into three sets of data - Data Set 1) two text set discussions on culture; Data Set 2) two "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town", a chapter in Blue Skin of the Sea; Data Set 3) the remaining ten discussions in Blue Skin of the Sea. The two discussions from "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town" were separated from the rest because the children seemed to respond more deeply to this chapter because it took place in their hometown of Hilo.

Transcripts of the literature discussions were analyzed using the process of analytic induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) which included looking back at the data for categories and then for relationships among the categories and later looking back at the data to modify and refine the categories (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

To address children’s responses to culturally relevant literature, I started with one set of data, the Text Set on culture, and chunked the transcripts into topics or units of meaning (K. Smith, 1993). Each chunk followed the
strand of an idea from beginning to end and was labeled according to the topic or issue of discussion in the margin of the transcript. After one set of transcripts was chunked I cut up the transcripts individually and labeled them by topic or issue that the students seemed to be discussing. Then they were sorted into preliminary categories such as: Pride/Valuing Diversity, Acknowledgment of Difference, Cultural Pluralism, Melting Pot Theory, Becoming Who You Are With, Denial of Conflict, Judging Other Cultures. These preliminary categories were written at the top of a blank sheet of paper. Each individual chunk was sorted into the preliminary category and taped on the sheet of paper. I placed all the sheets of paper on the floor and studied the preliminary categories searching for links and patterns connecting them. I moved the sheets of paper around grouping together the preliminary categories that related to each other and collapsed them into larger issue categories that pertained to response to culture. For example the preliminary categories -- Pride/Valuing Diversity, Acknowledgement of Difference, and Cultural Pluralism were grouped together into a collapsed Sub-Category called Culture is Diverse.
The same analysis process was conducted at three separate sittings. Once for the text set on culture, another for "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town", and another for the rest of the *Blue Skin of the Sea* transcripts. After each set of data transcripts was divided into chunks and labeled by topic or issue, and sorted into preliminary categories and collapsed Sub-Categories, I then took the three sets of collapsed Sub-Categories from the different sittings and collapsed them into each other to generate Major Categories to answer the research question. For example the Major Category generated from the text set on culture was: Historical Understandings and the collapsed Sub-categories were: Cultural Chameleon, Culture is Diverse, and Judging Other Cultures. The Major Category generated from the transcripts of "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town" was: Building Historical Understandings with Sub-categories: Making Sense of History, Connecting History through Story, Sensing Historical Connections. The Major Category created through the rest of the transcripts from the *Blue Skin of the Sea* discussion was Sense of Belonging with Sub-categories: Knowing the Language, Having a Sense of History, Confronting Racial Issues, Living the Local
Culture, Creating Meaningful Relationships, Knowing When to Have a Voice, and Understanding the Realities of Living in the Islands. The Major Category Connections to the Literature had Sub-categories: Living Through the Experience, Responding Emotionally, Creating Images, Connecting with Personal Experiences, Identifying Reading Strategies, and Relating to the Language which were generated from the transcripts from the Blue Skin of the Sea discussions. This constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) helped me to find links between concepts and patterns in the data. In this manner I worked to find relationships between the Major Categories and my research question. The Major Categories for the first research question were: Sense of Belonging, Cultural Theories, Building Historical Understandings, and Connections to the Literature.
Creating Major Categories: Took Sub-categories from Data Set 1, 2, and 3 and collapsed all three data sets into Major categories to answer first research question.

Secondary Data Sources: Data Set 4 (interviews), Data Set 5 (student journals), Data Set 6 (Dance for the Land), Data Set 7 (J'Like Ten Thousand)

- Cut transcripts and individual entries from student journals into individual statements and fit into Major Categories.

Figure 3.6. Data Analysis Process, Research Question One
The transcript analysis of the literature discussions, participant observations, and interviews were used to triangulate the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used the Major Categories generated from the thirteen literature discussion transcripts to guide my analysis of the whole class literature discussions ("J'Like Ten Thousand" and Dance for the Land), interviews and children's written work. The whole class discussion of "J'Like Ten Thousand" and discussions of Dance for the Land were cut into chunks and sorted into the Major Categories. Individual statements from the interview transcripts were cut and sorted into the Major Categories. The children's written work from the literature journals were copied, cut up separately and each entry was sorted into the Major Categories. The secondary data sources were used to verify the Major Categories created through analysis of the primary data sources.

Analysis for Question Two

I asked Question Two to explore how individual children's understandings and responses to culturally relevant literature evolved over time. The data collected in the interviews seemed to best address children's understandings of the literature, thus I decided to use the
interview as the primary data to generate the categories. Each child's responses were analyzed individually because initial analysis of the data collection indicated varied responses from child to child. To facilitate this process, each child was designated a specific color that was used to assist with differentiating data for the analysis. Refer to Table 3.7 which shows the color each child was assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jenna</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtney</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatyana</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaipo</td>
<td>Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.7. Color Chart for Analysis

I copied each child's statements from the pre-interview, Symbolic Representational Interviews, and post-interviews on colored sheets of paper. Each individual statement was cut up and placed into folders labeled by child and color.

Initially I intended to use a different set of categories for each child. However, after identifying categories and analyzing the data for one child I realized that the categories might work for analyzing the other children's data. I tried to individualize the categories
but realized that if I did individualize it would be difficult to compare the responses across the categories. Once I had identified categories for the first case study student I used those categories to analyze the five other students' responses. Refer to Figure 3.8 which shows the process used to analyze data for research question two.

**Creating Categories with Alex's Interview Data:**
- Cut into individual statements
- Labeled by topic or issue
- Wrote topics/issues at the top of a sheet of paper
- Sorted each individual statement and taped onto sheet of paper
- Studied patterns and collapsed topics/issues into preliminary categories
- Refined categories

**Alex's Literature Discussion transcripts:**
- Cut into individual statements
- Sorted into categories

**Alex's preliminary categories**

**Alex's written work from student journal:**
- Cut into individual statements
- Sorted into categories

**Alex's preliminary categories:**
- Refined into Major Categories

**Figure 3.8. Data Analysis Process for Research Question Two**
I took Alex's colored interview statements first because he had the most data. I cut up each of Alex's individual statements and read through each one. Then I sorted the statements according to a topic or issue and wrote the topic or issue at the top of a blank sheet of paper. Examples of these topics and issues included: Personal Heritage, Personal Inquiry, Personal Theory, Injustices, Cultural Theory, Prejudice, and Self as Character. After I had sorted all the statements onto the sheets of paper I taped them down and placed them on the floor to study patterns between them. I grouped together related topics or issues and collapsed them into preliminary interview categories. For example I took the categories Personal Heritage, Personal Inquiry, Personal Theory and collapsed them into one category, Personal Issues. At that point the preliminary interview categories generated by Alex's interview data seemed broad enough to be used to analyze the other case study participants' data.

Next I read through the literature discussion transcripts ("J'Like Ten Thousand," Blue Skin of the Sea, Text Set, Dance for the Land) and took a highlighter pen and marked each child's individual statements with his/her
designated color. Then I cut up each individual literature discussion statement and sorted them into stacks by color. I took Alex’s literature discussion statements and added them onto the sheets of paper with his preliminary interview categories. At this point Alex’s categories were refined and further developed. After I analyzed Alex’s literature discussion responses and fit them into the existing categories generated through the interviews, I followed the same process with his written work. I took copies of his written reflections from his literature journal and highlighted each piece of writing with his designated color. His written statements were added to the existing categories and again the categories were further refined and developed.

Alex’s categories were placed on the floor and used to guide the analysis of the five other case study participants. I went through the same process with each case study participant’s data. I labeled each member’s interviews, literature discussion responses, and written reflections by their respective color, cut up each response, and placed them into the categories generated through the analysis of Alex’s data. I needed to look at and compare the data as a whole; thus I created a matrix on
the floor. Each child’s name was listed in the columns along the top and the Major Categories were listed along the side in rows. The data for each child was placed in his or her respective Major Category. I used this data and matrix to help organize and to create individual profiles for each case study member.

Trustworthiness

Measures were taken during the implementation of this research inquiry to increase trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) write that the inquirer needs “to persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (p. 315). They identify four criteria used in qualitative research to establish trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

Credibility

Due to the large amount of data that was collected I kept other forms of notes in addition to my field notes. I kept a calendar of daily activities and a personal reflection log.

Other safeguards I took into account were prolonged engagement at the site, building trust and rapport with the
children while guarding against over rapport with them, and awareness of my personal biases.

Triangulation of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to crosscheck the accuracy of data gathered. Triangulation of data occurred by using three methods of data collection - participant observation (Spradley, 1980), interviewing (Seidman, 1991), and transcript analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

In order to refine ideas in the research I discussed ideas and patterns in the data with the classroom teacher and Alice Kawakami, assistant professor who taught the language arts courses at the University of Hawai’i at Hilo. During data analysis I also had intensive sessions with Gloria Kauffman, who provided an outsider perspective and asked clarifying questions when my insider perspective and vision became blurred. As the research progressed I met with others, including Marie Hara, local writer and English professor at University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, Ester Mookini, Hawaiian Studies scholar, and family members to help refine my own ideas and provide additional insights about issues surrounding Hawai’i’s culture.
Member Checking

Member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was conducted through asking each of the participants to review portions of the transcripts at two separate times. After analysis was complete I showed the case study participants drafts to ensure that I presented them accurately. Mrs. Miyashiro was provided copies of all the transcripts as they were transcribed. She read the drafts of all chapters and provided feedback on the writing.

Transferability

Lincoln & Guba (1985) claim that it is, “not the naturalist’s task to provide an index of transferability; it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers” (p. 316). This is best done through providing a “thick description” to enable the reader of the study to make a judgment about whether or not the study is transferable. In this study I attempted to provide thick descriptions of the setting and participants.

Dependability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that if it is possible to use the techniques to determine credibility, it may not be necessary to demonstrate dependability separately. A
technique characterized as "overlap methods" represent the kind of triangulation in relation to credibility. By establishing credibility dependability was established. In this study, triangulation was used.

Conformability

The major technique for establishing conformability is the audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Other techniques, triangulation and keeping a reflexive journal, are used as a part of the audit process. Lincoln & Guba (1985) draw from Halpern’s six audit trail categories to trace the accuracy. These include raw data, data reduction and analysis products, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, materials relating to intentions and dispositions, instrument development and information. Each of the six categories is addressed in the design of this study.

Conclusion

My primary interest in this inquiry was to explore fifth grade students’ responses to literature as they live through literature set in their cultural environment. I realize that my personal experiences and perspectives
influenced the way the research and analysis were conducted. Rosenblatt (1938) points out:

The social scientist recognizes that, like all other human beings, he is the product of a particular culture, a particular social environment, and that the assumptions assimilated from them must be taken into account as he works out a certain hypothesis concerning human personality and society . . . (p. 132)

The purpose of this study "[was] not to find the 'correct' or 'true' interpretation of the facts, but rather to eliminate erroneous conclusions so that one is left with the best possible, the most compelling interpretation" (Bromley, 1986, p. 38). In this study, I searched for the students' interpretation with the intention of developing a full understanding of how they respond to text that was representative of their culture.

In this chapter I presented a rationale for using the naturalistic mode of inquiry and presented a description of the data collection and analysis processes. This study utilized qualitative research methods and focused upon techniques used in an ethnographic study. A case study group of six students, three girls and three boys of differing ethnicity, was selected from a fifth grade class in Hawai'i. Children participated in four different literature discussions, a short story, novel study, text
set study, and class read-aloud, and responded to literature representative of their culture. Through collection of data and production of transcripts from literature discussions, interviews, observational field notes, and collection of written artifacts and through inductive analysis of data and establishing trustworthiness by credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability I studied students' responses to culturally relevant literature in Hawai'i.
CHAPTER 4

HISTORY OF THE STUDY AND CLASSROOM EVENTS

This chapter is a history and development of the classroom instruction and the research process. It establishes the context for the study. I provide this history of instruction to establish where the children were before and during the research study. I show the relationship between the instruction occurring with the rest of the class and the research process. In this research study I needed to understand the children’s responses and I believe these responses emerged from the history of instruction and research. Explaining the history of the instruction is important to the research because I do not want the research to appear to occur in isolation from the classroom instruction. While I did focus on a case study group it is important to tie in the research with what was occurring instructionally with the rest of the class. Part of the agreement with Mrs. Miyashiro was that I would not only work with the case study group but with the entire class. We decided that I was not to be the kind of researcher who came into the class in isolation and looked at one case study group. Rather I was also a teacher working in collaboration with
the entire class. Many of the decisions made during the study were both curricular and research decisions, and closely intertwined. Literature discussions were used as both an instructional strategy and research strategy. The engagements and literature discussions that the case study group participated in were the same as the instructional strategies that was occurring with the rest of the class. The events and instruction in the classroom influenced decisions in the research. Therefore, I include this chapter to provide insight into the history of the instruction, some of the instructional decisions that influenced the research process and some of the ethical dilemmas I faced.

This chapter is presented as a timeline of events describing the history of instruction and history of research that took place during the second half of the 1998-1999 school year from January through June 1999. Figure 4.1 is a graphic representation of the events as they unfolded. I describe the relationship that was established in this classroom of fifth graders and the six case study group members in particular. The journey commences with my entrance into the classroom and how I became a part of their literary community. Initial
observations are described, followed by detailed descriptions of four major literature discussions: a short story; novel study; text set study; and a read-aloud. The short story and read-aloud discussions took place with the whole class. Discussions of the six-member case study group are highlighted in the novel study and the text set discussions. Along with the literature discussions I include other events such as the pre and post-interviews, Symbolic Representational Interviews, a drama experience, sharing of artifacts, and notes from my own reflection journal. Woven into the descriptions of the literacy events are the stories of issues that I encountered as a researcher in a natural classroom setting. I mention these issues because they played a critical role and affected the turn of events in the qualitative research process.
1) Observation - Sing Down the Moon, (Class)

2) Pre-Interviews (Class)

3) Lit. Disc. #1 - Short Story - "J'Like Ten Thousand" (Class)

4) Lit. Disc. #2 - Blue Skin of the Sea (Case Study Group, Group II) Under the Blood Red Sun (Mrs. M.'s Group)

5) SRI (Case Study Group)

6) Process in selecting issues for text set literature discussion (Class)
   - Mrs. E. generated topics from transcripts
   - Class identified issues
   - Cross Referenced lists
   - Student generated questions about issues
   - Student categorized questions into issues
   - Student and teacher selected 4 major issues

7) Lit. Disc. #3 - Text Sets (Class)
   - Culture, (Case Study Group)
   - Relationships
   - Racism
   - War/Power

8) Heroes Drama Experience (Class)

9) Artifact Museum (Class)

10) Lit. Disc. #4 - Read-Aloud - Dance for the Land (Class)

11) Post-Interviews (Case Study Group)

Figure 4.1. Instructional Chronology of Events
I hiked up three long flights of stairs, walked around the building peeking past the other fourth and fifth grade classes, anxious about once again being part of a classroom community. The teacher, Mrs. Miyashiro, had generously welcomed me to join this fifth grade class' daily literature discussion circles. It had been a whole year and a half since I had my own third grade class. These were fifth graders with whom I had worked on a limited basis. This was January and with half the school year gone, I had to fit into a firmly established classroom community. I knew I was bound to alter the environment somewhat with my presence, yet I did not want to change the balance that I knew Mrs. Miyashiro had worked so hard to establish. I wondered how the students would view my role, would they see me as a researcher or would they see me as another teacher in the classroom? The familiar bubbles of excitement before facing a group of children returned as I stepped into the classroom. The students sat at their desks intent on reading individual books of their choice. Those that noticed me smiled in return as I found a seat in
the back of the classroom and I searched for familiar faces hoping to see some of my former students.

The vibrant colors of student artwork adorning the walls, mobiles that danced as the breeze wandered in, creative student book projects that filled every empty space in the classroom, and bookcases rich in literature all told me that this classroom placed a high value on literacy.

The makeshift bulletin boards separating the adjoining classroom and this class to conceal the openness of the classrooms fashioned in the 60’s were characteristic of many classrooms in the school. Unless utilized to support the learning of the students, this type of classroom structure left the students and teacher vulnerable to adjust to the noise and consideration of the neighboring classroom. Having had one of these classrooms myself, I remembered the challenge of creating sensible learning spaces to support my curriculum.

All too familiar to my teaching memory, the blaring traffic noises from the zooming cars on the busy street below caused me to make a mental note to check on the microphone for the videotaping and audio taping necessary to the research.
Mrs. Miyashiro stood to acknowledge my presence and greeted me when I arrived. When the students were called to meet as a class she formally introduced me as a teacher working on a doctorate who was interested in gathering information from their literature discussions. She shared that I would be gathering information to learn how children respond to literature of their culture.

Only two students in Mrs. Miyashiro’s class had been former students of mine. However, since I had been a third grade teacher when these students were third graders I recognized many familiar faces in the classroom. My role as Title I Schoolwide Coordinator also made me visible to students on campus as they made their weekly visits to the library where my office was housed.

Observations - January & February 1999

On the first day of their literature discussion in January Mrs. Miyashiro began by giving the children a book talk. She introduced *Sing Down the Moon* (1970) by Scott O’Dell and drew connections between this book and their preceding Native American Indian study in American history. The children were restless with excitement and expressed their enthusiasm to begin reading.
Children were given a choice; they read at their desks or selected a comfortable spot somewhere in the room. Some days they read alone, on other days they had the option of reading with a partner. Students responded to the reading by writing in their journals using questions to guide their responses — What happened? What will happen next? How did you feel about it? What did you learn? Is there any new vocabulary? Are there any confusing parts? Notes were jotted in their journals to support and guide their talk in the discussion circle. At other times they sketched out the images of the characters or the setting held in their heads.

The daily discussions were always lively and students were eager to talk about what happened in the story. Mrs. Miyashiro posed open-ended questions and students responded with their personal opinions and relied on the text to clarify and support their statements. They discussed the use of context clues to figure out specialized words specific to the Navajo culture. Students offered their ideas and feelings about characters, commented on the craft of the author, and began to make connections to their own personal lives. They posed questions about their reading of the text to the group. The class discussed issues such
as power, slavery, loss of the land, freedom, mistreatment and survival. Before ending the discussion each day students were encouraged to make predictions about what they thought would happen in the next chapter. It was evident that the children belonged to a community that respected and valued children’s talk about literature.

I sat in the back and took field notes of the discussion. In my notebook, I divided each page in half, filled one side with the discussion notes, and left space on the other side for me to make notes to myself. Here are excerpts from my field notes from an early discussion:

Today there was a very exciting discussion. The energy in this discussion was very high and the children were very eager to share their thoughts. It seems that the children are interested in the story and about the issues that come up in the discussion.
(Field notes, 1/13/99)

Mrs. M.: As you read, what are your questions?
Robert: Will they start a war?
Debbie: Are they going to go back?
Tatyana: Will they find their sheep?
Courtney: Can they find their home?
Kaipo: Did they have freedom?
Alex: There were no rules, the Long Knives could do anything.
Robert: They could bully people.
Debbie: What is the reason they had to leave the area?
Cathy: If they (the Navajos) didn’t move they (the Long Knives) would kill them.
Mrs. M.: Think about Debbie’s question.
Robert: They had to leave or be killed.
Kaipo: Why?
Alex: They (Navajos) can't stay. They Long Knives have weapons.
Kerri: They (Long Knives) have power.
Kaipo: The weapons give them power.
(Field notes, 1/13/99)

For the first few weeks I went into the classroom to familiarize myself with the children, to get to know the students and to become a part of the classroom community. During this time I did not have an active role in the literature discussion and sat unobtrusively in the back of the group and took careful field notes. Gradually, I tried to increase my role as participant in the classroom. When I found the time to roam around the classroom I engaged in informal conversations with the children by asking them questions about their work and tried to find out more about them as individuals. Increasingly during the whole class discussion Mrs. Miyashiro pulled me into the classroom community by asking for my thoughts on Sing Down the Moon. I offered my personal opinions about the reading, shared some of the notes I had taken, and offered some of my thoughts about the discussion.

Around mid-January I began taping the discussions so that the children were familiar with and comfortable around the tape recorder. After a few days I played parts of the
tape for the children so they could hear their voices and feel comfortable about being recorded.

Pre-Interviews – January, 1999

As I felt that the children were opening up and were more at ease with me I began to informally interview the children in the conference room in the library. I asked the children to join me in the library during their morning and lunch recesses for a short conversation with them. At that point in the study I decided to interview children in groups of three because when seeking out a child alone he/she appeared shy and reserved, even the talkative ones. This made me wonder how I could “establish a better rapport with the children or get to know them a little better” (Field notes, 1/28/99) so that the children would be open when responding to the research.

The interviews with children in groups of three was very successful. See Appendix B for pre-interview questions. I wrote in my reflection journal:

The groups are small enough to give children a chance to respond and yet, they are safe enough not to have to respond alone. The children seem to respond better with groups of three. The focus of attention is not entirely on them, but it also gives them the opportunity to speak up if they need or wanted to. Everyone has a chance to speak if they look like they want to say something and can share their opinions. (Reflection Journal, 1/26/99)
During the first two pre-interviews I did not ask questions verbatim but chose to have a conversation with the groups of children. I wove the questions into the conversation and asked additional questions if the conversation took a turn. With the next two groups I stayed closer to the questions and did not deviate much. I asked the questions verbatim and noticed that I did not get as candid or honest responses. The children appeared to be trying so hard to understand and answer the questions that it got in the way. I decided that the conversational interview gave me better responses from the children and stayed with that format. Since the case study group had not been selected yet I interviewed all of the children in class.

Literature Discussion 1 - January 1999

By the beginning of February the children completed their literature discussion on the book *Sing Down the Moon*, shared slide presentations of the book on the computer, and were ready to move into another literature cycle. It was the first literature discussion of this study, "J’Like Ten Thousand" (1990) by Darryl Lum. This short story took a
day for Mrs. Miyashiro to read aloud and for us to discuss with the class. However, a small number of students were present for this engagement because students were out on cafeteria monitor, cashier, and JPO (Junior Police Officer) duties.

When Mrs. Miyashiro read in the pidgin dialect the children's first response was laughter. However, following the laughter the children asked questions about the language and personally connected with the images the reading evoked. Following the discussion I introduced the SRI or Symbolic Representational Interview (Enciso, 1990) as a strategy for learning. See Chapter Two for description. The children cut out their images of the reading and shared their thoughts on this short story with the class. At this point my intention was to introduce the class to the SRI engagement so that they became familiar with the process and would be able to use it as a tool for thinking later in the study.

Literature Discussion 2 - February & March 1999

Near the end of January I introduced the novel study by doing a book talk on the novels to be used in the study. In anticipation of this study, I read and searched for
books written about children growing up in Hawai‘i for six months. It was a challenge to find novels appropriate for children at this intermediate age. I searched the local bookstores, wrote to local book publishers, and collected booklists on books of Hawai‘i. Of the few books written for intermediate aged children, Graham Salisbury was one of the few authors who had written books set in Hawai‘i. Several other books were collected and read as potential novel studies for the literature discussions, however I was especially captivated by Salisbury’s *Blue Skin of the Sea* (1994) and in my excitement shared the book with other family members. To me, it captured the essence of being local and described life as one might live in Hawai‘i. My father was impressed that Salisbury was able to capture life in Hawai‘i as he had experienced in the 1950’s. He, in turn, encouraged my 88 year-old grandfather to read Salisbury’s books. My grandfather, who admittedly had not read fiction in decades and preferred to watch television, was completely transfixed on Salisbury’s books until he finished them. This strong reaction from my family members confirmed for me the power of Salisbury’s writing to accurately describe life in Hawai‘i.
Salisbury has written three books set in Hawai‘i that I felt had potential for use with these fifth grade readers due to length and readability - Blue Skin of the Sea, Under the Blood Red Sun, and a new publication Jungle Dogs (1998). However, Jungle Dogs did not move me as deeply as Under the Blood Red Sun or Blue Skin of the Sea. The writing, somehow, felt distant from the islands than the other two books. The popularity of Under the Blood Red Sun amongst the fifth graders in the class was evidenced by the number of children who had already read and expressed enjoyment of the book and its place on the Nēnē List (favorite current fiction choices selected by children grades 4-6 in Hawai‘i) assured me that it was appropriate reading for the children. However, despite the fact that I loved reading Blue Skin of the Sea I questioned whether it was suitable for fifth grade readers. Although the book had won numerous awards, some of the language in the book had the potential for being offensive to our students and conservative parent community. I had strong reservations about some of the swearing in Blue Skin of the Sea and wondered if the children would handle it maturely. While the book did not use obscene language directly, it was implied once. I shared my reservations and concerns with
Mrs. Miyashiro and we spent a couple of days taking this matter into consideration. We looked at the numerous awards the book had received, including Parent's Choice Award for literature, American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults, A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year, Winner of the Bank Street Child Study Children's Book Committee Award, and wondered if we were justified in sharing such a widely acclaimed piece of literature. I began to question: Was I censoring the use of quality literature that has the potential for moving children in powerful ways because of one word? Is it fair for the children to miss out on using such a high quality and substitute it for a mediocre book because of my own doubts?

After getting caught up in the issue I knew I had to step outside to review it from a different perspective and consider if there were other options available. Since Blue Skin of the Sea was written at a higher reading level than Under the Blood Red Sun according to the age level specified on the book covers and it described eleven separate stories written as one text we decided to consider the stories in isolation. We determined six of the eleven stories appropriate for readers at this age using the
following criteria: language appropriateness (absence of extreme foul language), issues faced by children at fifth grade, and cohesiveness for flow into one complete story. Mrs. Miyashiro and I agreed on six of the eleven stories to be used with the children and felt confident and comfortable with our decision.

In late January, I gave a short book talk on both Under the Blood Red Sun and Blue Skin of the Sea to the whole class. The children had the opportunity to select the book they wanted to read. Since there were only two choices, they numbered their first and second choice on a piece of paper, then Mrs. Miyashiro and I met to review the children’s selections. We were pleasantly surprised to discover that they were almost equally divided by their first choice. A few more children had favored Under the Blood Red Sun. Out of this group two children had already read the story and shared their understanding of it with the class. Since these children had already read Under the Blood Red Sun, and selected it again, Mrs. Miyashiro changed their group and placed them in the Blue Skin of the Sea group. After looking at the children’s choices we then evened out the number of children in Mrs. Miyashiro’s group and my group by gender, achievement, and behavior.
Consequently, we split the class in half; Mrs. Miyashiro with twelve students reading *Under the Blood Red Sun* and myself with twelve students reading *Blue Skin of the Sea*. I then selected six of the twelve students who I would work with for the case study group. The criteria I used was gender, participation and non participation in large group discussion (based on observation of *Sing Down the Moon* and teacher input), a diversity in terms of children’s reading proficiency (based on teacher input), and representation from different ethnic groups. My intention was to balance the selection of students so that it characterized the mixture of children in the class as a whole.

The novel study started at the beginning of February. Although I couldn’t be there on the first day because I was attending a workshop, the children began the reading using post-its to note their questions and comments that were used to guide the discussion later. In an e-mail correspondence with Kathy Short (personal communication, February 15, 1999) she shared that in her experiences with children, they typically don’t move beyond discussion of the plot if they engage in daily discussions about the book as they are reading it. She said that children need to
read a text in its entirety to get to deeper and more thoughtful discussion of issues. Subsequently, a decision was made to conduct discussions after each episode or story in the book was complete rather than reading and discussing daily.

When I began the discussion sessions, I encountered several dilemmas that required special consideration. These predicaments included questioning whether a mainland student should continue to be in the case study group, the physical set up of the discussion circle, and establishing community with the small groups.

It took the children two classroom periods to read the first chapter. On the third day the case study group met and we held our first discussion. That day I left excited to have completed the first discussion but with an uneasy feeling about my decision to have the student from the mainland in the case study group. Intuitively, I felt that flow of discussion was unnatural and there were other insider/outside issues that I was not prepared to face. When I took the tape home to transcribe the discussion, I returned to my research questions and realized if I was asking how children respond to literature written about their culture, then this child who had come from the
mainland should not be included in answering the question. I agonized over the decision. It was early on in the literature discussion and I could switch her to Group II who was also reading the same book. I consulted with Mrs. Miyashiro and Kathy Short to examine the pros and cons and I decided that it would not be ethical or fair for me to keep the student from the mainland in the case study group.

Finding and working within spatial constraints with twenty-four students and two adults poses a unique challenge to any classroom situation. The optimal arrangement for literature discussion is to have all members seated in a circle so everyone can see and hear each other. When the discussions began it made the most sense for us to sit on the floor in a circular arrangement. Although this did not pose a problem for the children it did not lend itself to the most productive discussions because they could not always see each other. Mrs. Miyashiro suggested that the groups move from the floor to the one round table available in the room to conduct the remainder of our discussions. The new spatial arrangement improved the comfort for the students, allowed them to face each other and aided in audiotaping.
I realized that going into the classroom for only one hour each day was limiting my research. I knew that as a regular classroom teacher I would have access to more information about the children and would have had more time to establish a different kind of rapport with the children. At times I felt distant. The children saw me as a researcher and a teacher but they could not relate to me in the same way they would if I were their regular classroom teacher. I thought about my role in the classroom. Was I too serious? How did the children view me? They only had a month to get used to my presence, they had established a sense of community and now here I was joining in on discussions that required them to give their personal thoughts and beliefs, give a part of themselves. Did they feel comfortable enough? Was I providing enough safety for them? Was I pushing them too hard in ways they were not asked to think in before? Here is an excerpt from my personal reflection journal:

I talked with Mrs. Miyashiro on the phone tonight and another issue that surfaced is that the children are just getting to know me. Prior to the research situation, I had only come in as an observer and did not offer much of my own input in their discussion. Now they have me as a participant in their discussion and it is difficult to get used to a new person. Although I did do informal interviews and I did have the
opportunity to work with them on the short story, it is harder now I am asking them to share a part of them. I need to work harder at building community with them. Maybe at recess or when they visit the library. (2/11/99)

It was difficult to establish my role during the beginning discussions but as the year progressed, the children and I traveled through the literature together and shared our thoughts on the literature and life, and I could feel a growing bond between us. We grew as a group and gradually came to know each other as people. I learned about them and became interested in them as individuals and they, in turn, learned about me. Increasingly, I could feel their acceptance of me as they sought me out during recesses, before or after school or when I saw them out of school in the community.

Whole Class Discussion

On the first day of March the children completed reading three of six stories/chapters in Blue Skin of the Sea and the other half of the class completed half of Under the Blood Red Sun. The class met as a whole group to share and compare the issues that had surfaced during their discussions. Mrs. Miyashiro facilitated most of the big group discussion. I was in charge of the video camera and the audiotape making it difficult to fully participate in
discussion, however, I did interject a few times and added some of my own thoughts. During this discussion the children were able to draw connections between both books. They started out by retelling a bit because the other group had not read their book. Everyone needed to understand what was happening in both books.

The children shared common issues that they identified in Salisbury's books. See Figure 4.2 for the complete list of issues they identified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prejudice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistreatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racism - Teasing, Cultures, Color of Skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangs - Fights, Stealing, Peer Pressure, Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Power - War, Respect, Self-Esteem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture - Language</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.2. List of Issues Generated by Class

The children compared similarities and differences between books and commented on the author's style. The discussion seemed to stimulate an interest in both groups.

Symbolic Representational Interview, March 1999

The class had previously been introduced to the Symbolic Representational Interview at the outset of the
literature discussions with the short story "J'Like Ten Thousand." At that time the purpose was to introduce the children to the engagement rather than to use it as a tool for thinking. I planned to bring up the engagement again to familiarize them with the process.

The SRI was conducted again with the case study group, after we completed reading Chapter 6 - "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town." This chapter describes the fear and destruction after the 1960 tsunami hit Hilo, hometown to the children. They were to select a scene from the book and choose a color for themselves and colors for the characters (different colors were possible). I asked them to explain why they selected the colors and move the characters around as they saw it happening in their minds as they were reading. This second time using SRI the children's movements seemed to begin to symbolize their interpretation of the story. They did not move the pieces to explain what happened while they were reading, but they used the colors and shapes to talk about their experience with the story. When I asked them where they were as a reader when the action happened, some of them said that they were above, outside watching. Alex said that he was right next to the main character as the action occurred.
Courtney said that she was still above the action. Tatyana said she was a bystander watching. Kaipo was the only person who said he felt like he was the character. They all had different images and different interpretations of the same story.

Discussion of Author's Use of Language in Novel

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned concern with the author's use of language. This issue surfaced in Chapter 9 of Blue Skin of the Sea where Salisbury employed the use of strong language including obscene expressions in the dialogue of a new character. Mrs. Miyashiro and I wondered if the children would bring this issue up and how they would handle it if they did. During the initial discussion with both groups it was clear that the children were uncomfortable and the language issue needed to be discussed in further detail so Mrs. Miyashiro and I decided it would be best if she, the classroom teacher, supported them through the discussion.

We pulled the children reading Blue Skin of the Sea together to provide support for the reading. The children shared their initial reactions to the foul language used by the character. Robert carefully began, "I thought, 'Oh my gosh.'" And Tatyana was quick to add, "I was kind of
stunned." Kaipo truthfully shared, "I was shocked 'cause I never heard that language in a book before." As discussion continued, children worked out their ideas about the author's choice of language through their talk.

Alex: That is a first time I read a book with that kind of language. I'm used to like hearing it, but not reading it in a book. We are used to hearing it outside in life, just like the pidgin. We are not used to seeing it in books; it's usually in good Standard English so he (the author) tried to make it real.

Jenna: I guess the author made it like that to explain how Deeps was, 'cause he was new in the book 'cause he (the author) wanted us to get a feeling of what he was like.

Courtney: If you read this book, when you finish the book then you'll say, "wow this book was good even if it had these kinds of words in it" because it expresses the feelings that you wouldn't see in ordinary books we read. It (the ordinary books) says, "I was really mad" they don't show you how mad you were.

That night in my reflection journal I write:

The students seemed to feel satisfied with the discussion and seemed to accept the author's choice of words. I feel comfortable knowing that through the talk they were able to work through their initial shock and come to terms with the use of the language in books. But I also wonder: Do we try to shield children from real issues in books? Are books a safe place for children where they can get away from certain kinds of language? Are we exposing children unfairly by use of such language in books? (3/19/99)
Both small groups -- the case study group and Group II, the other small group discussing *Blue Skin of the Sea* -- continued to read, discuss and identify issues. At the end of March the schedule was hectic with the approach of SAT testing. The children took the SAT (Stanford Achievement Test) in early April and worked on presentations for the novel study. The children selected an issue that surfaced while discussing and created a presentation to share their learning with the rest of the class. Groups shared posters to compare and contrast fear the character experienced, they presented news broadcasts and TV talk shows interviewing and detailing the relationships between the characters in the book.

**Moving into the Text Sets - April 1999**

By the second week in April testing was over and all literature discussion groups -- *Blue Skin of the Sea* and *Under the Blood Red Sun* -- completed their presentations and were ready to move into the text set literature discussions.

As mentioned earlier, the class convened to compare Salisbury and came up with common issues across the two books. The children listed the issues and used them to
guide their presentations. Refer to Figure 4.2 to see the list of issues.

To check if students really made connections with literature to their lives, I posed several thinking questions. I asked students to identify the issue they presented and to write down the new questions that were generated as a result of the literature discussion. At first the children sat for about five minutes and did not venture to take a risk. Most of them could identify what their issue was but would not write their question. They seemed to be at a loss. Some of them did not want to write anything, some talked with others to see what others were writing. Would this work? I wondered. Could they find a question related to the issues? Did they have enough support to find a lingering question? Or were they just afraid to share their questions? They sat for five minutes as I searched for one person who would take a risk and set a standard for the expectation. Finally, after what seemed like hours, Jaime bravely risked sharing her question aloud and then when Kaipo confidently read his question it appeared to give the rest of the class the courage to think deeply and find their own questions. Figure 4.3 lists the questions the children generated that day.
Fear

How do you overcome your fears if you are scared? (Kaipo)
How do we overcome our fear of failure? How do we overcome our fear? (Robert)
What happens if you don’t overcome your fears, would you be scared of it forever? (Renee)
I would like to know how fear begins inside of yourself. (Alex)
How did he (Sonny) find a way to overcome his fears? (Sheldon)

Racism

Why do people tease other people about how they look? (Kaipo)
Why do people have to be so rude and have to tease people because of their race? (Jamie)
Why do people sometimes tease other people about the color of their skin? (Jeffrey)
Why do people judge other people on how they look? (Joey)
Why do people look on the outside and not on the inside? (Kerri)

War

Why do we have war when they do not do anything except disagree with them? (Neal)
Why do people fight? (Paul)
Why do people solve problems by fighting like how the Japanese had a war with Hawai‘i? Is this (war) the same thing as fighting? How can you solve a problem in a safer way? (Jason)
Why do some people start a war without thinking about others? It is not fair that other people don’t want to have a war but they have to be involved in it (Jan)

Mistreatment

Why do people mistreat others when they don’t like to get mistreated themselves? (Cathy)
Why do people mistreat small people? (Lon)
Why do people mistreat someone if they did not do anything to that person? (Lori)
Identity

If you don’t have power for yourself and self-confidence (like Sonny), how can you face your problems? (Jenna)
How do I believe in myself? (Courtney)
Why don’t people really share how they really feel? (Owen)

Relationships

How can I form better relationships with others? (Kris)
How can you change if you never let yourself believe what’s true or right? (Jill)
Why do people have to create gangs to back them up for what they’ve done? (Wesley)

Language

Why do people think pidgin is bad? (Jake)

Figure 4.3. Categories of Children’s Questions

Mrs. Miyashiro and I discussed the next logical progression of our work. We were encouraged by the quality of the children’s responses being personal and in-depth. We also thought the questions that were generated seemed to genuinely reflect what the children wanted to know about the way the world operated around them. We were excited to see a sense of direction being developed through their questions. Now that they understood what we meant by writing questions about an issue, we could ask them to generate questions for the text set.
The steps taken to identify the topics for the text sets are described in detail here. From the beginning of the study, I transcribed the tapes within a couple of weeks of the discussion. Following transcription I took the Blue Skin of the Sea transcripts and wrote the topics and issues of discussion in the margins. I generated a preliminary list of the topics and issues the children were discussing based on the Blue Skin of the Sea discussions. Then we held a whole class discussion to identify the different issues the two stories provoked.

I cross-referenced the list of issues I generated from the transcripts with the one that the children created during the whole class comparison of Salisbury and since they were very similar, I kept the list that the children made. At this point Mrs. Miyashiro and I wanted each student to identify personal issues and questions. We asked every student in the class to select three issues from the novel study and they wrote personal questions about the issue. The next day the class met to categorize their questions as a large group. The issues were listed on large pieces of chart paper that were posted around the room. Each child had the opportunity to share at least one of their questions and together the class categorized the
questions into the issue and explained why it belonged there.

Following that discussion the whole class met again to agree upon the four major issues that would drive the text sets. Together we looked at the charts and considered all the issues and questions and the children selected the four "big" issues and justified why they wanted to discuss these issues in greater depth. The issues chosen were Relationships, Culture, Racism, and Power/War. Figure 4.4 lists the questions categorized by issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Why do people mistreat others when they don’t like it when they are mistreated themselves?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are good relationships? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How come when someone teases you and you want to tease him or her, they end up getting mad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is teasing everywhere?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Why do people tease other people about their race?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there a culture that has the most racism?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why do people judge/hate other people by the color of their skin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can we combat (fight) racism when we face it? How do we protect ourselves from racism?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Would it seem weird if someone teases you about your race/culture and they have the same race/culture?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Is there a certain age group that does the most racism?
Can racism lead to death sometimes?
Does racism occur more or less now than it did before?
How do people try to prevent racism if they do?
Why do people tease other people about the shape of their eyes?
Why do people judge others by the way they look instead of the way they feel, think, and act?
Why do people have prejudice against others?

Culture

Is culture something to talk about in a bad way?
How can we protect and continue our cultures and traditions?
Why do people tease each other about the way they dress?
Does mistreatment occur most to a certain culture?
How come culture is important?
Why do people make fun of other people’s culture? Why do people decide which culture is better or worse?
Do people speak pidgin because the first person that made up English taught another person and that person learned wrong and passed it on from generation to generation?
Does everyone speak pidgin when they are born?
Should we use pidgin language in our schools?
Why do people speak pidgin?
How did the pidgin language come about?

Power/War

How can we prevent war from happening because of someone wanting power or has hatred toward other races?
Why does a person start a war when they know it’s the wrong thing to do?
Why do people want power?
Could it be possible that someday someone would want power over me?
What would I want power for?
Could fights become war?
What does power do for people?
Is power bad?
I know people want power but why do people do things the wrong way to get it?
What makes us have power?
Why do people think that they have to mistreat someone just to have power over them?
What makes people think that they have power over another person’s actions?

Figure 4.4. Major Issues and New Questions

These four major issues and questions were vividly posted in the classroom as the driving questions behind the text sets. Ultimately, it would have been ideal if the children could have chosen the set they wanted to explore but because of the research imposition the case study group needed to be kept together. Mrs. Miyashiro and I based the decision for each groups' text set assignment by looking back at the issues raised in their group’s novel study discussions. Therefore, the decisions for placing children in text sets groups were not based on individual children but made on the content of the group’s discussions.

Once I had the major driving issues and questions I collected books that I hoped would become the vehicle for
more critical and deeper exploration of the issues. I had collected books about Hawai‘i since the beginning of the school year. My first step was to read through these books again to determine whether they pertained to the issues the children had identified and the questions they asked. Due to the insufficient number of books available with enough depth for critical discussion written about Hawai‘i, I also collected books from multicultural book lists that included Asian Americans because these texts related to some of the children’s ethnic heritage. I found books from other cultures and read through them using the issues and topics from the Blue Skin of the Sea discussion and from the whole class discussions to guide my selection. I tried to include books that related to the specific issue as the major criteria, but I also attempted to include books with both female and male characters. By the time the children had selected the four major issues, I had a preliminary collection of books. Once the children selected the four major issues I browsed through the books again, searched out additional books, and then placed them into the sets. Mrs. Miyashiro and I met to review the book selections and plan for the text set discussions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relation</td>
<td>I Visit My Tutu and Grandma</td>
<td>Mower, N.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nana Upstairs and Nana</td>
<td>DePaola, T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Downstairs</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Katz and Tush</td>
<td>Polacco, P.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Two Mrs. Gibbons</td>
<td>Igus, T.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Relatives Came</td>
<td>Rylant, C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A House by the River</td>
<td>Miller, W.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Makana Aloha, Gift of Love</td>
<td>McConagh, B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dear Katie, The Volcano is a Girl</td>
<td>Craighead-George, J.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Long Silk Strand</td>
<td>Williams, L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Fruit, the Tree, and the Flower</td>
<td>Matsuura, R.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Da Grouchy Moocher Boogie Man</td>
<td>Maiava, P.</td>
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<td>Culture</td>
<td>I Hate English!</td>
<td>Levine, E.</td>
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<td>The Musubi Man</td>
<td>Takayama, S.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sumorella</td>
<td>Takayama, S.</td>
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<td>The Gift of Aloha</td>
<td>McBarnet, G.</td>
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<td>Hawaii is a Rainbow</td>
<td>Feeney, S.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rainbow Kids</td>
<td>Fassler, R.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dumpling Soup</td>
<td>Rattigan, J.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Aii Kai</td>
<td>Matsuura, R.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tutu and the Ti Plant</td>
<td>Goforth, S.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thanksgiving at Obachans</td>
<td>Kahaleiwai, M.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Whose Slippers are Those?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Three Non-Fiction Books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All the Colors of the Earth</td>
<td>Hamanaka, S.</td>
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<td>Racism</td>
<td>Wanted Dead of Alive - Harriet Tubman</td>
<td>McGovern, A.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Story of Ruby Bridges</td>
<td>Coles, R.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>White Socks Only</td>
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<td>Nettie’s Trip South</td>
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<td>Aekyung’s Dream</td>
<td>Paek, M.</td>
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<td>Angel Child, Dragon Child</td>
<td>Surat, M.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How My Parents Learned to Eat</td>
<td>Friedman, I.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Who Belongs Here?</td>
<td>Knight, M.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Whoever You Are</td>
<td>Fox, M.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yoko</td>
<td>Wells, R.</td>
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</table>
Figure 4.5. List of Literature Books Used for Text Sets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power/ War</th>
<th>Literature Discussion 3 - April &amp; May 1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Blue and the Gray</td>
<td>Bunting, E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Little Weaver of Thai-Yen</td>
<td>Tran-Khanh-Tuyet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wall</td>
<td>Bunting, E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadako</td>
<td>Coerr, E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sami and the Time of Troubles</td>
<td>Heide &amp; Gilliland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball Saved Us</td>
<td>Mochizuki, K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Day Gogo Went to Vote</td>
<td>Sisulu, E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage to Freedom</td>
<td>Mochizuki, K.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faithful Elephants</td>
<td>Tsuchiya, Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahala</td>
<td>Buffet, G.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four wall charts of the children’s major issues and questions served as guides to help them think through the issue and questions while reading the texts in the set. To further support the children, Mrs. Miyashiro suggested we demonstrate the expectation for reading to give the children a focus as they read the books in the text set. Prior to reading the books in their group's text set we read The Paper Dragon (Davol, 1997) aloud to the class and then talked about how that book related to the issue of fear. We asked children not to try to answer any of the questions but to use the questions as a guide to push their thinking further. After the discussion on The Paper
Dragon, children responded in writing about how they felt the book related to the issue.

The children took a couple of weeks to read through the books in their text set. As they read the books they were free to respond in their journals regarding how they thought the books helped them think about the issue and their questions. The case study group met on two different days to discuss the books in their text set.

Heroes Drama - May 1999

While children were reading through the books in the text set, Mrs. Miyashiro and I wanted to introduce and explore different ways of responding to literature. Heroes (Mochizuki, 1995) seemed like a logical choice because this story captured all the issues in the text sets -- relationships, culture, power/war, and racism. This picture book tells of a young Japanese-American boy's struggle to fit in. Each time his friends play war he is forced to be "the enemy" because he looks like "them." He wants to prove his "Americanness" to his friends but his father tells him "real heroes don't brag" and Donnie is left to his own devices to defend himself. After his father and uncle see the anguish and pain Donnie experiences, they come to his aid in the end.
During the read-aloud of Heroes, I was startled by the expressions of disbelief and concern on the children's faces. Silence followed the final words of the reading. No one wanted to speak. Thoughts ran through my head: Why were they refusing to speak? Was it because with this book they saw themselves as the Asian character that suffered racial teasing? Here in Hawai'i where Asians are not considered minorities even within the power structure of society; had any of them even thought about or considered themselves as "minorities"? Did this book awaken new understandings for them? The silence hung a heavy burden throughout the room. Both Mrs. Miyashiro and I tried to ask open-ended questions but the children simply refused to talk about it. We knew that they needed to deal with the book in their own way and discussion did not seem to be the manner in which they wanted to respond. Our intention had been to move into drama but we realized they would not be able to use drama as a tool to think because it was still an unfamiliar way to respond for them. Instead of moving directly into drama or forcing the children to talk about the issues in Heroes, the children went back to their desks and responded in writing. They appeared to need the time
to process, think, reflect, and express their thoughts in writing rather than through discussion.

The next day we returned to the book. This time Mrs. Miyashiro read the book aloud and the students were given situations for which they had to take on various roles and given different scenarios through which they could express their feelings. One group of children took on the role of the adults in a school watching the character being racially harassed. Those children said they felt that the adults in the school had the power to do something about the racial teasing. Other children who took on the role of bystander children on the playground stated they did not feel the power to do much of anything when other children were teased. Those children who acted as relatives of the character who was being picked on said that they felt angry but did not have the power to do anything. By the end of the drama engagement Jill reflected that through the drama she was able to explore new perspectives by “seeing how someone else feels.”

Artifact Sharing - May 1999

One day in early May I brought in several “artifacts” to share more about who I am as a person and what I value in life. A music box from a dear friend, a Japanese
picture from my father that read, "The biggest mistake is
to fear that you'll make one" and the last pennies from the
bottom of my piggy bank before landing a job as a teacher
revealed a part of me that the children had yet to
discover. Mrs. Miyashiro showed the children a figurine
with a piano that reflects her love of music and an angel
that represents her commitment to her religion. The
children were excited to see us in a new light and they too
were anxious to share artifacts about themselves so that we
could come to know others within our community in different
ways. Over the next several weeks the artifacts began
rolling in and time was set aside each day for sharing
artifacts with each other.

In my reflection journal I note:

It is evident the items are very precious to the
children. The children are so proud of their
artifacts and possess a deep sense of ownership. Mrs.
Miyashiro says the children are enjoying the artifact
sharing and she sees so much value in an engagement
such as this one because it enables us to share a part
of ourselves. We are learning so much about the
children, what they do, who they are, what their
culture is like, what they believe, and what they
value. (5/10/99)

Although this engagement may have helped to build
community earlier in the school year I felt that even at
this point it helped to create a renewed sense of community
within the group. Mrs. Miyashiro also felt that the artifact sharing allowed students to appreciate each other’s culture and traditions with new eyes.

Literature Discussion 4 - May & June 1999

At the outset of the research I had not planned on doing another read-aloud. However, in April Kathy Short shared with me Dance for the Land (McClaren, 1999), a book about Hawai‘i for intermediate readers that had been recently published. It sounded intriguing and I immediately went down to the local bookstore to order it. Upon receiving the book, I anxiously read it and found myself very enthused about issues that the book revealed and by the prospect of using this book with children. Still, at the same time I wondered if the nature of the Hawaiian sovereignty issue was within the experience of the specific population of children at our school. The following day I handed Mrs. Miyashiro a copy of the book without comment and asked her to read it and share her thoughts with me. When she completed the reading she exclaimed, “this story simply must be told!” She thought it would be a perfect read-aloud to support the text set discussions and I agreed. We rotated reading aloud to the
children for the remainder of the school year. Time was short and we determined that we would read two chapters a day in order to finish the book by the end of the school year.

In retrospect, the book was a perfect ending to the study in several different ways. First, it raised and brought resolution to many of the same issues that had been exposed in *Blue Skin of the Sea*, *Under the Blood Red Sun*, and the text set discussions. Secondly, Salisbury's books took place in Hawai'i as life existed in the 1950's. The present day setting in *Dance for the Land* seemed to make the story more realistic and applicable to the lives of the children today. Finally, the female protagonist in *Dance for the Land* provided a rich balance and a refreshing contrast to the male perspectives presented in both *Blue Skin of the Sea* and *Under the Blood Red Sun*.

Each day the children hung on the reader's every word and begged for more at the end of the reading *Dance for the Land*. Their intense focus and concentration on the book excited Mrs. Miyashiro and me. Never before had we experienced such devoted listening for such a long period of time. The power of the read-aloud seemed to bring together many personal issues for the children. Both Mrs.
Miyashiro and I felt it was a perfect way to bring the school year together.

Then several incidents occurred causing us to take a step back, reconsider what we were doing and to wonder if the children were ready for the content in the materials we were using. One of our students was reported showing newspaper ads to the boys with girls dancing in bikinis. Racist remarks and racial teasing took place during the lunch and recess hours. We questioned: Were we introducing and exposing them to difficult issues that the children were not yet ready to handle? Were we providing the right kind and enough support for the children? Should we continue with the reading of Dance for the Land? Would this book just magnify and deepen negative attitudes toward race, ethnicity, and culture?

Furthermore, we were particularly concerned about one student who had recently moved from the mainland and shared similar struggles with the main character in Dance for the Land. Early in the reading this student approached me and shared, "Mrs. Ebersole, I like the book. I feel like I’m just like Kate." I asked her how and she told me that she could relate to what Kate was going through because she had just moved and didn’t like the food, didn’t understand the
language, and felt out of place. She could relate to adjusting to a new culture. Also, she was a ballet dancer, like Kate the main character, and took hula lessons too. One day she wore French braids to school and on that day there was a description of Kate wearing French braids. The parallels caused concern and I wanted to make sure that she felt secure and supported through the reading. I asked her if anyone had been mean to her like the character Chad was to Kate and she said no. I kept a close eye on her throughout the reading and the discussions that followed and sought her out during recesses to make sure that she was feeling comfortable with the reading.

By the time we began to reflect on the use of the book, we were in the middle of reading *Dance for the Land* and the intensity in the book was building. In the story Kate was being picked on, called racial names, and physically harassed by a boy at school. It was evident to us by the looks on the children's faces during the reading that they were very involved and anxious to learn the outcome. We could feel the pressure building in the reading and in the discussions. The children clearly needed to have some kind of resolution to what was happening to the main character. To stop at this point
would have left the children unsettled and troubled. They needed to find out what happened to Kate, if only to settle personal struggles in their minds. Needless to say, we continued with the reading. But we reworded a few parts with harsh language or pointed racial name calling because we felt that the pressure was too pointed and direct for the children in the class.

At the end of the study I felt that we had made the right decision in continuing with the reading and the discussion. However, I still felt that rewording the extreme foul language and the racial name calling was appropriate because we did not have enough time left in the school year to continue dealing with these issues. If we had more time to support students through their questions it may have been appropriate to deal with these hard issues.

Post-interview - June 1999

During the last week of school I pulled the case study participants individually into the library conference room and conducted interviews with each one of them. These interviews were approximately 45 minutes in length. I had 20 questions to guide the interview. Refer to Appendix D for post-interview questions. For the most part I stayed
with the questions and sometimes the interviews took on a conversational nature.

Aloha - June 1999

The Dance for the Land discussion came to a close as children talked about the family relationships in the story and how the family participated in the Hawaiian peacemaking process called Ho’oponopono where “they expressed their feelings” (Tatyana) so they could “restart” (Jill). At the end Joey shared that “everybody was kissing everybody” and Neil told everyone it shows “Aloha” which Tatyana said is “caring and kindness to people and make others feel welcome.”

The final discussion about the book drew on the concept of “aloha.” Both Mrs. Miyashiro and I thought it was an excellent ending to the discussion and the entire literature experience for the children. The word aloha in Hawai’i is commonly used as a form of greeting and a way to say goodbye. The aloha discussion took place on the very last day before school let out for the summer. They were busy saying aloha (goodbye) to each other, bidding one another and their elementary school experience a fond farewell. It was an emotional experience for the children. The feeling of aloha that day was much deeper than just
hello or goodbye, it expressed a genuine feeling of warmth, sincerity, caring, appreciation - gestures of love, the true "aloha spirit."

**Role of the Teacher**

In this study I collaborated with Mrs. Miyashiro in planning the engagements, selecting the texts for the study and facilitating class discussions. We worked hard to establish an environment that encouraged talk by planning and participating in engagements like the artifact sharing that encouraged trust and community building. We set up physical structures like circular seating arrangements to facilitate discussion, carefully considered and planned engagements that we felt would push students' thinking, and selected powerful books with issues that had potential for deep and thoughtful discussion. Both Mrs. Miyashiro and I actively participated in the whole class and small group literature discussions. At the beginning of the study Mrs. Miyashiro and I made some agreements about our role in the discussions. See Chapter 3 for agreements during literature discussion time.

Research on the role of the teacher in literature discussion has indicated that discussions are different when the teacher is present and those in which the teacher
is not present (Kauffman et al., 1996). If we had not been present the children may have selected different “kid” topics and may not have explored issues in the depth that they did. Although I did not formally analyze the data, I informally studied the data to look at my role as an adult in the literature discussions. I reflected upon my role in the case study group in my reflective dialogue journal, however I did not use it in the analysis of the research question. Through this informal analysis I discovered that I played different roles in the literature discussions. Oftentimes I was a teacher as facilitator (Kauffman et al., 1996), "... encouraging students to extend or expand their ideas" (p. 375), inviting students to participate and directing the attention to particular topics for discussion. As a facilitator of the talk I also clarified details, restated comments, or took part in conversational maintenance. In the informal analysis of the transcripts I also saw myself as teacher as participant. As a participant I shared connections to the books, talked about personal experiences, asked inquiry questions about issues, and expressed personal opinions (Kauffman et al., 1996). In studying the data I found it problematic that I interrupted the students quite frequently, thus dominating
some of the discussions taking away the students' opportunity talk and time to work through ideas. I found it interesting to informally analyze the role I played and the type of talk I engaged in during the discussions. In another study I think it would be fascinating to reexamine my role in these discussions in greater depth.

This chapter was a history of the instruction and events that occurred in the classroom. I believe that it was important to explain the history of the instruction with respect to the research because I did not want the research to appear to occur in isolation from the classroom instruction. Many of the research decisions and curricular decisions were closely interwoven, thus I wanted to include this chapter to illustrate the connections between the classroom instruction and research process.

In the next chapter I discuss the analysis of the data and address the first question of this research study. It highlights the major categories generated in the case study group's discussions.
CHAPTER 5

EXPLORING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDINGS THROUGH LITERATURE

This chapter addresses the first research question: What is the content of children's responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature? For this question I analyzed the content of the children's responses. The primary data sources used to create the categories to answer this question were the transcripts from the case study group's literature discussions (Blue Skin of the Sea and the text set on culture). Other sources of data — literature journals, interviews, and transcripts from whole class discussions ("J'Like Ten Thousand," Dance for the Land) served as secondary data sources to support and expand on the existing categories. Discussion and written responses from the six case study group members are highlighted in this analysis.

The first category, Sense of Belonging, reveals children's beliefs about what it means to belong in their local culture. The second category, Culture, reflects children's theories about culture and the third category, Historical Understandings, illustrates the children's historical notions about their culture. The fourth and final category, Connections to the Literature, highlight
personal connections children made to the literature.

Figure 5.1 shows the categories and sub-categories for this research question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Sub-Categories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Belonging</td>
<td>Knowing the Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having a Sense of History</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confronting Racial Issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Living the Local Culture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Creating Meaningful Relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Knowing When to Have a Voice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understanding the Realities of Living in the Islands</td>
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<td>Cultural Theories</td>
<td>Cultural Chameleon</td>
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<td>Culture is Diverse</td>
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<td>Judging Other Cultures</td>
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<td>Building Historical Understandings</td>
<td>Making Sense of History</td>
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<td>Sensing Historical Connections</td>
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<td>Living Through the Experiences</td>
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<td>Responding Emotionally</td>
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<td>Creating Images</td>
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<td>Connecting with Personal Experiences</td>
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<td>Identifying Reading Strategies</td>
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<td>Relating to Language</td>
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**Figure 5.1.** Categories and Sub-Categories

The analysis process for determining the categories and sub-categories are described briefly here and for a detailed description of the analysis process see Chapter 3.

I gathered the primary sources of data -- thirteen literature discussion transcripts that only the case study
group participated in (Blue Skin of the Sea and the text set on culture). I divided this data into three different sets -- 1) two text set discussions on culture 2) two "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town", a chapter in Blue Skin of the Sea 3) the remaining ten discussions in Blue Skin of the Sea. For each of these data sets I used the process of analytic induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) to analyze the data. I began by chunking each of the transcripts into topics or units of meaning. Then I labeled each chunk into topics or issues and sorted them into preliminary categories. I searched for links and patterns connecting the preliminary categories and collapsed those that were similar into larger issue categories that pertained to response to culture. After determining the categories I collected the secondary sources of data -- literature discussions participated by the whole class ("J'Like Ten Thousand" and Dance for the Land), the interview transcripts, and written work from students' journals and used them to support the categories created through primary data sources.

In this chapter I consider the major concepts of the content of responses as children discuss literature representative of their culture in Hawai'i. Each section
of this chapter gives an overview of the issues that the children felt were relevant to their cultural understandings. Excerpts from the transcripts of the group’s discussions are included as examples of the children’s concepts in each Major and Sub-category.

Taking Language into Consideration

Before proceeding further into the analysis and discussion of findings, the subtle language complexities of “local” terminology used by the children in the transcripts warrant clarification. I first clarify the terms Hawaiian, local haole and pidgin English that are used throughout this chapter. When language in the transcript is vague, I include clarification in brackets.

Since the description “Hawaiian,” generally refers to one of native Hawaiian ancestry and is usually not a reference to one who merely resides in Hawai’i (as a person who resides in California is a Californian) there is a need to identify a term for the remainder of the people who live in Hawai‘i. Okamura (1980) writes, “The quest for such a term is difficult because of the island’s ethnic diversity which includes eight major groups. Any inclusive term, if it is to have significance as an identity symbol, must encompass a wide range of ethnic groups of varying status,
values, beliefs, activities, and experiences (p. 119)."

Increasingly, the term "local" is used in reference to people born and raised in Hawai'i who feel a deep sense of ownership within the island culture (Okamura, 1980). (See Chapter Two for indepth discussion on local.)

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the term "haole," initially the Hawaiian word for foreigner or without breath, was used for the white visitors to the Hawaiian Islands because they could not speak the Hawaiian language (Haas, 1998). Today however, haole is typically used to refer to a person of Caucasian ancestry. In Chapter Two the discussion points out that haoles are generally not considered local however, there are exceptions (Okamura, 1980).

"Pidgin English", the language dialect spoken in Hawai'i, is defined and discussed in detail in Chapter Two. Major Categories along with the respective sub-categories are discussed in the next section.
Sense of Belonging

But it was different when I came to Hawai‘i twenty years ago. I learned very quickly that no one can call Hawai‘i home until someone from here tells them they can. I also learned very quickly that that is okay. And it isn’t enough just to like it here; you have to somehow ‘become’ local. That is nothing like growing up local. (Teter, 1998, p. 349)

The Major Category of Sense of Belonging illustrates the case study group’s perception of what it means to be “local.” The children explore their beliefs about what it takes to belong to the local Hawai‘i culture as they discuss literature written about this culture. In this category the content of their responses when reading culturally relevant literature include what it means to fit into the local culture in Hawai‘i. The responses from the children indicate that the Sense of Belonging category is stronger than any other Major Category in terms of interest shown by the children and quantity of comments. The children are interested and engaged in discussions that relate to this category. Sub-categories in this section include: Knowing the Language, Having a Sense of History, Confronting Racial Issues, Living the Local Culture, Creating Meaningful Relationships, Knowing When to Have a Voice, and Understanding the Realities of Living in the
Islands. These sub-categories are characteristics that contribute to developing the sense of belonging necessary to be a part of the local culture, according to the children.

The first novel discussion focused on Salisbury's Blue Skin of the Sea which describes the life of a young "local boy" on the island of Hawai'i. The children in the case study group respond to this text by discussing and reflecting upon their local culture with respect to what it means to belong in the islands. In the beginning of the discussions the children are cognizant of their ethnic backgrounds and can quickly identify themselves according to their ethnicity. For example, when asked to identify her ethnicity Tatyana immediately replied, "I get Japanese, Chinese, English, Irish, Scotch, German, Hawaiian, Puerto Rican and Indian." They considered their ethnic and racial heritage to be synonymous with the word "culture." In drawing about his culture, Robert draws sumo wrestlers, Japanese samurai swords, and hapi coats, a part of his ethnic culture but does not include part of the local culture he lives in Hawai'i. However, as they talk through their understanding of culture they begin to differentiate
between their ethnic background and the local culture of Hawai‘i.

The identification of a separate local culture surfaced with the discussion of the chapter, “Year of the Black Widows” (Blue Skin of the Sea). The main character, Sonny, who is of French/Portuguese decent but grew up in Hawai‘i, is stunned with a new realization when Jack, a Caucasian newcomer to the islands, calls him “white boy” and tells Sonny “. . . you’re gonna get your butt kicked in seventh grade. They don’t like white boys up there.” Sonny begins to wonder, “White boy, is that how it was? I was like Keo [Hawaiian cousin] . . . wasn’t I? He was darker, but wasn’t I as Hawaiian as he was on the inside?” (p. 60 & 61). Jack’s warning brings up racial issues and causes Sonny to question and reconsider his position as a “white” person in Hawai‘i’s culture. This chapter provoked thoughtful discussion about the children’s own place in their culture.

In the beginning of the discussion the students struggled with expressing why they feel Jack is wrong and that Sonny really belongs to the culture, even if he is “white.” Alex uses the word “local” to describe Sonny and remarks that Jack is wrong and “[local] people won’t bother
(beat up) local people." Alex further speculates that Jack is really the one in danger of getting beaten up because, as Robert says, "He's new to this place." Conceptualizing the word local helps children think through their understandings of the expression. In the following transcript they identify themselves as being local even if they are not of Hawaiian ancestry and of different ethnic groups:

Robert: I'm local.
Tatyana: I'm a local girl.
Jenna: Yeah
Courtney: I'm local.
Mrs. E.: Okay so everybody in here, except for Alex [who earlier hesitated in identifying himself as a local] is . . . kind of . . .
Alex: Well, I'm kind of more haole. (Laughs)
Mrs. E.: What do you mean you're kind of more haole?
Alex: 'Cause then I'm like 60% haole and 40% Japanese.
Mrs. E.: Because you're 60% haole and 40% Japanese but what does it mean that you're more haole?
Alex: I guess I'm local cause I'm from here.

Alex's confusion over the term local is understandable because another definition of local is reference to non-whites (Okamura, 1980; Chang, 1986; Imada, 1993) which Alex had used initially in reference to Jack. At this point it seems that Alex is torn between local used in reference to non-whites and the definition of local which means one born and raised in the islands (Imada, 1993). Despite his contention that he is "more haole" Alex concludes that he
is local because he is from Hawai'i. He decides to consider himself local because the criteria of being born and raised in Hawai'i applies to him even if he is part white.

In the same discussion I ask the children to share what it means to be local and they explain the sense of pride that comes with belonging:

Robert: It’s like you are proud of it.
Tatyana: You know more.
Alex: You belong here.
Tatyana: . . . belong here than there.
Robert: Everytime I see the tourist busses I feel like I want to direct them. I don't know, I feel proud that I'm local.
Alex: You belong here like.
Tatyana: You [just] know.
Mrs. E.: What does it mean to belong here? What does it mean to feel like you belong here?
Robert: [Its] your lifestyle, the way you live.

Later in the discussion following the reading of "Islanders" (Blue Skin of the Sea), the children question Salisbury's choice in the chapter title because they feel the chapter is about people from the mainland and not people from Hawai'i. When I ask the children what it means to be an islander, again their responses describe a feeling of belonging and a distinction between life on the mainland:
Alex: You feel like you belong here.
Kaipo: Yeah you feel you belong here so if you go up to the mainland . . .
Robert: . . . they won't go with you.
Kaipo: Yeah!
Robert: It doesn't feel right.

During the beginning discussions the case study group identified themselves as being local and further specified that a person who is local is a person who "feels like you belong here" and takes pride in the culture. Okamura (1980) writes that commonsense meanings of local also refer to one who is familiar with the lifestyle of the islands and emphasizes knowledge of certain behaviors, values, and beliefs considered critical to the local lifestyle in Hawai'i. The children recognize that having pride in the culture is a critical part of belonging to local culture.

This category, Sense of Belonging, shows that the children establish social identities or behaviors and values consistent with the local lifestyle. Social identities are defined by Och (1993) as a range of social perspectives, including social statuses, roles, positions, relationships, and other relevant community identities that one may attempt to claim in the course of a social life. Through performing certain social acts and displaying certain stances the social identity of self and other is
established. In my analysis of determining what it means to have a Sense of Belonging, the children discuss what social acts and stances or attitudes are common to local culture that define this category. In this chapter the social acts and stances include pride in belonging to local culture and the identification and knowledge of the particular behaviors, values, characteristics, and beliefs common to local culture.

The subsequent sub-categories in this section highlight other considerations that children in the case study group discussed in order to belong to the local culture.

Knowing the Language: "Pidgin shows our culture"

No one will want to give you a job. You sound uneducated. You will be looked down upon. You're speaking a low-class form of good Standard English. Continue, and you'll go nowhere in life. Listen, students, I'm telling you the truth like no one else will. Because they don't know how to say it to you. I do. Speak Standard English. DO NOT speak pidgin. You will only be hurting yourselves. (Yamanaka, 1994, p. 40)

This quote taken from a teacher speaking to a student in Yamanaka's fictional story depicts the typical attitude toward the pidgin dialect spoken in Hawai‘i. However, the children in the case study group suggest that the ability to use the pidgin dialect in an authentic manner is one of
the defining characteristics of being local. The word "pidgin" refers to the Creole spoken in Hawai'i. Refer to Chapter Two for further detail on pidgin and creole. The children seem to suggest that pidgin is a reflection of their culture and is an indication of being local. Although the children comment on pidgin as a part of their identity and culture, they do not take it further into discussing the implications of the language. These comments show that there is some interest in language but the quality of the comments are not as strong as in some of the other categories. During the Blue Skin of the Sea discussion, Alex, who earlier was unsure about being labeled a local, uses language to indicate his own localness:

Mrs. E.: So Alex you said 60% haole, 40% Japanese but now you say you feel like you are . . .
Alex: Local.
Mrs. E.: Why?
Alex: 'Cause I was born here and raised here.
Robert: He learned the slang.
Alex: Yeah I learned the slang.

The children imply that the pidgin reflects an integral part of their culture and they share a sense of pride in the unique nature of their language. Bickerton (1998) writes that, like many stigmatized dialects, pidgin is a sign of community identity in the islands that serves
as a bonding mechanism within the culture. The children demonstrate a strong level of awareness of the language difference between dialect spoken by those who belong to the culture and those who do not belong:

Tatyana: The language, the language here is pidgin!
Robert: Pidgin English!
Courtney: It’s only the Japanese that come here that they bring the pidgin words. You learn it and then if you go to the mainland they’re not going to understand you when you are saying all pidgin words. ‘Cause we’re the only ones, we and the Japanese are the only ones that know it.

Mrs. E.: Who are the Japanese, the ones who are from Japan? (Tourists)
Courtney: Yeah, no no, like the people that come from Japan, like in Under the Blood Red Sun. They talk you Japanee, you Japanee. [Japanese people who came to the islands to work in the plantations and live in Hawaii].

Alex: And we’re the only culture that has pidgin. We’re not the only culture, but we’re the only place that has pidgin.

Robert: It’s rare! It’s rare to find it.
Tatyana: And when you go to the mainland and they go, “what did you say?” and they don’t understand. I feel like that I have certain way of talking and they have a certain way and pidgin shows our culture and how we speak.

In the latter part of the school year, the novel Dance for the Land (McClaren, 1999) was read aloud to the whole class. Kate, the main character who has just relocated from California, is approached by a rowdy group of girls who intimidate her and challenge her to a fight by asking, “You like beef?” [Do you want to fight?]. Alex points out
that because Kate is not familiar with the language she could misinterpret the other girls' intentions and that could lead her to trouble. This response implies that it is critical to become aware of the language spoken in the culture:

Alex: Kate has to, she might get into fights because she don't know how to talk pidgin and then the other girl thinks that Kate doesn't understand pidgin. And the other girl said she [Kate] like beef? And Kate might say "yeah" 'cause then she might think that she [other girl] meant food and Kate wants to eat and then she might get beaten up.

Children suggest that in order to fit into a new situation, especially when moving, it is important to respect the language of that locality. Courtney shares a situation in which her cousin moved to Las Vegas, changed his dialect, and upon returning to Hawai'i to visit she requested that he change back to his former dialect:

Courtney: My cousin he went, his dad got a job in Las Vegas so when they moved to Las Vegas everybody would be talking, he used to talk pidgin and everything and now it's changed, when he came back last night and he's calling everybody like, "Hey Court-ney, you want a hot pocket?" and talking all haole and we're like, "Can you talk pidgin again?" and so it's just that when you are there you are just so used to it.

These discussions reveal a sense of identity that comes with speaking pidgin. Language is more than a means
of communication. "Language also embodies a person's social identity and functions as a marker of group/subculture affiliation" (Hawai'i DOE, 1987, p. 28). Through their discussion the children demonstrate that they take ownership of and pride in the language spoken in their culture. Their language reflects their culture and the discussion suggests the critical role that the pidgin dialect plays in belonging to the local culture.

**Having a Sense of History: "Keep the reputation of the family here"**

(Stories, poems and essays remind us of our shared history, our literary genealogy. We are richer and have a deeper understanding of each other because of them. And like our own families they will continue to comfort us and sustain us ... so that we can find the points where we can begin to weave our histories together. (Lum, 1998, p. 14)

During the literature discussions, the children consider the reasons why people live in Hawai'i. Having a sense of history in Hawai'i is tied to the love for the land and struggles of the working class of the sugar plantations (Lum, 1998). The children have roots that go back to the plantation system and so have a deep sense of ownership in the culture. Although the quantity of comments in this sub-category are not as abundant as the other sub-categories, having a history seems to be an
important part of belonging. They seem to possess a sense of history, a knowing, an awareness, a love for the culture and a perception that creates a sense of belonging in the islands and makes living in Hawai‘i important to them:

Robert: Some people would want to live here because they want to keep the reputation of the family here. They don’t want to move someplace else they want to keep it here, their relatives. They want to live where they lived and um, they’re pretty much more used to it than everplace else.

Courtney: ‘Cause I was raised and born here and I want to raise and born my kids here. It’s important for me to live in Hawai‘i.

Local people consider Hawaii a special and unique place to raise their children and they believe that the overall quality of life cannot be found elsewhere in the world (Okamura, 1980). During the literature discussions the children share their feelings about Hawai‘i. History gives them knowledge about the islands and a sense of belonging as reflected in Jenna’s comment, “I guess [I feel] like maybe a little closer because I know more about this place. I feel like an islander.”
Confronting Racial Issues: "Haole, you don’t belong here"

. . . that word, haole, sometimes said as the punch line of a joke and sometimes with a sneer of hatred, was beginning to haunt her. It meant white people, Caucasians. It meant people who looked like her. From the little Kate knew about Hawai‘i’s history, there were reasons “locals” might have bad feelings about white people. Still, every time she heard the word, even when it wasn’t applied to her, she felt a twinge of fear. (McClaren, 1999, p. 15)

Many local people believe that Hawai‘i is “the melting pot of the Pacific” where different ethnic groups live together in harmony and racism does not exist. The children also hold strongly to this belief and like many local people the children seem reluctant to admit to the existence of racial injustices in their culture. However, in their discussion subtle and direct racial references in the literature and their talk about these references gradually expose and reveal their awareness of the racial tensions and realities that exist in Hawai‘i. Through the discussion children begin “exposing injustices” (Hade, 1997) and confront realities of racial tensions that exist in Hawai‘i. This sub-category seems to be a primary concern to the children in the case study group. They discuss this issue in more depth and show a high level of interest over the other sub-categories.
Blue Skin of the Sea and Dance for the Land address racial issues from different angles. In Blue Skin of the Sea, the children in the case study group say that Sonny isn’t native Hawaiian, yet he feels like a Hawaiian. On the other hand, in Dance for the Land, Kate is of native Hawaiian ancestry, yet doesn’t feel like she fits in. This distinction is important because sometimes Caucasians are considered to be part of the local culture as in Sonny’s case, and being native Hawaiian usually gives a person immediate status as a local (Sumida, 1991), as one might assume but this is not so in Kate’s case. Both characters are Caucasian-looking in appearance, but the difference lies in their own sense of belonging.

As mentioned earlier in a previous discussion, the issue of race is revealed in Blue Skin of the Sea when Jack, the new Caucasian boy, calls Sonny a “white boy” and tells him that he is going to get beat up because “they” don’t like white people in intermediate school. During this discussion Alex points out that it is not Sonny, but “Jack [that] needed protection 'cause he was white and then everybody else had dark skin.” Jack also “... needs to prove himself. He’s not local, he’s not Hawaiian,” says Alex. These statements imply that there are racial
tensions present, however at this point in the discussions the children have difficulty further explaining or admitting that racial tensions and animosity toward haole people in Hawai'i exists. Instead, they attribute Jack's racial remarks to Sonny as Jack's fabrication because it occurs "only in Los Angeles," where Jack is from.

The children choose to focus the discussion on why Sonny, a local haole (born and raised in Hawai'i and considered to have possession of the beliefs and values of local culture) fits into the culture despite racial differences. Jenna comments that, "He [Sonny] can feel the Hawaiianess inside hisself" and that "Jack can't see that Sonny is like Keo [native Hawaiian] on the inside." Robert says being Hawaiian on the inside means that it has to do with "Sonny's culture . . . He's not any different from Keo [native Hawaiian] because they're both Hawaiian brothers." Tatyana comments, "Maybe he just looked haole from the outside but on the inside he thought he was Hawaiian." In another discussion Alex adds, "That's what really counts if inside feels like an islander. Everything outside doesn't matter." Thus, in Sonny's situation, the children's discussions indicate that racial differences can be a factor in belonging to the local culture but it is "feeling
like a local” that is important. These local haoles consider themselves and are considered by others as local because of their upbringing and personal orientation towards the local culture (Okamura, 1980) and are therefore considered to be part of local culture.

Later in the year the racial issue surfaces again in the discussion of Dance for the Land. Kate, the main character, experiences difficulty fitting in with her peers, despite being half-Hawaiian, “Because I look like a haole. Even if I’m trailing along behind some Hawaiians, I don’t belong in this place” (McClaren, p. 33). The children comment on their interpretations of Kate’s thoughts and feelings:

Alex: Kate is afraid of what people think of her and moving to a new land. And it has to do with culture because she is thinking about that, “Oh they are not going to like me because I’m Caucasian or something.”

Tatyana: Oh yeah [she thinks] like, I’m this color and they are this color and they are local and I’m not. I hate it here, like that.

In a later discussion of Dance for the Land, the children comment on Kate’s appearance and why she does not fit in. They indicate that her racial background along with her attitude may affect the way people mistreat her and the negative perspective others have toward her.
(Comment: Because this was read aloud and the discussion occurred with the whole class, children who are not case study group members also participated in the discussion):

Alex: She looks more Caucasian, she thinks that she's more Caucasian.
Tatyana: Just because she has blond hair,
Kerri: . . . because of the color of her skin.
Tatyana: And you can tell already because of the skin color, their hair, and the way they look sometimes they might tease her.
Jill: They might be, "Haole, get out of here, you don't belong here" [in exaggerated pidgin]

Furthermore, Tatyana remarks, "She didn't really want to stay there because she blended in at California because of her look." Alex speculates, "Maybe because people treated her that way. If people treated her like a Hawaiian, she wouldn't think she didn't belong there, but if, if they treated her like a haole, then she does think she doesn't belong there." "Probably because they doesn't know what her culture is, they only seeing the outside of her," says Tatyana. Their responses demonstrate that Kate's recent move to Hawai'i, her racial appearance, and her attitude maintain her status as an outsider to the culture. Whittaker (1986) discusses what happens when the mainland haole comes to Hawai'i and meets with different ethnic groups and their "previously taken-for-granted morality becomes questioned" (p. 144). Whittaker (1986)
claims that when the mainland haole comes to Hawai‘i “they find themselves at a disadvantage” (p. 144) as in the character Kate’s experience.

_Dance for the Land_ focuses upon race through Chad’s incessant torment over Kate. The racial issue raised in the literature leads Alex to talk about his thoughts on his race:

Alex: But me, I think that I’m kind of lucky because I don’t get mistreated here because people know I was born here and when I go to the mainland I look haole and so they won’t mistreat me, they’ll think I am one of them.

Alex, who is Japanese and Caucasian and considers himself more haole because of the way he looks, says that he fits in Hawai‘i because, “I was born here, you adapt quicker and you are here all your life so you know everybody and nobody treats you different.” Jill, another Caucasian who was born in the islands, reaffirms Alex’s statement, “’Cause he is used to how the culture is here, since he was born here. He is not doing things differently, like he does things here the same that most people do because he was born here and he is used to it, like when she [Kate] got used to any of this. She doesn’t like the food, she doesn’t like working in the taro patch and she doesn’t know the language and everything.” These
comments hint at the fact that because Alex is local and lives the local culture, he doesn’t get mistreated in Hawai‘i, even though he is haole.

Salisbury’s use of the term "Islanders" in Blue Skin of the Sea leads Kaipo to reflect, “Sometimes I feel I am an Islander because I have part Hawaiian inside me and they call us Islanders cause we live on the Hawaiian Islands” shows the pride he has in being a Hawaiian. This leads me to ask whether a person who does not belong to the local culture in Hawai‘i and looks like he or she is native Hawaiian, would have an easier time fitting into the local Hawai‘i culture:

Mrs. E.: What if there was a boy, with Hawaiian blood, full Hawaiian, look Hawaiian everything, was born in California or Arizona grew up there until they were sixth grade and they moved to Hawai‘i?
Alex: Oh they know he Hawaiian so they like him already.
Robert: They would automatically like him.
Mrs. E.: What do you mean they know he Hawaiian so they like him already?
Alex: Oh I don’t know.
Robert: Because he knows the slang already, ‘cause then
Mrs. E.: But he grew up over there, he doesn’t know.
Robert: Yeah but his parents, his parents are Hawaiian that’s why and if he says he’s Hawaiian he might some people say he might speak full Hawaiian.
Mrs. E.: What’s the difference? I mean, Jack is a white boy grew up there, moved here. This Hawaiian blooded; does the blood make a difference? You folks said the blood doesn’t make a difference but now you are saying it makes a difference?
Alex: Oh I don’t know.
The children avoid saying that race makes a difference in the way people treat you, although they do admit that sometimes looking Hawaiian helps. This issue is present in *Dance for the Land*. David, Kate’s brother, physically “looks Hawaiian” and the children point out that he adjusts well within the Hawaiian culture as opposed to Kate whose appearance is very different than her brother. Sumida (1991) claims that “A Hawaiian is quintessentially a local, but a local is not necessarily a Hawaiian” (p. xiv) therefore, because David “looks Hawaiian” he may automatically be considered a local. However, the children later imply that belonging to the local culture does not simply refer to “the look” but that others also get to know that person:

Alex: But the people, they can’t see it. They can’t see what... Tatyana: They think that, it’s just the look, it’s the look. Kerri: You gotta know them better. Tatyana: Yeah, the way they look and stuff. Alex: They’ll think the girl (Kate) is pure Caucasian and that David is pure Hawaiian, just because he looks that way. Mrs. E.: But they have the same blood. Alex: Yeah they have the same blood, but they [people] don’t know ass [that’s] why. They don’t know anything about them.
In the Dance for the Land discussion, children say that it is possible for one who is not native Hawaiian but is "full haole" to fit into the culture. Sumida (1991) claims that, "A haole, 'foreigner' in the Hawaiian tongue . . . is not usually assumed to be a local. But once he or she turns out to be a 'local haole,' someone brought up amongst locals in Hawai'i . . . then the usual assumptions disappear" (p. xiv). The children say that a person can become local if they know more about the culture in Hawai'i. Here Tatyana and Kaipo explain:

Mrs. E.: Do you think you have to be Hawaiian [native] to be a local?
Tatyana: No, like Debbie (student who recently moved from the mainland) or something. They moved, if they stay here for awhile they could be, they'll become local too and then Debbie will know more about Hawai'i.
Kaipo: Yeah, she'll come down here and if she stays until she gets into her late twenties, she goes back up to where the last place she was and then she probably going forget everything and she'll be talking pidgin.

Courtney speculates that Kate thinks everyone needs to be native Hawaiian in order to be accepted but Courtney says that you don't need to be Hawaiian (native) to be accepted:
Courtney: Like to Kate she was getting bullied around with
everybody else, even though they lived in Hawai'i it
doesn't mean that they had to be Hawaiian.
She probably thought that everyone that lives in
Hawai'i has to be Hawaiian but that's not really
true.

Later in her post-interview, Courtney shares an
incident where she even mistakes her Caucasian friend as
being one who is of native Hawaiian ancestry because she
blends into the local Hawai'i culture so well. Courtney's
statement seems to imply that once someone has the
attitudes, behaviors, and values of the culture in Hawai'i
race does not matter. She did not even think about race
and assumed that her haole friend Jill was native Hawaiian
because she looked local:

Courtney: . . . I don't want to name out but if you look at
[how] Jill she looks [Jill is Caucasian]. I
asked her if she was Hawaiian if she was going to
go to Explorations [program for children of
native Hawaiian ancestry]. She said, "No." I
said, "How come?" She goes, "because I'm not
Hawaiian." But she looks real Hawaiian but she's
not that Hawaiian.
Mrs. E.: How come she looks Hawaiian to you?
Courtney: Just because she looks real local and when you
look local it just seems that you are [native]
Hawaiian all of a sudden.

I was shocked by Courtney's statement because in my
opinion Jill looks Caucasian in appearance. Courtney had
originally assumed that Jill was native Hawaiian when she
asked her about going to Explorations. However, when Jill
replied that she was not native Hawaiian. Courtney was surprised because to her, Jill was local. This indicated to me that she did not even notice racial appearance but more important to her was the fact that Jill had the characteristics of a local person because she held the beliefs, behaviors, and values of the local culture.

The children's responses seem to indicate that race matters sometimes, however what seems to supersede race are the attitudes, behaviors, and values that people in Hawai'i share. As indicated by the children, local culture can be an exclusionary term in certain situations, however it can also be a bonding mechanism highlighting common attitudes, experiences, and values of people of differing ethnicity in the islands (Okamura, 1980; Imada, 1993). The culturally relevant literature challenged children to consider racial issues within their own culture. Initially, children seemed reluctant to talk about racial issues attributing it to something that happens outside their community, however, as the discussions continued, the children realize racial tensions exist in Hawai'i.
Living the Local Culture: “Try to fit in”

KOTONK (Japanese-American born and raised on the mainland)
I can’t write a poem about Hawai‘i;
I haven’t traced enough rainbows with my eyes
Or spent enough time with my toes buried
    In the sand at Mālaekahana;
Or eaten enough saimin at Shiro’s.

I don’t wear rubber slippers, let alone wear
    Them when I play basketball;
Or feel comfortable wearing “dress” shirts
    That are all inside out;
Or eat pickled mango or li hing gummy bears;
Or play slack-key guitar;
Or make sure I wear socks with no holes
    In them when I go to someone’s house;
Or Surf;
And talking da kine? Cannot.
    I’m just not used to to it.

Maybe when I finally notice how the sun
    Sets so quickly in Hawai‘i that you barely
Notice the evening;
Or see my daughters grad from high school
    With leis
    Piled so high they cannot see over them;
Or feel that the wind blesses my shoulders
    The way my wife can;
I will be able to write a poem about these islands.
    (Tokuno, 1998, p. 416)

The children’s discussions about the literature of
their culture suggest that in order to fit into the
culture, a newcomer must respect the attitudes and beliefs
of the culture practiced here. In order to fit in, the
newcomer must show a desire to learn about and adapt to the
local culture in order to be considered a part of that
culture. Part of “living the local culture” means to respect and practice the customs of the culture and not "look down" or have a condescending attitude toward the culture. The children suggest that a newcomer must make an authentic effort to learn about Hawai'i's culture.

In discussing Dance for the Land, the children allude to the assumption that Kate does not fit into the local Hawai'i culture due to her own attitude. The children feel sympathy for Kate, the half-Caucasian, half-Hawaiian, girl from California because the locals are racially teasing her. Yet, Kaipo's bold statement implies some fault on Kate's part, "You know Kate, she doesn't make an effort, she doesn't even try to fit in . . ." Whittaker (1986) writes, "The process of learning about identity is inevitable to all newcomers to Hawaii. They learn in order to fit in, and conveniently fit in in order to learn" (p. 151).

The children seem to feel slighted that Kate is pushing away their culture and does not make an effort to learn about or fit into their culture. The children could interpret her rejection of the culture as an insult to them and their culture:
Robert: She doesn’t like the Hawaiian culture. She doesn’t like the poi.

Mrs. M.: She doesn’t like the poi, she doesn’t like the fish. What is this telling you about her?

Courtney: Go back to California.

Robert: That she doesn’t like it.

Robert’s written reflection demonstrates pity, but at the same time anger, toward Kate because she is not doing anything to help herself solve her problem:

At literature when we read Dance for the Land I felt sad for Kate but there is part of me that thinks that Kate deserves what Chad is doing to her because she doesn’t tell anyone.

The children seem to realize that it is not a superficial kind of attempt that is necessary to fit in but a sincere effort to know and feel ownership within a culture. They suggest the reason why Kate’s Kumu (teacher) excludes her from performing the hula is because she doesn’t have the necessary understanding of the culture to dance the song. Alex says she can dye her hair and try to camouflage herself physically to match the rest of the locals. However, Tatyana argues that the issue is not showing that Kate is like the rest of the hula dancers in a superficial way such as her hair color, but that she needs to show a deeper knowledge of and feeling for the culture. Tatyana asserts, “[s]he needs more feeling in her hula and more power.”
In essence, the children suggest that Kate is partially to blame for not fitting in. She can make external changes like the way she dresses or the color of her hair but in order for her to fit in, she must make a genuine effort to get to know the culture.

Later in the text set discussion, Alex implies that if one cannot adjust to the culture, then he or she should leave:

Alex: Just tell um, “Oh get out of my country, go back” I don’t know. I don’t want them to go but then if they can’t understand, no sense they live here . . . (Text Set discussion)

The children also mention that fitting into a new culture doesn’t happen immediately; the adjustment to and learning about the culture takes time. Whittaker (1986) contends that a Caucasian newcomer must learn “all the implications of haole status . . . and the changing positions of whites in the islands” (p. 152). Alex’s statement suggests that Kate needs to be patient and get used to her new culture before she can fit in:

Alex: She shouldn’t think that she’s different she should just think that she’s not used to it. She thinks she has to like it right away when she comes here. It’ll take time.

The children imply that if a person wants to fit into the culture in Hawai‘i he/she must make an honest effort to .
learn about and adjust to the local culture. This change does not happen immediately. It takes effort and time. They also suggest that if a person cannot fit into the culture, then maybe it is best to leave.

Creating Meaningful Relationships: "People know you"

. . . in the native Hawaiian way, personal introductions include these questions: What are you called (i.e., your given name)? Who is your family (i.e., your surname and genealogy)? Where are you from (i.e., your neighborhood or district)? . . . locals expect this genealogical exchange, this fine ritual of personal introductions, not for judging the superiority of one person over another, but for learning facts that relate somehow to inner values of the individual, on the one hand, and to already existing social and cultural connections on the other. This local ritual is expressively a way for two people to begin discovering their relationships with each other, however distant, in order to talk stories that sprout on common ground. It is a way to begin weaving their histories together — and this defines friendship, or an aspect of it, local style (Sumida, 1991, p. xvii).

Establishing relationships is a critical part of belonging within a culture. As Sumida (1991) states above, upon meeting, locals ask questions to establish a relationship or a common connection with each other. Sometimes after asking a few questions a mutual connection is made between the new acquaintance and a relative or friend (Lum, 1998). Identifying and establishing a mutual connection immediately draws locals together. These
relationships help to develop a deeper sense of community that is created between people after living in the islands.

As the children discussed the literature they expressed a need to develop meaningful relationships with others in the culture. Alex states, "When you are here and you were here for a long time so it's like a lot of people know you so you feel like you belong here." Alex also comments upon the need to establish friendships when moving to a new place:

Alex: If I moved to the mainland, I would feel uncomfortable, people wouldn't tease me because of my race because I look kind of haole. I have haole in my blood.
Mrs. E.: But you said you would feel uncomfortable . . .
Alex: Because I don't have any friends.

In the chapter, "Black Widows" in *Blue Skin of the Sea*, Jack attempts to intimidate the locals into forming a gang. He scares the boys into believing they need to form a gang to protect themselves from what they will experience in intermediate school. But it is actually Jack who needs protection and wants to belong. The group talked about why Jack does not fit in with the rest of the boys and thus he tries to build some kind of relationships with the locals:

Alex: . . . [H]e (Jack) spent about eleven years in California so he's not really a local.
Robert: But if they stay here from like, if they were born here then I guess you consider them local 'cause then/
Alex: If they’re born/
Mrs. E.: So Jack wasn’t born here, he felt like he was an outsider, so what did he do?
Alex: He tried to pull everybody/
Robert: He wanted protection/
Alex: . . . to have a lot of friends and he tried to pull everybody to him.

The children claim that Jack spent most of his life in California and wasn’t born in Hawai‘i so he is not yet a local. As a newcomer to Hawai‘i the children say that Jack needed protection so he tried to form a gang to have a lot of friends and establish meaningful relationships with them.

Jenna’s written reflections show that she is concerned with the relationships that Kate is building in order to help her fit in with the others:

Maybe Kate feels better because she has friends. Plus, I think Kate’s brother is improving on being nice to Kate she feels a little warmer inside. (Jenna, Journal, DFL)

I feel that Kate feels more welcome to Hawai‘i because other people want her in their group (Jenna, Journal, DFL)

Robert’s writing demonstrates that once friendships are formed, children can turn to their friends in times of trouble. Here Robert refers to Kate’s dilemma. She doesn’t know what to do when Chad is teasing her about her
race. Robert suggests that she seek out an insider to the culture to help her because of the relationship that has been established between Kate and Mehana:

I think that Kate should have went to Mehana for help because Mehana is one of her closest friends and she might know what to do. (Robert, Journal, DFL)

The children’s responses during the literature discussion point out a need to establish meaningful relationships when moving to a new culture. They suggest that upon creating relationships with others, one can depend on them in times of need. Although the quantity of comments the children make in this sub-category are more than some of the other sub-categories the intensity with which they talk about it is not as strong as the comments made for other sub-categories.

Knowing When to Have a Voice: “Just let um go”

The oriental kids - for that was our label - in the room knew better than to open their mouths just to lose face, and the part-Hawaiian and Portuguese kids knew they would get lickings one way or another if they talked, so we all firmly agreed that silence was golden. (Hara, 1998, p. 37)

Fitting into the culture and establishing meaningful relationships seems to be an important factor in developing a sense of belonging, however, knowing when to stand up for what one believes also seems to be important to the
children. When children stand up for what they believe, they begin to develop a sense of personal identity. It is a delicate balance; knowing when to and when not to stand up for what one believes. The children mention different situations in which it would be acceptable and others in which it would not be acceptable. During the discussion of the literature about their local culture some declare a need to get back at others if there is some kind of injustice suffered or fighting back when someone picks on you to show that you are not scared. Others disagree and say they would stand by and not get involved.

We discuss conforming to be part of the group in the gang situation and how the main character Sonny in *Blue Skin of the Sea* stands up for his beliefs and does not complete the necessary initiation despite his desire to be in the gang:

Mrs. E.: I thought Sonny wanted to be a part of that group 'cause they thought they were popular, he wanted to be a part of that.

Kaipo: But if he would have joined it, he would have probably get into more trouble

Mrs. E.: But he didn't go along with Jack.

Alex: No, for little while, 'cause then at first he wanted to go in a group so he tried to shoot a cat and look for a cat but then . . .

Robert: He kept the cat.

Courtney: He felt like he wanted it.
Sonny was able to stand up to Jack and not join his gang but made a different decision when it came to standing up to the adults. In *Blue Skin of the Sea* Sonny’s Uncle Raz bets Uncle Harley two hundred dollars that their huge pig Alii is heavier than Uncle Harley’s wife, Auntie Pearl. Sonny, who loves his Auntie Pearl dearly, is distraught with ethical concerns about the bet. Here the children put themselves in Sonny’s place:

Alex: I would just do nothing.
Mrs. E.: You would just do nothing.
Alex: I wouldn’t stop it.
Tatyana: I wouldn’t get into that situation.
Alex: They get the consequences.
Mrs. E.: Why wouldn’t you stop it if it wrong? It’s wrong, why wouldn’t you stop it?
Robert: Nobody going listen to you.

The children seem to suggest that age may play a role in influencing their decision to stand up for what they believe in. Although Alex asserts, “I have the power but then, nah, I no like. Let um get in trouble. If it wasn’t bothering me, I would just let um go.” When I ask if it bothers him to stand up he replies, “Nah, I would still let um go. If they get busted, then I no care.” And Robert exclaims, “Not my problem.”

Yet, while some of the children say they would be content as bystanders to the scene, Tatyana asserts, “I
would just tell um straight, 'Why you guys doing this? It's not fair, what if Auntie Pearl finds out? Then she going be all mad at you guys' ."

Some of the children feel a sense of justice must be served and that if they have been wronged in some way, they must get back at the other person. The children have different opinions about when it is appropriate for them to stand up for themselves:

Tatyana: I just tell them //
Robert: Back off boy.
Tatyana: You want to treat me like that, I treat you back, I treat you that way.
Courtney: I wouldn't treat them like that, then they would have more //
Mrs. E.: What do you mean Courtney? Can you explain that? Courtney: Like you do it right back to them, then it's going to happen over and over and over.
Robert: But then everybody has a right to stand up for themselves.
Kaipo: If you no do nothing to them, they going keep pushing you around.
Tatyana: If you don't stand up for yourself, they going //
Robert: One day they just bust in front of your face .. . BOOM!

Some of the children feel they must fight back while others tend to avoid the confrontation. As the children discuss the issues they reflect upon themselves and when they would stand up for themselves:

Tatyana: Some people would call local girls "titas" because they are tough and they can stand up to people they don't like. I think I'm like that sometimes.
During the discussion, children waver between when it is appropriate to have a voice and stand up for their rights and when they need to avoid the problem. The gang issue in *Blue Skin of the Sea* stimulates a discussion in which children contemplate getting involved to stand up for their rights. Some children seem to think that they should tell on the gang but Alex disagrees, fearing retribution by gang members:

Robert: If you’re mentally strong then you can like://
Courtney: You can do anything you want.
Robert: You might have a plan against these guys and they might get busted somehow for doing what they did.
Alex: But you’ll still have a broken leg.
Courtney: You can believe in yourself and you can do anything you want because you’re smart. You can think of something that you can do back to them.
Robert: You have to be strong mentally so you can just like, oh, brah, tell on them, beat you up. You don’t have to be scared. Just go tell on them.
Alex: Even though you tell on them you might have a broken leg and a broken jaw or fractured head or something like that.
Courtney: Or you still might be able to do what you always wanted to do.
Alex: First they are going to beat you up and they might make you handicapped. You tell on them, but they know they did the job on you and so they going do it to somebody else.
Tatyana: And they going to come back.
Mrs. E.: So how are you going to solve that?
Alex: You just gotta stay away from them. You can tell but then you’re still going to get hurt.
Robert: You have to take a different route around them, you know. You have to know where they hang out so you can take a different way.
Alex: Even though you can tell, I would still stay away from them 'cause you can get hurt. But then telling is just getting them, but it doesn't help my leg or my arm.

Courtney: You can believe in yourself and you can do anything you want because you're smart. You can think of something that you can do back to them.

The children are exploring when it is they feel they should have a voice and express their differing opinions on the issue. A few of the children in the case study group seem to feel that sometimes it is in their best interest to avoid a problem by remaining silent. Others express a need to right the situation when someone has been wronged. Most of the comments for this sub-category come during one discussion, however the intensity and disagreement within the case study group shows that this is a strong sub-category.

Understanding the Realities of Living in the Islands:

"People misjudge Hawai'i"

[They come to the islands thinking life will be easy, then find out that it's just as full of problems as anywhere else. (Salisbury, 1992, p. 54)]

The children's discussion reveals the resident versus tourist view of the islands, demonstrating an "insider" and "outsider" perspective of life in the islands. They seem to enjoy this discussion and talk passionately about the realities faced by those living in the islands. The
intensity with which they speak, even if the quantity of comments is less than other sub-categories demonstrate the importance of this sub-category. The children point out that the "tourist" perception painted of the islands is one of "paradise," however, if a person has lived in the islands long enough then he/she is well aware of the realities and challenges that exist in the islands. Part of being local is knowing that life in the islands is not just the paradise painted in the commercials but that it has its problems like everywhere else. Darrell Lum (1980) writes that "[t]hings are different here" (p. 3) and part of being a local is knowing the subtleties of the culture and understanding the histories and problems that the people of Hawai'i face and being sensitive to ethnicity, environment and language of the people of Hawai'i:

Alex: I think people misjudge Hawai'i because of all of the commercials because all of the commercials show them doing hula/

Robert: They show the good stuff.

Tatyana: Paradise.

Alex: And the beaches. They’re telling the truth but they are hiding the bad part.

Mrs. E.: Which is?

Alex: Like the economy/

Robert: The city/

Tatyana: No jobs, hardly any jobs.

Jenna: Yeah.

Tatyana: All rubbish all over the place.

Alex: Mosquitoes.
Robert: Airlines they make those commercials because they want the money from the customers and when they find out they want to go back.

Alex: It's all about money. If they didn't have to pay to come to Hawai'i then they wouldn't really try to advertise it.

Robert points out that commercials lure people to Hawai'i by painting a picture of paradise, "They make nice commercial about this nice palm tree . . ." [and] "the hula dancer in the bikini," interrupts Tatyana. Alex admits, "They (tourists) get their paradise but they get more of it. But [they get] more of the small portion [which] is the part that they thought would be the big portion. You would [imagine] just being on the beach. They do get that but then they [also] have to deal with the work and the low wages." This tourist notion of paradise that the children identify is prevalent in tourist tracts and airline trade magazines (Whittaker, 1986). Hawai'i is advertised as a "racial paradise" both in everyday media as well as scholarly works (Morales, 1998; Whittaker, 1986).

Later in the post-interview, Tatyana reflects on the realities of life in Hawai'i in comparison to the tourist view, "Everybody thinks Hawaii is the Aloha State. It is just normal like any other state." In essence, the children share visions of paradise and fantasy of the
"tourist view" of life in Hawai‘i, but for those who live here there are problems just like anywhere else.

The children show that belonging to local culture has complexities difficult to distinguish from the outside. However, it seems that through their discussion local implies the "common identity of the people of Hawai‘i and their appreciation of the inherent value of the land, peoples, and cultures of the islands" (Okamura, p. 131). Race, language, respecting attitudes and beliefs of the culture, having a sense of history, and establishing relationships with those in the islands all seem to be factors that the children suggest are part of belonging to local culture in the islands.

Cultural Theories

*Personal/Cultural Knowledge: The concepts, explanations and interpretations that students derive from personal experiences in their homes, families, and community cultures. (Banks, 1996, p. 9)*

As children read and talk about books on their Hawai‘i culture they begin to explore broader concepts and issues of culture. The discussions of the text set on culture focus on sharing their thoughts and beliefs about culture. During the data analysis process I identify talk about
cultural issues, cultural concepts, theories about culture, and stereotypical or judgmental statements about other cultures in this category. Through the talk generated, children share their ideas and theories about culture and reflect upon their own cultural experiences to understand what it means for them to live in a multicultural society. The children build metaphors to share their beliefs and create new understandings about culture. Sub-categories in this category are: Cultural Chameleon which explores the melting pot concept of culture and cultural conformity, the Culture is Diverse acknowledges and respects the diversity between and within different cultures, and the final sub-category, Judging Other Cultures, describes the effects of passing judgment upon other cultures. The Cultural Chameleon sub-category is the strongest sub-category under the Major Category Cultural Theories. This is evidenced by the large number of statements the children make and that the children bring up issues that fall within the sub-category Cultural Chameleon in later discussions and again in the post-interviews. The Culture is Diverse and the Judging Other Cultures sub-categories are not as significant as the Cultural Chameleon sub-category because the children make quantitatively fewer statements in these
sub-categories. However, when they discover new insights about the concepts within Culture is Diverse and Judging Other Cultures they say it with a great deal of intensity.

**Cultural Chameleon: “Camouflage your authentic culture”**

**CHOOSING MY NAME**

When I was born my mother gave me three names. Christabelle, Yoshie, and Puanani.

Christabelle, was my "english" name.
My social security name,
My school name,
the name I gave when teachers asked me for my “real” name, a safe name.

Yoshie was my home name,
My everyday name,
the name that reminded my father’s family that I was Japanese, even though my nose, hips, and feet were wide, the name that made me acceptable to them who called my Hawaiian mother kuroi (black), a saving name.

Puanani is my chosen name,
My piko name connecting me to the 'āina and the kai and the po'e kahiko my blessing; my burden, my amulet, my spear.

(Burgess, 1998, p. 278)

Through talk children explore their ideas about culture based on their experiences. In this category the children define what it means to adapt and show respect for the existing culture. These include statements that show what happens when a person moves to a new culture, theories about what happens when different cultures come together,
and the children’s beliefs about retaining identity when joining a new culture. Initially, the children cite the melting pot theory to describe their own local culture. The assimilationist ideology of the melting pot traces back to the play, *The Melting Pot*, written by Israel Zangwill in 1908, which was “a notion in which all ethnic differences would mix and from which a new person, superior to all would emerge” (Banks, 1994, p. 20). In the beginning the children talk about this melting pot view of Hawai‘i’s culture. Later, as the children talk through their understandings of culture they realize the limitations of the blending notion of the melting pot and acknowledge that even in the creation of a new local culture in Hawai‘i, in reality, they do not completely lose but retain parts of their ethnic roots.

For the children, when a person moves to another culture, he or she must fit into the culture. Kaipo expresses, “If you stay (are) in one culture, you just do what they do and if you move and you want to do that culture, you have to do like that culture.” As the talk continues children discover that in the process of fitting into a new culture, one sometimes needs to camouflage his or her authentic culture.
The children reflect upon their own culture in Hawai‘i and talk about how the different ethnic groups have mixed together to form a new culture. By mixing together, the children realize it both takes away from and adds to the existing culture. Banks (1994) points out that this occurred in the United States as well, “other ethnic groups, such as the Germans, the Irish, Indians, and African Americans, influenced the Anglo-Saxon culture as the Anglo-Saxon culture influenced the culture of these groups” (p. 20). The creation of a new culture inevitably changes the individual and existing culture. While discussing the history of how cultures came to Hawai‘i and what each culture brought to the existing Hawaiian culture, Alex notices that while adding new aspects to the culture it also, “kind of takes away from the culture.” For example, “... now you see Japanese, Chinese, American stuff in their (Hawaiians) culture” which “...kind of camouflages their (Hawaiians) authentic culture.”

Alex explains the melting pot metaphor to theorize how cultures come together in Hawai‘i:

Alex: Pretend people are water and you add it to a pot. Hawaiian’s culture is, pretend they are all red water and then somebody throws in blue water, somebody throws a little green water and now it all comes black. It all comes mixed up.
This metaphor depicts each culture as a different color of water that is added into the pot. All the cultures blend together, and in the process create something new, a new culture represented by the black water. The melting pot is the collective result of the blending. In the process of becoming part of this melting pot a new culture is formed. According to Alex, when “they changed the color, [they] changed the face of what it was.” This new culture is a blending of all the other cultures. One takes on characteristics of the respective cultural groups. Banks (1994) suggests that this mythical melting pot is not desirable because most of the immigrant and ethnic cultures are left at the bottom, the dominant culture remains in power, and other ethnic groups give up many of their cultural characteristics.

The children explain that a local culture has emerged as a result of the collective blending of different cultures present in Hawai‘i. Alex states, “So then if everybody is one culture then if somebody teases them about their culture, then oh, you are teasing yourself!” Kaipo concludes, “That’s why we make it all into one.” This local culture is analogous to the new blending of cultures
or the black colored water in the pot which suggests that
the ethnic culture is lost. According to Tatyana’s
statement the children begin to use new metaphors that
indicate a “mixing” of cultures:

Tatyana: I think local is all mixed up cultures. There is
all different cultures in Hawai‘i, maybe Puerto
Rican, Japanese, Chinese, all kinds of cultures
here but maybe some of us might have the same
culture but maybe you have Japanese, I have
Japanese. I think that it’s all mixed up
cultures. Mixed Plate. Local culture is made up
of different cultures.

Instead of viewing local culture as the black in the
pot where all the ethnic groups must subsume into the
dominant one, the “mixed plate” metaphor suggests that each
culture is still distinct. In Hawai‘i a “mixed plate” is a
plate filled with a distinct variety of food from different
cultures, thus suggesting that different cultures live
together and also retain their identity at the same time.
However, I am not sure at this time if Tatyana is referring
to the mixed plate to explain the distinction between
different cultures or if she is using the popularized term
to focus only on the mixing together as one.

The children also mention a rainbow metaphor to work
out their beliefs about culture. Kaipo says, “a rainbow is
mixed colors and we’re gonna mix all the nationalities
[ethnic groups] and then we’re gonna become a rainbow!”
His rainbow metaphor is like Tatyana’s mixed plate metaphor which could imply that ethnic groups can mix and retain parts of their cultural identity at the same time. However, I am not certain what they mean at this point because their comments seem to focus on coming together as one rather than recognizing the distinctive characteristics of their ethnic cultures.

The children’s view of local culture focuses on the sharing or mixing of the cultures of different ethnic groups in Hawai‘i. Okamura (1980) cites Hockaday who relates local to “polycultural” or the “ability to live and participate in the mixed culture comfortably, understanding and sharing some cultural aspects of other ethnic groups” (p. 122).

This “make it all into one” or “becoming who you are with” reflects the mixing of cultures which the children view as the local culture in Hawai‘i. Children see each other as belonging to this local culture and soon they become who they are with. This notion of local culture “is apparently derived from the sanguine notion of Hawaii as a ‘laboratory of race relations’ where peoples of sharply
differing traditions are able to live together in harmony with one another” (Okamura, 1980, p. 122).

Okamura (1980) contends that local transcends ethnic diversity to incorporate groups and individuals of differing ethnicity into a greater social and cultural complex in which commonalities are emphasized and differences are disregarded. In the example mentioned earlier, Courtney mistakes the children of Caucasian ancestry to be Hawaiian because they have become so much a part of the local culture that she is not able to detect any difference. In the post-interview with Courtney I ask her, “Why are you saying that Jill looked local and Alex local, Jill’s haole, but what makes Jill look like a local rather than someone else?” In her soft spoken manner she quickly replies, “Because she’s been here for a long time, she was born here and when you are here for a long time, even if you are haole you look more of a Hawaiian because this is Hawai‘i and they have more of Hawaiian history.” Courtney’s statement baffled me but it really helped me to understand what it means to “become who you are with” when you are in certain locations. No matter what race, Jill became a local when she is in Hawai‘i because of how she behaves, and she fits into the local culture.
Later Alex adds to the melting pot metaphor altering it from the total assimilationist view to a different one:

Alex: The colors are all there. It is exactly like a person, the top is black because all those colors are mixed but when you look a little under, if the pot was clear, you look a little under the pot, there is some green. They are not black, they are just the inside of the people. They feel like all one color.

So, according to Alex's new explanation, if one were able to slice through the pot the color of the rainbow would still be present. In essence, parts of the authentic or ethnic culture still exist, it is only masked by the black color. Robert says the authentic culture is so strong that, "it is like a stain, you try to wash it off, but it is hard to come off." This idea supports the "salad bowl" or cultural pluralism position which argues that ethnic immigrants have a right to maintain their ethnic cultures and institutions. By maintaining each ethnic culture it allows every culture to play a unique role and contribute to the total society (Banks, 1994).

In the text set discussion, the children theorize that when you become like those around you, it is possible to lose one's cultural identity. However even though cultural change does occur, one can also retain a sense of ethnic or authentic culture. Regan and Jenna comment on I Hate
English! one of the books in the text set. See a summary of the book in Chapter 3:

Robert: You can, like Mei Mei. She was Chinese and she moved to Chinatown. She can still use her Chinese culture there. She can still use some of her American culture with the other people.

Jenna: For *I Hate English*, I put that I think this book relates to my culture because I am Chinese. I think it was hard for my ancestors of my dad side to move from China to Hawai'i just like Mei Mei. I think that culture is important in this book because if you came from a different place like Mei Mei you wouldn't want to lose your first culture and it's language. I think that it would be fun to learn Chinese.

The children say that becoming who you are with is not necessarily a bad thing because they can learn new things from the other cultures. They acknowledge that culture is diverse and that they can learn from other cultures. The new culture is a mixture of all the others. The children change their understanding of culture from the traditional notion of the melting pot where the individual cultures are lost and everyone subsumes to the dominant culture to one in which an individual can adapt to the new culture and retain parts of their own culture.

Through talking about their understanding of culture and by exploring literature these cross-cultural children who “are caught between two mirrors - each presenting a
different image of the self" (Shannon, 1998, p. 14) begin
to address identity issues common to children with dual
cultures. Shannon (1998) identifies four kinds of
experiences for cross-cultural children: 1) rejection by
both of their conflicting cultures; 2) the acceptance of or
by one culture while denying the other; 3) the attempt to
be both conflicting cultures at once; and 4) the
acknowledgement and acceptance of one's individual and
evolving identity as a collage of cultures. As the
children in the case study group hear the stories of other
cross-cultural children they are more able to understand
their own identities (Shannon, 1998) and begin to
acknowledge a collage of cultures. In a written reflection
Robert writes:

I learned that it's not easy adjusting to a new
culture. I learn that it is not easy because you have
to change your language and way of writing to
communicate with other people. In the story [I Hate
English] Mei Mei moved from Hong Kong to Chinatown in
New York. Mei Mei had a hard time adjusting to this
new culture because she didn't want to lose her
Chinese culture. In the end Mei Mei wanted to speak
Chinese and English. You can have your old culture
and take parts of your new one. (Journal)

Through their discussion the children seem to identify
a tension between the unity that draws them together as a
part of local culture and diversity that exists between
different cultural groups. As the children discuss culturally relevant literature they define what local culture means and the relationship with different ethnic groups in Hawai‘i. The children work through different meanings of cultural theories by drawing metaphors to both the "melting pot" and the "salad bowl" views of culture. The children’s viewpoint that people can retain parts of their old culture, yet take on parts of the new one reflects the reality that some see in Hawai‘i. McDermott (1980) writes:

Through the years there has been a remarkable degree of blending among them [various ethnic groups in Hawai‘i]. . . . Yet, at the same time they have managed to retain much of their original identity and culture and through it make unexpected and modifying contributions to the total society. The result has been the evolution of a new and unusual community. (p. 1)

Culture is Diverse: “No culture is weird, it's just different”

The motto of the United States is e pluribus unum - out of many, one. (Banks, 1997, p. 5)

This sub-category describes the children’s ideas or thoughts about the diversity that exists between different cultures. The children acknowledge and identify differences between cultures and call for a need to “treat
others equally." Through the discussions the children reflect upon their own experiences and eventually realize some of the inequities that surround them. They begin to see and respect different cultures for their uniqueness.

As children talk about the books in the text set, Kaipo discovers that the children in the discussion make fun of other cultures because "... we're used to our culture." Alex shouts out his new insight, "No culture is weird, it's just different, 'cause then some people mistake that they call it weird, but nothing is weird, it's just different!" His insight encourages others to consider the difference between thinking about another culture as being "weird" and "different." Robert agrees, "Everything is different, maybe looks keep it the same, but inside they are different. It's unique, every culture is not the same." Their thoughts about culture reveal their growing awareness of and respect for difference. The children seem to conclude that part of treating each other equally involves trying to understand other cultures by not ridiculing others because they are different.

Robert's assertion that some think Japanese and Chinese are the same may be a result of his prior comment about his frustration with people who have mistaken his own
Japanese heritage for a Chinese background. He realizes that others may judge him but he and Jenna know and respect differences between Japanese and Chinese culture:

Robert: I'm saying that Japanese and Chinese are right next to each other and the Americans might think that they are the same, but then actually their culture is different, like totally different.

Jenna: I think there is a difference between Japanese and Chinese because of what they do and the Chinese they have the lion dance.

The children talk about the need to try things out to respect others' diversity. In *Dance for the Land*, Kate's actions show distaste for and rejection of the Hawaiian culture. The children feel that Kate needs to demonstrate more respect for the new culture and appreciation by trying to learn about aspects she may like. Tatyana comments, "Once she tries it, maybe she'll like it and she'll go, 'Oh, how come I didn't like this earlier and stuff like that.' That's like me, like food I don't really know and then like if I were to eat something that I didn't really know and then I like it, maybe I could get used to it and stuff."

The children consider and theorize about possibilities for creating better understandings between cultures and peaceful solutions to cultural and ethnic divisions. At
one point they consider making everyone into one big
culture so no one could racially tease anyone else but
decide it would be boring. They also discuss the
possibility of separating all different ethnic groups by
geographic location:

Robert: Unless one nationality [ethnic group] can move to
another planet.
Alex: Cannot already. You can’t stop what they did.
Robert: It could stop it, it could help.
Alex: Hey you know what they should do//
Robert: You could move the environmental sources to
someplace else and put like oxygen like that.
Kaipo: But if they would do that, they would be hard
time separating, ‘cause everybody has a certain
amount of every other cultures blood so it would
be a hard time separating it. ‘Cause you could
be Japanese and you could have Hawaiian blood so
then you wouldn’t know where to go.
Alex: But in the year 2000 they might have a state of
the art land, they might create a mechanical
land, so they can make land to cover and make
more space.
Robert: It’s your free choice, nobody can boss you, say
like you have Japanese and Chinese. Nobody is
there to tell you, you have to go there or you
have to go there and you don’t want to go there.
It’s like you can go to wherever you want. If
your family goes one way you can go another.
Alex: They can have some groups that are mixed. One
group maybe Caucasian/Japanese, that’s where I
would go and one group for that and then maybe
Chinese and Japanese mixed together, they go one
group.

At the end of the discussion, the children decide that
it would be impossible to separate every culture because of
the mixing that has already occurred and because people
should be allowed to live in a place of their choice. They conclude that cultural boundaries are a complex issue and that racial teasing others about differences can lead to misunderstandings and divisions between people. The children’s talk implies that they are not only aware of and recognize differences but start to appreciate and accept cultural and individual differences and their right to exist (Grant, 1977).

Judging Other Cultures: “Some other cultures aren’t as bad as you think they are”

All of us are raising and teaching children in a world of contradictions. On the one hand, they learn in school that all people are “created equal” . . . On the other hand, they live in a world where the exploitation of particular groups of people and of natural resources is accepted as the inevitable effect of unabashed competition. (Ramsey, 1998, p. 2)

This sub-category describes the judgments children make about other people and cultures. Their honest and candid remarks reflect their beginning awareness of cultural differences. At times, their stereotypical remarks imply ethnocentric tendencies. The children begin to reflect upon their comments and realize the injustice behind their stereotypical statements.

Alex’s remark, “some cultures aren’t as bad as you think they are” implies a condescending attitude towards
other cultures. But he later realizes that having an
ethnocentric attitude toward other cultures could have an
adverse affect upon others’ attitudes in reference to his
culture:

Alex: If you think one culture is better than, your
culture is better than theirs is, they might
think, “Oh your culture is junk too.” (Text Set
discussion)

In a written reflection Tatyana talks about how others
depend racially. Tatyana’s written reflection
reveals her observation of how people can make judgments
about others based on physical appearances:

If someone was Japanese or Chinese and they were to go
to the mainland, other people that live there they
would think they lived in Japan or China but they
could actually live in Hawai‘i or somewhere else.
(Journal)

Alex articulates his new awareness about the
limitations of stereotypical statements made by those
around him. He surmises that people may not even realize
their own prejudices in the statements they make:

Alex: I learned that stereotypes can be misleading.
It’s like plenty people call this school a Jap
School or something. That’s not that nice
because not everybody that goes there is
Japanese. That’s being prejudiced too, and they
don’t even know it probably. (Text Set
discussion)
The children's discussions about culture reveal their growing awareness of differences between cultures and their own attitudes toward other cultures. Children use their own knowledge about and perceptions of culture to discuss and become aware of differences between cultures. They begin to examine their personal biases and perspectives. Hade (1997) writes that "[m]ulticulturalism is a perspective we take on and struggle to understand, a stance we take to our reading that race, class, and gender matter in the way we interpret stories" (p. 241). Their talk seems to show an appreciation and pride in their culture. As they begin to talk about and challenge previous assumptions about race, the children become critically aware of the injustices around them. As they discuss the literature, they reflect on their place in Hawai'i and reveal their growing theories about living in a multicultural society.

Building Historical Understandings

Where then, is the past? Where is the present? Where the future?-except in the sense of them? (Toshi, 1986, p. 283)

Building Historical Understandings illustrates how children build and use their knowledge of history to
support their reading of the text. Through the discussion, they build common understandings of their cultural history. The children come to know their culture and develop a strong sense of history through family stories that have been shared with them. They seem to share historical connections through common life experiences and belonging to the local culture.

Making Sense of History: “Everyone came here to work”

A few feet in from of me she paused and reached among the clay pots and singled out one plant with three deep purple blooms. The roots had traced a complex pattern around the clay pot. She spoke something in Japanese I couldn’t understand . . . After a few moments of silence Frances said, “That’s the oldest. All the others come from this plant.”

(Nunes, 1986, p. 224)

This sub-category describes what the children know about their own cultural history and how they use their historical knowledge to support the discussion and the reading of the text. The children share what they know about Hawai‘i’s history and the plantation to provide relevant details and information for each other. Together they create understandings of history that impact their present lives. In the process of drawing upon historical details they create metaphors to support and create new understandings.
Robert shares his knowledge about the history of different ethnic groups in Hawai'i. He explains to the others what he knows about how and why their ancestors came to the islands:

Robert: Everybody came here to work, labor and get money because maybe they were like all poor in Japan or Portugal or wherever and they came here to work and somehow they got friends because they might have worked together on the same plantation. They wanted to make money so they came over here for labor so they worked in the cane fields and all that. They came over here by boats and all that. (Blue Skin of the Sea discussion)

As the children talk about the literature they discuss and build common understandings of the history of the islands. Alex shares his personal knowledge about the evolution of the language dialect, pidgin, in Hawai'i:

Alex: I know they made up a new language. 'Cause they all came and they couldn't speak Hawaiian and they kind of just, they put together languages and made English and they took away some parts and they made another language. ('J'Like Ten Thousand' discussion)

Tatyana's written response about Chad's racial teasing in Dance for the Land makes historical references that she feels impact life in Hawai'i today:

I think Chad is hurting Kate because of the history that the haoles made the Hawaiians slaves so it might be that or it's just that Chad wants to make fun of her and embarrass her. (Journal)
“You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town” is one of the episodic stories in *Blue Skin of the Sea*. This story is a fictionalized account of the impact of the actual tsunami that demolished the major section of the town of Hilo in 1960. Recently a Tsunami Museum was constructed. It signals the significance of this event in Hilo's history to the children. As they discuss the story they draw heavily from their personal connections and stories to make sense of what happened in their hometown. They try to work out and understand the history that their grandparents and great-grandparents lived:

Mrs. E.: I know for myself it’s hard to imagine too that that actually happened here. Just like what you are saying and it’s also hard for me to imagine what it would have been like to be Sonny and Keo and to go there the next day and see everything that was there and it’s just gone.

Tatyana: Like we read Kaipo’s grandma’s story. It made me feel like, wow, I could just imagine the place just terrorized. Everything all over the place with mud from the wave just crashing in.

Kaipo: Yeah and then the policeman said that every, that they would have the um, fire drill . . .

Tatyana: Tsunami

During the discussion Kaipo makes references to historical facts to recreate actual events to help others understand the events that occurred:

Kaipo: Yeah, tsunami drill [was usually] at one o’clock but then [when they practiced] they (officials) tricked them so then like, they ring the bell
like at 12, 11 o’clock but was supposed to be at one. Then everybody was thinking, “Whoa, why they do that for?” But then they just like [practice] getting them (the people) ready, so then next time [when the real tsunami occurred] they say like the tsunami is going to be at one o’clock and then it [actually] hits at like 10 o’clock.

Robert: They were preparing um.
Kaipo: [But they weren’t ready] ’cause they thought it was fake.

The lack of physical evidence of the tsunami today generates disbelief in the minds of the children. The children have difficulty believing that the tsunami actually happened and want proof of the disaster:

Tatyana: Yeah but you look now, it doesn’t seem like it really happened here.
Jenna: I know like all by that area that they are talking about it’s all like, it’s not like that.
Kaipo: But you can kinda tell.
Jenna: But they fixed it up so you like, and people tell you that it’s true and you like kind of like - it’s true and stuff but then you go down there and everything they explain it different ’cause they made it so you think it’s kinda fake that they’re telling about it.

Robert points out physical reminders and monuments to remember those who lost their lives in the disaster and to remind them of history that changed their town:

Robert: There’s proof that the tsunami hit because that green clock downtown it stopped at 1:05, 1:10.
Kaipo: That green clock marks the//
Robert: . . .time that the tsunami hit.
Kaipo: Waiakea Settlement Gym.
Mrs. E.: Oh that’s where the gym was? You know I think Jenna brings up a good point about it doesn’t
seem real that you go down there and there’s no traces.

Alex: I know 'cause then on top the Banyan Golf Course there was probably a building yeah?

Kaipo: No, there was a school.

Alex: Oh, a school and then that got wiped out so now all they did was clean it up and cut the grass and probably there was still little bit trees and plants and trees and they got the golf course.

Robert: They just got to put the greens and all that.

Alex: To clean the mess it probably only take two to three years.

Alex: But then everybody knows that a tsunami might hit because they already know it’s happened. It’s like baseball and you get beaned by a pitch and then you know//

Robert: You never know what’s going to happen. It’s kind of fast//

Alex: You might think, “Oh, no, he might hit me again”

During the discussion Alex creates another metaphor about memories of the tsunami to show that even if the physical traces of the tsunami may be gone, it is alive in the memory of those who lived through and experienced the disaster:

Alex: It’s not a pencil, like the build, physically it’s a pencil ‘cause you just have to get an eraser and erase it and a pen and pretend we don’t have white out and then it has ink and you can’t get it out and we don’t have white out.

Robert: That’s what I’m thinking.

Tatyana: In our heads.

Kaipo: I understand now.

Mrs. E.: You understand?

Kaipo: The pen is like what happened and you can’t get it out of your mind//

Tatyana: . . . ‘cause it’s so tragic.

Alex: You try to erase it with an eraser, it won’t go away.
Kaipo: And like the pencil and the eraser is like something that happened that was real small, then you can erase it and you can forget about it.
Alex: Just try not to think about it.
Tatyana: Yeah.
Robert: Just think of something else.
Alex: Don’t bring up the subject.
Tatyana: Think of something happier.
Alex: You’ll still remember it but then, don’t think about it.

Together they build an understanding of the history that impacts their lives today. As they discuss the events in the story, it evokes historical and personal connections to a past that involves a personal part of them. This history in the literature is a part of their lives and the discussion enables them to build deeper understanding and make sense of the world around them.

Connecting History through Story: “’Cause it happened to our town”

Daddy, tell me about the past, about my Hawaiian side. Tell me about my family. (Wight, 1998, p. 150)

This category includes building history through story. It is through the stories that families share that children begin to know and develop a sense of history. The children come to understand the historical impact upon their present lives through stories. They connect their personal stories with the story in the text and develop a new understanding of their history. They make connections between past
stories and present lives. Kaipo's statement reveals a deep connection with the story, "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town":

Kaipo: 'Cause it happened to our town and you know how they felt and you can see the, you can see like what it destroyed 'cause have all kinds of pictures and stories.

His statement reflects a personal connection because of the pictures that hang as reminders of the disaster and family stories that have survived through time continue to live in those who experienced it. The shared stories develop a communal sense of history. The true-life event of the 1960 tsunami elicits many personal family stories about the tsunami. They connect the written story with images built through the oral stories heard in the community. The children remember and relive the past through sharing personal stories and build a sense of community within the group:

Courtney: My grandmother's brother got struck by a wave. He doesn't believe in it but he only got paralyzed.
Mrs. E.: Can you tell us about this?
Courtney: I don't remember 'cause he died already. He was paralyzed for a long time. He died from being paralyzed. He had a stroke also.
Kaipo: I should have brought my story. Tidal wave story.
Mrs. E.: You wrote a tidal wave story?
Courtney: Yeah we had to write it. I wrote about my grandpa.
Robert: I wrote a earthquake one. My mom when she was a small kid in the plantation house. Kind of like a two-story house, had a seven point something, around there, a big earthquake.

Alex: My mom got hit by Hurricane Iwa.

Tatyana: I wrote about an earthquake.

Mrs. E.: So who wrote tsunami stories?

Courtney: Me, 'cause I had a really big story.

Kaipo: Mines one is three pages long.

Courtney: About my grandfather, he was in it and then I had another one about my uncle wasn't dead, he told me the story.

Kaipo: I got two tidal wave stories.

Courtney: My mom told me about the story but I didn’t write about it.

Jenna: I wrote about my grandma in the time she was in the World War II.

Mrs. E.: Okay, so that relates to the other Salisbury book. I wrote a poem about three years ago about the tidal wave too because my dad was in the 1960 tidal wave and my grandparents, they had a business right on front street, you know by Bay Front?

Courtney: My uncle had a street there but there was a liquor shop and they opened the thing, had all sand but it was already sealed so that . . .

Mrs. E.: You know what? My dad tells the same story.

All: Ohh!

The children relate personal experiences and stories their families tell about the tsunami to each other. They share family stories as a part of building common understandings and this enables them to “. . . spread what happens back when other people that are older now were younger” (Jenna).

Pictures and stories remind them of the past and keep them connected to their history:
Robert: At Kress you know they have all the big pictures of the tsunami and then I saw this picture where all these people are running from this stores and then you could see this picture with the wave in the back. I don’t know to me it felt like that//

Kaipo: ... [M]y grandma, in her story, she’s walking to school but then she never knew there was a tidal [wave], but she knew there was a tidal wave but she didn’t know that it destroyed Hilo, so then when she was walking to school she looked down and came down by that I forget where was and everything was just wiped out.

Mrs. E.: There was nothing there.

Kaipo: Yeah, like this (shows pictures of the destruction that another student in the class shared).

Tatyana: They have in Prince Kuhio some pictures.

Courtney: Yeah, everytime we go to the mall, like, my dad, if I want to go shopping, he’ll stop me and keep telling me look at these pictures. He used to live by Café 100.

Courtney, Tatyana, and Robert’s comments suggest that reminders of the tsunami surround them to keep them informed of and to remember connections to their history.

Sensing Historical Connections: “In our blood we can just feel the history”

And I will always sing the ancient songs that I have come to learn, the chants that echo from my beloved mountains, and I will tell those whisperings that still call to me now, ever more clearly. And this I promise to that little child who disappeared so long ago, that although I may never dance, I will sing out my Hawaiianness, a mau a mau, forever. (Wight, 1998, p. 152)

Children possess a sense of history of the islands through the stories they have heard from their families
over the years. They seem to learn more about themselves, their history and culture through the discussion about the story. The children express a deeper understanding and respect for the culture because they can feel the history in them. Though not entirely accurate in their definition, the children discuss their personal understanding of the Hawaiian term “mana” which is referenced in Dance for the Land. Mana means immense spiritual or supernatural power (E. Mookini, personal communication, April 20, 2000). In itself mana does not have meaning but within the context of the Hawaiian culture it is powerful.

They talk about the love of the land or a deep feeling and respect for the islands. As the children work out their connection to “You would Cry to See Waiakea Town,” their talk reveals a deep sense or a powerful connection with the history in the islands that flows through them. This particular reading seems to come alive for the children:

Robert: It’s history.
Mrs. E.: I know it’s history but what makes it so real for you?
Tatyana: Because probably we live, we live here where it happened.
Robert: It’s good to know what happened.
Tatyana: So probably because of our grandparents we might have the blood to know how last time I think it was Alex talked about in our blood we can just
feel the history and we know. We might know a little, because we understand more about this book?

Mrs. E.: Why?

Tatyana: I don't know but if it was for the mainland people to read this chapter, they really wouldn't understand. 'Cause this is not their hometown and this is our hometown so we probably understand it more than them.

Robert: 'Cause if they come from Colorado or something, like the middle states they wouldn't know about it because there's no ocean near them, it's all land.

Alex: If we never felt it we [would] never know how bad, how scared they really felt the people that were in it, [we] will never feel how they felt.

Kaipo feels they connect with this story and have a deeper understanding of it "Because it happened to us . . . it happened over here, we know how it felt . . ." The historical realities felt by the children makes it a powerful reading for them. These realities are reflected in Alex's comment, "We heard that this book is not all made up, it has some history too."

In Dance for the Land, Kate is excluded from performing a hula dance because, according to her hula teacher, she does not possess the mana needed to properly perform the Hawaiian sovereignty dance which feels the loss of the land experienced by the Hawaiians. The children talk about what it means to know, to understand, and to feel the power of the meaning behind the dance:
Tatyana: She's thinking that she just has to do the moves. But it's not the feeling or what the power of the hula is or what it is telling.

Mrs. E.: Explain that a little more, what do you mean, what it's telling the hula?

Tatyana: Like it is telling the story about ancient times and like the beautiful waterfalls and stuff. She can do the movements but she doesn't feel what it feels to do the hula and the power.

Alex: She could do one dance but she couldn't do the second dance because that one needed a lot of feeling.

Corona: She couldn't feel it.

Mrs. M.: Why? Why, what is the difference?

Alex: 'Cause the haole-, the Caucasian people were taking the land so they had loss of the land.

Kerri: Kate doesn't understand the loss of the land because she was the one who was taking it away.

Robert: Her culture was taking away the land from the Hawaiians.

Kris: She can't feel like she is Hawaiian.

Tatyana: Yeah.

Debbie: You know when they have the sovereignty dance, she doesn't feel the loss for the land because people are telling her that she is haole so she doesn't feel like she can relate to that.

Later in the story, after Kate learns about the history of her ancestors and begins to understand her Uncle Kimo's desire to regain Hawaiian ownership of the land, she starts to feel a part of the islands within her. Kate's actions demonstrate that she is living up to her Hawaiian name and the spirit of her ancestors begins to flow through her. The children explain how Kate grows to understand what it means to be a part of the islands:

Jenna: Kate was feeling the mana [spiritual power] because of the way she explained.
Jamie: She was talking about the land or something.
Tatyana: And how it was taken away, how the water was taken away.
Kris: She changed.
Tatyana: The dust went in her bones.
Mrs. M.: She felt like the dust went in her bones, what do you mean the dust went in her bones?
Tatyana: The mana.
Jenna: She could understand the words better.
Tatyana: ‘Cause she learned about it.
Jill: She knew more about the land.
Debbie: She felt the music and the meaning of the words flowing through her.
Jenna: She felt one with the music and the meaning of the song.
Tatyana: She just expressed herself through the hula.

Within the context of the Hawaiian culture the children understand that to have knowledge of the history is not enough. One must have a deep respect for and have understanding of the meaning behind the words. They imply that it is not a superficial feeling towards the history and culture but a deeper, almost spiritual connection with the islands.

Connections to the Literature

The literature of local writers has a distinct sensitivity to ethnicity, the environment (in particular that valuable commodity, the land), a sense of personal lineage and family history, and the use of the sound, the languages, and the vocabulary of island people. (Lum, 1986, p. 4)

This category describes the children’s connections to literature about the local culture as it presently exists
in Hawai‘i. The sub-categories in this section are written in descending order of strength. The ones with the most data and that the children responded to more intensely are listed first. Children share their experiences as they “lived through” (Rosenblatt, 1938) the literature written about Hawai‘i. The focus is on the experience itself and includes a range of different response strategies (Rosenblatt, 1938; 1978). In focusing on responding as an “event” Rosenblatt (1938) suggests the need to consider the importance of social context:

The special meanings, and, more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to the past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his response to the peculiar contribution of the text. (p. 30)

The children’s literature discussions reveal that they respond emotionally, make connections with personal experiences, create images, and discuss their strategies as readers:

[These books about Hawai‘i] made me understand, not like, in the lower grades, I didn’t like understand what it was saying but I knew the words. Now I can picture what is going on in the story. (Kaipo, post-interview)
Kaipo reflects upon his experiences reading books about local culture. His statement reveals his growth as a reader and how his understanding of reading moved beyond reading the words. He suggests that through reading books about his culture, he came to understand that meaning exists beyond calling out the words. Kaipo’s statement implies that he realizes “[r]eading isn’t simply recognizing words in succession” (K. Goodman, 1996, p. 40) and suggests that he is consciously aware that he is using his experiences to construct meaning for the written text.

Living Through the Experience: “I was in there”

... literature contributes to the enlargement of experience. Through the medium of literature we participate in imaginary situations, we look on at characters living through crises, we explore ourselves and the world about us. (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 37)

Children feel a deep connection with literature. Their responses indicate that they are living through the experience while reading literature about their culture. They describe their felt experience with the literature as they discuss the text with each other. Rosenblatt (1978) states that in this type of aesthetic reading “... the reader’s attention is centered directly on what he is living through during his relationship with that particular
text" (p. 1978). The children share their lived experience with the text as they talk with each other.

Stories the children have been told about the tsunami and pictures displayed around their hometown serve as reminders of the tragedy faced. During the discussion of the tsunami story, Robert and Tatyana express their experience with the text:

Robert: The tidal wave, it seems so real but it seems like so fake but it's actually real. I don't know it seems like we were in it.

Tatyana: 'Cause then the way Graham Salisbury described it. The way this story described the tidal wave described how Sonny felt. It made me feel like I was in Sonny's place.

Later during the post-interview they expand upon and extend how it felt to live through the experience with the characters:

Robert: [I learned] how it would be like through a disaster from Blue Skin of the Sea when they had that tsunami. I never encountered one before so I never knew what it was, what it would be like and after I read it, I kinda felt like I was experiencing one. I felt like I was actually in there with Sonny when I was reading it.

Tatyana: The way, the description, he made, Graham Salisbury made this story. It just touched me and I just imagined myself there. I was just like "Oh my gosh, what is going to happen next, I'm scared." I was there; I could just imagine myself there. I could just feel that power.
While talking about "You Would Cry to See Waiakea Town", the children express their feelings as they experience the text. Alex speaks as if he had actually experienced the tsunami that gave him a sense of understanding for those who had gone through it:

Alex: If we never felt it we [would] never know how bad, how scared they really felt the people that were in it will never feel how they felt.

Responding Emotionally: "You feel tense when you read it"

In its simplest terms, literature may offer us an emotional outlet. (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 36)

The children share their emotional responses to the literature. As the children read they begin to identify and empathize with the characters’ situations and begin to feel the emotions of the characters. Rosenblatt (1978) claims that through the sharing of emotions of other human beings in the literary experience, children begin to gain heightened sensitivity to the needs and problems of others. In discussing the lived through experience Jenna and Courtney describe their emotional reaction and sensitivity towards Sonny’s situation as they read:

Jenna: You feel kind of tense when he reads it because you can picture it, like how it, how you would feel if you were Sonny. (Blue Skin of the Sea)
Jenna: You know how he felt [when Sonny found out that his dad was still alive]. If you never seen someone for a long time you do not know how they are feeling. And then you know how Sonny feels because his dad was away for a long time, longer than how he usually stays out and then so you can feel his loneliness. (Post-interview)

Courtney: As I was reading I felt, Oh no, Sonny might be an orphan or like he might live with Shelly folks or Uncle Harley and so he would probably feel, I would probably feel that if I was Sonny I would feel really bad about myself, sad about myself 'cause now I don’t have anybody care with, make me feel that was going to care about me . . . (Symbolic Representational Interview)

Creating Images: “You could picture every part in your mind”

[M]ental images of characters, places, actions are intimately related to readers’ emotional experiences with texts and their understanding of texts. (Beach, 1993, p. 62)

The children express the ability to create images with the literature about their local culture. The children discuss how they “evoke images” (Rosenblatt, 1978) which heighten their experience with the literature. Children seem to draw visual images to connect with the literature:

Tatyana: I could see the friend’s dad with the cigarette in his mouth and the firecrackers/ (made firecracker motions with hands and laughter from students) and that was funny and it was it up and blew up in his face. (“J’Like Ten Thousand”)
Jenna: If you read this whole book you probably could picture every part in your mind as you were reading it because of how the author described everything. (Post-interview)

Alex: That's what I try to do to a lot of books, but the picture in my head always seems like something I saw already and I try to make it match. Hawai'i is much clearer because I live here. Other books it mostly the setting is on the mainland so I had to try. (Post-interview)

In the discussion, children talk about their images of the characters while reading. They seem to be able to talk about their images and share those images with others:

Tatyana: And the way he (Salisbury) described the Auntie.
Kaipo: Oh yeah.
Tatyana: . . . that um look like a Hawaiian queen.
Jenna: Yeah.
Robert: Was rich or something?
Mrs. E.: Tell us more about that Tatyana.
Tatyana: Um, I guess what I thought it made me see was her hair was up in a bun or something and it was like sticking up (forms a bun over her hair using her hands) and she had lots and lots of make up on.

Children talked about images evoked during the reading and reflected upon their images in the post discussion interviews. They credited Salisbury's rich and vivid descriptions as part of the reason this literature about their culture came alive for them.
Connecting with Personal Experiences: "Bu bu bu bu cock"

The reader, drawing on past linguistic and life experience, links the signs on the page with certain words, certain concepts, certain sensuous experiences, certain images of things, people, actions, scenes. (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 30)

Children seemed to connect with the actions and experiences of the characters in the story. The children reflect upon the actions of the characters and reenact a scene in the story as the discussion unfolds. They seem to use the author’s use of language and connect it with their own life experiences. The children relate their personal experiences directly to the experience of the characters.

Rosenblatt (1938) writes, "Imaginative literature happens when we focus our attention on what we are sensing, thinking, feeling, structuring, in the act of response to the particular words in their particular order" (p. 265). Alex, Tatyana, and Robert play upon Salisbury’s use of words by acting out teasing in the book as if they were living through the experience themselves:

Kaipo: Why was Sonny afraid of swimming?
Alex: 'Cause the water.
Kris: 'Cause he was afraid that eels and sharks would get in his face.
Robert: Yeah because the first time he went into the water and then he went into the water and he was just standing and staying still and he was going down deeper and deeper and then Keo was teasing him, like a chicken 'cause Sonny was scared.
Alex: Bu bu bu bu bucock
Tatyana: (Begins flapping her arms like a chicken.)
Robert: Bu bu bu bucock

In the post-interviews the children discuss how they were able to draw connections with the books written about their local culture and their own lives:

Alex: It kind of made me look for the issues in books and try to interpret them into my life. It's like thinking I experience or things I've seen before. (Post-interview)

Kaipo: It feels like a true story. It feels like you were in it. When Keo looked into that part on the boat when he looked on the bottom, you could picture on the bottom of the boat. I probably imagined that because almost sometimes I got scared of the boat when I went fishing with my dad guys. (Post-interview)

Tatyana: In Sumorella (Takayama, 1994) the manapua man actually sounds like my grandpa. "Eh, I stay old, but I can do um." (Post-interview)

The issues and cultural familiarity with language create situations for the children to make direct connections between the books and their personal lives.

Identifying Reading Strategies: "You want to understand so you read slower"

Our minds have a repertoire of strategies for sense-making. (K. Goodman, 1996, p. 110 & 111)

During the discussion of the literature children talk about their strategies as readers. K. Goodman (1982) shows that young readers use strategies such as scanning,
selection, confirmation, and correction to get to meaning. "'Efficient reading' gets to the meaning with the least amount of effort necessary. This efficiency is gained by using the fewest number of graphic cues and making the best possible predictions on the basis of what the readers knows about language and the content of what he is reading, without sacrificing meaning" (K. Goodman, 1982, p. 62). As the children discuss books about their culture, they discuss strategies they use to get to meaning and use talk as a way to work through understandings of the literature. They reflect upon using talk as a strategy to consider other perspectives and different ways to look at issues that they may not have examined if read in isolation:

Robert: You get to understand if you talk about it.
Kaipo: And if you read it by yourself, you'd probably like give up after the fourth chapter.
Courtney: If you probably read it alone you wouldn't be able to express you feelings about it.
Kaipo: Boring.
Alex: If you read it on your own you might not get the whole picture. But then if you come and talk about it here, you can hear other ideas and notice that there were some other issues that I missed. So then you get the full information of a book.

Alex and Robert share how they read parts slower to create images and to gain a better understanding:
Alex: When I got to that part I kinda slowed down a little. The image in my head is hundred-foot wave is coming over and covered the town and came down and made everything black.

Robert: You want to understand it more so you read slower.

The children talk about a keep-going strategy they use when they think a book is boring. Some of them comment that they would give up but others say they keep going:

Alex: I wouldn't give up 'cause then I know that the beginning part is not the exciting part, it's the middle and the end. It's like the climax. That's why when I read a book, in the beginning it's mostly boring but then I stick to it 'cause then I know at the ending it's gonna be a good part.

Kaipo: Yeah, like in the *Boxcar Children*, in the beginning it's all boring, but when you get to the end, they capture, like all kind people, mysteries.

Alex: There's a book that I read, I looked, I skimmed through it and then the whole thing was just letters - Dear Mr. Henshaw, Dear Mr. Henshaw, Dear Mr. Henshaw, Dear Mr. Henshaw.

(Laughter)

Alex: Was boring. There is no, only Dear Mr. Henshaw, the whole thing.

Robert: I was like that once. I read this long chapter book by? Light shadow? In second or third grade, the thing was so boring because it was just talking about this wizard dying. I was like, "oh boring" and at the end it was like better.

The children make predictions about the outcome of the story based on their prior knowledge about books.

Prediction plays an important role in proficient reading.

K. Goodman (1996) writes:
As readers use cues from the linguistic text, they bring their knowledge and beliefs about the world to bear on making sense. They 'guess' what's coming, making predictions and inferences; they are selective about the use of text cues and they monitor their 'guesses' for contradictory cues. (p. 7 & 8)

The children discuss how they make predictions to help them figure out what may happen in the text:

Alex: And something that catches me to is that in every single book that I read, the good guy always wins.
Kaipo: I know.
Alex: The good guy always wins!
Kaipo: In the beginning they lose, if they stay playing a basketball game they lose and then they come back and they win.
Mrs. E.: Why do you think that happens?
Alex: I don’t know but that makes it kind of boring 'cause then . . .
Robert: You know already.
Alex: You know the good guy going win.
Robert: Like Boxcar Children or Encyclopedia Brown.
Kaipo: Or like Mighty Ducks
Robert: If it's like the . . .
Alex: Like Blue Skin of the Sea, we know they going be successful.

The children use their knowledge of books and experiences discussing books about their culture to share strategies with each other.
Relating to Language: “We use pidgin”

If I could wish this book [Growing up Local] could do one thing, it would be this: at long last to lay to rest the arguments over whether pidgin is “acceptable” or not in literature. (Teter, 1998, p. 249)

The author’s choice in language surfaces as an issue in the literature discussion. Children make references to the pidgin or Creole dialect used in the dialogue of Blue Skin of the Sea and Dance for the Land and reflect upon the author’s use of language to build the character. Although local writers contend that children need to see their language in print (Lum, 1998; Yamanaka, 1999), the children did not see themselves as speaking pidgin in school. The negative attitude towards the use of pidgin in schools (see Chapter 2) could have influenced the children’s responses toward the language. They did not see pidgin as a reflection of themselves but rather as a reflection of the “uneducated” and undesirable characters in the book.

Although language was an issue mentioned by the children, it did not become a focal point of the discussions. During their discussions, children analyze the use of language by the author:

Courtney: Why is it that Deeps, Deeps is the only one that uses a lot of the pidgin words. Like, “okay hold on to dis,” and stuff like that. Instead of “this”, he’ll say, “dis”.
Mrs. E.: So you noticed there was a difference in the way Deeps talked, the language that he used and everyone else's?

Courtney: Yeah

Alex: He did use a lot of pidgin.

Mrs. E.: Why do you think the author would have done that?

Courtney: He's a new character so he's a new character and he's usually out on the ocean. When you're out on the ocean your more of a pidgin person.

Alex: And it really holds what we talked about earlier about when people in Hawai'i use pidgin a lot and he's just trying to state that again that we use pidgin.

Jenna: I guess the author made it like that, explain, to explain how Deeps was, 'cause he was new in the book 'cause he wanted us to get a feeling of what he was like.

Children note the author's deliberate use of their pidgin dialect in the literature. Although, the case study group children bring up issues of language they do not focus upon the language. Use of the pidgin dialect appears to validate the children's language and their culture, and so contributes to their enjoyment of the literature.

Kaipo, in particular, attributes part of his deeper understanding to the use of pidgin that helps him connect with the literature in a more meaningful way. Even though negative attitudes toward the language exist, the children do seem to enjoy and appreciate the inclusion of their language in the literature.
Discussion of Findings

**DA MAINLAND TO ME**

Eh, howzit brah,
I heard you going mainland, eh?
   No, I going to da continent.
Wat? I taught you going San Jose
for visit your bradda?
   Dats right.
Den you going mainland brah!
   No, I going to da continent.
Wat you mean continent brah?!
Da mainland is da mainland,
Dats where you going, eh?!
   Eh, like I told you,
dats da continent-

Hawai'i
   is da mainland to me.
   *(Balaz, 1994, p. 13)*

What is local culture? Through the discussion of
literature about their culture children revealed their own
insights about local culture. They expressed that if one
is considered local, he or she would be regarded as an
insider to the island culture present in Hawai'i. Through
discussing literature about Hawai'i, children identified
different characteristics necessary to be considered part
of the local culture. These characteristics included
knowing the local culture, being able to speak the pidgin
dialect, living the local lifestyle, being part of the
community, and having a sense of the history.
The children did not seem to see race as the deciding factor of being local, however racial considerations were taken into account as part of the complex social interplay between the different racial groups in Hawai'i. Race was a factor in developing a sense of belonging for the children but, it was not the determining factor; if one was able to fit authentically into the local culture in other ways, it superseded having to fit in racially. In the discussions they said that it did not matter what race a person was, as long as he or she "belonged" or fit in to the local lifestyle. Through discussion the children begin to see that commonalties between different ethnic groups are emphasized as the term local has come to represent common experiences, values, activities, and beliefs among different ethnic groups in Hawai'i (Okamura, 1980).

Cultural Reflections

Children responded to the literature by reflecting upon their experiences living in their multiethnic society. Through exploration of issues regarding their culture they began to build metaphors about their beliefs on culture. The literature discussions became a vehicle through which children defined cultural theories, and discovered how they belong within their own local culture. Their discussions
reflected their growing awareness of differences between cultures and their own attitudes towards other cultures. Children took the opportunity to become aware of and recognize, and appreciate and accept difference (Grant, 1977) and acknowledge their individual identity as a collage of cultures (Shannon, 1988) by reading and talking about literature of their culture. As they responded to the literature of Hawai‘i, they shared their developing theories about what it means to live in a multicultural world.

I expended a great deal of tension with respect to the Cultural Chameleon subcategory under Culture because of the children’s concern about “becoming who you are with.” When I analyzed the transcripts from the text set on culture the children seemed to talk about the concept of becoming who you are with, acting like those around you to be accepted. Children talked about the need to be a cultural chameleon which implied that they were so intent on changing their colors to fit into the local culture that they lose a sense of their authentic color. It bothered me to think that as you “become who you are with” you have the potential of losing your cultural identity. I questioned: Is this what we are promoting – a melting pot society in Hawai‘i? Is
this the reality of what happens in Hawai‘i - we become one local culture but lose the authenticity of our ethnic roots?

My tension was due to my personal debate with the issue. Personally, I did not feel that I lost all of my ethnic connections and that it still plays an important role in my history, traditions, and culture. I also observed this in the children but we did not have the opportunity to clarify what they had stated in the transcripts. The discussion simply did not get to that point.

Later, after school was out for the summer I was able to go back and interview the children about the melting pot or Hawai‘i’s local culture and ask them about their ethnic heritages. They expressed that the local culture is the melting together of all the cultures and the ethnic or authentic culture is still present below the local culture. So, in essence one needs to become part of the local culture, but one can still retain pride and identification with his/her ethnic roots. As Robert stated, “It’s like a stain, you can’t get it out.” The time allowed the children to extend the melting pot theory to include ethnic pride.
**Historical Reflections**

The literature enabled children to discuss and explore their cultural past. Through the discussions about literature of their culture the children explored parts of their history and shared their historical beliefs about their community and culture. These discussions, in turn, created new understandings of their history and allowed children to explore the past which led to new discoveries of about their present cultural lives.

**Literature Reflections**

The children also responded to culturally relevant literature in terms of personal connections. The literature discussions provided a place for them to "explore ourselves and the world about us" (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 37). It gave them an opportunity to talk through their growing understandings of the literature and share their *lived through* experiences with each other, not just *knowledge about* literature (Rosenblatt, 1995). Children were "... encouraged to bring to the text whatever in his past experience is relevant: His sensuous awareness, his feeling for people and practical circumstances, his ideas and information, as well as his feeling for the sound and pace and texture of language" (Rosenblatt, 1938, p.
As they discussed literature about their own culture they made personal connections, created images, responded emotionally, related to the language of the literature, and shared strategies as readers. Hade (1997) writes, "If we view reading not as comprehending existing messages, but interpreting certain signs with which we have a relationship that includes experience, culture, and value, we can see readers as becoming more powerful interpreters of their reading and of their world" (p. 240). Through reading and discussing literature about Hawai'i, the children built common understandings of culture, history, and made connections with the literature and as a result, came to know more about themselves and their own lives.

In this chapter I analyzed the first research question about the content of children's responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature. The content of the case study group's responses after reading literature that included representations of their culture fell into four major categories: Sense of Belonging, Cultural Theories, Building Historical Understandings, and Connections to the Literature. The content of the children's responses included what it means to belong to the local culture in Hawai'i, their beliefs and ideas about
culture, the historical understandings they have about Hawai'i, and how they connected with the literature. In the next chapter, I will discuss how each child in the case study group's came to understand and responded to culturally relevant literature over time.
CHAPTER 6

CONSTRUCTING PERSONAL AND CULTURAL UNDERSTANDINGS: SIX
STUDENT PROFILES

The intent of this chapter is to address the second question in this study: How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time? I specifically chose the word "understandings" because the primary source of data related to the children's understandings came through interview data rather than only the literature discussion transcripts.

To answer this question, I looked at how each of the six case study group children developed understandings and responded to their literature experiences over the course of the study. Individual profiles were written for each child and the profiles present the child’s unique perspective on his or her experience with culturally relevant literature. Within each profile I introduce the child’s understandings and responses in each of the categories identified from the data. These categories are: Identifying Personal Issues, Building Cultural Understandings and Understanding Language and Literature.
Each child's statements illustrate how he or she came to understand the literature in these categories.

In chapter 5, I examined the content of the case study group's responses to culturally relevant literature using the literature discussions to drive the categories. This chapter looks at the understandings each child explored through his or her perspective using the interviews to drive the categories. I discuss how each child identified his or her personal issues, built understandings about culture, talked about his or her experience with the language (pidgin) and as a reader of culturally relevant literature, and how these understandings and issues evolved over the course of the study. While the personal issues and evolution of understanding were unique to each individual, some of their beliefs about culture and reactions to the literature were similar in nature. I discuss how each child's personal and cultural understandings influenced the evolution of his or her experience with culturally relevant literature.

Members of the study group were selected to represent equal numbers of boys and girls, a range of reading abilities, a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and a range in levels of participation in class discussion. The criteria
for selection in the case study group were explained in detail in Chapter 3.

The primary data sources used to generate the categories were the interviews (pre-interview, Symbolic Representational Interview, post-interview). The pre-interview was conducted in small groups of three and lasted approximately 20 minutes in length, the Symbolic Representational Interview was done individually and took 20 minutes to 30 minutes in length and the post-interview was approximately 30 minutes in length for each child. The primary focus of this analysis was on the post-interview because it provided more data and was used to demonstrate the child's perspective of his or her literature experience.

After the categories for children's understandings were created using the interviews, secondary sources were used to provide additional data to support what each child had stated in the interviews. This data came from the four literature discussions — "J'Like Ten Thousand" (Lum, 1986), Blue Skin of the Sea (Salisbury, 1992), Text set on culture, Dance for the Land (McClaren, 1999) and written responses on these books. The data analysis process is
explained briefly here and is presented in more detail in Chapter 3.

Initially, I analyzed the data for Alex's profile first since he had the most data. I cut each of Alex's statements out from the transcripts of his Symbolic Representational Interview and pre and post-interviews. I read through and sorted his individual statements into topics and issues and taped them onto pieces of paper. I placed them on the floor to study patterns between them and made them into preliminary categories. Then I refined the preliminary categories into Major Categories by collapsing those that related to each other.

I used the Major Categories identified through Alex's interviews for the other children. One by one, I took each of the other five children's Symbolic Representational Interviews and pre and post-interview transcripts and cut children's individual statements and sorted them into the Major Categories.

When I had originally created this research question I had intended to use the interviews as a reflection of the process children had experienced as they read and responded. However, after studying the data I found a gap between my question and what the data actually showed. I
had expected deeper reflection on the process through the Symbolic Representational Interview, instead they reflected on their understandings rather than their process of reaching those understandings. I also noticed that each individual child evolved as the study progressed and that became a focal point of interest for me. Therefore, I returned to my question and reexamined the question, the analysis process, and the categories. I realized my question was really looking at the content of individual understandings and how those understandings evolved, thus, I revised my question. Then I went back to the data and examined the data to see if the data answered my question.

At that point I found I needed to reorganize the categories because the category titles 1) Building Cultural Understandings and 2) Dealing with Personal and Cultural Issues and the data within those categories were similar so I collapsed the two categories into one: Building Cultural Understandings. After reexamining the data I realized that what it really showed was how the children had evolved over the course of the study personally, culturally and as readers. These new categories illustrated the data more accurately and addressed the revised question: How do the
understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time?

This chapter includes an overview briefly describing each category and following these descriptions are six profiles which highlight the children’s personal understandings and responses to the literature as they evolved over the study. Each profile begins with a general description followed by the categories to show how each child came to understand and responded to literature about his/her culture to learn about his/her personal and cultural lives. The profiles unfold with the children’s voices to support my interpretation of their understandings and responses. To conclude the chapter, I discuss the overall commonalties between the six children and how culturally relevant literature supported them in creating deeper understandings about their own lives and the world around them.

Description of Categories

This section includes a description of each of the following categories: Identifying Personal Issues, Building Cultural Understandings, and Understanding Language and
Literature. The descriptions of the categories are followed by the six student profiles.

**Identifying Personal Issues**

This category describes the dominant personal issue that surfaced for the individual child during the course of the literature discussions. As they thought about their experiences with the literature, the children identified their personal questions each explored a major personal issue that evolved over the course of the discussions. The characteristics that signaled the child’s personal issue were the questions each child asked and the topics or issues he/she raised and worked to understand throughout the study. The discussion highlights each child’s dominant personal issue, how each personal issue developed, and how the individual’s issue related to and influenced his or her life.

**Building Cultural Understandings**

The cultural understandings discussed in this category overlaps with some of the data and findings reported for the case study group in Chapter 5. However, the difference is that in this chapter I look at how the individual child’s thinking relates to cultural understandings. This category shows individual children’s general perceptions of
culture and presents the child's ideas and beliefs about what culture means to him/her. Nieto (1996) claims that "the concept of culture itself is abstract, and most [young] children are not consciously aware of their own or others' cultures" (p. 69), however, a sense of cultural relativity develops around eight or nine. For these older children in this study, this category describes their awareness and understanding of culture. Cultural knowledge is, "the way a person explains or interprets reality" (Banks, 1996, p. 5). This category describes each child's personal and cultural knowledge or his or her "concepts, explanations, interpretations that students derive from personal experiences in their homes, families, and community cultures" (p. 9). Characteristics that signaled cultural understanding included children defining what culture meant to them, talking about how they felt cultures should interact, discussing differences between cultural groups, sharing injustices they saw against different cultural groups, or sharing how they came to perceive other cultures.

This category describes how each child came to understand the cultural issues that surfaced during the literature discussions. Individual children's responses
are used to illustrate how each child’s cultural understandings evolved through the course of the study.

**Understanding Language and Literature**

The discussion begins with examples of how each child talked specifically about the language dialect (pidgin). Children refer to how pidgin is used in the literature or with respect to his or her attitude towards the use of pidgin in different contexts.

In this category each child also reflects on his or her experience as a reader of the literature of his or her culture. Characteristics that signaled understanding literature included children talking about the process they experienced during the literature discussions, discussing what they learned about the process of reading, or sharing their thoughts on the impact of culturally relevant literature on their lives. The findings discuss each child’s comments on the reading process he or she experienced as he or she read culturally relevant literature and his or her process of discussion about books or a particular discussion about a book.
Alex: Open Up and See

The class often met together as a large group. During these class meetings Alex typically positioned himself physically at the back of the group. He was quick to share his comments and projected his voice clearly so he was audible to everyone in the group. The children valued Alex’s opinion and because he was eager and open to participating, sometimes it seemed that the children depended on Alex to speak up on their behalf. When the other children spoke, Alex listened, considered their insights, and often built upon their comments. He created metaphors like the melting pot metaphor mentioned in Chapter 5, to help himself work through his understandings and these metaphors often clarified and created greater insights for the rest of the case study group.

According to Alex, his experience with literature about Hawai‘i was limited to school and books. Prior to the literature discussions in fifth grade Alex said his experiences with this genre involved reading legends, Hawaiian versions of fairy tales, and a fourth grade Hawaiian history book.
Identifying Personal Issues

As the literature discussions evolved Alex began to think about and consider his place in the world with respect to his racial background. Over the course of the study Alex's personal issue regarding his identity and race surfaced. He identified himself as "Japanese and German" or sometimes he called himself "haole (Caucasian) and Japanese." In one discussion he established, "I am half-haole, half-Japanese, [but] plenty people tell that I am 100% haole." Another time he added, "I get more German than Japanese" and "people mistake me because they don't think I look Japanese." He felt that he identified with being haole more than with being Japanese. He expressed, "I know I have Japanese but I don't think like a Japanese. I don't watch any Japanese shows." This comment indicated that Alex felt removed from what it meant to be Japanese and that he associated being Japanese with doing things like those who live in Japan.

Ramsey (1998) cites Kich's (1992) three stages of identity development for bi-racial children: 1) Awareness of differentness and dissonance where children confront questions about who they are, 2) Struggle for acceptance where children may feel they need to choose one part of
their identity and reject the other one, 3) Self-acceptance and assertion of an interracial identity where children develop a stable self-acceptance of themselves as bi-racial and bi-cultural.

Through the discussions Alex grows to confront questions of who he is. Sometimes it seems that he shows characteristics of Kich’s first stage when he struggles to understand part of his identity by acknowledging he is of Japanese ancestry, yet states that he does not think like a Japanese. Alex also seems to demonstrate characteristics of stage two, accepting his Caucasian identity but rejecting his Japanese identity when he says that he is lucky to be white because “when I go to the mainland I look haole and so they won’t mistreat me . . .”

Early in the discussion of Blue Skin of the Sea Alex began to wonder about and work through different understandings about his racial identity. Initially, when confronted with the issue of racial teasing in Blue Skin of the Sea, Alex rejected the notion that any racial teasing of haoles (Caucasians) existed in Hawai‘i. At the time he attributed this racial teasing of haoles in Hawai‘i specifically to the character Jack. Alex claimed that he
never experienced this type of racial teasing in Hawai'i and it must happen “only in Los Angeles.”

Later, when the racial teasing of haoles surfaced again during the Dance for the Land discussion, Alex shouted, “It’s racism!!!! RACISM!!!!” over the distracting building construction in the background. This time the injustices and reality of the racist comments directed towards haoles in Hawai'i led him to confront and acknowledge his personal issue of dealing with racism. Alex’s new awareness about racism and personal relationship with literature of Hawai'i helped him see the world in a different light and wonder - “Is racism teasing?” In the final interview Alex reflected:

I learned that this might happen to me (racial teasing). So I just have to watch out because before I read, I listened to these books, I thought everything, nothing could happen but I found out some stuff like this could happen. I can understand that now there is some things that I can’t see.

Alex’s own awareness of and reflection upon this issue created new insights on his own racial background and extended his understanding of his place in the world. He further commented,

But me, I think that I’m kind of lucky because I don’t get mistreated here and when I go to the mainland I look haole (Caucasian) and so they won’t mistreat me, they’ll just think I am one of them.
Alex's comments showed he appreciates his comfortable place within the culture in Hawai'i. He is thankful for not being mistreated in Hawai'i and also for being able to fit in on the mainland because of his physical appearance. This comment suggested that Alex felt racial appearance or the way someone looks is a factor in getting mistreated. While Alex attempts to be both conflicting cultures depending upon place, it seems as though he is beginning to acknowledge and accept his individual and evolving identity as a collage of cultures (Shannon, 1998). Alex's changed perspective created a growing understanding of difference and a personal insight about his racial background.

Through hearing and discussing stories of other cross-cultural children like Sonny in Blue Skin of the Sea and Kate in Dance for the Land, Alex was able to learn more about his own identity (Shannon, 1998). Alex's personal approach to the literature about Hawai'i enabled him to leave the year with a deeper understanding of himself, a concern for racial injustices, and genuine desire to wonder: "Why do people tease someone about their race? Why are people mean to other people just because of their race?"
Building Cultural Understandings

During the text set discussion on culture, Alex explained his understanding of culture by sharing a metaphor with the others in the group. He drew from the traditional melting pot assimilationist view of culture, in which all ethnic differences mixed and created a culture superior to all (Banks, 1994), to explain how he thought the cultures in Hawai'i came together:

Alex: Pretend people are water and you add it to a pot. Hawai'i's culture is, pretend they are all red water and then somebody throws in blue water, somebody throws a little green water and now it all comes black. It all comes mixed up.

Alex’s understanding of the concept of culture indicated that the cultures of the immigrant ethnic groups who came to Hawai'i were lost in the mixing of the different cultural groups. By blending together all the colors in the pot a new culture, represented by the color black, was created. This meant that the “ethnic groups had to give up many of their cultural characteristics . . .” (Banks, 1994, p. 20) in order to fully participate in society.

A few weeks later, Alex reconsidered and altered the melting pot metaphor to show that the culture of the immigrant or ethnic groups was not lost, but masked by the
black color. In essence, what he envisioned was the "salad bowl" (Banks, 1994) metaphor where each ethnic culture retains part of their identity and plays a unique role in the total society:

Alex: The colors are all there. It is exactly like a person, the top is black because all those colors are mixed but when you look a little under, if the pot was clear, you look a little under the pot, there is some green. They are not black, they are just the inside of the people. They feel like all one color.

Alex felt that the ethnic cultures participate in the larger society but still retain parts of their ethnic cultures, taking a "salad bowl" (Banks, 1994) view of culture. This position, cultural pluralism, rejects the assimilationist argument and argues that members of diverse ethnic groups maintain their culture and "peacefully coexist" among each other (Grant, 1988).

One day during a literature discussion, Alex asserted, "You should treat all the cultures equal" and the other children all agreed. Then a couple of minutes later I observed Alex as he made fun of the way another culture ate their food. His words "treat all the cultures equal" illustrated a seemingly typical response, yet his actions tended to indicate an understanding contrary to his statement. It was through in-depth discussion about
culture that Alex was able to explore his beliefs about culture and meaningfully reflect on the impact of his actions upon others. In the post-interview Alex revealed insight into his actions and the way he viewed cultures other than his own:

At first I thought 'oh yeah' about cultures, they are funny like that, but [I learned] they are not, they are just different so you shouldn’t laugh at them. Then he laughed at himself and shared an example of what difference came to mean to him:

I used to see on the TV yeah? They showed this African movie and then they are all dancing and like that [shows me with his arms] and I was laughing. It was funny that’s why. But then it shouldn’t be funny, that’s just what they do, its just part of their culture. He summarized, “I kind of learned that no culture is weird, they are just different because they just have a different ritual or way of doing things.”

Alex’s statements demonstrated that he constructed a new view of other cultures. The experience of his culture within literature discussions and his willingness to accept other perspectives led Alex to expand his world and open up a new phase in development which led to greater appreciation and acceptance of cultural and individual differences and of others’ right to exist (Grant, 1998).
Through the discussion about literature of his culture and personal reflections on his culture Alex cited examples of injustices, questioned why others would want to take advantage of someone, and discussed why people would make fun of other cultures. Alex’s statement, “[When the] missionaries came [to Hawai‘i], they just took over . . . they changed the color, changed the face of what it (the culture) was,” demonstrated that he realized the injustices placed upon Hawaiians and that one culture can impact another culture.

Alex tried to work out the reasons people would ridicule other cultures. He suggested, “[If] they are not used to it . . . if they see something different, they’re gonna tease it. That’s the only reason. If they were the same as them, they wouldn’t tease.” He also speculated that others may make fun of other cultures because “people just want to tease other people . . . maybe they don’t like them . . . maybe just to be mean.” He admitted that sometimes this teasing is “like a habit already that they can’t break.”
Alex's responses also indicated that he respected the right to be different, "[There's] nothing wrong with that (being different), there's no law." He felt:

You shouldn't tease people about their race because they didn't have anything, they didn't do anything to you and it shouldn't bother you and they can't help it. They cannot say, 'Oh I want to be born blue, I want to be born red.'

Through Alex's personal approach to the literature and reflections on himself and his culture, he began to notice injustices in the world and reasons to respect the differences of people around him. Alex's statements showed an increased appreciation when he reflected on attitudes and behavior that affirm diversity and challenged beliefs he previously held (Crawford, Ferguson, Kauffman, Laird, Schroeder, & Short, 1998).

**Understanding Language and Literature**

The first literature discussion, "J'Lilce Ten Thousand," was about a story written in pidgin. Pidgin was also used in the dialogue of certain characters in Dance for the Land, Blue Skin of the Sea, and some of the books in the text set. In the post-interview Alex commented that the inclusion of pidgin in the books allowed local children like himself to read the books about Hawai'i in a deeper way because "we understand pidgin."
After reviewing a transcript of their discussion Alex exclaimed, "Whoa, get plenty pidgin. I never know we talked like that!" This comment indicated that he was not consciously aware of his use of pidgin during the discussions. As some of the other children expressed in the large group discussion on language, Alex thought that he used "Standard English" in the formal school context and pidgin outside the classroom. His attitude towards pidgin supported the common belief that there is a sense of pride and ownership in the language, yet a negative attitude towards use of pidgin exists in the schools (Hawai'i DOE, 1988).

Alex's reflections in the post-interview demonstrated that he realized that he was able to gain new perspectives and build his understandings of culture through his discussions of literature about Hawai'i.

If you read it on your own you might not get the whole picture. But then if you come and talk about it here, you can hear other ideas and notice that there were some other issues that I missed . . . If there is more people, people could see like different sides of the story, like they could interpret it differently . . . If you have tunnel vision you only see what is straight ahead but then if you open it up you see, whoa everything!
The literature discussion became a place for him to discuss ideas with others and a place where he could talk about issues in depth.

Discussion

Alex was willing to take risks by honestly sharing his thoughts and by actively participating in the discussions. He freely shared his beliefs and his ideas about culture. Through personal reflections on his actions, Alex grew to question injustices in the world, respect the rights of others, and understand a world outside himself. The specific issues raised in the literature touched a sensitive personal issue which encouraged Alex to think about racial and cultural issues in greater depth. Alex searched within himself and personally reflected on his place within the culture. This gave him increased awareness of his own world and appreciation for others around him. Alex’s personal perspective and his view of the world are changing with his willingness to learn and “open it up to see, whoa everything.”

Jenna: Keep the Culture Alive

Sometimes Jenna sat up front, but she usually found a spot on the floor in the middle of the whole class
discussion. Jenna listened intently to others' comments and rarely shared her own impressions, making her appear extremely quiet and shy.

On a few occasions both Mrs. Miyashiro and I tried to encourage Jenna to share her thoughts in large and small group discussion. However, in responding to my questions in the post-interview she quietly expressed, "Some people just want to let it go. They don't want to explain how they feel and what is going on." Then she added, "I didn't have anything to say." Initially, this worried and discouraged me but in later analyzing the transcripts, I found her insights perceptive and thoughtful when she did share. As the year progressed, her written responses began to reflect her growing understandings about herself and her culture and her discomfort verbally sharing with the group.

In the pre-interview Jenna mentioned that her experiences with literature of Hawai'i included some familiarity with local fairy tale variants and the young adult novel, Under the Blood Red Sun. She completed a book project that drew a powerful connection between her Japanese ethnic heritage and the main character in that story earlier in the school year.
Identifying Personal Issues

On a few occasions Jenna shared that she had never been teased about her Japanese and Chinese ethnicity before and was surprised when the issue surfaced in the discussion. She said that she had never been asked questions or discussed issues like the ones we were dealing with and appeared uncomfortable responding. Much of the time, Jenna would answer, "I don’t know" or "no" in response to questions directed at her.

Although she responded occasionally through the readings and discussions, Jenna was able to identify and share her personal questions. Initially she began questioning, "If you don’t have power for yourself and self-confidence like [the character] Sonny, how can you face your problems?" She later grew to recognize other probing questions about inequities that exist in the world. She wondered, "Why does everyone treat different people unequally when everyone should be treated fairly? People all know that everyone is different, so why tease them about their eyes or color of their skin?" Her uneasy feelings about racial inequities developed over the course of the literature discussions. Jenna became consciously aware of and began to express her personal issue and
disapproval of racial teasing and the injustices towards
different people in the world.

**Building Cultural Understandings**

Jenna’s understandings of culture were tied to her personal knowledge of her Japanese and Chinese ethnicity. Although she did not directly state what culture meant to her, as the literature discussions evolved Jenna revealed her desire to know more about retaining her ethnic culture. In a written response she questioned, “How can we protect and continue our cultures and traditions?” During one of the literature discussions she expressed a need to “keep the culture alive . . . so we can know different Hawaiian [local] cultures.” She identified subtle differences between her own Japanese and Chinese heritage. It was important for Jenna to preserve part of her “authentic” Chinese culture. She related herself to the book *I Hate English!* (Levine, 1989), a picture book about a girl who moved from Hong Kong to New York City and refused to speak English. She commented that “you wouldn’t want to lose your first culture and it’s language. I think that it would be fun to learn Chinese.” Jenna positively expressed her desire to learn more about her Chinese heritage which indicated self-acceptance and assertion of her interracial
identity (Ramsey, 1996). She was not threatened by questions about her background and showed a genuine desire to learn more about her cultural heritage.

In the pre-interview Jenna shared her thoughts on the injustices suffered by the Japanese people in Salisbury’s *Under the Blood Red Sun*. She reflected, “it made me feel kind of like it was unfair for the Japanese people . . . after I read that book I sort of knew how my grandma and grandpa felt ‘cause they are Japanese.” Her comments suggested that Jenna was aware of the racial prejudice suffered by Japanese people in Hawai‘i during World War II. In the post-interview she remarked that others were judging the character Tomi, an Asian American boy of Japanese ancestry, based on his race. “People saw him as Japanese-American on the outside but then he felt like he was local and Hawaiian on the inside.” Jenna began to question and express her distaste for racial mistreatment.

Once again she asserted her objection towards racial teasing and the injustices that accompany this type of harassment in writing about *Dance for the Land*:

I would feel angry deep inside [if I were Kate], but also frightened. Angry because I wouldn’t like people teasing me by my color of skin. But frightened because I would think, “What if this happened
throughout the school year?" Although, I would feel more angry than frightened.

Since Jenna could not recall being the target of racial teasing, she expressed herself through the eyes of the character. She felt a sense of injustice and fear for the character Kate and imagined what it would be like if the teasing did not end.

In a written reflection Jenna anticipated how she would address this dilemma:

I felt bad for Kate because she was being scared off by Chad, Richard, and two other girls. I think Chad and Richard shouldn’t do this to Kate because she is still adjusting to the Hawaiian Islands and they shouldn’t tease her color of her skin and culture . . . I think Kate can change the problem by speaking to her teachers, counselors, or her trusty friends. I would have told my friends or my counselor or my teacher. I would also be very scared because I have never had someone do what Chad is doing now. I know how Kate feels . . . ."

During a drama engagement the class participated in using Heroes (Mochizuki, 1995), a story about a Japanese-American boy who struggles to be accepted by his peers who still consider and treat him as "the enemy" long after WWII has ended. Many of the Asian children like Jenna appeared to be shocked by the image of the main character Donnie and the prejudice he encountered. After this powerful reading, none of the children were able to respond in discussion, so
instead they were asked to write their reactions to the story. Jenna’s writing expressed personal feelings about the realities of Japanese-Americans as the target of unjust racist behavior:

I think this book relates to my culture because I am Japanese. I think Donnie felt like he was just the same as his other friends, but they thought Donnie was different. No one teased me or played way with me as the bad guy, but I still know how Donnie felt. I could tell because of how the author described the story. I feel that Donnie felt bad, downhearted, and mistreated. I think this story teaches you to be fair to everyone and treat others the way you want to be treated.

Her written response indicates an awareness of racism toward Japanese-Americans like herself.

Jenna also reflected on her awareness of difference and considered alternate solutions if she is confronted by these problems:

I learned that everyone is different in a way and not tease people by the color of their skin. If you don’t tell anyone about what are your problems, then it will come worse. And not to be afraid of speaking up about your problems. You will feel much better and safer after you tell someone.

Although she claimed she had not experienced this type of racism, by relating to and living through the experiences of the characters, she generated new impressions about racism and the realities that exist in the world (Shannon, 1998).
Understanding Language and Literature

Throughout the literature discussions and interviews, Jenna commented only once on pidgin. She shared an instance where she was surprised to hear her mother speak in pidgin "'Cause she doesn't really talk in pidgin."

In the post-interview Jenna realized that reading literature about her culture enabled her to identify and think about issues in books. Jenna commented that books about Hawai‘i are important because they can help to keep the culture alive and help children "know different Hawaiian cultures." She felt that through reading books about Hawai‘i she learned a part of her history and "how to spread what happens back when other people that are older now when they are younger."

Discussion

Jenna did not reveal many of her insights through the literature discussions and post-interview. At first glance, because Jenna did not choose to participate much in the discussions, it was difficult to find evidence to show that she was able to connect with the literature. However, she did express her thoughts in a few discussions and through written reflections. Writing became an important means through which she could think and share her ideas
publicly. Her comments reflected her personal issue with the injustices suffered by people of color even if she had not experienced racial injustice herself. She gave examples that related this issue to her ancestors and to characters in the literature. The racial injustices influenced Jenna's desire to perpetuate culture and "keep culture alive" demonstrating a new consciousness of social issues and critical awareness of racial prejudice around her (Crawford et al., 1998). Through the discussions Jenna expressed that she must not conform to this type of wrongful and unjust behavior.

Kaipo: I Understand

Kaipo usually sat in the back during the large group discussion. When he shared, all of the other children listened. He often posed his personal questions to a larger group to seek the opinions of others. As a fifth grader, he claimed that he did not have much experience with books about Hawai'i and mentioned, "I only read Boxcar Children and stuff like that." One book he did recall was How Honu the Turtle Got Its Shell (McGuire-Turcotte, 1991), a legend explaining why the sea turtle in Hawai'i has a hard shell. When the children sat in partners to read Blue
Skin of the Sea I sat with Kaipo a couple of times to provide support through the reading of the text. He appeared very engaged with this particular story and his facial expressions would change as the story progressed and he would ask questions out loud as we read together.

Identifying Personal Issues

Kaipo considered himself to be a mixture of ethnicity and knew he "had some Chinese." Unlike the others he was not quite sure of his ethnic background, but he did describe himself as, "[F]eeling like I am an Islander because I have part Hawaiian inside me . . ." During artifact sharing, Kaipo proudly presented a huge stuffed boar captured while hunting, pictures of other prized catches, a lei from his grandmother, and his grandfather's police badge.

Through observations of his intense concentration upon the reading Kaipo seemed captured with Sonny's experiences as a young boy coming of age in Hawai'i in Blue Skin of the Sea. During the discussion of this book the children in the case study group made reference to Kaipo's behavior and some of the characters in the story. It appeared that he identified with the issues and experiences of some of the characters in Blue Skin of the Sea. In the middle of the
study he identified his personal question as "Why do people tease other people about how they look?" This showed an effort to understand the behavior of the characters and presumably his own behavior. However, his responses indicated that during the course of the study he began to pursue his personal issue of his identity -- about who he was, his culture, and his place within it. He posed different questions about race and culture to the group. In a discussion, when asked to describe his culture, Kaipo responded, "I’m not sure what I am, I just know I get some Chinese." A short time later he described himself as being local claiming that local means mixed. Then the day after identifying himself as being from local culture, he surveyed the opinions of his classmates by asking them to answer his question, "What does local mean?" By posing this question to the others, Kaipo seemed to be in search of other perspectives, wanted verification, and was interested in pursuing a better understanding about himself and his personal place within the culture.

**Building Cultural Understandings**

As Kaipo talked with the other case study group members he began to define his understanding of culture. Kaipo felt that the local culture in Hawai'i is a blending
of the different ethnic groups as one. He believed that if one moves to another culture, one needs to change to accommodate and conform to the new culture. Due to the blending of ethnic groups over the generations he felt, "it doesn't matter who you are, if you are Japanese and you lived in Hawai'i for so long time that you tease the Chinese culture." According to Kaipo, the cultures have become so intermingled, differences no longer matter; one feels so comfortable with other ethnic groups that one can joke with them in a friendly way. He claimed:

They would be hard time separating [by ethnic group] 'cause everybody has a certain amount of every other cultures blood so it would be a hard time separating it . . . It can never stay the same, like a Hawaiian man gets married to a English woman and they have kids then they both have Hawaiian, that kid has Hawaiian and English . . . and then they get married to Chinese and they keep on going.

Kaipo summarized "We have everything mixed [here in Hawai'i]." His conceptions about culture reflected the rich mixture of his racial background and his observation of the other multiracial people around him. Through the discussions Kaipo increased self-awareness and self-understanding (Grant, 1998) of his own culture. He was beginning to develop an understanding of his identity as an individual and as a member of a particular group (Ramsey,
1998). According to Grant (1977) pride in one’s cultural heritage can positively affect the appreciation and acceptance of other cultures and races. Kaipo’s personal experiences influenced his growing beliefs of culture and living in a multiethnic world.

In the post-interview Kaipo admitted that through discussing literature about Hawai‘i he grew as an individual and came to realize the effect of his actions upon others:

I feel like for racism I learned it’s bad to tease other people about their race just because you don’t like how they look or something . . . . It changed me, like before I used to tease a lot of people and now I don’t tease because what it [books] taught me and what people were going through. So when you guys were reading the books I was like, “Whoa, I shouldn’t not do that.”

Kaipo came to realize that he imposed injustices upon others by teasing them and claimed that he began to make a change in his behavior. “Couple times I was, my friends they were teasing my other friend. I was like, “Oh nah, just leave ‘um alone already’ and I was backing up the other boy.”

Kaipo claimed that being able to see images of himself in the literature helped him to make connections between the actions of the character and himself. He became more
aware of and sensitive to his actions upon others through the literature (Rosenblatt, 1938). He admitted, "I would probably be getting into trouble more" if he did not talk and think about the issues that surfaced in the literature discussions. Through reading the literature about Hawai'i he shared, "I learned about our culture," which created a new awareness of and respect for the diversity of others around him (Grant, 1998).

**Understanding Language and Literature**

Kaipo expressed excitement about having pidgin in the literature. He said, "I like it [books about Hawai'i] better because sometimes we talk pidgin and we can understand it more." Inclusion of pidgin in books provided children like Kaipo with opportunities to identify with and develop a sense of pride in their language. The books were meaningful to him because "the pidgin language and it happened in Hawai'i where I live." Kaipo connected with "how they talked and the places where they were talking about." "I could understand what they were saying, not like other books." The inclusion of his language and being familiar with places created a sense of pride in Kaipo which enabled him to establish a stronger connection with the literature (Lum, 1986).
He claimed that through the stories about Hawai‘i he was able to create vivid images because he could relate to the actions of the characters, "what some people do, like my uncles, they shoot cats." Kaipo was the only student in this group who mentioned a connection with the setting in *Blue Skin of the Sea* and associated his images with a specific place. "‘Cause everytime I go Kona, I see that places, like on the map [in the book], it has King Kam and the Kona hotels and then I saw it all."

During the post-interview Kaipo shared a powerful response about his experience with the literature of his culture:

At first I was bored and then every chapter it was getting better and better. It [books about Hawai‘i] made me understand. Not like in the lower grades, I didn’t understand what it was saying but knew the words . . . I understand this book more than other books.

He indicated that through the books about his culture he was able to experience what it means to find meaning behind the words and make meaning of the reading. Prior to this reading experience he shared that he knew the words but did not understand the meaning of the story. As a reader, Kaipo is beginning to think about "reading as a process of making sense from print" (K. Goodman, 1996, p.
3) and that “Texts are more than collections of letters and words” (p. 2). By living through the experience with the literature of his culture, Kaipo was able to establish deep connections between his personal life and the literature and to breathe life into written words.

Discussion

Kaipo’s responses demonstrated that he was able to live through the experience with the literature about his culture through the strong images evoked, the deep sense of connection with the characters, and relating his own experiences to the book (Rosenblatt, 1938). His personal responses indicated growth in Kaipo as a person who came to understand his own life and culture around him in a deeper way. Kaipo began to develop a strong identity in himself and as a member of the culture in Hawai‘i (Ramsey, 1998). This literature experience enabled Kaipo to empower himself as a reader and also provided an opportunity that led him to discover the meaning behind words.

Robert: It Was Hard

Robert moved around during the discussions, sometimes he sat near the front, sometimes he sat near the rear of
the classroom. He was always eager and willing to participate, but hesitated when asked to explain further and the attention focused directly on him.

To get to know each other better the children shared their personal artifacts with the class. Robert brought a basketball trophy along with a “tree of cranes” he constructed with folded paper fans and origami cranes (Japanese art of folding paper). He said that he was proud of the tree because it was the first time he won a contest and it was part of his Japanese culture. On another day Robert sketched images to show parts of his ethnic culture. He drew a sumo wrestler, a Japanese hapi coat, and a Japanese samurai sword. He shared that the sketch showed his “Japanese side” and added, “I get half-Filipino too.”

Out of all the children in the case study group Robert seemed to have the most experience with books of Hawai‘i. He read both humorous picture books and Hawaiian legends, and mentioned the textbook they used in fourth grade.

**Identifying Personal Issues**

Robert often listened to what others had to say and built upon their comments. He was willing to risk speaking out in front of the group. He was persistent, made every effort to do his best, and worked hard to please others.
At times he labored to find "the right answer." In the post-interview he shared, "it was hard . . . most of the time I knew, but the small details I couldn't get." Unlike the other children Robert claimed, "Sometimes it was hard because I couldn't really hear what you guys were saying when you were reading the book so it was kind of hard for me."

Early in the school year he identified the question, "How do we overcome our fear of failure?" in relation to the character Sonny in Blue Skin of the Sea. This seemingly paralleled his own search for ways to overcome his personal issue with and own apprehension about having the "wrong response." In the Symbolic Representational Interview, when asked how he felt as he read, Robert shared, "I just feel, like kind of squashed 'cause I'm not saying anything, or anything. They're taking over. I just feel like, 'Oh, I'm going to follow along, I'm not going to do nothing.'"

Throughout the literature discussion, Robert searched for ways to learn to share his thoughts and beliefs about culture. He listened to the others' opinions, added to their comments, and as he worked out his own thoughts, it appeared as though he supported opposing sides to one
Building Cultural Understandings

Robert seemed to use the inextricable tie between language and culture (Nieto, 1996) to explain his personal understanding of culture. He hypothesized that the creation of the pidgin language in Hawai‘i was an example of how everyone came together. “That’s maybe how they started pidgin . . . they connected all the languages and formed a new one so everybody could just understand one language.” As the case study group discussion continued, Robert agreed that “local could be a culture” and that “it’s cool [having a mixture of cultures]. That would be good because everybody is all mixed and you would have the same language.”

Robert agreed with this melting pot assimilationist view of culture, but as the discussions continued, Robert reconsidered his position on culture. His personal experiences also compelled him to question whether the mixture was really good if it caused cultures to become one and the same or if cultures need to retain some of their ethnic heritage. His uncertainty about the mixing of
cultures in Hawai‘i was reflected in his comments on differences between Chinese and Japanese culture. “I don’t know, but the language sounds the same. I don’t know but the traditions seem the same, the writing seems the same . . . Not everything is different maybe only looks might keep it the same, but inside they are different.” Robert realized that in some ways Chinese and Japanese culture might appear the same to those that are not familiar with the cultures, but through the discussion he became more aware of differences between each culture and began to appreciate the unique nature of each (Grant, 1998).

Robert also considered the changes that occurred when different cultures came to Hawai‘i. He agreed with Alex because, “it changed what it was.” He gave an example to show how it changed, “People from Japan they are Japanese, they might know the traditions better, like the way they pound mochi [making a sweet rice dessert at the New Year], but the Japanese in Hawai‘i might do it a different way.” Robert seemed to realize that cultural change occurs and is ever-dynamic (Banks, 1996; Nieto, 1996). In the end he concluded that even if local culture is a blending of all the ethnic groups in Hawai‘i, they still retain parts of
their cultural identity which can enrich the lives of others (Banks, 1997).

As Robert talked with the group he considered different viewpoints expressed by others and tried to work through his cultural understandings. For example, in dealing with cultural issues, he proposed that one possible way different cultural groups could live in harmony is to separate each group by ethnicity. His view seemed to indicate that it is better to separate diverse racial and ethnic groups rather than having them "freely interact" (Banks, 1997, p. 47). However, he abandoned this initial view after discussion with the group and listening to the others' opinions. Robert later concluded that:

It’s your free choice; nobody can boss you, say like you have Japanese and Chinese. Nobody is there to tell you, you have to go there or you have to go there and you don’t want to go there. It’s like you can go to wherever you want. If your family goes one way you can go another.

This response indicated his belief that people should have choices and should be able to act on their human right if they choose.

Robert also expressed that people moving to a new culture need to adapt and adjust to the culture. They
"just have to live with it [changes]" even if they may not like certain aspects of the culture.

Robert worked to clarify his beliefs about power. He questioned, "Why do people want power? What does power do for them?" In one discussion he argued that having mental strength would be better than having physical strength. He said in dealing with gangs, "You have to be strong mentally so you can just like . . . tell on them, [they] beat you up. You don't have to be scared. Just go tell on them."

When Alex pointed out, "[I think] you just gotta stay away from them . . . You can tell but then you're still going to get hurt," Robert changed his position and agreed with Alex, "You have to take a different route around them, You have to know where they hang out so you can take a different way."

Robert saw the racial injustices suffered by Kate, the character in Dance for the Land, as a result of Chad's quest for power. Although he said he felt for Kate, he also placed some of the blame on her. "I felt sad for Kate but there is part of me that thinks that Kate deserves what Chad is doing to her because she doesn't tell anyone." He claimed, "Some people want to help, but the majority of the people just want to watch" and do not want to get involved
in others' problems. Throughout the discussions, Robert was searching to find when was it necessary to stand up for his rights and when he should just stand by and watch.

**Understanding Language and Literature**

In the interviews Robert did not comment on his thoughts about pidgin, although in the literature discussion transcripts he agreed that speaking pidgin was an indication that Alex was local and made reference to pidgin being "rare" and "hard to find" in other places besides Hawai'i.

Robert commented that the discussions helped him "see what other people were thinking about." He stated, "When I used to read my books I used to rush through it and now I know how to read my books." Robert also shared that through the discussion with others he learned to identify the major issues in the stories which helped him to understand books. He said, "You get to understand it if you talk about it." Robert noted that it is important for us to read books about Hawai'i because it is a part of our culture and we need to know about it.

**Discussion**

Robert's responses indicated that as he listened to the others' viewpoints and considered their perspectives,
he tried to work through his own ideas on various issues with respect to what the others had said. In the post-interview he confessed, "it [discussion] was hard." As he listened to others' response he searched to find the "right answer" and when he found there was none, it was confusing to accept multiple perspectives on one issue. He worked hard to consider all of the others' viewpoints and tried to better understand and work through his own beliefs with respect to others' comments.

Throughout the literature discussions on dealing with difficult issues, Robert struggled with accepting that there are multiple perspectives and with the complexity of issues present in our world.

Courtney: I Understand What It Means To Be Hawaiian

Courtney was a serious participant who always sat up front in the large class discussions and listened intently while others shared their impressions of the literature. Periodically Courtney slipped her comments into the discussion and at times quietly asserted herself by disagreeing with the popular opinion of the group. She claimed that she preferred the small group to the large group discussion because it provided her with increased
opportunities to share. In the pre-interview she shared that prior to the study she was familiar with a few local fairy tales versions and shared that she was of Hawaiian, Chinese, German, and Portuguese descent.

**Identifying Personal Issues**

Initially, when asked to identify her personal question Courtney wrote, “How do I believe in myself?” At the end of the school year when asked to write new questions as a result of the literature study Courtney wondered, “Why do people judge people from (within) their culture? Do people besides locals have the same culture as me?” Her first statement brought questions about Courtney’s level of confidence in herself and her new questions reflected a change, an identification with local culture and a desire to know more about culture.

Through the literature discussions on books about Hawai‘i Courtney began to demonstrate that she established and nurtured a pride in her cultural heritage and in herself. Shannon (1998) states that through stories children can see parallels with the cross-cultural child’s search for identity. Courtney expressed that, “[E]ver since you had that literature circles, I felt more Hawaiian than I usually felt so I knew more [about] my culture.”
She further related, "... I understand the books are all saying how come people are teasing me. It has a lot of powerful words that relate and help you understand your knowledge of being Hawaiian." Courtney developed a sense of empowerment in herself, a pride in part of her Hawaiian heritage realized through the discussions about literature of Hawai'i.

**Building Cultural Understandings**

During literature discussions Courtney reflected upon her Hawaiian heritage and her place in Hawai'i. She demonstrated how she related books to her culture and built upon her understandings of culture. After reading *Whose Slippers Are Those?* (Kahelawai, 1988), a simple picture book illustrating the many different kinds of slippers (thongs) left at the doorstep before entering homes in Hawai'i, Courtney shared her interpretation of the book and her growing understanding of culture:

> It's like the great big fat slippers and the little skinny slippers are different so it represents the different colors of our races. Somebody can be black, somebody can be white, somebody can be in the middle... and that's how the slippers relate to ourself. Somebody is going to find all the slippers and they are going to put it where it belongs so then they are all back together.
Courtney’s use of slippers as a metaphor for the different cultures that live in Hawai‘i demonstrated her beginning awareness about how the many different ethnic groups live together in Hawai‘i. Her view of culture supported the melting pot position of society (Banks, 1994).

The literature about Hawai‘i generated issues about racial differences that helped Courtney to think about her perspective on difference. It seemed as though Courtney became more aware of the differences between ethnic groups in Hawai‘i. Prior to the literature discussions Courtney expressed that she felt everyone who is local is of Hawaiian ancestry. She felt that everyone who was born and raised here “looked [native] Hawaiian” to her. As stated earlier in Chapter 5, Courtney mistook her haole (Caucasian) friend as being a native Hawaiian “because she looks real local and when you look local it just seems that you are [native] Hawaiian all of a sudden . . . [when you are] born here and when you are here for a long time even if you are haole you look more of a [native] Hawaiian.” To Courtney, living here and being local superceded racial divisions. Her view supported Okamura’s (1980) contention that the concept of local can transcend ethnic diversity.
As a result of the discussion Courtney was able to express a sense of appreciation for and pride in her Hawaiian culture. Grant (1977) states that pride can be instilled along with appreciation and acceptance of cultures and races. Courtney's experiences with literature led her to reflect upon the injustices faced by native Hawaiians, "It makes me kind of feel that we are being mistreated that they [outsiders] might think that Hawaiians can't write but Hawaiians are really smart. They wrote many songs and Hawaiians are talented."

Understanding Language and Literature

Courtney realized that pidgin English was important because, "that's part of their (our) culture." However, she also said she spoke pidgin "when you're kind of in a bad mood and the words just come out of your mouth." To Courtney, speaking pidgin was acceptable "when you are with a Hawaiian" but it wasn't okay "when you are with an adult that doesn't like pidgin words" or "if you are in the mainland because they are all English people and they don't speak pidgin, they don't even know what it is." She also felt it was okay to have pidgin in books "when a child is reading it." Courtney's statements about pidgin indicated that she has developed certain beliefs about speaking
pidgin in different contexts. Her statements implied that it was acceptable for children or Hawaiians to speak pidgin but it was not to be used with adults who do not like it or people who do not understand it. Her attitude toward pidgin is reflective of the attitudes prevalent in Hawai‘i’s society (Bickerton, 1998). Courtney’s beliefs about pidgin show that she has clearly defined ideas about when pidgin is acceptable and when it is not acceptable.

Courtney implied that the books about Hawai‘i helped her see images of “my race and culture” in the literature. Courtney acknowledged, “If I just read books that aren’t really local, I wouldn’t learn my culture that much as I learned about my culture now.” Through reading literature about her culture, Courtney was able to develop cultural identification (Banks, 1997) on a conscious level. She shared, “I feel good that they are talking about Hawai‘i . . .” and she said that she “experienced joy that there is a Hawai‘i book for older kids. There’s usually only the younger kid's books. Now there is a young adult book. So I feel joy.”

Discussion

Courtney’s responses to the literature of Hawai‘i demonstrated how she used literature to connect with her
personal and cultural life. Unlike the other children, she
did not discuss the racism suffered by Kate in Dance for
the Land, but chose to discuss the injustices suffered by
native Hawaiians. As Courtney discussed the literature,
she began to realize new insights about herself and her
culture. Through this experience she was able to establish
a deeper sense of pride in herself, her local culture and
her Hawaiian heritage.

Tatyana: I Know My Culture

During literature discussions that involved the entire
class, Tatyana usually hurried to the floor to reserve
herself a space in the front of the class. She was always
eager and willing to participate and share her ideas with
everyone. One day when the children were sharing their
racial background with others, Tatyana announced her racial
background with pride — Japanese, Chinese, English, Irish,
Scotch, German, Hawaiian, Puerto Rican and Indian. As she
rattled off the rich mixture of her roots, Alex exclaimed,
"Whoa! Chop Sui!" referring to the Chinese dish of mixed
vegetables or the commonly used expression meaning a
mixture or variety of things mixed into one. During
artifact sharing along with treasured pictures and
collectibles, Tatyana brought her Tahitian dance costume, one she had used in a special hula competition. The one text about Hawai'i that Tatyana mentioned having previous experience with in the pre-interview was Sumorella (Takayama, 1997), a local or Hawai'i fairy tale version of Cinderella.

**Identifying Personal Issues**

Tatyana carried within her a sense of pride in herself and an intuitive appreciation of her cultural heritage. As the literature discussions on literature about her culture evolved, Tatyana developed a conscious awareness of and pride in her culture. She wanted others to know about and appreciate their culture. Tatyana posed the questions "why do people tease other people about their culture?" and "if they are that culture, why are they teasing the person in the same culture?" Tatyana began to ask perplexing questions about why cultural rifts within and between peoples of the world exist. Identification of her personal question led her to think more deeply about her own role in addressing this issue.

**Building Cultural Understandings**

Tatyana’s cultural understandings reflect her own rich racial mixture. Like Kaipo, Tatyana indicated that she
envisioned the culture in Hawai'i as a mixture or blending together of many different ethnic groups. She shared, "There is all different cultures in Hawai'i, maybe Puerto Rican, Japanese, Chinese, all kinds of cultures here but maybe some of us might have the same culture but maybe you have Japanese, I have Japanese. I think local culture is made up of different cultures." She viewed local culture as a rich mixture of cultures and she felt that because different cultural groups keep moving into Hawai'i and intermarrying, the mixing will continue. She was aware of the cultural differences but tended to view culture as the melting pot where all cultures come together implying they lose their ethnic culture in the mixture (Banks, 1994).

Tatyana tended to focus on the similarities between people and shared her vision of how people of different cultural and racial backgrounds in the world should exist.

All the different colors of the children, like they say in All the Colors of the Earth (Hamanaka, 1994). . . they all have love, and love is the most powerful thing. On the outside they are really different colors, but they should also care for each other the same way they would care for their mother.

As Tatyana talked through her understanding, it became apparent that she envisioned a world living together in love and harmony. Along with developing a personal sense
of identity, Ramsey (1998) states that "children need to develop a sense of solidarity with all people and the natural world" (p. 6). As a person of such a rich multiracial background, it seemed that rather than focus upon difference, Tatyana wanted to focus upon the similarities between people.

Tatyana expressed a strong supportive relationship with people around her, especially her mother. She felt a need to gain knowledge and learn from her parents and grandparents. "Without a parent there to help you or teach you anything, you wouldn't have any knowledge . . . without my parents I wouldn't be anything . . ." Tatyana also felt that in discussing cultural issues she needed the support of the other students around her. "Having other students around me and letting them know how I feel or letting me know how they feel was important." Here she expressed that her personal and cultural knowledge (Banks, 1996) was due in large part to the people around her.

Tatyana seemed to possess a deep sense of the history and knowledge about native Hawaiian culture. When "Ho'oponopono," the ancient Hawaiian peacemaking process was mentioned in Dance for the Land, Tatyana explained that it was used to help solve problems and allowed people to
"express their feelings." She explained that hula (Hawaiian dance) was not merely being able to do the motions but when "express[ing] self through the hula" the dancer must "show feeling and the meaning of what the hula is telling . . ."

Tatyana brought her personal experiences and knowledge about native Hawaiian culture to the readings and discussions. She began to build connections between her personal experiences and the literature.

Tatyana was upset with the racial mistreatment Kate, the character in Dance for the Land, experienced. "[I felt] kind of disgusted because of the way they teased her." She wondered, "if they were to do that mistake and they were to be laughed at, how would you feel, why should they laugh at her?" Although Tatyana held a positive view of cultures living in harmony, she admitted that teasing often occurs and it is not necessarily always about race. "I think it does happen, they might be teasing you because of your culture and the way you look or your hair color, but they could also be teasing you about a lot of other things, like if you are small or if you are too tall or something else is different."
She felt that one way to address the racial differences is to try and understand each other by "opening up and to each other and express themselves." Tatyana asserted that she would take an active role in standing up for a person getting teased. "I'll try and help that person . . . I'll tell her to call me and don't be afraid I'll help her."

Tatyana called for people to live with aloha (love, harmony). She claimed, "I think that we [should] give love to whoever so we make them comfortable to this island." To her aloha meant, "caring and kindness to new people, like show them around or something and make them welcome." Tatyana's view of culture supported the ideal vision of what it means to live with aloha in Hawai'i. She seemed to have a genuine desire to work toward achieving racial harmony in the world.

Understanding Language and Literature

Tatyana's responses about the pidgin dialect in Hawai'i suggested that she believed that although pidgin is a part of our culture, it could be seen as undesirable in certain contexts. "Sometimes you can't really help it [speaking pidgin], it just comes out when you really want to speak nice . . . and in a nicer way and you're just used
Although her statement indicated that pidgin is not appropriate "when you really want to speak nice," reinforcing the common belief that pidgin reflects uneducated talk (Bickerton, 1998), she had other thoughts about including pidgin in the literature of Hawai‘i. She said, "I think it makes it more funny. It expresses the character and you feel more interested in the book. It expresses the way we live and the way we talk here in Hawai‘i." On one hand even if she seemed to believe that pidgin is undesirable in some instances, in this case Tatyana’s reflection on language implied that the language is a reflection of the culture in Hawai‘i. Even though she felt that pidgin was not always desirable, her statements also indicated that inclusion of the language in literature validated her lifestyle and language use, which generated increased interest in the books.

In the post-interview Tatyana reflected that during the discussions, "you really had to think . . . from the beginning of the school year when we started . . . now we know what to say, we know how to think."

Tatyana also mentioned that the literature discussions about her culture affected her as a reader, "I think this discussion really made me a different kind of reader. It
made me express more of my feeling and talk up when I want to say how I am feeling. I know what to do. I can express myself.”

Tatyana reflected that the literature about Hawaiʻi, “... told me more of the things I needed to know about my island, my home. I kind feel I learned more about my culture, what I am and it made me feel like I was a little more local to my island.” Through the discussions Tatyana developed a conscious awareness of her culture and created deeper sense of appreciation and pride in her local culture (Grant, 1998). Tatyana said the books allowed her to “know about my culture.”

Discussion

Tatyana’s perspective on life, her personality, and her knowledge about her culture appeared to influence her responses to literature of Hawaiʻi. Her beliefs about culture and ways of dealing with cultural issues reflected her personal view of the world. The discussions on literature of her culture encouraged Tatyana to think and connect with her personal knowledge which generated a deeper sense of pride in herself and her culture.
Weaving Children’s Responses Across Categories

Through children’s talk about culturally relevant literature they generated personal and cultural understandings which evolved over the course of the study. The children’s unique perspectives and their personal approach to the literature influenced the way they responded to culturally relevant literature.

**Identifying Personal Issues**

Each child approached the literature as individuals. Their discussions indicated that they came to understand and responded to the literature in unique ways. Kaipo, Robert, Courtney, and Alex responded at a personal level, relating the issues directly to themselves as they searched to learn more about their own identities. Jenna and Tatyana’s personal understandings dealt with a global look at the injustices against others. The children all gained an increased awareness of racial and cultural issues.

**Building Cultural Understandings**

Courtney, Kaipo, and Tatyana related their understandings of living in a multiethnic society to themselves and their own rich racial heritage. They built their understanding of culture upon a melting pot
perspective where humans live together in harmony. The mixture of different ethnic groups come together and become one.

Alex's major insight was in reconsidering the melting pot and shifting to the salad bowl view of culture. Instead of believing that when different ethnic cultures come together they become one, he maintained that cultures keep their ethnic identity and are able to contribute to the society as a whole.

Jenna and Robert felt the need to "keep the culture alive." Although they are both multiracial they valued their ethnic heritages and saw a need to retain parts of their ethnic cultures.

The children's understandings and responses also indicated that they associated the word "culture" in reference to a specific ethnic group with the country of origin. When asked to talk about their culture they would refer to their ethnic roots. For example, when Robert described his culture he depicted sumo wrestlers, hapi coats, and samurai swords. This was his ethnic heritage and only a part of the culture he lives today. Thus, "Japanese culture" referred to practices from the Japanese culture in Japan. In the beginning of the discussions
children used the word culture in reference to their ethnic heritage. Through the discussions the children started to refer to their local Hawai'i culture as their culture as well. They realized that it was possible for them to retain parts of their ethnic heritage and identify with being part of the shared local culture that belongs to all ethnic groups that have come to live together in Hawai'i, supporting a culturally pluralistic position on society (Banks, 1994).

Even though the children each had unique responses to culture, they all grew to perceive and consider culture in a new light. Through reading and responding to literature of their culture, it awakened insights and understandings about culture (Klassen, 1993).

The children indicated that they were disturbed by the injustices suffered by certain ethnic groups. Even if it is not used in the books the children first discuss the term "teasing" and identify teasing as a type of racism in the whole class discussion of Salisbury. Throughout the discussions the children relate the term teasing to racism. Robert related some of the racial teasing in the literature to his own experiences with prejudice. Jenna and Alex came to understand that although they have not encountered it
themselves, they are not immune to racial teasing. Tatyana spoke of support structures to help others deal with racism and Courtney mentioned the injustices toward Hawaiians. Kaipo responded on a personal level and came to reflect upon his own actions upon others. The literature discussions about their culture created a situation where children could explore and understand complex cultural issues. Although at times some of the children were hesitant and reluctant to discuss the difficult issues, they all grew to consider themselves and those around them in more critical ways.

Understanding Language and Literature

The children seemed to accept and say that they have pride in the uniqueness of their language because it is woven into their identity with the culture. However, at the same time they are very aware that pidgin dialect is not acceptable to certain individuals in certain contexts (Bickerton, 1998). Perhaps, that is why they think pidgin "sounds funny" when it is in written form. Even though the children are proud of pidgin as a reflection of their identity and culture in social contexts, they do not acknowledge or realize that they speak pidgin in school. Alex was surprised when he encountered it in the
transcripts. The children's statements indicate that pidgin is not acceptable or valued in the school setting.

Generally, the children had a positive attitude towards the literature. Some children stated that even if they did not particularly enjoy or may want to avoid the realities of the issues in some of the books, reading these books was a rewarding experience for them. They saw value in reading books about their culture. Reading and responding to literature about their culture enabled them to see images and reflections of themselves. Kaipo, Courtney, and Tatyana stated that being able to read about their culture instilled a deeper sense of pride in their culture and in themselves. Jenna and Robert commented that through their experience they were able to identify and relate to issues they had not considered before. Alex's experience with the literature allowed him to consider alternate perspectives and create a sense of empowerment within himself.

Conclusion

In this chapter I looked at individual children's understandings and responses to literature written about their culture and how those understandings evolved over
time. Through interview data, literature discussion transcripts, and written responses, individual profiles were created to illustrate how each child came to understand and responded to the literature. I discuss how each child identified his or her personal issue over the course of the study and describe how each child came to understand and responded to culturally relevant literature in Hawai'i in unique and personal ways. The findings discuss how individual children developed new insights and awakened new knowledge about themselves and their cultural beliefs. The children’s responses to language and reflections about their experiences with the literature of their culture demonstrated that they valued the experience with the literature. As I searched to answer my research question, I found that the literature discussions about culturally relevant literature gave children opportunities to share their human experiences and to respond in ways that allowed them to use the literature to better understand themselves and the world in which they live.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this research was to examine a case study group of fifth graders responding to culturally relevant literature. Situated within the theoretical framework of transactional theory, this naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) used qualitative research methods (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) and drew from the methodological techniques used in ethnographic study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) to explore children's responses to culturally relevant literature. I was interested in the content of what the children talked about as they participated in literature discussions about literature relevant to their culture. I also explored the evolving understandings of individual children over the course of the study. As I interviewed the six children, they reflected on their responses to the four literature discussions in this study -- "J'Like Ten Thousand", Blue Skin of the Sea, a text set on culture, and Dance for the Land. They shared what it means to belong to the "local" culture, theories about culture, historical understandings, and connections with the literature. As the study evolved they individually came to develop personal and cultural
understandings and insights about language and literature. They revealed that through the literature discussions they identified personal issues and built cultural understandings and understandings about language and literature.

In this concluding chapter I review and discuss my understandings of the findings of the two questions that guided this research. Then I look at the implications of this study for elementary school teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers. I feel the insights I gained from this study have implications for my own teaching and for other educators who are interested in using literature, particularly culturally relevant children’s literature in the elementary classroom. Although my study is situated in one classroom, in one school, on the island of Hawai‘i, I hope that other elementary classroom teachers who are using literature discussions in their classrooms are interested in the implications of this study. With increased interest in the exploration of multicultural literature, other teacher educators such as resource teachers and university educators and researchers may find that the implications of this study speak to them. It is not my purpose to generalize to all young readers nor do I intend to
represent these six children as unchanging individuals who have not continued to refine their ideas on the issues raised in this study. My aim is to look at how teachers, teacher educators, and policy makers can better address issues of culture within their classrooms. I hope that this study's conclusions may challenge teachers and other educators to use literature relevant to children's culture in their classrooms and provide situations for children to explore issues that may be meaningful to them.

Data collection included transcriptions of literature discussions, interviews, written artifacts, and written field notes. Analysis of the data occurred using the process of analytic induction (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) which included examining the data to develop categories and relationships among the categories and then modifying and refining the categories (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). As I analyzed the data I searched to understand and find answers to the questions that guided this research:

1) What is the content of children's responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature?
2) How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time?

Responding to Culturally Relevant Literature

In Chapter 5, I presented the analysis of the content of the responses to culturally relevant literature by the case study group of six fifth graders. I did not examine the process of their responses but was interested in the content of the children's discussions as they explored literature from their culture. The primary data sources used to answer this research question were literature discussion transcripts. The interviews and written artifacts were used to support the categories found through analysis of the literature discussion transcripts. The content of the children's discussions were grouped into four major areas: Sense of Belonging, Cultural Theories, Historical Understandings, and Connections to the Literature. I will define each of these areas of discussion and share the ideas the children considered relative to the each category.
Sense of Belonging

In this category the children worked to define what it means to belong to the culture in Hawai‘i. They talked about the meaning of the term “local” in the islands and shared their understandings of belonging to the local culture in Hawai‘i. A brief description of this category and sub-categories are found in Figure 7.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of Belonging</th>
<th>Children explore their sense of belonging and beliefs about what it means to fit into the local culture in Hawai‘i.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing the Language</td>
<td>Children express that part of being local is use of the pidgin dialect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a Sense of History</td>
<td>Children believe that having a sense of history develops a deeper insight into and understanding of the local culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronting Racial Issues</td>
<td>Children discuss realities of racial inequities present in local culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living the Local Culture</td>
<td>Children believe that newcomers need to make an effort to fit into the culture rather than “put down” differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating Meaningful Relationships</td>
<td>Children believe locals have meaningful relationships with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing When to Have a Voice</td>
<td>Children discuss when they think it is appropriate to or not to stand up and have a voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the Realities of Living in the Islands</td>
<td>Children discuss the tourist notion of “paradise” and knowing the realities of life in the islands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7.1. Belonging Category Descriptions**

Through the discussions I found it interesting that the children not only defined what being local means to them but they began to describe how they identify with and the pride they feel in having a sense of belonging with the local culture in Hawai‘i. It was fascinating for me to find that the children were able to capture the essence of being local in Hawai‘i and that their views on the culture, language, and race were supported by the literature and other "experts" who have attempted to write about the culture. I found that most of their knowledge about language, history, and culture was based on common or "folk" knowledge and not book knowledge or formalized teaching which leads to powerful implications for teaching which will be discussed later in this chapter.
Cultural Theories

The children discussed what culture means to them and their beliefs about culture. As they talked about the literature they explored the meaning of culture, theories about how different cultures should live together, their ideas about the diversity of cultures. They also made judgments about other cultures. The following subcategories described briefly in Figure 7.2 indicate the children's growing understandings about culture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Theories</th>
<th>Children share their beliefs about the concept of culture.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Chameleon</td>
<td>Children talk about the &quot;melting pot&quot; view of culture and that different cultures that come together should become one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture is Diverse</td>
<td>Children's thoughts about culture reveal their growing awareness of and respect for difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judging Other Cultures</td>
<td>Children make stereotypical statements and make judgments about other cultures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.2. Cultural Category Descriptions

I thought it was interesting that the children had such strong ideas about what culture is and how cultures interact. They clearly had defined ideas about the "melting pot" theory of cultures and really believed that
in Hawai'i people live in harmony. This belief is one which supports the common understanding of culture in Hawai'i. That left the loss of the "authenticity" of the many ethnic cultures in Hawai'i unquestioned and problematic, however, as the discussions progressed the children began to reveal a new understanding of diversity. I believe that it was through the discussion of the culturally relevant literature that the children were given time and opportunity to work through their understandings of diversity.

**Building Historical Understandings**

Children used what they know about the history of Hawai'i to support their reading of the text. As the children talked, they shared common understandings of their cultural history and told their family histories through the stories passed down to them. The descriptions for the sub-categories for Building Historical Understandings are described in Figure 7.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Historical Understandings</th>
<th>Children share and use their historical knowledge to support their reading of the text.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making Sense of History</td>
<td>Children make sense of their shared history that impacts their present lives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connecting History through Story

Children share family stories to build upon common historical experiences in the community.

Sensing Historical Connections

Children talk about it means to "feel the history", a spiritual connection with the history of the islands.

Figure 7.3. Historical Category Descriptions

Through the discussions about culturally relevant literature I believe that the children had the opportunities to share stories that are typically not welcomed in the classroom but saved for other contexts. I found it interesting that children had such a powerful connection to history and have developed a strong share history among each other.

Connections to the Literature

This category describes the children's connections to literature about the local culture as it presently exists in Hawai'i. Children shared their experiences as they "lived through" (Rosenblatt, 1938) the literature written about Hawai'i. The sub-categories are defined in Figure 7.4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections to the Literature</th>
<th>Children discuss the connections they make to culturally relevant literature.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living through the Experience</td>
<td>Children describe their felt experience with the literature as they discuss the text with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding Emotionally</td>
<td>Children share their emotional responses to the literature. They identify and empathize with the characters' situations and feel the emotions of the characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating Images</td>
<td>Children describe their images of the characters, places, and events while reading culturally relevant literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with Personal Experiences</td>
<td>Children discuss how they connect with the actions and experiences of the characters in the story. The children relate their personal experiences directly to the experience of the characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying Reading Strategies</td>
<td>Children share the strategies they use as readers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating to the Language</td>
<td>Children discuss the use of their language dialect (pidgin) in the literature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.4. Literature Category Descriptions
As the children talked about their connections to culturally relevant literature during the literature discussions, I believe they had the chance to build new understandings of the literature and share their lived through experiences with each other not just knowledge about literature (Rosenblatt, 1995).

The content of the responses during the literature discussions showed that case study group developed a sense of belonging and defined what it means to belong to the local culture in Hawai‘i. I found it interesting that the children had such specific ideas about culture and that they could discuss and define such an abstract concept. I thought it was fascinating that the children defined their own culture and that their conceptions of culture were supported by the literature on local culture in Hawai‘i. I believe that the culturally relevant literature gave them the opportunity to consciously think about what it means to belong in their culture and the discussions provided a place for the children to begin talking about their understandings of history. Through the talk about history the children created new understandings and developed deeper connections between their shared histories and their present lives. The children made powerful connections with
the culturally relevant literature. I believe that because
the culturally relevant literature gave children
opportunities to build upon existing cultural and
historical understandings they came to deeper insights
about the process of reading and lived through experience
with literature.

Individual Understandings and Responses

The second question in this investigation was
concerned with how each child developed personal and
cultural understandings and responded to the literature and
language over the course of the study. Since my question
involved looking at the individual child's understandings
and responses and how these evolved over the study, I
presented individual profiles for each of the six case
study children. I used their interviews to guide the
analysis for this question because I wanted the individual
child’s perspectives on the understandings he/she
developed. Later I pulled data from the literature
discussions and written artifacts to support the categories
that were created through the interviews. The
understandings that each child developed were grouped into
three major areas: Identifying Personal Issues, Building
Cultural Understandings, and Understanding Language and Literature. I will define each of these areas of discussion in Figure 7.5 followed by a summary of the understandings the children developed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying Personal Issues</td>
<td>The individual child’s personal questions and dominant personal issue that surfaced during the literature discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Cultural Understandings</td>
<td>Individual children’s ideas about what culture means and how each child came to understand the cultural issues that surfaced during the literature discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Language and Literature</td>
<td>Each child shares his or her attitude towards the use of pidgin and comments about his or her experience with the literature of his or her culture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.5. Individual Understandings Category Descriptions

Identifying Personal Issues

As each child read and discussed the literature he or she asked personal questions and talked about particular issues in more depth. Personal identity issues dealing with race and culture came up for individual children in the study. Kaipo, Robert, Courtney, and Alex asked
questions about issues that demonstrated a search to learn more about their own identities. Jenna and Tatyana’s talk touched upon their personal identities, however, their personal issues demonstrated their need to understand and work to change racial injustices in the world.

Building Cultural Understandings

Courtney, Kaipo, and Tatyana perceived society as a melting pot where different cultures mix together and live in harmony. Alex also began with the melting pot view of society, however, he later reconsidered this idea and instead saw a multicultural society as a place where different cultures do not lose their ethnic identities and at the same time contribute to society as a whole. Jenna and Robert also felt that people should not lose but retain parts of their ethnic culture as they learn the new one.

The children were disturbed by the injustices suffered by characters in the books. Alex and Jenna realized that even if they haven’t been teased racially, it could happen to them. Robert related some of the racial teasing in the literature to his own experiences with prejudice. Tatyana did not mention being teased about her race but talked about how she could help others. Courtney came to realize the injustices toward native Hawaiians. Kaipo responded on
a personal level and shared how he had treated others unfairly in the past.

**Understanding Language and Literature**

Individual children expressed different ideas about the inclusion of their language dialect in the literature. Alex, Courtney, and Tatyana said that they appreciated and enjoyed having pidgin included in the literature. Kaipo not only enjoyed seeing pidgin in the literature, he felt that pidgin enhanced the reading for him. Courtney and Tatyana stated that even though they liked the inclusion of pidgin in books about Hawai‘i they believed that there are different contexts where pidgin is undesirable.

The children had positive attitudes toward their experiences with culturally relevant literature. Although, Courtney and Tatyana said that they did not particularly enjoy *Blue Skin of the Sea* because they could not relate to the male issues, they felt that reading books about Hawai‘i, especially *Dance for the Land*, was a rewarding experience for them. They saw value in reading books about their culture. Reading and responding to culturally relevant literature enabled them to see images and reflections of themselves. Kaipo, Courtney, and Tatyana mentioned that being able to read about their culture
instilled a deeper sense of pride in their culture and in themselves. Jenna and Robert commented that through their experience they were able to identify and relate to issues they had not considered before. Alex’s experience with the literature allowed him to consider alternate perspectives and create a sense of empowerment within himself.

Each child came to understand and responded to culturally relevant literature in unique ways. Overall, they shared that they enjoyed their experience with literature discussions on books about their culture. Individuals shared how they built personal and cultural understandings, gained new insights and perspectives through the literature discussions on culturally relevant literature.

During this study I found myself moving back and forth between research question one and question two. Figure 7.6 is a graphic organizing the findings of the study. It helped me to clarify the relationship between the two questions in the study.
Figure 7.6. Graphic Organizer of Findings
Research question 1 asks: What is the content of children’s responses in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature? As the children engaged in literature discussions of culturally relevant literature they shared their individual experience with the Hawai'i literature based on their knowledge of history, culture, and language. Through discussion of the Hawai'i literature a collective group experience evolved and the responses showed the content of the discussions. However, as a result of the collective group experience the children reflected upon their individual understandings and responses over time. Research question 2 asked: How do the understandings and responses of individual children to culturally relevant literature evolve over time? Each child's individual experience with the Hawai'i literature played a role in the development of the collective group experience which also affected their personal understandings and responses which evolved over the course of the study.

Implications of the Study

In this section I discuss the implications of this study. It is organized by the implications for the
classroom teacher, teachers educators, and policy makers. Each part discusses implications for the respective group. The implications are followed by limitations in this research, suggestions for further studies, and the significance of this study.

**Implications for Classroom Teachers**

Classroom teachers play an important role in determining the curriculum that is taught and how the instruction is delivered. I believe that due to the nature of the study, the major implications for this particular study are written for the classroom teacher as related to curriculum and instruction.

**Providing Opportunities for Personal Issues in Classrooms**

For classroom teachers it is not always easy when children bring up complex issues that deal with questions about identity, race, or culture. Some teachers believe it is easier to stay with what is safe and not deal with difficult issues because of pressures to cover the school curriculum and prepare for standardized tests. However, if the children bring up these significant and real issues that they are facing, the classroom and school become an important place to learn about and deal with these issues.
I believe that even though it can be challenging, it is critical that teachers give children opportunities to find the issues that are meaningful rather than contrived or superficial to the children. Oftentimes teachers speak of having students participate in meaningful activities however, sometimes these activities are merely time fillers or fun activities that do not involve the students in depth of thinking. I believe that teachers need to take the time and energy to help students find real issues that are meaningful to them. One way to do this is to help students find their personal issues, issues that are real to them. Teachers must not sit back and passively watch students but carefully observe students and use those observations to build upon students' responses. They must be involved in helping students find those issues by providing meaningful engagements and actively question and push the thinking of the students. Teachers can use photographs, literature, or different forms of media such as videotapes to introduce children to significant issues. Then teachers can give children time to wonder about and ask real questions and opportunities to discuss and work through understandings so the children can deal with these complex issues.
Providing Opportunities to Discuss Cultural Issues

In the classroom children need opportunities to become aware of their own cultural beliefs and biases that exist. Children need to have exposure to more complex and thoughtful discussions about culture. Often, we don’t examine our own biases and reflect upon our own cultural beliefs and so continue to hold an ethnocentric view. We believe that we “treat others equally.” However, when given the chance to look at ourselves and interrogate our own actions through the literature and dialogue, we can begin to become aware of our own biases. Maxine Greene (1993) writes that we need “[t]o open up our experience (and, yes, our curricula) to existential possibilities of multiple kinds is to extend and deepen what we think of when we speak of a community” (p. 189).

Often the teaching about different cultures is oversimplified, limited to the study of the celebration of ethnic holidays, memorizing historical, and geographical facts, examination of art and artifacts, and tasting the foods of the particular culture (Fang, Fu, Lemme, 1999). Teaching about culture can move beyond this type of oversimplified activities if children have opportunities to participate in engagements that allow them to explore
issues and ideas in more depth. Fang, Fu, Lemme (1999) suggest that teachers and teacher educators need "to recognize the limitations imposed by their own backgrounds/experiences and by the cultural milieu of the schools in which they work, and to rethink critically the consequences of their instructional practices" (p. 269).

Beyond recognizing their own limitations and oversimplifying the complexities of the culture, teachers can introduce literature and engage in critical reading of the text with students by examining the context in which the book was written or how and why the author wrote the book, the theme, different social issues raised in the literature, author's writing style, or authenticity of the author.

Providing Opportunities to Discuss Language Attitudes

In this study the children's attitudes toward the pidgin dialect seemed to be dichotomous. They knew that the pidgin dialect was part of their culture and they took pride in the uniqueness of the language, however, at the same time they did not take ownership of their language in different contexts. The negative attitude towards their dialect as a "low class" or "uneducated speech" is prevalent in Hawai'i and children are led to believe that
their language is inferior, and in turn, they feel they are inferior to some "mainland" standard. I believe that teachers in Hawai'i should provide children with the opportunities to see their dialect in print and educate children to value it for its own uniqueness instead of ridiculing children for their speech. Rather than being put down and criticized for their speech, children could then appreciate the value of the language which is deeply connected to their culture. They could explore their multiple registers and the language they use in different contexts.

Providing Opportunities to Identify with Culturally Relevant Literature

I believe it is very important that children who are not from the mainstream white culture have experiences with culturally relevant literature. Teachers need to provide children with experiences that enable them to see others like themselves in the literature. Especially in Hawai'i where there is a belief that the local literature is somehow inferior to the "mainland" culture (Sumida, 1993), I believe that through seeing images of themselves in the literature the children's individual and cultural experiences were validated. Having books about their own
culture available can give children the powerful experiences of living through the literature.

Children need to draw upon what they know to help them construct meaning of a text. I believe that through reading books about their culture children have increased background knowledge about what they are reading. K. Goodman writes, (1996) “When we construct meaning from reading, we must draw on what we know, what we believe and what we value . . . The more we know about what we’re reading, the easier it will be to read” (p. 106). Through reading culturally relevant literature children may have experiences they can relate to, and texts they know about and so connect with experiences they have lived themselves. Therefore, they may know more about what they are reading making it critical and necessary for teachers to provide children with experiences in reading and responding to culturally relevant literature.

Creating Opportunities for Literature Discussion

The literature discussions provided a space for children to talk about their reading and discuss issues that were meaningful to them. It was a safe place for the children to talk about difficult issues with others. Through literature discussion the children were able to
tell stories, engage in the social nature of learning, experience reading as transaction, and consider the importance of interpretation (Eeds and Peterson, 1997).

Children had time to engage in intensive reading (Peterson & Eeds, 1990), dialogue with each other about the lived experience (Rosenblatt, 1938; 1995) and collaboratively build meaning from the text. They used literature discussions as a place where:

Students are not pushed toward a "right" response or a predetermined interpretation of a text, but they are encouraged to generate questions, sharing their own ideas through writing and reading. This social dimension of knowledge permeates the classroom, and soon student realize that what they think and believe does have merit and value. The literature teacher must give students opportunities to make discoveries, which are significant to them, to participate in a community which comes to life for them. (Fox, 1991, p. 184)

Teachers need to help children by providing them with the time and space to have literature discussions and provide demonstrations so that meaningful discussions can take place.

I believe children who are taking part in literature discussions need to have time to talk and to engage in both conversation which is informal talk about books and dialogue which is focused in-depth talk where the children collaboratively make meaning together (Short, class
lecture, February 10, 1998). Oftentimes teachers worry because the children's talk during conversation does not seem focused or directed, however, children need time to share their initial responses before discussing ideas in greater depth.

I strongly feel that learning through talk has important implications for parents as well as teachers. I believe that children need to talk about their understandings of literature with adult readers so that they may come to new understandings and insights. Parents need to learn to talk about books with children so that children will become knowledgeable about book talk. Thus, teachers and others who work with parents at the school level need to find ways to hold workshop sessions and find creative ways to demonstrate to parents how to meaningfully engage in talk about books with children. This meaningful talk does not mean asking children comprehension questions about the story but talk that discusses, questions, or extends the ideas in the books. It can start with the child's interest in the story or illustrations but the adult should share their own personal observations, thoughts, and ideas about the story and extend the child's understanding. I believe that parents also need to be
informed about the importance of valuing books that are relevant to Hawai‘i’s culture.

During literature discussions I feel that it is critical that the teacher have students share their impressions and thoughts rather than imposing an agenda for discussion upon the students. Teachers could have students use Post-Its as they read and write questions, ideas they want to discuss, or confusing parts that they want to talk about in the group. I believe it is important for students to participate in engagements that allow teachers to really listen to students.

Creating Spaces for Trust and Community Building

Another critical element in conducting successful literature discussions is an environment characterized by a sense of trust and community (Kauffman, 1996; Peterson & Eeds, 1990; Short, 1990). In order to discuss issues that are truly meaningful to them, children need to feel safe and take risks. Teachers need to create an environment that will invite and foster discussion of the literature. Through asking open-ended questions and not leading students to one correct response teachers can send the message to students that their opinions and perspectives are valued. However, I also believe that every response is
not of equal value. I believe that in this environment of trust and community building also involves thoughtful responses that reflects careful consideration.

Offering Powerful Selections of Literature

Teachers should consider literature that has meaningful topics, ideas and issues so that the children will have significant issues to discuss and think about. I believe that even if provided opportunities to use multicultural literature or culturally relevant literature, if the literature does not provide the depth or issues, children will not have much to think about or discuss.

Selecting "good" literature for discussion does not mean that the children will always like or appreciate the literature selections. Two of the girls mentioned they did not particularly like the novel Blue Skin of the Sea because of language and male issues. Even if they did not like reading about the things that boys do they were able to talk about the issues in the text and why they did not like the book. I strongly believe that having knowledge about multicultural literature and the culture of the people represented in the text, knowing their students and carefully considering the choice of books to read during the literature discussions are important factors for
teachers to consider in selecting powerful books that will move the students to engaged and meaningful discussion.

Establishing the Role of the Teacher

Oftentimes children are given comprehension questions at the end of a reading and children search for the "right answer" or a "correct response." The teacher in this type of classroom is the one who holds all the answers and is the giver of knowledge. The students in this type of situation then are continuously searching to find the answer that the teacher desires thus, limiting the responses from students. However, if the teacher establishes a different type of role for herself/himself in the classroom it encourages different types of responses. In literature discussions I believe it is critical for the teacher to establish an environment where students are not led to a correct response but encouraged to generate questions to think about important issues. Literature discussions then become a place for students to work through their understandings. Children can become thoughtful participants in meaningful discussions rather than searching for a predetermined response. Teachers can establish this type of discussions by starting with the students' questions, asking students open-ended questions,
and by not placing a value on one correct response but pushing students to consider alternate perspectives. When students know that the teacher is searching for the "correct response" the students are less apt to take risks and share their personal opinions or thoughts on an idea or an issue. By establishing the role of the teacher as another participant or a facilitator or active listener (Kauffman et al., 1996) children will begin to see the teacher not as the one who holds all the answers but as a knowledgable participant in the discussion.

Discussion about implications for the classroom teacher has focused on the use of culturally relevant literature in the classroom, thoughts on language, personal and social issues, literature discussion, and learning through talk. I believe that many of the implications directly impact the classroom teacher highlighting the importance of what teachers do in their classrooms with students daily. What follows are other implications that concern teacher educators and educational policy makers.

Implications for Teacher Educators

This study's implications focused on concerns for the classroom teacher and classroom instruction. However, the issues discussed earlier have implications for teacher
educators as well. Creating a classroom environment that invites discussion or providing situations so that children move from personal responses to more reflective dialogue is a craft that teachers need to learn. Teacher educators can provide professional development workshops to introduce teachers to the possibilities for different types of literature discussions in the classroom.

Teachers have many mandates from state standards, pressures from administrators, and increasing demands from the public. Time is short for teachers, so in order to provide time during the school day, teachers need to see reasons why they should use literature and literature discussions in the classroom. I believe that teacher educators, both at the university and district resource teachers, need to provide demonstrations as to how teachers can implement literature discussions in the classroom.

Issues such as race and culture in the classroom are difficult to discuss and teachers need to have professional development which shows them what to do when children bring up these difficult issues. Professional development in areas such as literature discussions, talk, and inquiry cycles (Short, Harste, with Burke, 1996; Short et al., 1997) could provide teachers with the support needed to
implement different kinds of learning engagements in their classrooms.

I believe that resource teachers could team up with regular classroom teachers and provide demonstrations of various literature engagements in the regular classroom. Teacher support groups could be established to help teachers explore questions and issues in their classrooms. Dialogue journals between teachers and other avenues of communication such as chat sites or newsletters could be established to provide support for teachers implementing literature discussion in their classrooms. Resource teachers, regular teachers, and university educators could also engage in teacher research projects or collaborative research projects (Klassen & Short, 1992) to support each other’s inquiries and learning process.

It is critical for classroom teachers to have support and professional development on multicultural literature. Teachers need information on the literature that is available, how this literature can be used with students, and criteria for critiquing multicultural literature. Teacher educators must give workshops which demonstrate how multicultural literature goes “beyond chopsticks and dragons” (Pang, Colvin, Tran, Barba, 1992, p. 216) through
in-service workshops or providing in class demonstrations for teachers which show teachers how they can create spaces for children to be more reflective about their own and other cultures. Teacher educators must also provide readings such as journal or research articles that support why children need the time and space to take part in multicultural literature discussions and help teachers become more aware of limitations imposed by their own backgrounds/experiences and to critically rethink the consequences of their instructional practices. I believe it is critical for teachers to have time to read such articles and time to discuss and work through understandings and how they might implement multicultural literature discussions in their classrooms.

I realize that being a teacher educator and a teacher in the public education system is an extremely challenging task. State, District, and Federal mandates and pressures of merit pay based on students test scores make the job increasingly challenging. I strongly believe that both teachers and teacher educators need to know their students and have the power to construct and deliver the curriculum and instruction is best for the students.
Implications for Policy Makers

Currently policy makers are working to increase their control over teaching curriculum and practices. Mandated curriculum and required state standards are moving toward control of what and, sometimes, how students are taught in the classrooms, thus taking the power of choice out of teachers' hands and restricting time and materials. In this study it was critical that the teacher have the choice and the freedom to know the students and the flexibility to allow students more time to explore issues that were important to them. Through intense analysis of students' responses, I was able to let the students' questions and inquiry guide instruction in the classroom. Teachers who work with their students and know their students need flexibility to select materials appropriate to their own students. I believe that policy makers should take knowledge and expertise of teachers into account and give teachers flexibility through how state standards and policies are written.

Research Issues

This research provided me with a number of challenges. Some of the ethical dilemmas that I encountered during the
study were mentioned in Chapter 4. My own cultural beliefs and biases, my personal interest in culture and the imposition of this study upon the existing classroom culture, were concerns that I worried about. In her dissertation, Holly Johnson (1997) writes:

Through this investigation I found that all research participants, including the researcher, are vulnerable. As researchers, we are vulnerable to our own agendas, our own limited visions of others, and our own limited awareness of our cultural selves. Our participants are made vulnerable by their trust in us, by their admissions and disclosures and by their lack of control over the final research documentation (p. 558).

As I read her words, I wondered about my own agenda and limited vision and awareness. Although I know that I did collaborate with the classroom teacher to provide another perspective and decrease this vulnerability, I realize that I still needed to include other voices and interpretations in the process of the research. Due to the local culture content of the literature discussions I was able to gather the opinions and perspectives of family and friends around me and in the process of the research I sought help from those outside the culture for their interpretations and opinions. However, I would like to have had more opportunities for the participants to reflect on the process of the research.
Another critical element in this research was the relationship between the classroom teacher and myself as the researcher. Mrs. Miyashiro provided me with access to and allowed me the freedom and flexibility to work with the students as the research and need demanded. However, I know that I did impose and change the community that was firmly established when I entered the classroom. The instruction Mrs. Miyashiro had planned for the students also had to be adjusted and I had to be flexible to the many demands and changes of the school schedule. Our collaborative relationship constantly required communication and flexibility on both our parts.

Other issues surfaced while writing and reflecting upon the research process. At times I found it difficult to stand back to see what I was doing while immersed in the research situation. However, keeping a reflective research journal on a consistent basis helped me to step back and try to study the situation in more depth.

Some of the other concerns I had dealt specifically with improving the research process. Upon thinking about the process I saw that the children needed more time to reflect upon what things they said in the discussions. Even though we went back to the transcripts on a few
occasions it may have benefited them if they had more time to think through and share more insights on what and why they made certain statements. Maybe they could have begun to recognize and become more aware of their own language and stereotypical statements.

The task of book selections also provided a situation that was challenging for the research. It was difficult to find many books for intermediate readers that I considered "culturally relevant" and at the same time provided depth for discussion. I had concerns about the "authenticity" of the authors but did not place a heavy emphasis on the background of the author. I realize that Caucasian or haole authors wrote the books Blue Skin of the Sea and Dance for the Land for which the major discussions occurred. I do not think that these authors are of native Hawaiian ancestry and may not be considered local by some people. However, I considered Salisbury a local haole because he seemed to have insights into the culture and was born and raised in Hawai‘i. I also tried to include a range of other culturally relevant stories through using the short story, "J’Like Ten Thousand" by local author Darryl Lum and picture books by local authors in the text set. Although this proved to be a difficult task, I
believe that the availability of books about Hawai`i continues to grow and hope that there will someday be enough books to fill the void.

I believe that having faced these issues, I grew as a learner, educator and as a researcher. As I continue to research and work with children and teachers I know that this research experience taught me enduring lessons and I will use this knowledge as I pursue other research studies in other settings.

Further Studies

At the end of this study I found myself with more questions and other possibilities for further investigation. I have considered several different options for related areas of study.

One of the first options to consider for further study is to look at existing data from this study. I could examine the data for gender issues. Since there were three boys and three girls I could study what role gender plays in their talk. I could also examine the language or pidgin spoken by the children in the case study group.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, I informally examined my talk or the talk of the adult in the literature
discussions. I could take a more indepth look at the talk I did and study the role of the teacher in the literature discussions.

Further studies could include other new studies rather than examining the existing data. I think it would be interesting to look at older adolescents reading culturally relevant literature. Although the selection of texts is still limited I think it would be possible to use adult literature selections and short stories such as those published through Bamboo Ridge Press which are increasingly available.

Another related area would be to look at writing development using culturally relevant literature in Hawai'i. With so much work being done with the Poets in the Schools Program to promote local writing, I think it would be interesting to explore the reading and writing connection where students are reading local literature at the same time they are producing their own pieces.

Other areas which explore Hawaiian sovereignty or native Hawaiian issues specifically with native Hawaiian children would also be possibilities for future investigations. Books written in the native Hawaiian language are also increasingly available. Studies
exploring the usage of literature written in the Hawaiian language could be a possibility for another study.

Language was another issue that was only touched upon briefly in the analysis. Since the eight population study (K. Goodman & Y. Goodman, 1978) looked at miscue readings of Hawaii readers I would be interested in exploring Retrospective Miscue Analysis on culturally relevant readings.

As an outcome of this study, different possibilities for future study have surfaced. I hope that others or myself may continue investigating the issues that have arisen.

Significance of the Study

In education we are constantly searching for ways to actively engage students in their learning experiences. This study has demonstrated that using culturally relevant literature gave children the opportunity to identify with other people like themselves. Through literature discussions the children had the opportunity to learn from each other, talk about cultural issues, and a chance to think about their own positions and their places in the world. The literature became a special place where they
could see images of their lives and feel important. As educators we cannot close doors for our students but need to search for ways to educate the head and the heart.
Dear Parents: January, 1999

As a part of my doctoral work at the University of Arizona, I am studying how children respond to literature about Hawai‘i. I am interested in studying your child’s verbal and written responses to literature and the journey he or she travels to reach his or her conclusions.

As legal guardian, I request your permission to use your child’s work from their 5th grade class. I also ask permission to audiotape and videotape, and interview your child about his or her perceptions on the role of literature and their lives.

I can guarantee no risk to your child by participating in this collaborated task and I will protect his or her rights by being the only person who has access to any of his or her work with the exception of his or her classroom teacher, Mrs. Miyashiro. I will change your child’s name and the names of the teacher, and school as a form of protection.

You need to know that at this point I am not certain what information I will use for my dissertation which will be presented in an oral and written format to university professors. I may also seek to publish the data in part or in its entirety in the future. I would like to use some direct quotations, but I may simply need your child’s input about what children believe about literature and learning in connection to their lives.

Your child will not be reflected in a negative light under any circumstances, but has been chosen for their perceptions and intuitiveness. Your child may withdraw from the study at any time. I am simply searching for new ways for teachers and students to work together. Within the world of education, young voices need the opportunity to explore, expand, and share their valid ideas and beliefs.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at Waineki School at 959 - 1234. I appreciate your time and your consent to use your child’s work and ideas.

Sincerely yours,
Michele Ebersole
Permission Form

I give Michele Ebersole permission to use my child’s work, both oral and written, about the role of talk with respect to literature in their lives.

I understand my child’s name will be changed and no risk or recourse will result because of the use of my child’s work.

I may also request to review the information that my child shares for accuracy before Michele Ebersole uses it for any form of formal publication.

____________________________  ______________________
Signature of consenting adult              Date

Printed name of consenting adult
APPENDIX B

Pre-interview questions

1) Do you know any books written about Hawai‘i? What are they?

2) Where did you read these books?

3) When did you read them?

4) Tell me what you think about these books that are written about Hawai‘i.

5) How do you feel about these books that are written about Hawai‘i?

6) Do books about Hawai‘i affect your experience as a reader? How?

7) What do you think about pidgin in the books?
APPENDIX C

Symbolic Representational Interview
(adapted from Enciso, 1990)

Name __________________________
Date __________________________

Materials:
Audio recorder
Audiotape
Interview Script
Packet of colored paper
Tape
Scissors
Folder
Camera

1) Introduction/ Explain purpose
I’m trying to learn more about how children read and what they think about while they read. I’m doing research about what children do while they read. I’d like for you to help me by answering questions, reading aloud, and work with paper cut outs. It’s not a test, just answer as honestly as you can.

2) Assignment: (Day 1)
List and cut out characters and reader (describe).
I have some colored paper and scissors here, choose some colors and cut out shapes of the characters in the book. Think carefully about the characters, their personalities, and what they do in the story and carefully choose a color and why you chose that color to represent that character.

a. Show who the characters are using the colored paper.
b. Then choose a place in the story which really moved you deeply in some way, what was the setting like during that part? Cut it out using the colored paper and scissors.
c. Make another cutout showing what you were like as a reader in the story.
3) Interview: (Day 2) (Five minutes)
Tell me about each cut out and the character it represents and Why did you select that color?

What made you cut ________ in that shape?

Explain your setting.

4) Reading with cut outs of character and reader (5 minutes)
a. Find the part of the story that was very powerful for you; it moved you deeply in some way? Tell me about it. (Retelling)

b. Read aloud (one page) and move the shapes to show what is happening in your mind as you read. (10 minutes)

Tell me why you moved it like that.

What is happening there?
APPENDIX D

Case Study Group Post-Interview Questions

1) What did you think about reading the different books (Blue Skin of the Sea, the books in the text set, and Dance for the Land)?

2) How were you able to connect with the books?

3) What discoveries did you make/ what did you learn through reading books?

4) Did you find the characters similar to yourself? Talk about how you found the character in the books may have been similar to your own.
   • How did you think you were like the character? How did you think you were different from the character?

5) How do these books help you understand yourself better? How does it help you understand others better?

6) How do these books help you understand your life better?

7) What did you learn about the issue of culture? racism? relationships?

8) How has reading this book changed you?

9) What did you notice about Blue Skin of the Sea and Dance for the Land is different from other books? How is it similar?

10) How did you feel about discussion circles? Was it hard, easy? What did you learn through talking with others?

11) Did you feel comfortable discussing these issues with others? Were you uncomfortable with the books or during
discussion? Why? Were there ways that I could have helped you?

12) What about writing? Did you find it difficult to write?

13) What about drawing?

14) What about the Heroes drama? What did you think or feel about that? How did the writing and drama help you to understand culture?

15) What is your culture?

16) What did you learn about culture through Blue Skin of the Sea and Dance for the Land?

17) How do you think you will be able to take what you learned and apply it to your own life?

18) How did you feel about being in this group? Did you feel the questions were hard? Why?

19) How has reading these books from and about Hawai'i affected you as a reader and a learner?

20) Have you changed your ideas about reading?
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