INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

INVENTING A TRANSACTIONAL CLASSROOM:

AN UPWARD BOUND, NATIVE AMERICAN

WRITING COMMUNITY

by

Jesse Patrick Turner

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, READING, AND CULTURE

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2000

UMI Number: 3002511

Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA ®
GRADUATE COLLEGE

As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Jesse Patrick Turner

entitled Inventing a Transactional Classroom: An Upward Bound, Native American Writing Community

and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Yetta M. Goodman	Date 4/29/99
Kenneth S. Goodman	Date 4/29/99
Kathy G. Short	Date 4/29/99
Dorothy Menosky	Date 4-29-99
Richard Ruiz	Date 4-29-99

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.

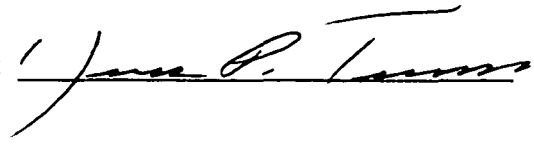
I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Dissertation Director Yetta M. Goodman — Date 12-20-00

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at the University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgement of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the copyright holder.

SIGNED: 

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the many individuals who supported me in this dissertation, I extend my appreciation. Their contribution provided me with lessons that extend far beyond the scope of this study. Patience, perseverance, courage, zest for truth, vigor, faith, love, and caring were qualities which I witnessed in those who shared in and supported my efforts. This acknowledgement is intended to honor their influence and encouragement.

I am especially grateful to Angie Listo, my Tohono O'odham mentor, who as Upward Bound Director continuously supported and encouraged me throughout this project. My appreciation extends to all the Upward Bound staff including Ryan Huna and Tony Gatewood and to all the participants of this study for trusting my efforts and providing assistance as I learned from their unique experiences.

I am indebted to Dr. Yetta Goodman, my advisor, who supported me with her scholarship, integrity, counsel, and professionalism and who encouraged me to seek avenues for improving the quality of education for Native American students.

My deep-felt appreciation to the Department of Language, Reading, and Culture, who encouraged me to include Native American voices so that this study highlights an often neglected perspective–that of Native Americans. My thanks are also extended to Dr. Kenneth Goodman, Dr. Dorothy Menosky, Dr. Richard Ruiz, and Dr. Kathy Short for their assistance in my doctoral program.

I am indebted to my wife, Carolyn, and my daughter, Erin-Beth, for their encouragement, never losing faith, and believing in my academic capabilities; my mother, Margaret Turner, and sisters, Kathy, Jessica and Mary-Ellen, who set the foundation for all my learning journeys; and to my Christopher City friends who always reminded me there is light at the end of the tunnel.

And finally, I acknowledge the many students who inspire me daily to continue to seek ways to rethink learning and teaching.

DEDICATION

To my heroes

The Tohono O'odham and Yaqui students

Who filled my heart with possibilities

To my educational warriors, and

To the Tucson desert moon and stars who in that time just before sunrise

Always whispered

You can do it

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS--*Continued*

TABLE OF CONTENTS--*Continued*

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF FIGURES--*Continued*

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

This teacher-researcher study examines the experiences of secondary students in a unique Upward Bound program exclusively for Native Americans. The study followed the reading and writing experiences of these students during a 2-year period. The focus of the dissertation is on the literacy experiences of students as they were exposed to a rich writing program that used culture as the invitation to literacy. The investigation follows both teacher researcher and students during the emergence of a transactional curriculum that closely followed the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force recommendations for Native American learners.

The study enlisted 20 Native American students who were already participating in the Upward Bound program. This program was chosen because it was the only such program in the United States exclusively for Native Americans students. These students attended public high schools in Tucson, Arizona, or high schools on the Tohono O'odham reservation outside Tucson.

The curriculum focus is on transactional literacy experiences and inquiry. This focus and the concept of teacher as researcher provide the theoretical framework. This framework illuminates curriculum as it attempts to transform the educational experiences of Native American adolescents immersed in writing experiences rooted in Native American ways of viewing the world.

This analysis of one distinctive writing class suggests that the often documented institutionally-produced factors that contribute to Native American adolescent failure and

discontinuity in secondary writing settings can be overcome when Native American culture is not only valued, but embraced as the focus of literacy in school.

This dissertation provides insights into the uniqueness of Native American school experiences and extends the current body of literature on Native American education by considering culture as the invitation into literacy and the teacher as change agent. This study also asks others to pick up the torch.

Finally, teacher researcher generated recommendations provide an opportunity for teachers themselves to begin the process of changing the discontinuity of learning often felt by Native Americans in their own classrooms. These recommendations include five conditions for an emerging curriculum: (a) creating space for transactional dialogues, (b) sharing responsibility, (c) trusting inquiry, (d) using multiple sign systems, and (e) accessing personal and social ways of knowing. We need not wait for institutional change to make a difference. As has often been stated in educational research, the teacher makes the difference.

CHAPTER 1

ENTERING THE MAZE

This dissertation is a teacher researcher study of how curriculum emerged within one whole language classroom. It provides insight into a teacher researcher's reasoning and is a formal look at the technique of co-creating curriculum with students to foster the development of literacy processes. This study follows a group of Native American adolescents in a cross-age Upward Bound writing class over a 2-year period. The students, from grades 9 through 11, moved from reluctant readers and writers to determined and willing readers and writers engaged in literacy processes for personally meaningful reasons. As these students began to read for culturally-meaningful purposes, they wrote to express themselves via public poetry readings, banquet speaking engagements, plays, and major public art projects. This is the journey of literate adolescents who used multiple sign systems to create meaning through culturally-relevant invitations and engagements.

This study provides insight into how, as a teacher researcher, I used students' responses to give birth to opportunities that created a meaningful and engaging curriculum within that highly contextualized place of discovery, the classroom.

Setting the Stage

The director of the Upward Bound program being studied, Ms. Angie Listo, is a member of the Tohono O'odham Nation and has a real desire to be a change agent for Native youth. She gave me permission to study and make the curricular change necessary

to bring the program within the framework of the eight suggested recommendations for reading and language arts curricula for Native American learners that had emerged from the work of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (INRTF) (Brown, 1992). Ms. Listo and I selected five of the Task Force recommendations that fit the needs of our learners. We omitted two recommendations dealing with English as a Second Language and Limited English Proficiency, because they were not areas relevant to our learners. We excluded one that we felt was repetitious. The five Task Force recommendations we selected stated:

1. The cultural heritage of the Native student needs to be recognized as an asset to the class. The various ethnic and cultural groups represented in the classroom provide many resources that can be used to enhance learning for all students.

2. Native students need warm, accepting environments that allow them to become risk-takers in learning new skills or content areas.

3. Individual students may need to have a silent period. These are periods during which they listen to a great deal of language in order to get a feel for the new sounds and vocabulary that have meaning for that particular content area.

4. Content material should include concepts appropriate for Native students' grade and achievement levels.

5. Instructional programs in the content areas should incorporate the use of concrete materials, shared experiences, and prior knowledge. (Brown, 1992, pp. 68-69)

Whole language is one of the educational philosophies suggested by the INRTF. It was my whole language philosophy that brought Ms. Listo in contact with me. She felt a deep desire to begin a shift away from a deficit model of education to a natural and rich model. Deficit models of education (Flores, Tefft Cousin, & Diaz, 1991) are locked into

a concept of viewing failure as a cultural problem and avoid any real institutional self-examination. Reyhner, who helped author the INRTF commissioned papers (1991), believes that American Indian languages and cultures are in danger of being lost, partly as a result of federal and state education policies over most of the last two centuries that call for the 'Americanization' of Indian students. Deficit model programs are the kinds of programs that Reyhner described as those aimed at the Americanization of Native children. Ms. Listo wanted a model that valued and built upon the rich cultural heritage of Native learners. Both as the director of Upward Bound and as a member of the Tohono O'odham Nation, she saw the need for a curriculum model that thoroughly embraced Native heritage instead of one that actively engaged in eradicating it.

Understanding the Conundrum

The issue we faced was creating a curriculum that included Native culture, while at the same time excited adolescent Native Americans about literacy. Ms. Listo and I agreed that the existing current writing program fulfilled neither of these goals.

I was hired to help shape this shift to a natural and rich writing program. The existing writing program focused on skills and to a large part ignored Native culture. For me, the new writing program had to be rooted in literacy experiences based on Rosenblatt's transactional perspective of multiple meanings (1991); Short, Harste, and Burke's view of 'inquiry as curriculum' (1996); and Graves' (1983, 1994) and Atwell's (1998) writing process and reading/writing workshop.

One of the assets I brought to the situation was my strong whole language belief system. I was comfortable with Ms. Listo's model and concerns, and she was

comfortable with mine. The program needed someone to invest effort to research any change that would take place. I recognized that this change process could become a dissertation topic. I would then share my study with the INRTF and other Native educators. Ms. Listo and I both understood studying the process would enrich American Indian education by providing an in-depth look at an individual classroom undergoing a shift to a whole language model. K. Goodman (1986) suggests whole language is a way of bringing together a view of language; a view of learning; and a view of people, in particular two special groups of people: kids and teachers. Ms. Listo gave me permission to proceed with the project with the understanding that I would report to her throughout, and if she felt at any time the study should be ended, I would do so. She stated qualitative research is highly valued within Native American communities (Reyhner, 1994), and so we agreed that a qualitative study would provide the best format for this research.

The Rationale

One purpose for educational research is to analyze teacher-written narratives to document how curriculum emerges within their classroom. Many educational researchers often need a macro-perspective, the teachers need a micro-perspective. Educational researchers seek large-scale reforms for schools and districts, while teachers seek immediate reforms within their own classrooms. A teacher-as-researcher stance provides that micro-perspective with a lens on the classroom. Such examinations are windows into the process of classroom change through the eyes of one of the most significant informers--the teacher. Ray (1993) offers an important explanation of the need for classroom based research:

> Teacher researchers need to become more cognizant of the effects of their inquiry, not only on their own teaching, but on their profession as well, and understanding of the contribution that teacher/research makes to the knowledge base in educational in general, and composition in particular is necessary for the progression of the teacher/research movement. One such contribution is the insight that teacher/research provides between theory and practice. (p. 60)

Ray argues that educational research cannot reform education by disregarding the very voices of those who are expected to carry out any such reforms. She views the key to successful reform as being rooted in the voice of the teacher.

A second purpose for educational research is based upon the need to understand the process of curriculum as it changes. Understanding such change processes should be of interest to other researchers and teachers involved in the education of Native Americans. Since this study also examines the application of the recommendations to embrace Native culture suggested by the INRTF (1992), it should be of interest to a range of teacher researchers attempting to understand how curriculum emerges from minority education in general.

In this investigation I examine the creation of a transactional classroom driven by the reciprocal literacy experiences of learners and teachers as they explore multiple sign systems and take critical stances. This inquiry seeks to share the process of theory meeting practice in the complex setting of one whole language teacher's classroom. An extremely valuable way to ascertain what teachers learn in their classroom is through individual teachers researching their own classrooms. Schon (1983) argues that theories and knowledge developed in laboratory settings are often misleading guides to classroom practice. Classrooms are complex places where, what Schon (1983) calls, the technical

rationality associated with laboratory controls are irrelevant to the real world problems of teachers. Teacher research studies working outside the traditions of technical rationality are of value, and Schon implores teachers to study their own practice. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) argue that teachers engaged in researching their own classrooms is a form of social change where they may alter classrooms, schools, and school communities. They state:

> Teacher researcher is a powerful way for teachers to understand how they and their students construct and reconstruct the curriculum. By conducting inquiry on their own practices, teachers identify discrepancies between their theories of practice and their practices. . . . Inquiry stimulates, intensifies, and illuminates changes in practice. (p. 51)

It is the potential for meaningful change that motivates teachers to research their own classrooms. Discovering those discrepancies between theory and practice empowers teachers to become swift and powerful change agents.

At a TAWL (Teachers Applying Whole Language) luncheon in Tucson, Arizona, Dorothy Watson spoke about each classroom being its own text. Watson mentioned that she was conducting research involving the classroom text of three of her first student teachers (1996). Her presentation made a powerful connection with Ray's (1993) image of the missing piece of the teacher voice in educational research:

> Something is missing in the way we create and disseminate knowledge in schools and universities. This is the primary message of teacher research. In an era when nationally normed test scores, exit level proficiency exams, and reports from outside experts, rather than classroom teachers' professional judgments, are looked to as the 'real' measure of students' learning, teachers are seeking change. (p. 50)

Teacher researchers view their classrooms as authentic research settings waiting to become their texts of understanding. The classrooms of teacher researchers are places to perceive, analyze, and learn through reflective practice how curriculum emerges. Teacher research is a learning and growing process that enriches both during and after instruction.

In history, the autobiography is a prized piece of primary resource, and in science, the firsthand observations of the scientist are crucial pieces to any study. Similarly, in education, it is time for researchers to highly value teacher descriptions of the texts of their own classrooms. I use narrative as the main vehicle to present this teacher research study. Teacher narratives provide others an inside look as teachers move beyond the discrepancies between theory and practice. I use my teacher's voice to expose that process for others and myself in investigation.

The Research Questions

The questions that drive this inquiry into the process are:

1. How does a transactional curriculum affect adolescent Native American high school students considered to be reluctant readers and writers?

2. Will a transactional view of literature change passive perceptions of literacy in the classroom for at-risk Native American students?

3. What are the experiences students have in a transactional classroom that affect passive views of literacy: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing?

4. What evidence is found in the written, spoken, and visual responses to literature that there is a growth in the reading and writing abilities of adolescents in a transactional classroom?

In this chapter, I set the stage for this teacher research study and present the research questions that I answer in chapters 4, 5, and 6. In chapter 2, I review the relevant literature. In chapter 3, I describe the design of the study, my data collection, and analysis of the study. I end the dissertation with my implications for Native American students and teachers.

CHAPTER 2

A RICH TAPESTRY: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Five threads hold this tapestry of inquiry together:

1. Whole Language
    a. Literacy Processes
    b. Inquiry as Curriculum
2. Transactional Theory
3. Critical Influences
4. Teacher Researcher
5. American Indian Education.

Bringing these threads together is a theoretical understanding of literacy rooted in transactional model of learning based on a reciprocal process between teachers and learners that transforms the learning relationship.

The critical connection between the five threads is a belief that learning is a liberating and social experience in which both teacher and student are enriched and changed. Transactional literacy sees each learner as constructing his/her own meaning. Therefore, research inquiries that illuminate the context of such experiences make instructional connections visible. As theoretical threads come together, I unearth five pillars of support for an action-based model of multicultural education. Critical theory is not a one-leg model for education or a one-size-fits-all model. A truly liberating education model is influenced by multiple perspectives. My pillars of multicultural

education are allied in their effort to redefine curriculum as a transformative process for both teachers and learners, engaged in what Freire (1993) called an "Ontological vocation/the process of becoming more human" (p. 108). The format for this literature review examines each thread separately, but while each thread remains an individual strand within this review, these threads interweave together in the classroom to create the fabric of a unique active model of multicultural education.

Whole Language

The whole language thread is discussed in two sections. The first is language processes and the second is inquiry as curriculum.

Language Processes

Whole language teachers are guided by a set of theoretical beliefs that guide or determine their thinking on literacy. These beliefs are founded on an understanding that the cognitive processes of reading and writing do not exist separately but are rooted jointly in language. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are expressions of the same sign system, and are together in similar, natural ways. They are receptive and productive processes acting simultaneously for constructing meaning and making sense of the world in which we live. These language processes are influenced by functional purposes related to communicative needs grounded in social roles, cultural roles, and the human need to interact with others. The understanding of these processes as being natural, harmonic processes of language suggest they are not separate receptive and productive processes, but a continuous engagement in meaning making.

It can help to view reading and listening as receptive processes and speaking and writing as productive processes in the world of research, but these processes do not operate in isolation from one another in the real world. From time to time, I place language under the microscope lens and find it useful to examine writing, reading, speaking, and listening as separate; however, like K. Goodman's (1986) argument that reading cues operate simultaneously to make meaning, language involves a similar simultaneous processing for meaning making. Listening is a receptive language process by which we make meaning from others, through which humans learn and understand the world around them. Reading is a similar receptive process of making meaning from print. The world is swarming with sound and print, and what we listen to and read is guided by functional needs. As we drive in our cars, we may constantly switch radio stations searching for particular songs we enjoy. As we walk on busy streets, our ears are constantly filtering sounds. The sounds we listen to are determined by our need or desire to hear them. Our ears are never turned off, but they are selective to our needs and desires. What we hear and what we take in are not the same thing. We select, we predict, we confirm, and we disconfirm based on our needs to function in the world.

Reading print is similar to listening: we are constantly immersed in print from the moment we are born. By the age of 4, most children can differentiate between McDonald's and Burger King. Most children grow up seeing their parents reading. As they see their parents reading road signs, labels, books, newspapers, and other texts, children come to understand print as a way of knowing. The miscue research of K. Goodman (1965), K. Goodman and Burke (1973), and Y. Goodman (1970) is based on

years of observing children as they read books. This research enabled teachers to understand that reading is not decoding letter sound relationships, but making meaning. Their miscue research was the first to use only readers in a real school setting, orally reading whole stories. The significance of miscue research is that it provides teachers with research that looks at the reading process as a whole, as it happens.

Miscue research enables teachers to understand the contributions of linguists such as Halliday (1975), who provided teachers with a functional perspective of language. K. Goodman helped teachers understand the work of Chomsky (1965), who proposed that children learn language, and the structural component of language, easily because they are pre-wired to learn the language of the community into which they are born. Miscue research was informed by these new linguistic understandings that language was acquired easily and naturally through functional use. If speech was acquired in this manner, K. Goodman proposed that reading and writing should be learned in the same manner. K. Goodman's research viewed reading as a receptive process closely related to listening, and writing as a productive process closely related to speaking. Readers were using the different cue systems (syntactic, semantic, graphophonic, and pragmatic) to make meaning, and writers were using the cue systems to construct meaning. All language processes are meaning-making processes. The implications are that if children learn to speak without being instructed in language use, they must learn it as they use it in authentic contexts. If reading and writing are related processes, they too should be learned not by direct instruction, but through functional use of reading and writing in authentic contexts.

Viewing reading/writing and listening/speaking as receptive and productive processes of language means they are acquired together in a reciprocal relationship. Excluding speech and hearing difficulties, we can assume speaking and listening are interdependent. That is, we learn to speak as we listen, and we listen as we speak. We cannot write without reading what we write, and we cannot read without understanding how to write. Smith (1971) pointed out that reading is not taught, but learned by reading. Like Halliday's idea that we learn language as we use it, Smith proposed we learn to read by reading. Thus, a teacher does not teach children to read, but supports them as they read. K. Goodman (1994) sees reading and writing as processes acquired through functional needs. The implication is that humans cannot be taught how to be literate before they are literate.

Inquiry as Curriculum

Curriculum in whole language classrooms is not prescribed by outsiders. Curriculum is not separate from the process of learning, but part of the learning process. Inquiry is the center of curriculum development in a whole language classroom. Inquiry questions are created by learners who are problem solvers intimately coming to know each other in classrooms focused on learning. This is the emergence of a learning-centered curriculum based on invitations and engagements, built around trust, that forms the basis for further explorations. Inquiry begins with extending the personal to a thought collective via social engagement with others rooted in the common function of constructing meaning of their world. As learners construct meaning in social settings, they reflect and re-value through sharing and examining their beliefs in safe communities

with others. Ambiguities and inconsistencies are natural occurrences that learners honor and expect when encountering new values (Burke & Crafton, 1994).

Teaching is a ceaseless spiral, because as we teach we learn, and what teachers learn within their classrooms impacts how curriculum unfolds. Y. Goodman (1989) refers to curriculum as "the dynamic transaction between teachers and students results in change in all the actors and actions involved in the teaching/learning experience . . ." (p. 3). This dynamic transaction has always excited and fascinated me. Y. Goodman goes on to remind us that this process is part of the process of curriculum: "Evaluation--the examination of that change--reveals the development of the learning, the teacher, and the curriculum . . ." (p. 3).

Evaluation informs teachers, and the process of becoming informed impacts curriculum. In whole language classrooms, evaluation is not isolated from curriculum development but is an essential part of that development. The search to better comprehend the dynamic transaction of curriculum within whole language classrooms is fundamental to any understanding of whole language curriculum.

Harste (1994) describes curriculum as having the potential to transform schools: "Improving the quality of life in schools calls for opportunities for both teachers and students to experience themselves as learners engaged together in creating, critiquing, and transcending their present realities" (p. 1238).

Evaluation in inquiry curriculum is not the same as in traditional curricula. Burke and Crafton (1994) explain:

What we believe about language and learning we also believe about evaluation:

1. Evaluation must be internal to the learner and internal to the learning process itself.

2. Evaluation should occur in supportive, social contexts in which learners have ongoing conversations about their learning.

3. Evaluation should support inquiry by providing systematic ways for learners to continuously question an consider the meaning of their work.

4. The primary function of evaluation is to interrogate individuals' values.

5. Evaluation should empower the learner. (p. 5)

Here, inquiry creates evaluation opportunities that transcend the traditional quantitative realities to a process of curriculum that is created in classrooms embedded in democratic processes. Teachers and children in such a community are active participants in the process of creating curriculum. Curriculum evolves through inquiry.

In whole language classrooms, an inquiry framework begins with finding out what students already know and what they want to know about the world around them:

> The focus of an inquiry is not always in the form of a specific question, but can be a 'wondering' about something we want to pursue. As we work through inquiry, we do not usually end with one answer or even a set of answers. (Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996, p. 295)

Short, Harste, and Burke (1996) are highly regarded researchers of curriculum and inquiry. Their work shows an evolution of developing an understanding about inquiry. Their work has moved curriculum from sets of isolated facts to a process of creating a community of learners exploring multiple ways of knowing. In the forward to Burke and Short's key book on curriculum, *Creating Curriculum* (1988), Harste wrote, "Burke and Short see the function of a literary curriculum as supporting key processes in literacy, not

teaching of specific books or particular pieces of content . . ." (p. ix). These researchers, like K. Goodman in his miscue research, continually evolve, explore, and refine their work. No one has defined inquiry as intensely as Short, Harste, and Burke. Harste wrote, "Neither theory nor curriculum ever sleeps. Despite the instructional progress brought by whole language, we haven't gone far enough" (Ruddell, 1994, p. 1231). This evolution is grounded in the authoring cycle and its impact on classroom instruction. Short and Burke's research has always been a reciprocal relationship between authentic classroom practice and learning theory. Harste (1994) describes inquiry as sets of 'Dynamic Relationships,' and provides a diagram of this relationship (see Figure 2.1).

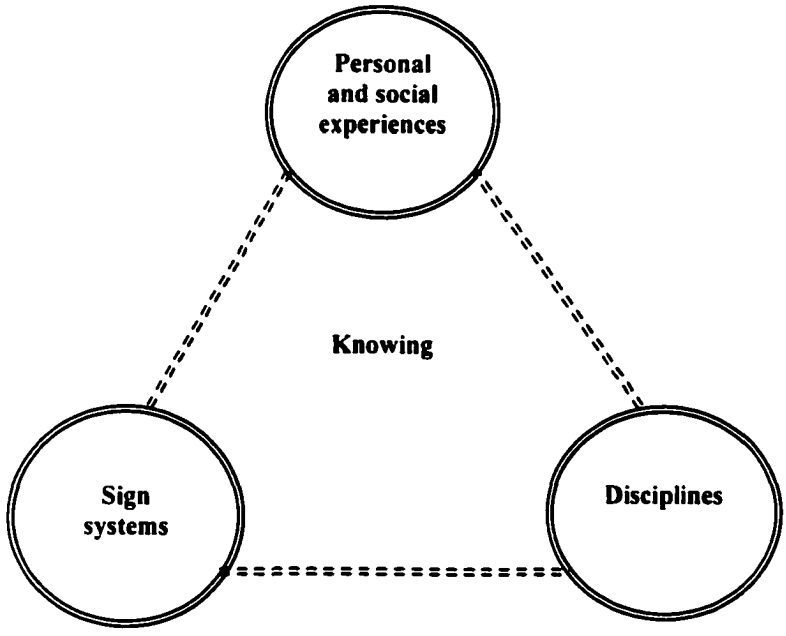


Figure 2.1. Harste inquiry model (Ruddell, 1994, p. 1231).

Harste uses his model to portray the shift from curriculum as separate disciplines to a view of curriculum as inquiry. Burke and Crafton (1994) talk about inquiry in classrooms:

> Inquiry-based classrooms operate on a different set of assumptions: knowledge is dynamic, not static, and it is socially constructed within collaborative groups. Classrooms are filled with ongoing opportunities for learners to identify questions and issues they feel passionate about. (p. 3)

These researchers reveal a shift from a methodological to a philosophical stance. Harste, Burke, and Short discuss inquiry as a cycle that begins with what kids know, and builds on their past experience and knowledge through invitations to explore meaningful engagements through multiple perspectives. Their focus is on learning as a process of using sign systems to explore new issues and questions through multiple perspectives. Knowing begins with what the learner currently knows. Such personal knowing is the frame for planning an inquiry curriculum through the sign systems humans use to mediate our world. We use language, music, dance, etc., to communicate, interpret, dream, record, and create our world. Harste (1994) views all of the sign systems as forms of literacy. Disciplines, in an inquiry curriculum, become different perspectives. They are not knowledge itself, but perspectives of knowing. Moving through the various disciplines by way of different sign systems enables the learner to move from personal to social ways of knowing. Processes, not products, are the core of learning in an inquiry curriculum (Harste, 1994). I believe this view of inquiry is a revolutionary view of curriculum far beyond anything progressive educators have ever before proposed. This is a shift from curriculum as fact (traditional classroom) and curriculum as activities

(literature-based classrooms), to curriculum as inquiry (transactional classroom). The work of K. Goodman and Y. Goodman and Short, Harste, and Burke come together to form this whole language thread.

Transactional Theory: An Undistorted Purpose for Literature

Rosenblatt's purpose for literature is much more enriching and meaningful than the acquisition of any sub-skills. Sims Bishop (1990), in *Transactions With Literature: A Fifty-year Perspective* written about Louise Rosenblatt, writes: "She [Rosenblatt] forcefully reminds us that the text on the printed page is merely a potential, that only in the transaction between the reader the text is the work of art created" (p. 8).

At the core of a transactional theory is the belief that a reader is an active constructor of his or her own meaning. "There is no single interpretation of the text" (Sims Bishop, 1990, p. 8). The center of Rosenblatt's perspective is that reading literature is based on an engagement in a literary experience. The literary experience is not secured by the text, but is the result of the relationship between the reader and the text. This relationship is not an interactive process, but a transactional process. The term transaction implies a reciprocal relationship, as opposed to separate entities acting on one another. This was Dewey's contribution to Rosenblatt's theory in 1949. This understanding also separates Rosenblatt's ideas from most other reader-response perspectives. Rosenblatt (1990) wrote:

> Most reader response exponents still seem ultimately to conceive of the reader and the text in the traditional ways--as already-defined entities acting on each other--and hence tend to situate the 'meaning' of a work **either** 'in' the text, instead of recognizing the dynamic to and fro relationship that gives raise to 'the Work.' (p. 104)

Rosenblatt's view is a perspective of literature as a reciprocal relationship. Her view leaves the reader enriched by the reading experience when he/she is allowed to assume an aesthetic stance. The aesthetic stance is the shifting between the private and public aspects of meaning. Rosenblatt discusses the efferent stance, when the reader's focus is on reading for information. Both aesthetic and efferent stances can happen at the same time, but if teachers ignore the aesthetic stances of readers, then the shifting between private and public aspects is limited to answering questions. Thus, without a full aesthetic response, the literary experience is not evoked. This particular aspect of Rosenblatt's theory connects her directly to an inquiry curriculum. Inquiry is not finding out things for others; it is addressing the learner's private and public aspects of learning through multiple perspectives. Rosenblatt's transactional view of literature (1990), like psycholinguistic models for reading, places the emphasis on literacy as a meaning making process.

> Human beings are always in transaction and in a reciprocal relationship with an environment, a context, a total situation. The classroom environment, or the atmosphere created by the teacher and students transacting with one another and the school setting, broadens out to include the whole institutional, social, and cultural context. (Rosenblatt, 1990, p. 108)

Although Rosenblatt does not define herself as either a whole language or critical theorist, her evolving work, as evidenced by her above statement, provides a connection to both critical theory and whole language.

Critical Influences

The practical usefulness of critical pedagogy is its view of education as a transformative process. Critical pedagogy is not the transfer of knowledge from teacher

to student. The transfer of knowledge is a view of education known as the 'banking model,' which Freire opposed (1986).

Nieto (1992) defined critical pedagogy as: "When students critically analyze different perspectives and then use them to understand and act on the inconsistencies they uncover" (p. 220). Nieto places the role of critical pedagogy within the perspective of multicultural education. At the core of critical theory and multicultural education is the potential to transform education. Like whole language, critical pedagogy and multicultural education are rooted in the recognition of a new learning relationship. This relationship is a metamorphosis of learning, from being passive to gaining a view of learning as active. Active learners contribute to their own metamorphosis as they contribute to the metamorphosis of others within their inquiry community.

There is no teacher-to-learner role within critical pedagogy; there are communities exploring new inquiries. A critical perspective in literature instruction means literature can never be limited to the acquisition of skills. In the context of critical pedagogy, literature becomes a means of critically analyzing students' and teachers' perspectives in society. This reflection creates a potential for action that offers the possibility of a more just world. Humans do not use literature to become better workers; they use literature to become better humans. This is Freire's concept of the ontological vocation as opposed to the ideas of functional competency. Education is our ontological vocation. This means education cannot be neutral. Rather, it serves as either an instrument to domesticate human beings or an instrument of liberation (Freire, 1986, 1993). The core of critical literacy is the potential to become more human, more just, to create a safer world for all

humans. The very idea of functional literacy is morally obnoxious and dehumanizing. It chains learners to focus on their role only as workers (Kozol, 1985).

The potential of critical pedagogy in relationship to education is a reconstruction of what it means to be a learning community. The critical potential for literature is not in maintaining isolated pockets of retreat for marginalized voices in corners of literature instruction, but in the equal inclusion in all literature of both the marginalized and non-marginalized voices. The benefits of agency become liberating when the purpose of literature instruction is not the acquisition of skills, but the invitation and engagement in the discourse that makes us all more fully human.

This idea of education being a participant in the process of the social readjustment of its institutions is where progressive and critical theory meet. Dewey (1914) states, ". . . An undesirable society, in other words, is one which internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience" (p. 99). Clearly, both Dewey (1914) and Freire (1993) take very powerful stances against functional perspectives of education. Dewey provides the link to progressive educators that connects critical theory and whole language.

Functional literacy perspectives restrict literature to a 'banking model,' denying learners the right to reflect, act, and change. Literacy in such a society becomes a pacifier circumventing a democratic experience for its citizens. Democratic experiences form the core that joins critical theorists, whole language theorists, transactional theorists, and multicultural theorists. This joining in the creation of opportunities to share in

democratic experiences is the common theoretical curricular foundation that grounds this study in the invention of a transactional classroom.

Teacher Researcher

Theory meets practice when teachers research their own classrooms. Research that examines this reflective context provides data that is both rich and authentic. Being a teacher research offers a unique opportunity to study curriculum as it emerges.

The crucial contribution of this study is that it offers a critical examination of curriculum outside the mainstream of a traditional classroom. There must be an alternative to that of viewing curriculum as being handed down from experts. Paris (1993) stated that curriculum reform is the challenging of assumptions:

> To avoid replicating past curriculum practices and reproducing the dis-empowered relationship of teachers to curriculum, it is necessary to examine some of the assumptions that underlie and limit thinking about teachers, curriculum, and reform. The first is the unquestioned belief that curriculum knowledge--knowledge of what it is to teach and how to teach it--is scientific knowledge that is inaccessible to the typical classroom teacher. (p. 11)

This study is a bold challenge to that too often unquestioned assumption that curriculum is fixed from outside the classroom, beyond the influence of both learner and teacher. If, as K. Goodman and Y. Goodman (1989) and Harste (1994) say, learning is a dynamic transaction, this dynamic transaction must be studied in order to challenge or confirm what Paris called "the first . . . unquestioned" assumption of curriculum reform (1993, p. 11).

The knowledge that each classroom is a self-contextualized text is essential to this study. This unfolding of understanding is what I propose to share with other teachers and researchers.

The complexity of a whole language classroom is not easily portrayed, especially in empirical studies. Applying objective measures to a subjective context cannot capture the authenticity of that moment when teacher researchers, theory, and practice meet in their classrooms. Vacca and Rasinski (1992) describe one major obstacle of whole language as the inability to define whole language theory and practice with clarity. Yet, teachers all across America and the world have embraced the principles of whole language. Perhaps the lack of clarity in regard to a definition of whole language is the understanding that each classroom is unique, rendering simple descriptions inadequate. The complexity of whole language classrooms continues to elude the restraints of decontextualized research designs. Elbow (1990) suggests that practice is sometimes prior to theory:

> Our success in pursuing and increasing theoretical knowledge usually depends on respecting and trusting practice for a while and after integrating it as a rich source for new theory. . . . [I]t is shrewd and sophisticated for teachers to proceed using practical wisdom and even intuition and then stop and say, "Now what were we doing? What are the promises and consequences of our practices?" (pp. 87-88)

This study represents Elbow's suggestion to examine what I did in my classroom to document 'the promises and consequences' of my practice.

American Indian Education

As American Indians became less of a threat to White expansion, the focus became one of control. Control was often seen as a matter of assimilation and

encouraging conversion. Thus, the purpose of American Indian education was, at heart, an attempt to destroy Native spirituality and ways of knowing. Bernard and Burner (1975) state:

> Since the earliest settlements by Europeans in the New World, solicitude for the welfare of American Indians has been expressed. Most Whites, however, were more interested in lands and furs than in the Indians' minds and souls. Consequently, warfare and trade instead of learning and religion have been the dominant modes of contact. (p. 98)

The original purpose of Native education was to teach the young how to survive and to bring children into the social fabric of Native society. Each nation had its own religious beliefs, and those beliefs were taught by the whole nation through elders and through participation in religious ceremonies. European aggression brought warfare, disease, and loss of the traditional Native economic ways of survival. As Native populations were drastically decimated by warfare and disease, over-zealous missionaries moved to convert them. This caused further breakdown in Native nations, because of the attempts--often by missionaries--to have the Native population totally reject their traditions. Thus, attempts by White people to educate American Indians were often met with resistance. At the core of Native resistance was the understanding that Europeans did not view the Natives as their equals. Early American history is one of eradication of Native Americans and their way of life through war and westward expansion (Reyhner, 1994). As eradication proved impossible, the government moved toward assimilation. Assimilation policies meant educational boarding programs aimed at the destruction of Native language and culture. This destruction of Native ways of knowing was consistent up until the 1920s. The Meriam report (1928) concluded:

> The philosophy underlying the establishment of Indian boarding schools, that the way to 'civilize' the Indian is to take Indian children, even the very young children, as completely as possible away from their home and family life, is at variance with modern views of education and social work, which regard the home and family as essential social institutions from which it is generally undesirable to uproot children. (p. 403)

Native education was controlled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and, as Reyhner states (1994), the BIA schools were designed to carry out cultural genocide. In the worlds of the Carlisle Indian School founder, Pratt, the purpose for these schools was to ". . . kill the Indian and save the man" (p. 8). At the turn of the century, the Native population in America was down to 237,000, but as government policy became less hostile, the Native population increased to nearly 2,000,000 by 1994. President Richard Nixon, speaking on July 7, 1970, acknowledged the government's continuous role in the subjugation of the Native American, and called for a commitment to change:

> The story of the Indian in America is something more than the record of the white man's frequent aggression, broken agreements, intermittent remorse and prolonged failure. It is a record of endurance, of survival, of adaptation and creativity in the face of overwhelming obstacles. It is a record of enormous contributions to this country--to its art and culture, to its strength and spirit, to its sense of history and its sense of purpose.
>
> It is long past time that the Indian policies of the Federal government began to recognize and build upon the capacities and insights of the Indian people. Both as a matter of justice and as a matter of enlightened social policy, we must begin to act on the basis of what the Indians themselves have been long telling us. The time has come to break decisively with the past and to create the conditions for a new era in which the Indian future is determined by Indian acts and Indian decisions. (Nixon, 1970)

Finally, 400 years after Columbus, the war was over against Native people in the United States and their way of life--at least officially. As Tribal governments stood up to the policy of cultural genocide, they began to gain control of the BIA and their own

schools. The battle today against cultural loss is far from over, but it has changed to a battle for language and cultural preservation. With the 1972 Indian Education Act and the 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, Native people were again gaining control over their future. In 1990, the Native Languages Act signified the genocide against Native language was ending, and the release of the INRTF report signified that Natives were gaining back some influence over the education of their youth in America. Nearly 500 years of struggle for Native people finally led to a new hope for Native education in America.

The Task Force reported, "A whole language approach can foster higher-level thinking: via authentic writing situations such as interviewing tribal elders, writing their own texts, and using these texts to produce social studies materials" (U.S. Department of Education, 1992, p. 68).

Cummins (1994) suggested the experiences of minority students in American schools were harmful:

> A central proposition of this chapter is that minority students are dis-empowered educationally in much the same way that their communities are dis-empowered by interactions with other societal institutions. . . . In short, minority students are empowered or disabled as a direct results of their interactions with educators. (pp. 4-5)

Cummins then provides an example of instruction that empowers Native students: ". . . Whole Language instruction creates conditions that aim to liberate students from dependence on instruction in the sense of encouraging them to become active generators of their own knowledge. . . ." (1994, p. 7).

Review

Whole Language curriculum begins with what the learners know. It can involve the use of language experience types of stories to create local versions of traditional stories. "Such instruction leads naturally to integrating content areas into holistic and meaningful units of study" (Reyhner, 1994, p. 68). It is clear that whole language fits perfectly within the Task Force recommendations for educating Native youth. Still, whole language is often limited to debates of reading and writing models, and therefore, the fabric to creating a liberating model of learning for Native Learners suggests connecting threads to other paradigms of knowing. These five threads include:

1. Whole Language
2. Transactional Theory
3. Critical Influences
4. Teacher Researcher
5. American Indian Education.

This chapter reviewed the literature related to these threads. Whole language, transactional theory, and critical theory view language as a meaning-making process. Teacher researcher allows the teacher the needed context to investigate these connecting threads within the classroom.

CHAPTER 3

A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Research Design

Throughout the 1995-96 school year it became evident that a basic skills model with an emphasis on the transmission of a fixed body of knowledge was in direct contrast to the recommendations stated in the Task Force papers. As I intensified my emphasis on inquiry and multiple sign systems, a rich and natural writing program emerged around invitations and engagements that immersed learners in explorations of Native language, culture, and tradition through critical literacy experiences. The process of conducting an investigation into a writing curriculum that was becoming immersed in multiple sign systems required a qualitative design which would enable me to fully grasp curriculum as it emerged.

The first year of the study was used to develop a plan for research procedures and to acquire a basic understanding of the complexity of this social learning environment. As I became more secure with collecting and analyzing data, questions emerged that required in-depth content analysis during the first and second year, particularly with the exploration of sign systems and inquiry driven curriculum. One way to counter bias and strengthen a study is through triangulation (Patton, 1990). My need for a qualitative design evolved as the method necessary to follow the creation of a transactional classroom through my five data sources: (a) curriculum notebook, (b) audio recorded

focus group interviews, (c) writing samples (social and individual), (d) literacy surveys, and photographs/video.

Data Sources

Curriculum Notebook

My Curriculum Notebook is an electronic journal, which contains my before- and after-class entries. I consider these entries to be my field notes: a before-class entry would be my expectations for the upcoming class, and an after-class entry would be one of reflection. As a teacher, my commitment during class was to my students. My curriculum notebook also contains class agendas (lesson planning documents) that I shared with my class. Copies of all handouts or scanned copies of key readings were also entered. My journal kept track of which students were working on what project. Some students were doing independent research, while others were working on writing engagements. I transcribed key comments into my notebook from audio conversations recorded during class. Every poem/writing sample handed in by a student was noted in my notebook. When discussing curriculum, I consider my notebook to be my soup pot into which all spices enter. I began and ended my day with my notebook. Cochran and Lytle (1993) state, "When teachers study and write about their work, they make their own distinctive ways of knowing about teaching and learning more visible to themselves and others" (p. 115).

The analysis of my notebook helped to visualize necessary data of my learning and teaching journey. My class agendas were examined numerous times to mark off my own perceptions of how an emerging transactional curriculum affects reluctant readers and

writers. They also marked my teaching and learning focuses on a class by class basis. My agendas were color coded to mark transactional experiences affecting passive literacy attitudes of my students.

Audio Recorded Focus Group Interviews

Interviews were recorded and transcribed with groups of four to six students. These interviews were informal and short; they followed an adjusted format prescribed by Seidman (1991) in *Interviewing as Qualitative Research.* Seidman provides a theoretical understanding of how researchers should conduct interviews. He suggests interviews of participants with three separate focuses: (a) focused literacy history, (b) details of the experience, and (c) reflection on meaning.

First, Seidman focuses on the personal history of the participant's experience in the context of the topic. At the beginning of Fall Year 1, I chose to have the students write me a description of their literacy history. All 20 students did so.

Next, Seidman advises concentration on the concrete details of the participant's present experience. At the end of the Spring semester, I had all 20 students write and discuss whether or not their views of literacy had changed since the previous semester.

Finally, Seidman suggests reflection on meaning. At the end of the Summer Year 1, this is exactly what we did in the form of group interviews and individual papers. We reflected on our past year at Upward Bound.

In the Fall of Year 2, 18 of the original 20 students returned to my class. Two students had graduated, so I also had two new students. I had the two new students write me descriptions of their literacy histories. For the Spring of Year 2, all 20 students

repeated whether or not their views of literacy had changed since the previous semester. Then in Summer Year 2, all students were once again interviewed and asked for their reflections on the whole 2-year experience (1 year for two students).

Writing Samples (Social/Individual)

Social writing engagements found students in literature circles using large chart paper to record their own verbal and visual response to readings. These charts were analyzed and coded for evidence to determine how literature responses were connected to writing- and reading-ability growth. Writing samples also included "react-cite-discuss" sheets, free writes, reaction papers, and even manuscripts of a play we performed.

Individual writing also took on several forms, including dispatches, which are reflective letters from the student to me regarding their literacy experiences in our class.

Literacy Survey

As part of Seidman's (1991) "focused literacy history," the students completed a literacy survey in the Fall semester Year 1. In the Fall Year 2, two students, new to the program, completed the same survey, and the results were recorded. Before the end of Summer semester Year 1 and Summer Year 2, a reflective take-home survey was given to all 20 students. This was then the topic for our focus group interviews. The replies were analyzed to measure any change in literacy attitudes and behavior.

Photographs/Video

From Day One and throughout the 2 years that followed photographs were taken in class and on various field trips. The students were the photographers. I consider these photographs to be excellent indicators of what the students value. The purpose for this

data is twofold: to create classroom bulletin boards and as chapter 6 illustrates, the context of the literate environment of the classroom and the activities that were occurring at any given time. Photo data was coded and used to help illustrate the context of significant moments. Photos were used to help provide visual examples of specific learning engagements.

As Eisner (1991) suggests, a variety of data sources was used "as a means through which multiple types of data related to each other to support or contradict the interpretation and evaluation of a state of affairs" (p. 110). The five descriptive data sources revolved around the complexity of a social learning community immersed in literacy experiences. I am the instrument in this study. I developed the interview protocols, interviewed all of the participants, and collected all of the data. My task as investigator was to be a good listener, an excellent observer, a collector of artifacts, and a reflective practitioner. This study is qualitative; it entails observation over an extended period of time and is based upon my participation in the community. Crucial singular events are described within the context of the entirety of the two-year period and the impact that those events had upon curriculum, me, and the other participants. For this study, I selected events that are consequential to the development of an emerging transactional curriculum. Considered separately, many aspects of classroom life look trivial. In a sense, they are. It is only when their cumulative occurrence is considered that the realization of their full importance begins to emerge.

My dissertation assumes that the particulars of the rich and natural writing program of Upward Bound will have implications relevant to other classroom teachers

and educational researchers. The narrative structure of my study is rooted in my belief that narrative is a way of knowing and is as visible as other forms of data. Narrative as a means of coming to know might be the only legitimate path to capturing Ruth Ray's missing piece in educational research (1993). K. Goodman (1989) sees traditional methods as inappropriate in understanding whole language classrooms: "In curriculum planning, whole language teachers create opportunities for pupils to use language in authentic, richly contextualized, functional ways. Traditional evaluation is inappropriate and tends strongly to underestimate growth in functional use of language" (p. xiii). Goodman points out the complexity of curriculum within whole language settings, and the ineffectiveness of traditional evaluation to capture the rich context that exists in whole language classrooms. Building on that understanding, it becomes clear that traditional quantitative methods neglect the only way to capture the full complexity of this transactional classroom--the human voice.

My dissertation necessitated incorporation of a rich context of narratives that give justice to understanding the richness of Native American voices in the classroom. Just as Native American narratives have been excluded to a large extent in quantitative research, so too have teacher narratives. My search of the literature led me to qualitative methods of looking at and analyzing interpersonal relationships. Code (1991) calls for examination of interpersonal relationships as key to research enterprise and rebukes depersonalizing academic practices.

Four interpersonal relationships require a qualitative design that provides for opportunities to triangulate the data from four authentic vantage points by providing insight into those moments through:

1. A teacher's personal journal, and notes taken from my curriculum notebook,
2. The classroom as a whole collected from social writing pieces and interviews,
3. Various student and staff voices collected through focus interviews conducted at the end of each year, and
4. Individual writing samples collected from student journals and reflective writing assignments.

These four perspectives came together within an extra-curricular program called Upward Bound over a 2-year period from Fall semester 1995 through Summer semester 1997.

K. Goodman (1989) writes "Self evaluation is the most significant kind of evaluation; pupils and teachers need to have a sense of why they are doing what they are doing so that they may have some sense of their own success and growth" (p. xiii). Goodman views whole language classrooms as being places where pupils and teachers have a sense of "why" they are doing what they are doing. It is my view that there are exact moments when this awareness is disclosed within whole language classrooms, and qualitative methods can help pinpoint such moments. When these moments are revealed in my study, they are observed and documented during data collection and discussed in my findings.

During what amounted to 2 full school years, including a summer session for each year, I was a participant observer in my own classroom. I was present the whole time; my role was as visible teacher and learner. I planned, negotiated and conducted activities during my data collection. I coded, transcribed, and analyzed the data intensely, searching for significant events revealing crucial moments as curriculum emerged.

> Lived experience overflows the boundaries of any one concept, any one person, or any one society. As such, it brings us to a dialectical view of life which emphasizes the interplay rather than the identity of things, which denies any sure steadying to thought by placing it always within the precarious and destabilizing fields of history, biography, and time. Indeed, by forcing upon our attention the unrepeatability of events, dialectical thought . . . remains skeptical of all efforts to reduce the diversity of experience to timeless categories and determinate theorems, to force life to be at the disposal of ideas. (Jackson, 1989, p. 2)

I positioned narrative as a way of knowing and discovering the human voice by embracing its rich descriptive potential to illuminate the dual nature of curriculum. Each year, October through May, I taught class each Saturday morning for 2 hours. Each June, I taught class 4 days a week, for 3 hours each day. This totals approximately 204 hours taking field notes, recording audio conversations, collecting social writing samples and individual writing samples, and recording and transcribing interviews, plus 492 hours of a unique in-depth look at teacher planning. Transactional settings are social learning communities that require non-traditional ways of observing and documenting such settings. My dissertation is an attempt to share the multiple layers of social learning that I feel capture the rich narratives of voices too long silent in the larger context of educational research.

The Writing Program at Upward Bound

Upward Bound is a federally funded program for "at risk" adolescents between the ages of 14 and 19. The Pima County Community College District Program is restricted to Native Americans who attend 1 of 7 high schools, 5 of those high schools are Tucson public high schools (Cholla, Desert View, Pueblo, Sunnyside, Tucson) and 2 schools (Baboquivari and Tohono O'odham high schools) are on the Tohono O'odham reservation southwest of Tucson.

Students who participate in the program must fall into the following three categories:

1. They must be Native American.
2. They must be considered low income, as set out by the federal government guidelines.
3. They must be a potential first-generation college student (the program defines a "first-generation college student" as one with neither parent having received a college degree).

The Upward Bound Writing Program in this study was a basic skills remedial writing program attempting to move towards an enrichment model. This shift in focus will be documented and expanded in this dissertation.

The Population

All participants in this study are Native American, all students attended 1 of 7 local high schools. Baboquivari and Tohono O'odham are rural high schools on the Tohono O'odham reservation. The other five high schools are non-reservation public

high schools in the center and south sections of the city of Tucson in two school districts. All participants are means tested, with a total family income of no more than $14,000 per family of four. All students had to fit the category of being potential first-generation college students.

Participants were bused into Pima County Community College District East Campus, located on the southeast side of Tucson, for weekly Saturday classes. The students who came from the reservation had a 90-minute travel time each way. For the month of June, all participants of the Upward Bound became residential students and lived in the dormitories of the University of Arizona in Tucson. Summer classes were held Monday through Thursday. All participants received free lunches during the year while attending the Saturday class, and three meals a day during the residential period. In order to cover costs occurred while participating in Upward Bound, students received a small stipend of less than $20 per month during the year and $20 per week during the month of June.

Participant Selection Process

As the teacher researcher in this study, I had no involvement in the selection process. The Upward Bound Director and Program Coordinator assigned students to my classroom without any teacher input. I worked with the students I was assigned. My first day of class began with 12 students, and by the second class I had 20 students. These 20 would eventually become my study participants. (See Appendix A for letter of consent sent to parents of participants.) During the 2-year period, two participants graduated

from high school and two new students were added to my class. In all 18 students were the same participants during the entire 2-year period of the study.

The Setting

The setting for this study was Pima Community College East Campus in Tucson, Arizona. Tucson is a mid-sized city, population of approximately 800,000, in the southwestern United States. The classroom where I held my class was a large room with movable tables and chairs. It would have comfortably accommodated 30 students. There were two large chalkboards and two bulletin boards in the room. There was a permanent television, VCR, and overhead projector in the room.

Analysis of Data Collection

Data analysis activities included:

1. Categorizing data collection,
2. Analyzing the data for themes and anomalies,
3. Verifying participants responses via sharing transcribed sessions and interpretations, and
4. Validating data reliability through the use of a qualitative design to capture rich narrative descriptions for triangulation.

Qualitative methods were used to provide a focus for the narratives and themes that emerged from my original questions during this 2-year in-depth study as a transactional curriculum developed in our classroom.

The categories that surfaced the first year became the focus for the second year, distinguishing between them as general and specific. The general categories: (Task Force

Recommendations, Literacy Events, Inquiry as Curriculum, and Invention/Convention Learning Theory) set parameters for organizing the data. The specific focus for content examined how sign systems were the means to create cultural invitations and engagements moving learners into a generative curriculum. John Dewey (1963) talks about mis-education and education. Education begins with learners' passions and questions, growing from their current position in the world. Valuing and accepting what learners believe is the core of any emerging curriculum--this is the first border that learners and teachers push beyond. The data analysis in this study tells the complex story of how a transactional curriculum was invented in our whole language classroom.

CHAPTER 4

THE EMERGENCE OF A TRANSACTIONAL CLASSROOM

In this chapter, three key sections are introduced to establish the framework and to provide the complexity of a qualitative design study for the reader. The first section provides insight into my principles for the teaching of writing. Those principles were in place before my study began and influenced writing in my classroom. The second section provides a view of how curriculum emerged after my meeting with the Upward Bound Director, Ms. Angie Listo. Ms. Listo is introduced as a key participant within my study, and her presence influences the way curriculum was allowed to emerge. The third section is a descriptive overview for chapters 5 and 6 in which I provide an extremely rich descriptive portrait of my classroom.

Principles for Teaching Writing

I invite the reader into my thoughts about the teaching of writing with an insight into what Dorothy Watson calls "planning to plan" (Watson, Burke, & Harste, 1990). Transactional curriculums are not bought or sold as kits or programs; they emerge from a teacher's belief system and are firmly rooted in holistic teaching theories. The teacher's mind is actively engaged in teaching, before the opening school bell rings, and the engagement continues well after the last student has gone for the day.

Fox (1993) believes good writing comes from writers "who ache to care." As a teacher dealing with a classroom of reluctant learners, I know that if I create this "ache to care" in young writers, they will care about their own writing, and both the quality and

the quantity will improve naturally. Fox's "ache to care" concept is critical to any natural and rich writing program. I sincerely believe when I give a total effort, disregard cynicism and, remove the limits on writing, the incredible becomes an everyday occurrence.

The following are my personal principles on teaching writing that I brought to the Upward Bound Program. The conversational tone I use to state my principles expresses my voice as my passion about this qualitative study. As a researcher, it would be foolish to ignore my voice, passion, or beliefs. I was hired by Upward Bound partly because of them. Teachers are guided by their passions and beliefs, therefore, they need to be made visible in a teacher research study. Teachers who bring passion to their teaching move others to be passionate.

The following are my principles on writing as they were written into my curriculum notebook the night before I was interviewed for the position in Upward Bound.

- Principle #1: Risk everything every day.

> Writing is a craft, and we must teach it as other crafts are taught: in studio or workshop conditions. The pottery teacher does not say, "Now here's a wheel and here's the clay--throw." The writing teacher, like the pottery teacher, must practice the craft alongside the students. (Graves, 1981, p. 8)

Teaching writing for me begins with a teacher who loves to write, and one who above all is willing to share his or her love of the craft. This "love of writing" might seem whimsical to some educators, but would not those same educators view it as strange if the owner of a prestigious art gallery admitted to a dislike of art? On the other hand, would anyone trust the repair of their car to a mechanic who repeatedly says, "I hate

cars"? As a teacher, I understand a natural and rich writing program begins by sharing my own writing. As the dance teacher dances, he/she demonstrates a movement before the students, the art teacher paints and demonstrates the stroke, thus the writing teacher must demonstrate and write before his/her students. In simple terms those that teach the craft practice the craft.

- Principle # 2: Writing teachers create inviting literate places to write where the concerns, issues, and inquiries of the learners are addressed.

I start with Freire's (1986) concept of generative words. That is, the search for those words that hold power in the community a person plans to join. At the start of the school year, a whole language teacher spends time building trust, and then facilitates the finding of a theme for their writing community. They must continuously immerse their students in an array of rich plentiful reading and writing choices. Classroom tables, bookshelves, and counter tops overflow with great books and other reading materials from as many genres as possible. Good writing teachers create an atmosphere, which says, "This is a great place to read and write." Classroom communities need to share as a whole group; "What is it students discovered while reading, a particular author, topic, or genre?"

Teachers listen intently for students' generative words, so openly discussed within this kind of literate community, to gain deeper insights into student's interests. Teachers are the facilitators for rich discussions on how writers write. They ask their students how they would tell a particular story from a different point of view. Teachers share how they themselves would write that kind of story.

- Principle # 3: Writing teachers love to read. They continuously share that love of reading with students. Good writing consistently begins with good reading.

> I think that, as life is action and passion
> It is required of a man he should share the
> passion and action of his time at peril of
> being judged not to have lived.
> Oliver Wendell Holmes (WordStar, 1991)

Holmes understands that life is about sharing our passions. For a writing teacher, writing is also life. Teachers read every powerful author they can, and they read aloud to their students often. They continuously observe and learn from the writing communities within their own classroom. Louise Rosenblatt writes about evoking the literary experience. It is not enough to just write about evoking literary experience, but teachers share what they mean by evoking the literary experience. Teachers need to risk opening themselves personally, digging deep and evoking the literary word. Graves (1981) talks about writing teachers exposing their innermost thoughts through writing:

> Writing, real writing, is exposure of innermost thoughts and feelings. When we ask children to write sincerely, we ask them to undress. But they won't do this for long if the teacher never writes, never shows how, never exposes his/her own writing to the children--such a teacher has the same effect as the fully dressed visitor to a nudist camp who blunders around gaping at others' nakedness. (p. 8)

As a writing teacher, I often share with my students how, on my grandfather's deathbed, he asked me to read William Butler Yeats' poem "1916--A Terrible Beauty Is Born." I read the poem to my class and share with them why it is my voice sometimes crackles, why it is my eyes become red. I confide in my students, "It's because I ache to write like William Butler Yeats." I well remember my grandfather holding my hand as

he drew his last breath, hearing me read his favorite poem. I understand that when I share my love of reading and writing with my students I too must "hold their hand." Realizing the power of a word is not only in the speaking of that word, but rather in the meaning evoked by the reader (or the listener). When teachers share their passion of the written word with their students, they demonstrate that writers read with a focused and a passionate eye.

- Principle # 4: Teachers lead students to the understanding that they read and write first for themselves, not for their teacher.

It is necessary to explain to students that writing essays is only one form of writing, but the writing that burns in their hearts is the greatest topic for which any writer can ever hope. Students learn this when they read James Baldwin's *Sonny Sings the Blues*. James Baldwin shares his purpose/desire for writing below:

> The bottom line is this: You write in order to change the world, knowing perfectly well that you probably can't, but also knowing that literature is indispensable to the world. In some way, your aspirations and concerns for a single man in fact do being to change the world. The world changes according to the way people see it, and if you alter, even by a millimeter, the way a person looks or people look at reality, then you can change it. (1979, p. 1)

Teachers need to constantly remind students that they write to change the world. What is important here is they both realize their writing probably will not change the world, but it could. Helping students write begins with giving them plenty of choices, and at the same time explaining that with choice comes responsibility. Audience and publication are considered, but the writer's voice is never sacrificed. As a writing teacher, I write as my students write. I share my masterpieces as well as those I consider ripe for the trash. All of this helps to build a trustful community of writers. Writing for

one's self means being rooted in the struggle for your own voice. Reading for one's self means filtering what we read through our own voice. In the end, publication means a celebration of voice.

- Principle # 5: Teachers help writers find the lines they love in their own papers. They inform their students that sometimes a piece just does not work out. They treat their students' words as if they were golden trinkets.

Once the studio writing atmosphere is in place, and students are actually writing, I start taking their rough drafts home. I spend time reading my students' poems, typing them on the computer that I lack in my classroom, and giving their words a visual appearance by centering their poems. I conference with individual students about breaking up those never ending sentences. I point out interesting lines and show how to isolate certain words that should stand out when read orally. On a really good day, I blow up the students' final drafts to poster-size documents, exclaiming that these are the most powerful pieces of writing I have ever read. I am constantly reading and sharing the power of the words they have written. I always find power somewhere in their work. I draw smiley faces with comments such as:

- This is great!
- Have you thought about adding more rich detail here?
- How about deleting some of this?
- This is a powerful topic!
- Do you think you could find a better hook?
- Can you invite the reader in a better way?

- Check the thesaurus for a stronger word
- Add a little beauty here
- Let your anger show

I teach my young writers how to dig for the "golden words" that Neruda writes of in his poem about the language left behind by Spanish conquistadors.

- Principle # 6: Let students know that every piece they write has the potential for new and exciting possibilities.

Teachers continuously explore and share new authors, sharing the ones that awaken the soul. I have often found myself out in the courtyard standing on a big old table reading aloud Langston, just to ache with care. Students are reminded that until they write like this, there is always room for revision. I often dig out poems and stories I have rewritten over the years, and share with my students the changes I have made. They appreciate when I ask for their help and together we can work on a piece. When students realize that I, too, have struggles with writing, it often helps them better understand their own writing.

- Principle # 7: Teachers remind students that a writer's passionate eye is discovered by continually reading great literature.

Great writers are always great readers, and great readers most often are good writers. Every time we write in my classroom I try to connect the student's writing in some way to his/her favorite author. I help them see connections. I remind them to go back and read their favorite authors again and again. Mazer (1992) writes:

> Perhaps I am a writer today because reading and stories enthralled me at such an early age. Did it arouse in me the desire to similarly enthrall others? I have never

> known why. At the early age of 13 I became irresistibly drawn to writing, why is it then that the desire to become "a writer" (whatever that was, whatever that meant: I had no idea) crystallized in me. Now I look back and understand that reading was control, writing was control. In a world in which I felt little control, in which I was often baffled, hurt, confused, inhibited, afraid, desperate, words were powerful. (p. 27)

Mazer reminds writing teachers that good writing is connected to good reading. As a writing teacher, I know a passionate eye for powerful words begins by developing a passionate eye for good literature.

- Principle # 8: Teachers find ways to celebrate the writing craftsmanship of their students.

Students celebrate their craftsmanship by reading with enthusiasm their writing at school celebrations, at bookstores, school banquets, etc. Writing teachers continuously think about publication, because publication motivates students more than grades. Teachers know talking about publication helps students understand how polishing a piece increases its power. I remind my students of the times I shared my writing fears, concerns, and hopes. I organize our classroom so students have opportunities to reflect on what they learned in small group conferences with their fellow writers. I often review the times our class shared writing as a whole. I discuss the lessons learned with individuals, small groups, and even the whole class when necessary. Finally, the students' most cherished pieces of writing are ready: "It's time to publish." I publish them on the classroom walls, the school halls, the school newspaper, and classroom publications. I even go so far as sending some of their writing out to nationally recognized publications, always hoping. . . .

- Principle # 9: Teacher's "evaluate," not assess, their students writing. I know from experience how difficult it can be to write.

At the end of the year I ask students to write what they think it means to be a writer; did their views change over this past year? Assessment is never a grade, but is an insight into improvement, and indication of where to go next. I give a grade, but with complete understanding that no grade can ever truly value the writer's journey.

- Principle # 10: Teachers empower their students to make changes.

I continually find myself using the suggestions in Kirby's (1991) book, *Inside/Out*. I took a course taught by Kirby at the University of Arizona, Teaching Writing Composition, and in this class I learned about students writing dispatches (letters) to critique the teacher, the class, techniques used, etc. When I do this in my classes, I also ask students to give me a grade, and their suggestions for improving the class. I view these letters as rich data for my own reflective practice.

- Principle # 11: Teachers create a calling to write in their students.

I try to ensure that students are excited in class. I go to workshops and read professional books and articles, searching for new ways to help foster the "calling for writing." It is so important to remember that it is not only the finished piece of writing that matters. It is the struggle to create, the ache to care about something, the entire journey, and not only the final product that I love. Each year as my students exit the door, I remind them about process, I remind them of their heroes, and then I reflect on my own process and the heroes in my life.

As a whole language teacher, I value words and names that continuously flow through my head: PROCESS-PROCESS-PROCESS, the names of Arthur Applebee, James Baldwin, Rudine Sims Bishop, Randy Boomer, David Booth, Lucy Calkins, Anne Haas Dyson, Denis Ledoux, James Moffett, Vivian Paley, and Tom Romano. At the end of every year, the name I remember most is my most cherished teacher, Dorothy Menosky. Dorothy gave me the courage to stand up and shout out stories and poems from the tops of desks, standing on chairs, even sitting high atop a big old oak tree on the campus of New Jersey City University one soft Spring day. A writing teacher helps students find heroes of their own. Heroes are found not at the end of the journey, but on the journey.

A Meeting of Principles and Curriculum

Curriculum is often predetermined for secondary writing classes. When I first applied to Upward Bound, I understood curriculum would be filtered and negotiated through my principles. How accessible curriculum is for learners often depends on the principles teachers bring with them. My principles would not only filter the curriculum, but also provide a place for the voices of my students in their curricular choices. I came to Upward Bound at a time when I decided to become the reflective practitioner I had so often read about in my graduate courses. Thus, I entered Ms. Listo's office prepared to share my principles, and also remember the words of Newman (1991), "Given the nature of our evolving theoretical understanding, none of us can ever arrive" (1991, p. xiv). I fully understood my principles were still evolving and not at all complete.

A Common Ground

Applebee (1991) concludes that while classrooms of the past:

> . . . Worked well in promoting basic skills among relatively well-motivated and high achieving students; they have done less well in engaging traditionally at-risk students, or in promoting reasoned and disciplined thinking among any groups. (p. 555)

Applebee goes on to suggest a new classroom for the future in which the teacher encourages students to have an active voice and take a more central role in the classroom.

In developing a new curriculum model at Upward Bound, my first role as a teacher was to be a facilitator who encourages an active and engaging role for students. It was clear from the first that the Upward Bound program was immersed in an "we can do better" attitude. The director was also thinking about classrooms of the future--not the past. She envisioned writing classrooms where her students were engaged and active in their learning. During our first interview, she answered a phone call from a prospective teacher. I remember the conversation and even jotted down some notes as I waited for the phone conversation to end. Ms. Listo commented to the caller:

> I may not know a great deal about math, but when instruction is so boring that kids are falling asleep in class, that can't be the best instruction. I'm just saying, "Wake those kids up." Make math fun. Get them to smile a little. I know it's not easy, but we have to try. I know you will; I'm glad you're with us. Thanks for calling back.

Another phone conversation took place during my interview, this time Ms. Listo spoke with an administrator. Again I noted her comments:

> Listen those counselors need to help us out here, it's their job, your retention rate is 80%, that's looking at your total population, not only Native Americans. I presented the numbers, ours is 97% when they come here. Those counselors should be knocking down our doors. Don't they care? (CB Year 1)

What struck me most about the conversations was her final question, "Don't they care?" Her voice was rational and very quiet. There was something very strong and wise about it. Ms. Listo herself was not in the least overwhelming, rather very effective. Finally, turning to me she smiled and said, "You're the whole language guy Mic told me all about. So tell me, do you think school should put kids to sleep? I loved school. I think students should be smiling once in a while after class. These are great kids. They need to see that 'I love learning spark.' Can you give them that spark?" At that interview I made a promise. I promised Ms. Listo and myself that I would never stop trying to give students that spark.

Ms. Listo's knowledge of whole language was that of a reading program for elementary schools, not secondary or college classrooms. She had heard about me from another writing professor at Pima, who told her of my success with teaching community college freshman writing courses. After a lengthy discussion with Ms. Listo, I assured her that whole language works just as well with high school students. In particular, she expressed a desire for her students to become lifelong learners, readers, and writers. Ms. Listo exemplifies the perfect administrator for any whole language teacher. The seeds for a new writing program were planted in soil that first day. Both Ms. Listo and I wanted a writing class where writers would be engaged and become active participants in their own writing. Together we would create that place Graves (1981) calls "a studio," where writers practice their craft. At the end of my interview, we both understood that Upward Bound was making a new step forward, and in doing so we would be leaving behind the

basic paragraph writing for a new focus on natural and rich writing. I knew the road ahead was long, but I knew that Ms. Listo was as committed to success as I was.

The director viewed curriculum as flexible; she supported and respected teachers who were risk takers. It is important to note that Ms. Listo was an administrator with a commitment to excellence. She insisted on reflective practice from every member of her staff. This reflective stance for the program is what made Ms. Listo see the need for doing a research study on the program. She was familiar with the INRTF commissioned papers; I was not. These papers became our common ground, and my dissertation would be grounded in their recommendations.

Later on in the year, during the Spring semester, I was asked to make a presentation to the Tohono O'odham Education committee, which is a policy-making committee for the Tohono O'odham Nation, and make connections between Task Force Recommendations and our new writing program. But my first charge from Ms. Listo was to create a visual chart to represent curriculum changes needed to bring Upward Bound within the framework on the INRTF. We talked about models, and I began work on a visual by reviewing the literature on curriculum. In particular, I sought out literature that concentrated on the difference between a traditional and holistic curriculum. How could I create a spark in learners? What spark would make them lifelong learners? These ideas reflected memories of my first meeting with Ms. Listo, when we planted the seeds of the dynamic challenge to come.

The emerging question driving my inquiry (the one that started my research) is: "What shapes the curriculum in a transactional writing community that contributes to

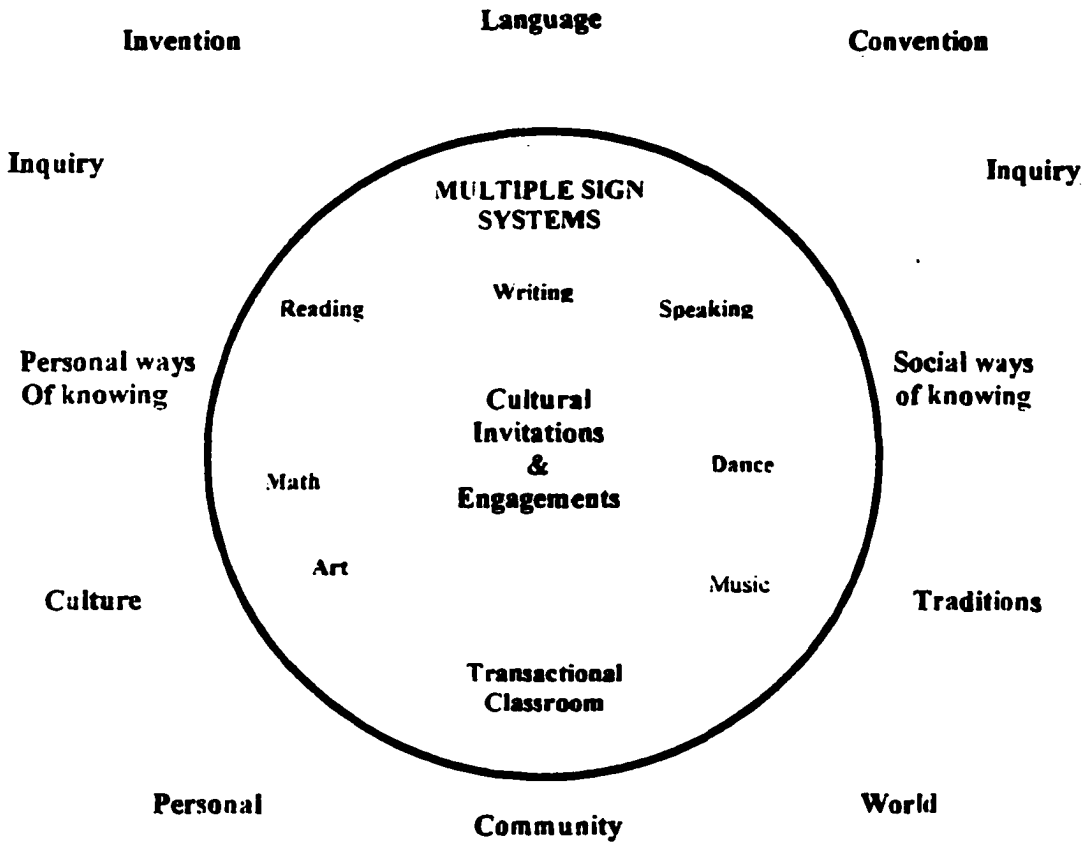
writing development?" It appeared that not only did I have a new job, but also a classroom-based research study. I typed into my curriculum notebook: "Document, document, document it all" (CB Year 1), and with those words I began my data trail.

A New Model Emerges

Teachers construct their own learning models based on their theoretical beliefs. In addition to my 11 principles, there are four core beliefs about curriculum that form the foundation of my own model of learning. My principles are guided by these theoretical beliefs rooted in my own view of whole language. First, learning in any classroom setting is a reciprocal process. Second, the continuum of moving between a learner's personal and social ways of knowing drives curriculum. Third, the sharing of multiple perspectives is always present; and fourth, transactional curriculums are inclusive of others.

With these four curricular beliefs, I created a visual of my curriculum engagement model. This model (Figure 4.1) illustrates the way I view theory and practice merging within my classroom.

The foundation for my curriculum model is K. Goodman's (1988) Invention/ Convention theory of learning and Short, Harste, and Burke's (1996) view of inquiry as curriculum. The format takes a circular form because of its crucial relationship to Native culture. It is a continuum representing learners moving between their personal and social ways of knowing, using language as the core medium of learning. The model shows how learning happens through an inquiry curriculum, which allows learners to filter new knowledge through their personal and social ways of knowing. The model highlights the



TRANSACTIONAL PILLARS

1) **The Invention and Convention Process**
Both Personal and Social ways of knowing are valued
2) **Reciprocal Learning**
Inquiry drives the curriculum
3) **Curriculum Implications**
Learners and teachers share multiple perspectives
4) **Access**
Curriculum is inclusive of other viewpoints

Figure 4.1. Curriculum engagement model.

access to the networks of understanding that include local funds of knowledge (Moll, 1990) possessed by all communities. These funds draw from the families, the community, and Native American traditions and ethics. The model shows the access learners have to all the sign systems, providing genuine opportunity to share multiple perspectives (Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996). My model reflects Paulo Freire's (1986) generative curriculum. It views local and cultural networks as equal partners within an emerging curriculum.

The concept of literacy expands to emphasize the meaning making connections between the productive and receptive processes of literacy (Figure 4.2).

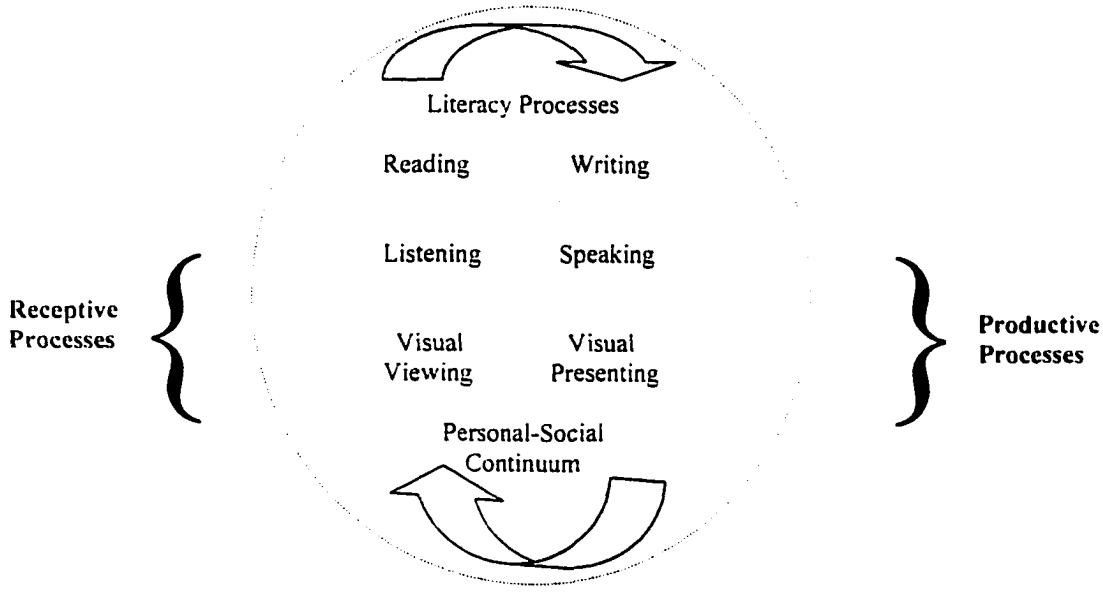


Figure 4.2. Productive and receptive literacy processes.

Figure 4.2 builds upon K. Goodman's 1996 concept of Receptive and Productive Processes of language, which are both active processes. My visual emphasizes the personal and social continuum, and adds visual literacy. I made the adjustments to the Goodman model to help link their concept of language process to the 1996 National Council of Teachers of English model of literacy processes. Extending language processes to visual literacy and alternate sign systems provides access for Native American learners to use more familiar ways of knowing. Transactional curriculum provides access for students to all means of communication when responding to literature and sharing ideas via multiple ways of knowing. The focus of any transactional classroom places inquiry as the central driving force of curriculum, not content, activities, or testing. With inquiry as the focus, literacy becomes meaningful for learners for authentic reasons.

Louise Rosenblatt (1994) points out that transaction evokes reciprocal relationships between the reader and the text. At the core of the invention/convention is the acknowledgement that all learning is a process on a continuum moving between what we know (personally) and how what we know and want to know is influenced by the world (socially) surrounding the learner. K. Goodman's model (1988) is focused on developing reciprocal relationships (built around social contexts) that invite and engage learners into an inquiry cycle (built around individual and group negotiation). In a transactional classroom, this focus extends well beyond transactions with published texts, placing learners within reciprocal relationships with multiple oral and written texts, teachers, and students.

For the Upward Bound writing program my theoretical beliefs were combined with the INRTF recommendations by using culture as the invitation for engagements with literature. With my 11 principles and four core beliefs to filter an emerging curriculum, groundwork was set for the creation of a transactional classroom. My beliefs drove my principles, and both my beliefs and principles fit within the INRTF recommendations through a view of curriculum that provided access to personal and social ways of knowing.

An Overview of the Research Time Period

This overview breaks the 2-year period of this investigation into six specific time frames. The six time periods, labeled Fall Year 1, Spring Year 1, Summer Year 1, Fall Year 2, Spring Year 2, and Summer Year 2, establish the significant events that note the important changes in the curriculum (Figure 4.3). These students who started out as reluctant readers and writers, viewing literacy as dull and boring, became exhilarated users of multiple sign systems, with a new view of literacy as a powerful means of preserving their Native American way of life. An in-depth interpretive narrative analysis of each episode is shared in chapters 5 and 6. They document the curriculum as it emerged, based on the analysis of my data.

Fall Year 1

Four distinctive key events emerged during Fall Year 1:

- First key event--Literacy surveys completed by the students during our second meeting exposed their perceptions of reading, writing, listening, and speaking as being word centered activities, aimed always at obtaining the author's meaning. Out of a class of

YEAR ONE	YEAR TWO
FALL PERIOD I	**FALL PERIOD IV**
a). Initial literacy attitudes b). My class agendas c). Browsing time d). Partnership emerges	a). We join the Art World
SPRING PERIOD II	**SPRING PERIOD V**
a). Three Issues: loss of language/culture/traditions b). Social Writing Sheets c) Literature 086	a). Living Poet's Society
SUMMER PERIOD III	**SUMMER PERIOD VI**
a). Poetry Café at the dorms b). Helping organize Open House	a). Poetry Reading at Borders b). Changing history through drama c). The Walls Speak - Our Word Wall

Figure 4.3. Breakdown of key events by six time periods.

20 students, only two identified reading and writing as being more than mechanical processes. This initial literacy perception needed to change to a process of meaning making in order for a transaction curriculum to be sustained.

- Second key event--My agenda for class outlined issues, topics and authors was negotiated between the students and myself. Copies were shared with the students, and in a short period of time they became tools for discussion. Over the 2-year period these agendas were used by students, administrative staff, and myself to review issues,

topics, and the literature discussed. My agendas became the audit trail of this investigation.

- Third key event--Browsing time was my way of introducing choice into the curriculum. During the last 10 minutes of each class, students were invited to browse the literature I brought into class each week. Students marked pieces that appealed to them, which were copied and distributed in upcoming classes. This established a voice for learners right from the very beginning in curriculum planning.
- Fourth key event--Tony Gatewood was included in the ongoing class, rather than as an outside-class writing tutor. Before I arrived at Upward Bound, Gatewood pulled students out of class to work on individual assignments designated by the writing teacher. When a continuation of this original format was suggested, I took a stand against this practice. I believe that such tutoring arrangements are disruptive to process-writing classes. As a teacher, I need to be part of my students' writing struggles, to be there to facilitate their writing. At the time, I was not opposed to having a tutor to help in class and suggested that Gatewood was more than welcome to become part of our class itself. The director, Ms. Listo, approved this idea, and Gatewood became the first Upward Bound in-class tutor. Gatewood is Native American, and his knowledge of Native American literature became a crucial curriculum resource.

Spring Year 1

Three key events marked additional developments in this investigation.

- First key event--Early in the semester, students expressed three distressing issues through their social writing: language loss, culture loss, and loss of traditions. These issues were also reflected in most of the Native American literature that was selected for class readings. They provided a powerful purpose for reading more Native American literature. I define these three issues as:

    1. Loss of Language--the loss of the ability by the students to speak their own native tongue.

    2. Culture Loss--the loss of their way of viewing the world through Native American eyes, eyes that depend on knowing the historical knowledge of the past.

    3. Loss of Traditions--the loss of external ways of expressing cultural knowledge.

    These three issues eventually developed into a political rallying point in which literacy became the means of empowering students.

- Second Key Event--I had already begun to use social writing sheets in the Fall Year 1 semester as a vehicle to retrace our learning journey. By Spring semester, the sheets did more than retrace out learning journey; they began to direct it. I hung them on the walls of our classroom with pieces from the literature we had read, and the individual writing responses to those pieces. The first time I did this the students expressed an immense sense of accomplishment and pride. The director requested that our class create a visual display of the writing sheets for the program's upcoming Open House. The display itself, and the positive comments made by the general public during Open House, made it clear that I considered the walls and bulletin boards to be powerful means of publishing.

- Third key event--I asked the director for permission to teach a literature course (086 Reading Literature for Pleasure), instead of the writing class in the upcoming Summer session. I made this request because I knew that becoming powerful writers is rooted in reading powerful authors. Smith (1988) points out that good writers read like writers. Mem Fox (1993) discusses a writer's eye:

> . . . The world's most effective writers have been avid readers. Those writing now are still reading now. Reading, more than any other factor (including formal schooling) has taught them how to write. They haven't been passive readers. They read with a writer's eye, paying attention to words, savoring the way they are put together, rolling their tongues around the sounds of language; and they absorbed huge quantities of information--which they have stored away in their heads. . . . Writers who are readers have many more choices and advantages than writers who are not. (p. 168)

I wanted my writers to have these choices and advantages when writing. After the Fall and Spring sessions, I knew from their response journals that the shift these students needed most was to view reading as something more than tedious work.

Summer Year 1

Literature 086 led to two important literacy events.

- First key event--Reading and responding to powerful literature revealed a favorite genre of the Upward Bound Students. Students asked for more and more poetry! Poetry was by far their most loved genre. At this point, they were writing poems themselves. I proposed publishing a book of our own poems to be presented at an event we called "Poetry Café at the Dorms." This first publication verified and legitimized my students as writers.
- Second key event--At mid-point during the Summer session, Upward Bound administrators invited the students in the program and their families to an Open House.

As the date of the Open House approached, the director asked if my students would help with the organization of the evening. Being asked by the administration for their help and input was a major event for these students. Students had often expressed the notion that nobody ever paid attention to their concerns, in or out of class.

Fall Year 2

- One key event defined our move to multiple sign systems during the Fall Year 2. Upward Bound students were asked to display their artwork at the art gallery in Tucson High School. The students saw this as an opportunity to show other students at Tucson High, and the general public, how Native American youth feel about living in America. The students used paint, feathers, small medicine bags, tobacco, written speech, and music to create a 10' x 10' art display with a list of some 5,000 broken treaties to express their concerns. These broken treaties between Whites and Native Americans were promises never kept. The students had read about the treaties from a book called *Reading America* (Schenck, 1978), and were extremely offended because the book only used the treaties as a means to teach readers how to quickly scan lists. Their art project was not only the largest and most prominent in the gallery, but the director of the art gallery told us it had a profound impact on every visitor. The art project took 2 months to complete, and left not only my students, but all Upward Bound students, with a distinct sense of pride.

Spring Year 2

- The key event for Spring Year 2 was the student's first-ever public poetry reading. By the Spring, the reputation of the Upward Bound students was growing rapidly in

Tucson. In celebration of Native American Day, students were asked to read their poems by the Pima Community College (PCC) Native American Club. The significance of this invitation to the students was that it came from the largest campus of the Pima Community College system, and the highest proportion of Native Americans already in college. The members of PCC Native American Club are highly respected by my students. We decided that we needed extra time to write special poems for this exciting event. We arranged to bring students together on Wednesdays after school. It was apparent that the Upward Bound students were willing to come to class even on non-scheduled days. This event led to a change in the Spring schedule; we began to meet once every week rather than every other week.

Summer Year 2

Three key events marked a full shift into viewing literacy as a means of empowerment.

- First key event--At the beginning of the Summer we had a call from Borders, the biggest and newest bookstore in Tucson near a popular shopping mall. They asked if our students would come to read some of their poems. This event became another opportunity to share publicly how young Native Americans feel. More importantly, this event would take place in what students considered to be a bastion of the White world. Once again powerful poems and stories were shared at a public event.
- Second key event--At the Open House for Year 2, the students staged a play depicting the Sand Creek Massacre. This was their response to a class reading of a government document called "156." This event involved script writing, role playing, and set

designing. The play brought tears to the eyes of many parents, teachers and administrators who were in attendance.

- Third key event--By the summer of Year 2, the walls of our classroom began to take on a life of their own. We had a "word wall" where English words taken from their literature responses were translated into O'odham and Yaqui. Our word wall dominated the classroom. There was a continuous changing display of the students' own stories and poems. Favorite quotations from Native and non-Native Americans were displayed on every inch of wall space. Favorite bits and pieces of the Fall art project were placed throughout the room. Halfway through the Summer, students approached Gatewood and myself with the idea of sharing their feelings through dance, art, poetry, and song at the end-of-the-year banquet. In our classroom at this stage, literacy had moved far beyond reading and writing. Students saw literacy as a way of expressing themselves through multiple sign systems. By the end of the Summer program, students believed that they had regained aspects of their language, culture, and traditions by way of our classroom walls. This shift happened because literacy was no longer a White man's tool for living in the White man's world; instead, literacy had become a means to preserve Native American ways.

In this chapter, I have provided three crucial points of reference for this qualitative study. I introduced my writing principles, explained how curriculum began to emerge after I was hired, and presented an overview of the entire 2 years of the study, thus setting up chapters 5 and 6, the two interpretive narrative chapters.

CHAPTER 5

NO MORE BRICKS IN THE WALL

In this chapter, I present an in-depth analysis of my own classroom as a teacher researcher, similar to Janet Allen's published dissertation by Heinemann *It's Never Too Late* (1995). Allen's work provides a fertile context rooted in authentic classroom experiences which classroom teachers can translate into changes in practice. My desire is to continue what Allen and others have done studying their own classrooms.

Chapter 5 probes the complexity of curriculum, based on my principles discussed in chapter 4 and filtered through my growing experiences with Upward Bound, as it emerges by multiple in-depth examinations of significant literacy events as they happened during the first year of this study. Dewey wrote:

> From the standpoint of the child, the great waste in school comes from the inability to utilize the experiences he gets outside of school in any complete and free way; while, on the other hand, he is unable to apply to daily life what he is learning at school. (1899, p. 26)

The core of this chapter is analysis and documentation of my personal stance as an educator to avoid what Dewey viewed as "the great waste," through the creation of a classroom based on a transactional perceptive of literacy. For Dewey, using what is learned in school in a free way makes learning meaningful outside of school and, therefore, makes learning meaningful to students. Dewey's thinking connects to my view of a transactional classroom. A classroom that emphasizes a transactional view of

literacy unshackles curriculum through inquiry and allows students to apply what they learn in personal ways.

This chapter examines multiple literacy experiences and the theory driving those experiences through key curricular events. I first provide insight into my title choice for this chapter. I move to suggesting the importance of finding ways to know my students and their culture, the critical context I relied upon to create meaningful school literacy experiences for learners. I document the role of student responses in shaping curriculum, as well as my attempt to implement an inquiry curriculum. I support my discussion with data from my curriculum notebook and class agendas. Chapter 5 ends with two significant literacy events (the Poetry Café and the Open House), both of which help connect what is learned in school to the lives of my students and their families. Thus, through these events, I avoid Dewey's (1899) concept of the "great waste" of schooling. Rather, I create a classroom rooted in transactional thinking and immersed in inquiry.

Any classroom is a complex multi-layer community that needs in-depth descriptive analysis to be fully understood. So let the journey into chapter 5 begin.

Taking a Stance and Making Cultural Connections

Coles (1998) suggests literacy research has done little to improve education in America. By failing to actively address the underlying causes of social inequality, and concentrating resources mainly on "best methods," research has failed to point out substantial ways to improve education. As long as educational research pays little or no attention to issues other than best practice, Coles suggests that America's teachers are left to do the best they can with what they have.

The choice of doing what is best for the learners in my classroom begins with first admitting the failure of American education to provide a progressive meaningful curriculum for Native American children. The curriculum in many American schools is a wall preventing success for Native learners. This wall ensures failure by separating Native American children from their culture.

Pink Floyd's song, *Another Brick In The Wall,* best describes my thoughts regarding the United States historical record regarding the education of Native Americans. In South Africa, Black youth adopted *Another Brick In The Wall* as their theme song against a similar Dutch Afrikaner educational curriculum in the 1980's. This chapter is entitled "*No More Bricks In The Wall*" and marks my critical stance. I wonder: Are there any educational researchers in the past who chose to title one of their chapters after a rock anthem? More traditional educational researchers might not see the validity, then again neither did the South African apartheid government who initially banned the song.

The very first suggestion from the INRTF states:

> The cultural heritage of the Native students needs to be recognized as an asset to the class. The various ethnic and cultural groups represented in the classroom provide many resources that can be used to enhance learning for all students. (Department of Education, 1992, p. 68)

Viewing culture as an asset means connecting my theoretical understanding of inquiry and transactional theory. As I indicate in chapter 4, I see Short and Burke's (1991) and Harste's (1992) views of "curriculum as inquiry" as the means of breaking down that wall. I also see Rosenblatt's transactional theory as my bridge between Native

culture and reading for my students. Sims Bishop writes of Rosenblatt: "She forcefully reminds us that the text on the printed page is merely a potential, that only in the transaction between the reader and the text is the work of art created" (1990, p. 8).

I want my students to see the printed page as the potential to a million possibilities. A transactional emphasis on literature is important, but transactional theory alone is not enough. Learners have to be able to connect transactional thinking with their own inquiry. The potential of the printed page has to be connected to the questions Native American adolescents hold within their hearts.

There are powerful and personal outside influences on teachers and students that impact learning relationships which are present long before their first meeting. Both teachers and students bring past experiences with them to the classroom. The benefit of teacher research is the journey the researcher takes while writing--the journey itself is one of building connecting bridges. Sometimes the journey takes the researcher much closer to home than ever expected. The cultural connections the students and I made with each other at Upward Bound begin with a poem that I carried in my wallet for many years, long before I ever heard of Upward Bound. It is written by Dennis Leyne:

If people don't have roots
what do they build on?
We can't give our children wings,
and if we can't give them roots,
what will they relate to?
If we start to deny our history,
our culture, our existence--the facts--
what are we doing?
We are sanitizing history, and then
What do we hold sacred?

The poem was given to me by my grandfather, who was born before the turn of the 20th century. In my childhood, my grandfather often told me stories of how he remembered being taught the Gaelic language and Irish history outside in the fields, hidden behind the hedges, as a child in Northern Ireland. During his childhood it was against the law to teach the Irish language or the history of Ireland. But there were those few teachers who risked everything. Those schools became known in Irish history as the Hedge Schools. My grandfather's stories about his Hedge School days provided me with the schema I needed to understand American Indian education.

Short and Pierce (1990) provide the context for establishing a community of learners, and the framework for understanding inquiry as curriculum under the following conditions:

1. Come to know each other;
2. Value what each has to offer;
3. Focus on problem solving and inquiry;
4. Share responsibility and control;
5. Learn through action, reflection, and demonstration; and
6. Establish a learning atmosphere that is predictable and yet full of real choices. (p. 35)

My efforts to institute an inquiry curriculum my first year at Upward Bound were rough and crude. They portray a theory-driven teacher continuously stumbling and learning along the way. Short and Pierce's conditions provide the door to an inquiry curriculum, and for incorporating sign systems into my view of a transactional classroom.

During the first year of this study, I adopted ways to bring inquiry full circle into my class. First I drew upon the "Authoring Cycle" (Short & Burke, 1991; Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996), in which uninterrupted personal engagements, collaborative exploration

of meaning, reflection, presentation and sharing, the examination of sign system processes, and invitations to further engagements are linked to life experiences both within and outside of the classroom.

I found ways to allow for greater learner choice in my classroom using real literature via student selected readings. I provided opportunities to respond to literature in relevant ways by focusing on Rosenblatt's transactional theory. I supported the full aesthetic and efferent continuum through insisting on responses to everything we read or wrote by encouraging the reader's "gut reaction" first. In our literature circles, we would point out the meaningful lines and discuss how they linked to the students' gut reactions. I provided opportunities for using multiple sign systems by developing a democratic community steeped in a variety of choices.

> In an inquiry-based curriculum, voice, the sense that one's point of view is actively heard and valued, is nurtured. Voice emerges more easily when students learn to respect differing perspectives through teacher demonstrations and through explicit discussions about power and equality. (Koshewa, 1998, p. 14)

I nurtured and valued Native American voices in my classroom by using relevant literature. Students made choices, and we established a learning atmosphere that valued literacy as a means to culturally better understand ourselves. A significant point in the INRTF report was "The cultural heritage of the Native students needs to be recognized as an asset to the class" (Department of Education, 1991). Inquiry, for me, is the means of recognizing Native students as an asset to classroom and curriculum. The literature we read, discussed, and wrote about constantly challenged students.

Knowing where the learners are provides a starting point of any inquiry curriculum. The best place for an emerging curriculum has to begin with how learners feel about literacy. This leads us to the first key literacy event of Year 1.

Fall Year 1: Initial Literacy Attitudes

For our first class, I decided on a short agenda. The class members needed to get to know each other better, and I needed to find out what students' reading and writing interests were. My agenda that first day listed these topics:

1) Let's talk
2) About me
3) About you
4) About music.

I shared with students some humorous stories my family and I had experienced on our car trip from New Jersey to Arizona, and I explained that I, too, was a student. I then asked for volunteers to share. No one volunteered. I suggested they share some good books they had already read. Eyes rolled and continued to stare. I used some music to test their willingness to talk--nothing. Finally, I suggested we vote for topics to read and write about during class time. I received seven ripped pieces of paper which read: "Screw you White Buffalo;" "death;" "nothing;" "sex, drugs and rock and roll;" and three blank pieces. Out of 20 students, only 2 raised their hands when I asked who liked to read. I have learned to expect silence and lack of eagerness on first days in my classes, but only 2 hands out of 20 worried me.

This concern led me to formally survey my students' literacy perceptions. I asked them to write their personal definitions of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Their

definitions became crucial to understanding my students' attitudes toward literacy. In Weaver's *Reading Process and Product* (1988), Harste writes: "Our findings suggest that both teachers and learners hold particular and identifiable theoretical orientations, goals, and outcomes at all levels" (p. 1).

Harste provides an insight for examining how students define literacy. He further suggests that we see the theoretical orientations students bring to class from earlier literacy encounters. At the next class meeting I handed out the surveys. I included a space for their definitions of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. I wanted to know if they saw connections between these elements of literacy. I did not ask about other sign systems. It was not until later during the process of this study that I became fully aware of that I had extended my definition of literacy. To that end, the reader should be aware that not only did my students' attitudes and beliefs about literacy change during this investigation, so did mine.

The literacy definitions from the 17 students follow:

1. Reading words and letters you say in seeing and speaking aloud.
   Writing words and letters you put down with a writing utensil.
   Speaking—saying letters and words.
   Listening—hearing words and sounds of letters or noise.

2. Reading words and phrases put together.
   Writing is defining words on paper.
   Speaking is talking to another person.
   Listening is hearing words.

3. Reading is the idea of looking at words and trying to understand them.
   Writing is the idea of placing words together.
   Speaking is a form of communication.
   Listening is hearing another person speak.

4. Reading is saying what you see.
Writing is putting words down on paper.
Listening –hearing words and understanding them.
Speaking—saying words for the mouth and heart.

5. Reading—is knowing what's on the paper.
Writing—is a way of writing in our own way.
Listening—is to hear what someone is saying.
Speaking—is to express yourself.

6. Reading is understanding what people write, when you read what people say you understand them better. Example—if a person is down and quiet. They may be sad or down, lazy or tired or maybe just not having a good day.
Writing—expression, how a person feels, what's in their mind and in their heart. Their dreams, imagination, outlook and emotions, it's a way of communicating.
Listening—hearing, caring, being interested, no one has to be talking for you to listen. What a person says and what you get out of it could be two different things, so you have to listen closely sometimes, and most of the time not with your ears—but with your heart, especially when you listen to yourself, your emotions, thoughts, and outlook.
Speaking—letting people in, telling them about yourself and sometimes leaving them thinking 'cause your words don't say much--the way you say them does. So you should be very careful choosing words.

7. Reading—to read and understand words.
Writing—to put your findings or thoughts on paper.
Listening—Hearing and understanding what someone else is saying.
Speaking—answering someone's questions, words coming from you and/or your heart.

8. Reading—I think reading is trying to understand what someone is thinking or feeling through their writing.
Writing—there are a lot of definitions, but the most common—the one with which I most agree is expressing your own thoughts.
Listening is hearing things around you that are of interest to you.
Speaking—another way of expressing yourself.

9. Reading—understanding words someone wrote and using your mind to see the picture.
Writing—recording into words those that are in your mind.

Listening—to hear the writings of the words around you.
Speaking—the way to express yourself.

10. Reading—learning tool.
Writing—I don't know—words written with a pencil.
Listening—hearing.
Speaking—expressing what you feel.

11. Reading—silent reading to yourself or out loud for all to hear.
Writing—when you get a pencil or pen and write words.
Listening to others when they speak.
Speaking to other people when it's your turn.

12. Reading is something that comes from a book you can get into and have dreams of.
Writing is something you know and say with words.
Listening—is understanding and hearing—like the wind with words.
Speaking: is saying things you feel.

13. Reading—to read information and directions.
Writing—is words and sounds people can write.
Listening to hear people talking.
Speaking—to be able to say words.

14. Reading is any material that gives you information.
Writing is what a person writes about, any subject and how they feel.
Listening—hearing what other people are.
Speaking—is talking to another person.

15. Reading is a way from which people can look and feel better understand them.
Writing: a way of communicating to others.
Listening: when you hear someone who is talking to you and know what they are saying.

16. No comment.

17. Reading is understanding.
Writing—putting words on paper.
Listening—hearing and understanding what someone is telling you.
What a writer is trying to say.

The dominant theme that emerged from the analysis of their definitions was "knowing or understanding words." Fifteen of the 17 responses fit into this theme. One student wrote "no comment," while a few definitions fit into a meaning-making process. One student (# 12) wrote, "Reading comes from a book you can get into and have dreams of." I placed this student into the meaning-making category because of ownership and control. There is no mention in his response that reading is knowing the words. From their own definitions, I determined that most of the students did not see reading as a powerful meaning-making process. With writing, the pattern was similar. Most of them did not see it as a personal meaning-making for themselves. I was determined to expand their definitions of literacy, an expansion that continued throughout the next 2 years. I challenged their word-centered perspective right from the start. We discussed their definitions of reading and writing in the next class. I hoped their views of speaking and listening would fall into place naturally as I challenged their initial views of reading and writing.

The challenge began with a small schema piece from Bransford and Johnson (1972) to demonstrate that knowing the words is not enough for real meaning-making. The title *Washing Clothes* was purposely omitted to point out the need for schema, but in my class I decided to replace the original title with a title of my own, *Technology for Today*. I needed a strategy to show students how reading is so much more than knowing the words. I wanted the students to use semantic strategies as well as syntactic and graphaphonic strategies. I created a test with 10 text-related questions for the paragraph.

The students read the piece and took the test. Not one student scored below 80% on the questions asked on the paragraph:

> Technology for Today
>
> The procedure is quite simple. First you arrange things into different groups. Of course, one pile may be sufficient depending on how much there is to do. If you have to go somewhere else due to a lack of facilities, that is the next step. Otherwise, you are pretty well set. It is important not to over-do things. (p. 722)

At the beginning of class, I shared their definitions of reading (from our previous class), and they all agreed a perfect definition of reading was "Reading is knowing words." In class that day they had all passed the test of the paragraph, but not one student could offer an explanation of the procedure. It is amusing to watch as students confront their own literacy fallacies. For many of these students, knowing the words and passing test scores were what reading was all about. That was the very first time in their lives they began to question their own literacy beliefs.

Over the next 2 years, I never missed an opportunity to mention or introduce a piece about the power of reading and writing and how to connect that power to multiple ways of responding. My hope was to have these students attain a new literacy perspective through the use of authentic literacy materials. Providing a choice and valuing their voices is core to changing literacy attitudes. As Bob Dylan said back in the 1960s: "The times they are a changing."

Before the Fall semester was over, a complete turnaround had taken place in our classroom. In a follow up literacy survey (in the form of focus interviews) given just before we broke for winter vacation there was only one student who defined

reading/writing as "just reading words or writing words." These focus interviews were set up by dividing students into 2 groups of 10. I interviewed one group at a time. The focus interviews centered around, but were not limited to, the following three questions:

1. Has your view of reading and writing changed since your first day?
2. If your view of reading and writing has changed—why has it changed?
3. What can we do to improve this class?

Comments from those interviews pointed to significant changes in student literacy attitudes and provided clues to how students felt about class. Of particular interest, I noticed how students saw a difference between the writing program at Upward Bound and their regular classes at school. A selection of focus interview comments from the students provides evidence of their changes. These comments are typical of the more than 4 hours of transcribed interviews between the students and myself. Ava is commenting on question 1:

> Reading . . . I never cared for it when I was little. I didn't have my parents around, nobody was there so I didn't really know how to read. We were always like kept inside, do this, do that, clean, wash the clothes, take care of the kids, and I kind of raised my five younger sisters and little brother. My two older sisters moved away so I was stuck at home when my mother and father left, and I wasn't going to school after that. We were put in different homes, and I never really liked school, so I didn't know. I was barely starting going to school and reading to me was like filling words in books--I don't know, placing myself in their situations kind of makes me live it. Sometimes I want to like live in the books and stuff, but it's hard (ha ha). It's like going to a different world or something, different dimensions, seeing different things, going places you've never been, not physically, but mentally like--so that's how I feel about reading, since Upward Bound. Reading takes me places now. It is like I can't stop reading (ha ha). I find myself reading not because of school, but because of me.

Ava was voicing something I had begun to notice more and more from the students. They were choosing to read on their own, and they were reading more. Another student, Emerson, commented on the second question concerned with why his view of reading and writing have changed:

> Because when I'm at school I like have to learn certain things, it's not things that I usually want to read or learn, but when I'm here some of the stuff we read here I understand.

Charlie, another student, asked: "Yeah why do you think you understand it?" And Emerson replied, "Cause . . . it's like a part of me. Some of the Native American literature that we read, I like to read it. Yeah, I understand what is part of me."

Emerson, who at school perplexed his teachers with his silence, was very verbal in this focus interview. After the interview he wrote about school in his response journal: "I never volunteer anything, and when they call on me I just smile--but never give them anything." In the Upward Bound Program he began speaking up, writing journal responses, and making connections to the readings. During literature circles Emerson's responses moved from silence to verbal participation that provided me with the evidence that he was comprehending and making schematic connections. Having a choice in what they were reading played a role in shifting passive learning stances to active ones. For Emerson, the fact that he admitted in public that he liked to read Native American literature was a giant leap for him. At the start of the year, Emerson's participation in his group's literature circles consisted of staring up at the ceiling or out the door. Toward the end of semester he became verbally active in all discussions. He read with a piercing eye. Emerson was representative of others in my class. Ava, Emerson, and others read now

because of personal connections to what they were reading. They also read and participated with the realization that others valued their opinions during literature circle discussions. Speaking up in literature discussions meant reading and discussing the reading choice made by the group. In literature circles, choice established a responsibility to the learners to participate with others who valued their opinions. *Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing* states:

> In our postindustrial society, with its ever-increasing need for workers with strong problem-solving dispositions and skills, one of the basic purposes of schooling that has gained in prominence since the 1920's has become not simply the transmission of knowledge but the more complex nurturing of independent learning. A curriculum committed to independent learning is built upon the premise that inquiry, rather than mere transmission of knowledge, is the basis of teaching and learning. (IRA/NCTE Joint Task Force, 1994, p. 6)

I viewed the IRA/NCTE Task Force on Assessment position on inquiry as a choice-based curriculum.

Turning passive students into active learners started in my classroom by handing the responsibility of choice to the learners themselves. Choice is the cornerstone of an inquiry curriculum and changes the role of the teacher from comprehension gatekeeper, to facilitator of exploration of knowledge. The role of the facilitator is not some free fall from teaching, but places the teacher in the role of what Dorothy Watson, at the WL Conference 1998, referred to as "supportive teaching." Supportive teaching is an extremely active teaching stance that supports the learners to become independent and interdependent thinkers based on exploring their own questions.

Other comments by students during the focus interviews pointed to "asking their own questions" and "being highly valued in this community of readers and writers." Inquiry was new to these students. As Alex pointed out clearly:

> Well, when I was young my Mom used to read to me too. I didn't really think too much of reading, but once I got into school and had to do a lot of reading and now that I'm in high school, it's like, it gets tougher. But when I'm here, it's, I understand it more, I understand how to read it. Here reading is more than just reading. Reading is powerful here. Here reading is about my questions.

Alex pointed to reading as being about his questions. This was evidence that inquiry as curriculum was having an impact on my students' perceptions about reading. After Alex's comment, I asked the students if anyone else felt the same way. A resounding "Amen" went around the classroom. Charlie, another student supported Alex's comment in more detail:

> Charlie: Education is never ever about my questions.
>
> Jesse: Whose questions is it about?
>
> Charlie: Not mine. Questions on European history or Black history, or the slaves--so mostly it's about someone else. How many of us can take a stance in school? You're not allowed to do that, you don't get that chance; they look at you like well you can't do that cause we're doing this, or it's not right because it's not the topic, your opinion doesn't mean anything, because it's just what they want you to write. It's like we're getting off the subject of what they are talking about, what they are trying to teach you, but they don't understand that you are trying to teach them something, too.

Charlie's comments were thought provoking. Is this how a Native American student views reading, writing, and inquiry in his high school? As a teacher researcher, I realized just how much we have to learn from our students. The focus interviews were invaluable for me to plan and expand inquiry in the program. The Upward Bound writing

program was changing the attitudes of its students not only about literacy, but also about school. Charlie and Alex understood what they read better, because they were guided in their reading by their own questions. Emerson's comment expanded this perception:

> In Jr. High and all that I didn't really like going to school. Now in high school it was the same thing, I was ditching a lot. When I first went it wasn't that good and then my Mom threatened me that if I didn't go to school and all this sort of stuff. She sent me here to Upward Bound. At first I didn't talk a lot, like when I talk I stutter a lot, I like to sort of . . . it's hard for me to talk when, especially when I have something to say and I stutter, and then I can't talk. So I like to write, here I don't have to talk, I can write.

Emerson found respect through his written responses, and found the small group setting of literature circles a safe place to share them. Then he added:

> Reading all this other stuff like the teachers do from school, it's not like here. In school you're reading stuff about George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, what is that? It's not ours. It's not part of our history. It's not ours. That's what I feel like about American History, it's not me. In History we're reading stuff like that, and then my U.S. History Teacher gave us an assignment on, write a poem or an essay of Chief Joseph and on his background, and in that paper I talked about what the struggle is today and what they were then, and how they are still the same, this problem that we have, and I got a real good grade on that. I learned about Chief Joseph in this class. I confronted my classmates, cause it's just U.S. history, and it's just like not ours, and I don't know . . . I just feel free here.

In these focus interviews I realized that inquiry meant the freedom to question, think and make choices. I connected that sentiment of freedom to their changing perceptions of literacy, a shift from the definitions in their initial literacy surveys. I grounded the theoretical connection I was making to my understanding of the work of Harste (1988), who states that students adopt literacy theoretical stances, and that teachers can learn from examining them. I ensured that learners moved from a word-centered belief to a meaning-making understanding. Those early student definitions of reading and

writing provided me with a direction and the support needed to continue on the path of greater choice and inquiry for my students. All of which was affirmed by a transactional view of literature.

Discovering the definitions of my students' literacy perceptions and the ways they shifted over the 2-year period provided me with action based direction. The focus interview comments indicated an astounding turnaround at the end of the Fall semester, Year 1. That turnaround began with changing the focus of the classroom from one where students answered teacher-assigned questions to a view of writing and reading as a transactional process. This, in turn, allowed readers to be guided by their own questions, and then share their responses in literature circles.

A shift from a fixed to an inquiry curriculum caused students to change their view of literacy. My learners were moving from passive to active learners in school with a vested interest in what they read and learned. This shift was encouraged by my implementation of the six conditions for inquiry as curriculum that I listed earlier, but repeat here for purposes of analysis:

1. Come to know each other
2. Value what each has to offer
3. Focus on problem solving and inquiry
4. Share responsibility and control
5. Learn through action, reflection, and demonstration
6. Establish a learning atmosphere that is predictable and yet full of real choices. (Short & Pierce, 1990, p. 35)

The first four conditions set me on my way to exploring curriculum as inquiry. The process of change in literacy attitudes allowed us to come to know and value each other, and the focus on inquiry changed the way reading and writing was viewed. Both

the students and I shared responsibility and control via literature circles in whole-class discussions of our responses to what we read and wrote. Creating a transactional classroom began by shifting students' views of reading from a passive activity to a dynamic self-directed activity. Numbers 5 and 6 of the conditions would be addressed later in the study as we expanded our responses to multiple sign systems. The shift in student views of reading was no accident. The shift was set in motion by the transactional curriculum I was creating that provided access for student voices via my agendas that filled my curriculum notebook. The documentation for how I built a transactional curriculum, based on coming to know my students in Year 1 of my study, is found in my curriculum notebook.

My Curriculum Notebook and Agendas

My curriculum notebook is a primary data source for analyzing and discussing curriculum within this study. I use aspects of my curriculum notebook as a way to triangulate what I have documented about my study. The curriculum notebook contains before- and after-class journal entries together with my agendas for the class sessions. It is the place where anything I planned or did in class found its way. It was my "messy closet" that made sense only to me. Everything I wrote was part of a folder on my computer titled "Sacred Journey." My notebook may have been messy, but computer-based, thus my audit trail was clear and conveniently located.

My agendas and journal entries provided a rich source of data for the 2 years. During that first year, there were 64 journal entries (one before and one after each class) along with 34 agendas. Class met the first year on Saturday mornings only, 18 times

during the regular Fall and Spring semesters. In the summer we met four times a week for the month of June for a literature course with college credit. We had an agenda for every class, and I wrote before and after journal entries every time we met. During the month of June, class did not meet until 12:30, so I wrote my before-class journal entry and agenda later in the morning, usually starting around 7:00 a.m., and then my after-class entry on my laptop right after class.

My journal. The journal entries that I include are exactly as I wrote them. They are somewhat rambling, "a wondering and a wandering." They shift tenses, but they are meaningful data sources of my reflections on the processes of my inner thoughts. The entries provide an example of teaching that Watson calls "Planning to Plan" and a view of the thought processes that Burke refers to when she discusses the format to think about curriculum in ways that are highly planned and yet allowed to evolve collaboratively with others in focus studies (Watson, Burke, & Harste, 1990). The journal entries were safe places for me to think about the possibilities of curriculum and to create a curriculum framework.

My agendas. Part 2 of my curriculum notebook consists of my agendas. I shared my agendas with the students and others who ventured into my classroom. Students each had their own copy. The analysis of the agendas allowed me to identify topics we discussed on any given day instantly over the 2 years of my study. They are the fingerprints of the audit trail for this investigation. My curriculum notebook connects my thought processes before, during, and after the planning of the curriculum. Planning is an ongoing process of thought. It can be an extremely shadowy process and is often

oversimplified in written format. To assist the reader through my planning process, I provide a means to see how the journal entries and the agendas are in reality different threads of the same curriculum-planning process. Each agenda is connected to two journal entries, a before-class entry and an after-class journal entry. My agendas and journal entries cannot be examined in isolation, but as an integrated process.

My very first before-class entry in my curriculum notebook was written at 3:30 a.m., the morning of class.

> It's 3:30 AM, What to do the first day of class. Why am I always so nervous before the first day of class? I never begin with a good night's sleep. I am thinking about the silence everyone talks about with Native American students. Teaching revolves around talk, silence is not something I handle well.
>
> Stereotypes are going through my head and I am feeling ill-prepared. Time to write my first agenda.
> Jesse

In this, my first "journal entry," I am referring to a number of educational research studies on Native American learners that I had previously read. Many of those studies are deficit based. In one way or another, these studies explain why Native Americans are poor learners. These explanations come from biased assumptions based on the reductionist thinking that Native learners are nonverbal. The studies left me feeling uneasy. It was not until I reread the Task Force Report and spoke with Drs. Richard Ruiz, Teresa McCarty, and Yetta Goodman (my professors at the University of Arizona) that I began to distinguish between deficit and non-deficit research perspectives.

While my journal focuses on my fears, my agenda focuses on my hopes (Figure 5.1).

Agenda # 1

Upward Bound Program writing seminar.
Instructor: Jesse P. Turner

As a child my grandpa placed a gift of true vision in my soul. He explained that real vision begins not with the eyes but with the heart. I have followed this vision of the heart, I have trusted it always, and never once has it failed me--Jesse P. Turner.

1) Let's talk.
2) About me.
3) About you.
4) About music.

The secret of education lies in respecting the pupil.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Writing is the desire of a person to express themselves, to record the reactions of their personality to the world in which they live . . . Jesse's bite.

I'm Still Here
I've been scarred and battered.
My hopes the wind done scattered.
Snow has friz me, sun has baked me.
Looks like between 'em.
they done tried to make me
stop laughin', stop lovin', stop livin'-
But I don't care!
I'm still here!
---(Langston Hughes)

This week as you go, return to your oldest and most caring teachers--your parents and grandparents.

Figure 5.1. My first class agenda.

My first agenda includes a personal insight into my relationship with my grandfather. Mentioning my relationship with my grandfather is an attempt to share personally with my students in order to establish a meaningful learning and teaching relationship. From the very first class, I shared with my students that writing has a personal purpose for me, "Writing is the desire of people to express themselves, to record the reactions of their personality to the world they live in."

The agenda also includes one of my favorite quotes and a Langston Hughes poem, "I'm Still Here." This poem provides an insight into how literature is a cultural bridge to what it means to be a minority in America. In essence, I initiated Short and Pierce's first two conditions--"coming to know each other" and "valuing what each has to offer"--for creating an inquiry curriculum. The quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson on my agenda provides an opportunity for me to share with the students an important aspect of my belief system that is rooted in respecting the pupil.

As my study moved forward my agendas became my way of reaching out and seeking cultural connections to literature and writing. After each class I sat at my computer to write an after-class entry into my curriculum notebook. Below is the first such entry:

> I thought I was well prepared. I had multiple copies of excerpts from Native American literature, dozens of color markers, large sheets of white butcher paper to map our ideas, I had music to break the ice. . . . What I got was silence. I almost drowned in that silent big old classroom. As students arrived, I placed the tables into a circle. Students joined the circle very slowly and seemed to sit reluctantly. Why did I not do this before they arrived, why had I assumed this would make everyone talkative?

Passing out the agenda I swear I could read their minds, "What is this for?" We began with introductions, my name is_____ and I go to _____ high school, my tribe is_____.

The reality is today was no different than any other first day for me. Years of teaching has prepared me to expect the same from any new group of students. I hoped for more, but received the norm.

I read my opening statement, a lesson from my grandfather--something I have always held close. Did it catch their attention? Ms. Listo seems to thinks so. She informed me later, that simple sharing was crucial to letting Native students know I valued my elders. I had hoped for a traumatic sharing of voices, what I had got was simply a sharing of names. I talked and shared my voice. I honestly explained how little I know about Native Americans, coming from New Jersey. The first Native American I had met personally was the director of the program, Ms. Listo. I hope my honesty will at least earn their respect.

I talked about how I needed them to be my teachers, how during the year I would be sharing insights about becoming a better writer, and they would share their perspectives on the literature we would be reading. I explained they would make the choices about what we would read, books like American Indian Myths and Legends. Before class ended we browsed through the literature I had brought along to class. One student, Angelica, selected the stories for our next class. Class ended with something I always remind my students (regardless of age, ethnicity, or racial background) to return to their oldest and most caring teachers, their parents/grandparents.

The director and coordinator sat in my classroom the whole time. I must admit this made me more than just a little nervous. I coped by having both of them join in. Later they both commented on the different aspects of my class, they freely offered valuable insights on how to improve certain things I did. They provided important personal insights into Native American thinking for me. They are both Native Americans.

Reflection: It is a good beginning, doors are being opened rather than closed, and isn't that what literacy is all about--opening doors . . . Jesse

My after-class journal entry is a retelling of events. It provided me with an outlet for effective aspects of how class went each day. Yes, I found silence in the classroom, not because they are Native American learners, but because they are like all other high

school students on their first day. I wrote, "Why did I not do this?" concerning the tables. I knew, from then on, I would arrive at class early to set up tables. I was reflecting, thinking, and preparing for my next class. My journal entry points out how and why the short narrative caught their attention. It shows my disappointment; I had expected more. Two other crucial details emerge; one is my honesty as to my limited knowledge of Native American literature. Second is the relationship that was there from the start with the director, Ms. Listo, who was the crucial cultural negotiator who was so necessary for the success of this program and for this study. Throughout the course of my 2 years, Ms. Listo was always available to talk with me regarding any concerns I had. She attended and participated in more classes than any other administrator had done in my entire teaching career.

As a teacher learner, I was meeting another of Short and Pierce's conditions (# 5) "learning through action, reflection, and demonstration." My agendas, from the start, helped to establish a learning atmosphere in the class that was predictable and full of real choice. In my journals I found a safe place to reflect on my practice. These first two before and after journal entries and the first agenda combination set in motion the audit trail for my research. They provided insight into my thinking as a teacher, and established the framework for my curriculum notebook as a primary source for planning curriculum. What is missing from them is the part of my thinking that best reflects Watson's concept of "planning to plan" (Watson, Burke, & Harste, 1990). After the computer had been shut off, my mind and thoughts remained active, constantly reflecting on the events of the last class and my expectations of what was to come next.

My entry into my journal before our second class follows:

> 3:30am and I find myself wondering what it is I am going to do? I have copies of the readings that Angelica chose. Lacking a large library of Native American literature I am limited to using whatever I find--and can carry to class. If the mountain won' t go to Mohammed--then Mohammed might just have to go to the library. How can I make the library a wonderful field trip?
>
> I could share another one of my grandfather stories. I hope the narratives will cross cultures. As I explore Native American literature, I am constantly examining my own cultural heritage. These fears of my lack of knowledge about Native American literature are slowly giving way to warm memories connecting my past to the present.
>
> The kids really are a neat bunch.
> Jesse

I like the idea of journal entries before my agendas, they oiled my brain. That second journal entry reveals the first real issue I faced, "How could I improve choice in my class?" Allowing students to make choices worked well for both the teacher and the students. I honestly lacked familiarity with the genre, and I could tell they appreciated the opportunity, but I needed to offer more choices.

Another issue I picked up from reading my journal entries is that as I was reading Native American literature, I was becoming more aware of my own culture. I was as much a learner as my students. This is what Rosenblatt means by reciprocal relationships in literature. As I read about others, I learned about myself. By analyzing these first few journal entries, I saw my doubts turning to curiosity, and my own inquiry was set in motion.

My second agenda sets in motion the direction for the Fall semester (see Figure 5.2).

Agenda #2

Upward Bound Program writing seminar.
Instructor: Jesse P. Turner

It was on my Grandmother's knee that I learned to hear the voice of this world. She would sing about Ireland, and her voice would take me on a journey 3,000 miles away from the big old faded chair in her living room. Sometimes she would cry and say "Little Jess you don't know your heart, you do not know Ireland's green fields or my county Mayo. You have never felt an Irish morning rain, you don't ever walk the sheep out in the morning or spend the day in fields. How will you dream? So my grand mother would take me on long walks in Central Park, NY, and we would pretend we were 3,000 miles away herding her father's sheep. We would sit upon the big rocks in the park and just listen. She called this our "listening time." I thought she was crazy, but now I know better--she was teaching me to listen to the world.

I have a favor to ask of you today. I want you to teach me how to listen to Native Americans. I don't mean listen with my ears, I want to listen with my heart. During the last class you said you wanted to read poetry, myths, and legends. My part here is to improve your writing. I can teach you to become better writers, but you have to teach me to understand (this literature) from an American Indian perspective. Teaching is a two way street. No one can teach anything without learning something. We must become each other's teachers in this class. Together we will explore the world through writing and each other.

Agenda for this morning
Definitions: Surveys-Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

1) Listener response.
2) James Connolly/Rubin Hurricane Carter.
3) Reader Response.
4) New World.
5) Tears of Our Mother.

"To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society." Theodore Roosevelt

This week I ask you to go home and find a place where you can listen to the voice of the world. Thank you for being my teachers. - Jesse P. Turner

Figure 5.2. Second class agenda.

A pattern began to develop that continued over the next 2 years of this study. My agenda began with a personal story, this time about my grandmother. Again I started with a lesson taught to me by my elders. As I read about Native Americans, I kept thinking about my immigrant grandparents.

I took Graves' advice (1994) and wrote from "day one." I wrote before class, during class, and after class. My agenda began with a story about my grandmother. When I was young, I was sure she was crazy, but writing the story caused me to realize that she was so much wiser than I had ever dreamed. Human beings come to know each other through their stories. I modeled personal narrative: "Whole language teachers create opportunities for students to use language" (K. Goodman, 1989, p. xi).

After my story, I requested a favor: "I want you to teach me how to listen to Native Americans with my heart." I had decided this after reading Silko's *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit* (1996). She writes:

> Where I come from, the words most highly valued are those spoken from the heart, unpremeditated and unrehearsed. . . . Pueblo expression resembles something like a spider's web--with many little threads radiating from the center, crisscrossing one another. As with the web, the structure emerges as it is made, and you must simply listen and trust, as Pueblo people do, that meaning will be made. (pp. 48-49)

Silko is writing about Pueblo people but I felt the silence during my first class was connected to this understanding of listening and trust. I needed to learn how to listen and trust my students. I was asking for their help.

My expectations for class are next on the agenda:

Definitions: Surveys-Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.
1) Listener response.
2) James Connolly / Rubin Hurricane Carter.
3) Reader Response.
4) New World.
5) Tears of Our Mother.

After I read my grandmother's piece, I handed out my reading and writing surveys. I wanted to know what my students knew and believed about literacy. I planned to use music during class, a Bob Dylan song about Rubin Hurricane Carter, an African American former contender for the middle-weight championship. Carter spent 14 years in prison for a crime he never committed. My second choice was a traditional Irish ballad about James Connolly, an Irish hero who was shot by a British firing squad during Ireland's struggle for independence in 1916. I selected these two in particular because they are about injustice, and I also enjoy both songs. As a teacher, I know I cannot go wrong with music. I continuously use music and songs in class, with listener-response activities to model reader-response activities. The songs chosen for this day have strong messages, and because of the ballad format I expected students to be able to react, discuss, and comment in a whole-class format. For the end of the class, I reserved the poem that had been selected by Angelica the week before. Her selection comes from *Red Ink*, a Native American journal published by Native students at the University of Arizona. I hoped Angelica's choice would cause students to react. I planned to use it with the first written reader response activity. My agendas developed around Short and Pierce's concept of "coming to know."

The length of my agendas varied, and by the end of my study the topics for my agendas grew out of my beliefs about writing and student responses. The readings were student selected, and I also included pieces of my choosing. My choices are rooted in a deep belief that teachers negotiate curriculum, they do not remove themselves from the development of curriculum. Langston Hughes was my choice for that second class and my choices had a place in our classroom. My personal story touched many hearts that day. After class, students expressed similar experiences with their own early writing experiences. The challenge I had in front of me was one of moving students beyond their current perspective of writing as a passive negative experience, to an active positive experience. This provided me with an opportunity to incorporate different authors' views on how they felt about writing.

The second agenda laid out a routine that would eventually lead me to literature circles and the authoring cycle. After class that evening, I wrote in my journal once again.

> Slowly it's happening. I saw smiles, the talk is beginning. . . . The students seemed to enjoy the opening narrative portion of the agenda. After class, Ms. Listo told me how the students with Navajo blood ties connected with my narrative as many of their relatives own sheep and my story connected my respect for her to the respect Native Americans have for their elders. Students spoke up about their grand parents and the lessons they had taught them. We have a beginning. My appeal for their help was heard. I asked them again to become my teachers; this was confirmed with smiles throughout. Once again the program director sat in on my class. I am learning from my students, and Ms. Listo is becoming that much needed cultural negotiator. Our conversation after class clearly supports activities we did in class.

Reflecting on my entry, it reveals that I am learning about Native Americans, their respect for elders and that Navajo people keep sheep. Those reciprocal threads of a

transactional classroom kept spinning my fabric of understanding. I openly admitted to the students that I needed their help understanding Native perspectives. My honesty and willingness to share had the support of the program director.

Slowly a routine began to fall into place. During the week, I would gather my resources and copy those selections made by students as classroom reading material. I set my alarm for 3:30 a.m. each Saturday morning. I would awake and have a cup of coffee, usually out on my patio under the Tucson stars, and reflect on last week's entry. With my laptop ready, I would write my before-class entry, have another cup of coffee, then write my agenda. At the end of the day, I would write my after-class entry.

Structuring and Creating a Literate Environment

Routine and structure are always part of my classrooms, and Upward Bound was no different. A routine established early was the use of one corner of the room to display literature choices. Lacking multiple copies of Native American text, every week I asked one or two students to select the readings we would do the following week. Before class the following Saturday, I made several copies of their choices so each student had a copy of their own. Longer readings were signed out to individual readers for personal reading. Before class started, I wrote the titles of their selections I had photocopied on the board. With the copies, I had group sign-in sheets for our literature circles for each reading.

Class would begin each week with examples of students' completed work being displayed on the wall. Often, students requested their own copy of the displayed work. There were times when students were so impressed with the displayed work of their classmates, their group would chose that particular piece for their literature circle. Those

classroom walls became, for us, an extremely powerful means of publication. It was an honor for students to have a piece of their work on the wall.

Class met each week for 90 minutes, and began with students reading the completed works of fellow students on the wall as they entered. During the first 10 minutes of class, I took attendance and conferenced with individual students. Students made their selection from the previous reading choices. The make-up of the literature circle was determined by the individual reading choices. Students joined the appropriate literature circle by choosing a reading that had been selected by their peers. After several class meetings, students realized they could determine the make-up of a group by making and selecting their choice as a group or by having one person select for the whole group. I never worried about it, because the impact made it appear that everyone was anxious to read. For about 30 minutes, we would read and discuss those choices in literature circles. During that time, I rotated around the room and spent time participating in the discussions of the readings.

After 30 minutes of reading and discussion, students would take a 5-minute break. We would then share what we had learned during literature circle time. At the end of every class, for 10 minutes or so, students browsed and selected the readings for the following week, while I worked with an individual student or a small group of students.

The creation of the literature corner was the cornerstone of my classroom. The problem with our cornerstone was that it had to be portable. Student work had to be taken down each week at the end of class, because the classroom was used by other classes all week. As the semester progressed, I gathered more resources, and I became

the "shopping cart teacher." Each week I rolled those resources in and out of class. Like many other whole language teachers, I needed to turn my classroom into the most inviting and engaging literate environment I could. I had to work with what I had, and what I had were books and my students' work. My corner soon grew into the classroom library; it grew as I borrowed books from friends, colleagues, and libraries. I spent everything I could spare on books written by Native American authors. With our routine and a classroom library, we had the beginnings of an inviting and engaging literate environment.

The sixth condition for establishing "inquiry as curriculum," according to Short and Pierce (1990), is to: "Establish a learning atmosphere that is predictable and yet full of choices." Learning in my classroom was built around readers making choices, discussing those choices, publishing their reactions, and sharing their responses to what they read and wrote socially during literature circles and whole class discussions. Choice and inquiry were the core for learning in my classroom.

Atwell (1998), in her book, *In the Middle*, questions what teachers teach students and the "implicit messages that come across to kids through the standard approach to literature." Students in traditional settings often see English teachers who never read or write during class. Students recognize these non-readers and writers as those who make the choices as to what students read and write. One key difference that separates a traditional literature classroom from a transactional classroom is that both teacher and students are embedded in reading, writing, discussing, and choosing what is read. Choice begins with a community of readers and writers immersed in reading and writing

together. My transactional classroom is based on more than just a transactional view of literature. The creation of this transactional classroom is rooted in expanding Rosenblatt's thinking about the purpose of literature, to thinking about the purpose for learning in the classroom. The creation of a literate environment is rooted in establishing a classroom that values time for choice. My success, I believe, came from using literature circles to invite and engage learners to rethink their views about reading and writing. As a teacher researcher, I found I had formed partnerships with my students, the director, and other staff members. The closer the link to literature circles and choice, the stronger the partnership.

A Consequential Partnership Emerges: Mr. Tony Gatewood

During the third week of class, Ms. Listo advised me that she had a tutor for my class. He would work with any student I thought needed his help. The tutor already knew some of the students as he had taught a Native American literature course the previous summer. As a whole language teacher, I am opposed to the concept of pulling students out of class for tutoring. Tutoring is most needed in the context of learning to read and write in the classroom. Instead of removing students, I proposed to Ms. Listo that the tutor might consider coming into the class and helping out. An extra hand, especially one familiar with Native American literature, would be a more than welcome addition. The tutor, Mr. Tony Gatewood, joined us in class the following week. That first morning I introduced him as Mr. Gatewood, a tutor, who would help us out in class. He smiled and sat down at the back of the room. When the students moved into their literature circles, I approached Tony and suggested he mingle in and out of the groups, keeping the students

focused on the readings. Tony smiled and added, "Hopefully, they did the reading." I later learned that Tony had some doubts about his new role, but to all appearances he fit right in. That first day Tony mingled in and out of different groups, providing students with open-ended questions that kept them thinking and involved in rich discussions of the text. After our first class together, I shared the classroom routine with him. I suggested that he might begin by helping to expand the choices on our literature table. Tony is Navajo and taught Native American literature at Upward Bound during the summer. He was at the time completing his undergraduate degree doing his student teaching at the University of Arizona. He seemed pleased with the first day.

Tony appeared just at the right time, and I knew he would be an ideal addition to our community. He brought a familiar face to the students and a wealth of knowledge of Native American literature to our classroom. Tony contributed direction and focus to the inquiries of the students. In my fifth agenda, both Tony and I are listed as instructors. This gave Tony equal status and the recognition he deserved from me. Tony and I worked well together. I planned the class work and wrote up the agendas, while Tony worked on building our literature corner. Tony always asked the students, "Why this author? Why this story? And why is this important to Native Americans?" Since there were two of us, we provided students with more individual conference time. Tony's presence allowed us a greater opportunity to support literature circles. By mid-term, my quiet classroom became an active verbal community of readers and writers responding to powerful literature. In my sixth journal entry, I wrote:

> Today I realize that our classroom looks and sounds more like a busy newspaper office than a typical high school classroom. Students jump into their literature circles, and go out of their way to talk about what they are reading and what they learned from the reading. Are these really the same students?

At the end of the first year, I interviewed Tony, asking him to think back to his first day when he joined our class. "What were your feelings on that day?" I asked.

> Well the first thing I noticed was that you had butcher paper on the wall and there was writing all over them. I began to walk around just looking and reading. I saw the students and they were working, that was the first thing that came to my mind, that they were working, and I say, oh my god what is he doing, my god they are working on things and they are responding,--those there--the ones I had previously--it took a pair of pliers to get them to do the work, but here they were willing to do the work. They were happy doing what they were doing, they were smiling while they were doing their writing, what did you do to these guys, did he spike their juice or something during lunch time, what's going on here--I wanted in on your secret from that very first day. (Gatewood, 06/30/95)

Tony was a reflective practitioner from the beginning of our teaching together. After class he would stay around asking questions and sharing his thoughts on literature and on the progress of the students. Tony was interested in my secrets, and I was amazed at his knowledge of Native American literature. Every week Tony brought in something new. He would often come over to my house with something to read or share. He quickly became my teaching partner. The role of tutor was left behind. Over the next two years we became close friends who respected and valued each other's contributions to class. At our June interview, when I asked him for his thoughts on shifting from the role of tutor to teaching partner, he replied:

> At the beginning of the year I was hired to go in and tutor. At the same time I had to do some self reflecting, like you know, am I really tutoring? I thought a tutor was someone who goes in and looks at a bunch of students who are having difficulties completing their assignments and I would help them out, either half way, or part of the way and then maybe give them some guidance, but in your

> class I found myself in a position where I wasn't a tutor any more. I was more like being used as a reference source, and that was a little unusual. Well, I said, "This is not exactly in my job description," but essentially that's what took place, but I didn't mind. I didn't mind sharing the things that I had. I was learning—heck, we were all learning in that classroom. It was fun. (Gatewood, 1996)

Our partnership grew out of a desire to help students, and a love of teaching. Students noticed our partnership and wrote about it at times in their response journals.

> There was another teacher there, I had him as a teacher for Native American literature, Gatewood. When Jesse and Gatewood team up Jesse is the loud one, Gatewood is the quiet one. They are both nice and good teachers. I don't believe one is better than the other because both are equal. (A.V., 1995)

The following year, Tony and I wrote a proposal to do a presentation about our experience in the classroom together for the Whole Language Umbrella Conference. It was accepted. We presented, and our session was selected to be recorded, and the tape sold at the conference. For Year 1 Fall and Spring semesters, Tony and I worked together. During the second year, Tony had a class of his own, but our partnership continued through occasional joint assignments, and we were always each others' biggest supporters. Partnerships grow naturally within transactional classrooms, and that Fall Year 1, Tony and I formed strong reciprocal learning links.

By the end of Fall Year 1, I had established two significant partnerships. The first was with the director, who often joined my class to participate and show her strong support, and the second was with Tony who added his rich knowledge of Native American literature. Our classroom became the place for reading, writing, listening, talking, and, most of all, a place where literacy was connected directly to inquiry.

With the end of the Fall semester, I had a month to prepare for the Spring. That semester break, I thought more deeply about my research questions for this study. My second question is: "Will a transactional view of literature change passive perceptions of literacy in the classroom for at risk Native American students?" I was certain my students were on the road to becoming active readers, but I wanted them to be more than just verbally active. I wanted our rich discussions to result in longer written responses by the students, and the use of sign systems other than reading and writing. I set my sights on further developing active literacy stances for my students. On the last day of class in Fall Year 1, I did not set up the browsing table. At the break, four students came over and asked why I did not put anything out on the browsing table. I responded, "This is the last day of class." Angelica, 1 of the 4, said: "We know, but that doesn't mean we can't read anything over the break; we need something to read." All I could do was smile and run to unload my car to set up the table. For the Winter break, students borrowed books instead of photocopies of the short stories.

As a teacher, my dream is not one of higher test scores for my students, but for readers who want to read more. Like Oliver Twist in the great Dickens novel, I too had kids who "wanted more." Like that moment in the novel, Angelica's comments and the students selecting books to read over the break is engraved in my memory forever. Over the break, I continued to find powerful authors from both Native American and American literature. I wanted to extend the cultural bridges we had been making even further for both my students and myself. I knew in the Spring I would raise my expectations and push my curriculum into multiple sign systems.

Spring Year 1

Discovering Social Writing Sheets

Rosenblatt's transactional theory provides the context for a reading theory and a means of understanding all aspects of literacy. In our classroom, social writing events occurred during literature circles. Once students had finished their reading, they used large sheets of white butcher paper and colored markers to create a web of their responses to help focus their discussions. The web began with the title of the story placed in the middle, and responses in outside circles being connected to the title. A simple classic web follows (see Figure 5.3).

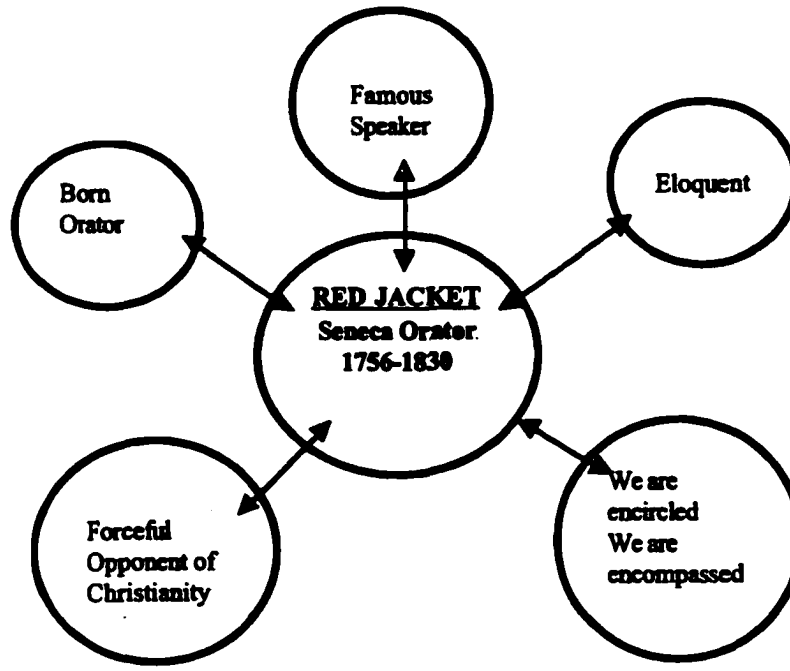


Figure 5.3. Classic web.

The social writing sheets became the means students chose for class presentations in order to share what was happening in their literature groups. In the previous Fall semester, the webs stuck close to the stories being read, but at the beginning of the Spring semester, the webs began to reflect a change in the way students were responding. The webs no longer were limited to just the stories. They began to reflect issues within the stories that connected to the outside world. I immediately recognized this change, and viewed the actual sheets as valuable artifacts for my investigation. I first noticed this change when students stopped placing the title in the center of their webs. Instead, they would place the issue the story was dealing with in the center of the web that enriched the discussions in literature circles. As issues came to the forefront, responses grew from a few words to more detailed written responses. Comparing Figure 5.3 as a classic web with the Spring Year 1 web (see Figure 5.4) clearly demonstrates this shift.

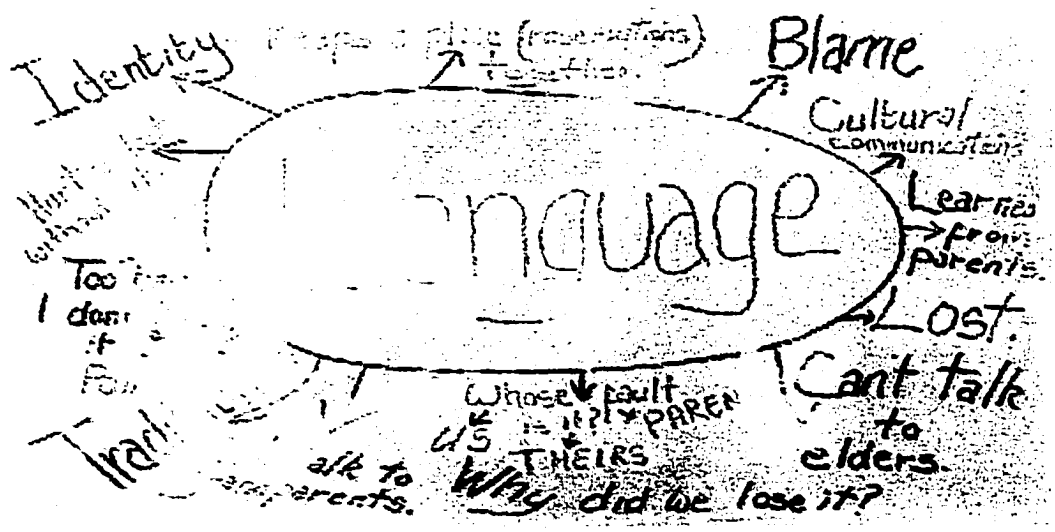


Figure 5.4. Spring Year 1 web.

A closer look at these two social writing sheets reveal:

Fall Year 1
Story/ Red Jacket Selected by Bruce
Center of web:
Red Jacket, Seneca Orator 1756-1830
Outer circles' comments
1. Forceful opponent of Christianity
2. Famous speaker
3. Born orator
4. Eloquent
5. We are encircled--we are encompassed

Spring Year 1
Natalie's Uncle selected by Jennifer
Center of web:
Language
Outer circles' comments
1. Identity
2. Keeps a place together (reservation)
3. Hurt and lost without it
4. Too bad I don't know it
5. Pain-Sadness
6. Can't talk to grandparents
7. Whose fault-us-or-parents
8. Can't talk to Elders
9. Why did we lose it
10. Lost-blame
11. Learned from parents
12. The story, Natalie's Uncle, was written for me.

The major difference between the two sheets goes beyond just placing the title in the center of the web. The Fall sheet shows responses to a biographical piece selected by Bruce, a student who was most interested in Native religious issues. Students were literal and stuck to the facts with short responses. Their discussion followed a similar trend. The Spring sheet shows the same group of students with Jennifer's selection, "Natalie's Uncle." This story touched a button that shifted the focus from the actual story to one of language. In this web, students leave the text and place the issue of "language" in the center. Initially, I did not see the connection. I asked why they had placed language at the center of their web. Their comments reflect personal connections to the story and inferred the issue of language. In the story the Navajo language is mentioned, but it is not connected to language loss, but to the loss of life. Bruce commented on how the story

reminded them of some family member they lost, and how at those times the elders and their grandparents show up speaking O'odham, their Native language. When it was time to share as a whole class, I listened intensely. The discussion was lively, and when Jennifer shared her grandmother's story a pin drop could have been heard:

> My grandma died of cancer when I was younger. I was too young to understand why my family was so sad when my grandma got sick and had to go to the hospital. Just before she had to go to the hospital for the second time, I saw her in her bedroom from where I was standing in the kitchen. Her door was open and she was sitting on the side of her bed. I watched her take her hair down. It was so beautiful, long and straight, white and flowing freely. She saw me stand behind a chair in the kitchen, and then she called me to come stand beside her. She talked to me in Navajo as I brushed her hair. At the hospital the nurses wouldn't allow me to see her. She died in hospital, but I did not cry because she had told me not to. She told me a lot of things that day I brushed her hair. I don't know how I knew what she was saying--but I understood all of it. I dream of her now when the stress builds up, and in my dreams she is always speaking Navajo. Maybe this is the only way I can learn Navajo. (Jennifer, Spring Year 1)

As I looked around the room I saw several tears being shed. The only important discussion that day was about language. As a careful kid watcher (Y. Goodman, 1978), I marked this change in my mind and later in my curriculum notebook. Tony, Ms. Listo, and I ate lunch and discussed what happened that morning. Ms. Listo suggested we bring in readings that discuss Native American world views next. Short (1996) states:

> As students wander and wonder, it is especially important for us to carefully watch and listen as students explore. We take field notes as children are engaged in exploration . . . and note where they are spending their time, what seems to be most of interest to them, and what kinds of conversations are occurring. (p. 183)

After class that day, I turned on my computer and marked the moment in my curriculum notebook. I tried to understand the significance.

> Today Jennifer and Bruce's group moved beyond just discussing stories they read and enjoyed, they used the stories to discuss broader issues in their lives. They

> placed a great deal of themselves into their responses and their presentation. Afterwards Ms. Listo suggested that I look for more ways to have the students think about Native world views. This change in the webs means something, the other groups sheets did not show this same change. This group risked sharing in a much more personal way than any group has done before.

I saw that moment as crucial, and considered it an important event.

For the following week I obtained 25 free copies of *Red Ink*. It has a combination of short stories, poems, and articles concerned with Native American issues. I advised the students that magazines such as *Red Ink* could use some sharp young Native minds and suggested that they submit poems and stories to the magazine. Andrew, a young O'odham student, smiled and said very softly, "Do you think-Na." In my most far fetched dream, I thought someday maybe one or two of their voices would reach publication in *Red Ink*.

That day, for the first time, we had enough copies to read the same article at the same time. I suggested we skim the magazine and vote on a story we would all read. I was committed to choice, and if we were going to read the same story, it would still be based on student choice. Students selected two stories, one article, and one poem. The poem, "Tears of Our Mother," written by J. Cedric Woods (1994) was clearly the first choice. In our literature circles, we decided on a response strategy of finding key words. We often used this strategy with poetry. This strategy follows a simple routine of first reading the poem, second skimming the text for the most powerful words and lines, and finally writing a one or two line response on our social writing sheets prior to sharing it orally in groups. "Tears of Our Mother" is an ecological plea for Native Americans to remember a time before the coming of the Europeans and to teach non-Natives to only

take what is needed, to treat the earth as our mother. Every group was buzzing with rich talk, because this poem connected culturally, politically, and personally to the students. There were four literature circles that day, not one group placed the title in the center of their webs. All four groups listed the title on the sheet, but not within the web. During the whole class discussion, students commented about the way Woods spoke of the earth as being our mother: "That idea of the earth being our mother is a native concept, not European" (Lanell, Spring Year 1). Lanell's comment was representative of others. Abigail said: "The earth is not only our mother, but it is part of our tradition and language." She was expressing something I was hearing more and more in student responses: that a Native American view of the world was connected to their traditions, culture, and language. This became more evident when one of the groups used two social writing sheets to discuss the poem. One sheet listed the key words and lines, and the other sheet created a web with the word "Tradition" at the center. The group then went on to discuss the concept of tradition.

The center reads -Traditions

Surrounding comments:
A gift passed down Happiness is connecting
Sad sometimes forgotten What you make it
How will they know you in the spirit world
where you came from.
who you are The keeping of a people' s spirit
Proud-My grandfather held on
Shame-My grandmother lied and told school she was Mexican

Three longer written comments:

1. When I read the poem "Tears of Our Mother" it makes me angry--How people have no respect for the land on which we live

> 2. I wish I knew more about my cultural ways. I really want to learn my own language. I hope my language doesn't die--or as the Whites say become extinct. If I could have my way in this world it would be full of Native Americans--just the way it used to be. I know it might sound racist--but I think what this land would be like if the Whites, Mexicans and African Americans never came to this place. I blame those who came from afar for things like pollution, and the other bad environmental effects on our earth. Before they came this land was at peace, everyone loved life. I'm not saying it is everyone's fault, but they knew (and know today) right from wrong. I just wish they would learn to love life more.
>
> 3. People coming together, people helping each other. Knowing their culture, from where they came and who they are. Helping each other: People who help each other, take care of one another, they don't turn their back on another, they are there to give each other a hand. Knowing where they come from: in many people there is a heart, most of the time it is broken, happy or mad, and sometimes it makes them feel they have no life. Until they look way down into their hearts, to the very essence of who they are culturally, and then practice their traditions-then they will know they have a heart. [Social Writing Sheet Spring Year 1]

When the group made their presentation, they read Woods' poem and moved directly into sharing their comments and feelings on tradition. The whole class became intensely involved in this discussion. Tony pointed out that this issue of "tradition slipping away" is common in most Native American literature. He asked the students if they thought maybe sharing this important Native issue was the reason the whole class enjoyed reading the poem. Every student agreed that the issue of tradition had motivated them to read and write. (See Figure 5.5.)

We broke into our literature circles to further discuss the concept of motivating issues, and I asked what other issues in Native American literature motivated them to read. All four groups included tradition and added language and culture. All groups mentioned the quality of the writing; it had to be real! Before the end of class, we had three issues to guide us into a thematic direction. Out of 20 students, we had only two

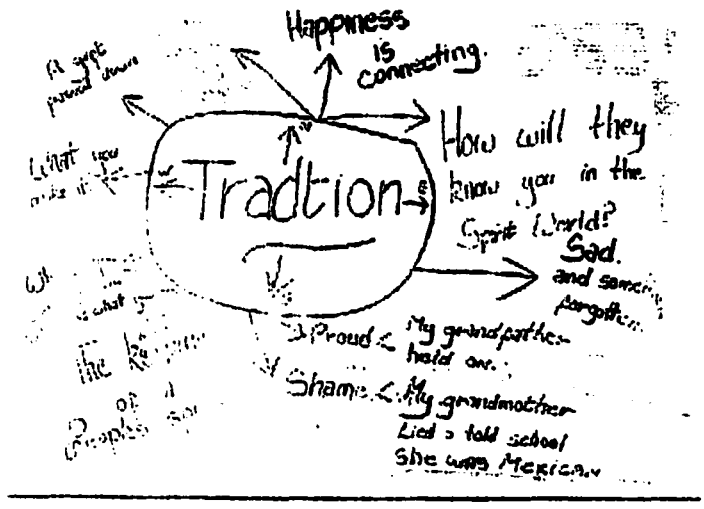


Figure 5.5. Traditions.

who responded that they knew their own language. We continued and asked how many students thought that they were in danger of losing their traditions, culture, and language? Eighteen of the 20 students raised their hands. The two. who did not, were the two who could speak their own language.

Later, I discussed the events of that day with both Ms. Listo and Tony. They pointed out that this loss of language, culture, and traditions are a common concern, not only among the young, but for all Native Americans. At home later that evening I went through the social writing sheets of the day. Two sheets in particular caught my attention: Figure 5.6 and Figure 5.7.

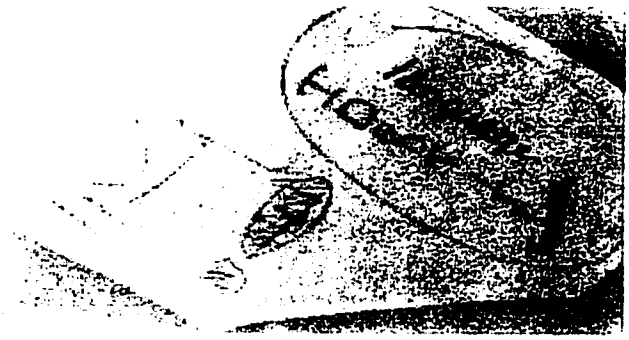


Figure 5.6. Loss and tears.

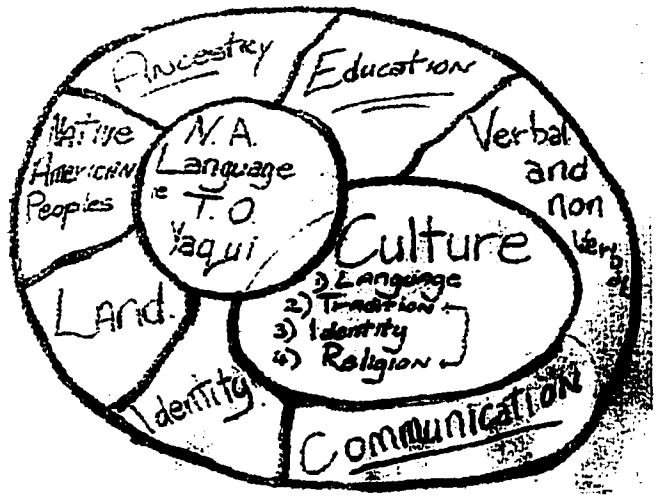


Figure 5.7. Web enclosed in one large circle.

Earlier that day I asked the group, "Why the sad face and tears in the 'o' in the word lost?" Jennifer, with both Navajo and Tohono O'odham heritages, explained: "For me these three things are needed to make me whole: I can't speak Navajo or O'odham--until I do I will never be whole. That makes me sad." Jennifer's answer haunted me; it still does. The thought of language as being what makes a person whole is something to which I never really gave much thought. In America, historically, the price of assimilation has been the acceptance of English, and the cost of one's native tongue. America has no real official language written into law, but my students, both Yaqui and Tohono O'odham, have such laws written into their tribal law books: "The Yaqui language is the official language of the Yaqui Tribe and may be used in the business of government, legislative, executive, and judicial. . . ." In 1986 the Tohono O'odham Tribe also established an official language policy. Zepeda (16th AILDI, 1995) states,

> The language policy of the Tohono O'odham is similar to that of the Pascua Yaqui. . . . The language status of the Tohono O'odham is declared as follows: ". . . with respect for our first language the Tohono O'odham Nation declares the Tohono O'odham language as the official language of our people." (Tohono O'odham Tribe Language Policy, 1986, p. 6)

The Yaqui and the Tohono O'odham have language policies, as do 1 in every 4 tribes of a total of 500 (Zepeda, 1990). This knowledge helps me understand how important the language issue is in the Native American nations. The issue of language loss remained a focus with us throughout the entire study. I was concerned whether or not we should read about issues that caused the students pain, so I discussed my concerns with Ms. Listo, who commented, "These issues will be with them regardless of whether

or not they choose to read and write about them." We both agreed that ignoring these issues did more harm than good to Native nations.

The feelings and concerns of Native American youth are important historically. There are many stories from Native people of difficult memories about boarding schools, for example; sometimes these memories are too difficult for people to share, but their sharing is crucial to understanding the assault on traditions, language, and culture. The sharing of these stories helps people to understand the impact boarding schools had on Native American youth. The stories and questions helped my students and me understand how the preservation of Native language can be used to turn Native American students on to literacy.

My attention was drawn to the web in Figure 5.7 because everything was enclosed within one large circle, not the usual web format. Upon asking the students why they had used this circular format, Angelica responded:

> Well, Jesse, you like to break things into little circles and big circles. How could Native people place our ancestors, language, traditions, and culture in tiny little separate circles? All those things make us Native People--and who we are is all tied together within one sacred circle--like when our group read about Black Elk and mending the sacred hoop--this is how we view our lives within the sacred hoop.

Angelica and the other students were making connections between themselves culturally and what they were reading, discussing, and writing about in class.

The sad and sometimes painful issues that we were discussing in class are connected to the everyday lives of Native communities. Reading, discussing, and writing about these issues helped students better understand their feelings. In a conversation with

Tony one day, he commented, "Think about it Jesse, would you ask Jewish adolescents to stop reading about the Holocaust, if it makes them sad?" The glue that holds inquiry together is a transactional view of learning. Transactional perspectives open up the curriculum to real inquiry, and real inquiry leads to personal and worldly focus.

The social writing sheets that we created every class session were literacy events in themselves. The sheets focused the students' response journals on opportunities to better understand the literature we read, along with how that particular literature impacted us as a community. The social writing sheets turned our literature circles into events that both broadened and furthered our inquiry. The reading choices shifted to a thematic focus that led naturally to intertextual connections. The readings were now taking the students and me beyond the institutional walls. We daily discussed the issues and concerns rooted in the hopes and fears of Native American communities across the United States of America. Rosenblatt understands that transactional thinking has this kind of impact on the classroom:

> Human beings are always in transaction and in a reciprocal relationship with an environment, a context, a total situation. The classroom environment, or the atmosphere created by the teacher and students transacting with one another and the school setting, broadens out to include the whole institutional, social, and cultural context. (1994, p. 1081)

Right there on our social writing sheets, the broader context, between the whole institution and culture that Rosenblatt mentions, began showing itself. On the sheets I found the broader reciprocal relationships that Rosenblatt writes about. The sheets became significant markers of our literacy journey. This transition from simple webs to

more complex and sophisticated writing sheets was a significant turning point in our classroom. Every week I hung blank sheets on the walls of our classroom. These writing sheets provided focus for discussions in literature circles. The aesthetic and efferent responses of my students were right there. These sheets became a large, much loved part of our community. When the writing sheets were on the walls, we felt good, we felt safe. For my students, the writing sheets were a publication for their voices within themselves. I saved the sheets each week, and we often returned to one in particular for reflection. The sheets also became part of my audit trail, my field notes. They record events that took place in our classroom through the eyes of the students themselves. There is a connection from these sheets to the students' response journals.

Emerging Themes/Response Journals

This issue of dealing with the loss of language, culture, and traditions also showed up in the students' response journals. Response journals were file folders where the students kept their work placed in a portable hanging folder. They contained two types of written responses that usually occurred daily: (a) a short, question-guided, 10-minute writing activity, and (b) a literature response: "How do you feel about what we read today?"

One morning the 10-minute writing activity was: "What are you learning in this class?" There were 17 students in class that day; each response was positive. In this section, I discuss selected journal entries to represent typical responses. The first provided me with an important clue to Denley's interests and also what he thought about the class. Denley, a Tohono O'odham, wrote:

> I learned that even though we don't speak our Native tongue or know much of our tradition, we will not forget who we are and where we came from. The first time I stepped into this class I expected us to learn nouns, verbs and other stuff that dealt with English. It came as a surprise that we listened to music and talked mostly Native tradition. We learned to hope and hang on to our identity.

Denley points out that his first line of defense against the loss of language and tradition is not to forget. The second point he hints at is that students need a greater purpose for learning in English classes. They need so much more than "to learn nouns, verbs and other stuff" in order to stay motivated. Denley's education up to this point had been at reservation schools. He was surprised that we listened to music, but more importantly, he hints at the abundance of literature that we are reading in class that deals with issues relevant to Denley and his community. His final point, the point I needed to understand, is that these issues we were discussing in class give the students the "hope" of hanging on to their identities. I realized, then and there, that discussing their own culture is the most important means to invite and engage Native students to think differently about literacy/literature.

A second response journal entry comes from Bruce. Like Denley, Bruce attends reservation schools.

> I didn't expect the class to be this way, from the first day I thought it was going to be just like school. I thought we would just write about things that meant nothing to us or myself. But as it turns out we got to discuss and write about things important to one of us or all of us. I've learned that I can do something to save my culture and traditions.

Bruce is pointing to the fact that the power of "choice" has an important impact on how he feels about this class. He writes, "That meant nothing to us or myself . . ." and follows with ". . . about things important to one of us or all of us." Those words explain

inquiry curriculum. Inquiry creates a curriculum relevant to the individual and the class as a whole. Bruce continues to point out that he has no pain from the issue of loss of language, culture, and tradition--but he has hope.

A third response journal that day reveals the impact "inquiry" has on these students. Donna is also Tohono O'odham, but she attends a non-reservation, regular public school in Tucson. Donna writes:

> To me I did feel that my language and culture were lost, but now I know it really is not lost. I still have it in my family. I just have to ask my grandmother. When I first came to these classes I thought we were going to read out of boring history books. Instead we read about Native ways.

Donna continues the message of hope, and adds another insight regarding Native American students' views of traditional school literature curriculums: "I thought we were going to read out of boring history books." Having spent 4 years working with Native American students, I found many of them viewed both history and literature as no more than a retelling of White ways. Traditional high school history and literature courses offer little to Native American learners about their history and their stories. In our program the real difference for Donna and her classmates was an inclusive view of literature: an opportunity to use literature to learn about themselves. Donna's words, ". . . Instead we read about ourselves. I'm glad I came here, because now I'm learning about Native ways," expose the power of an inquiry curriculum that has the potential to make learners appreciate the possibilities of schooling.

The vast majority (15 of 17) response journals that day contained similar comments; only two were neutral about class. As a teacher there are no more rewarding

words than those of Bruce and the others on that day. As I read their journals at home later that evening, I thought about Victor Hugo's words: "He who opens a school door, closes a prison." In my mind, an irrelevant curriculum is just as much a prison as any physical jail. An inquiry-based curriculum unlocks the doors of literacy for all students.

On another day I found a poem in Jennifer's response journals. I had not asked for a poem; she made that choice. At this point in the school year, students were choosing "how" to respond to the literature and the topics we were dealing with in class. Jennifer wrote:

A corn seed that had the
potential to grow into a tall
proud corn stalk.
To stand before this world
in its ultimate beauty in
complete harmony. . . .
The seed was torn from the
earth and placed in a little
room with a single glass
window . . . to grow. . . .
We grew on that reservation
always looking through that
window at the door.
The door's never open.
Every waking moment
the ones who have lived and
died in that little room . . .
Scream "Dear god! Why! . . .
Oh! Why are the children
made to suffer? Please
forgive me"--it said in a
whispering cry. .
If you listen you can
hear their echo from the
past. . . .
Running from the predators
of the world . . . time,

separation and fear the
child's mind is like leaves
before the wind.
I have learned many things
Teacher and I'm so grateful.
Thank you Jesse
And I am going to get out
of that little room to grow.
I'm going to open that door
and that window is going to shatter
and
the world is going to know
Jennifer

The following week I typed Jennifer's poem and made copies for all the students. It is an example of how having opportunities to choose literature, and choosing how to write about it can be meaningful and push all expectations to a higher level. I trace this change in my students to the power of choice, literature circles, and respecting the inquiry of the students. All inquiry came from concerns the students had expressed in their journals.

Students continued to select Native American literature, and those selections continued to drive our curriculum. One student's inquiry took us in the direction of examining the role of missionaries. That inquiry led us to the question "What had happened to Native American religion?" During the class following that question, Bruce brought to class a carefully folded copy of a speech given by the infamous orator, "Red Jacket." His speech concerned (of course) Native American religion.

Another student's inquiry led us to examine the BIA boarding schools. This resulted in an inquiry of the role of elders. By this point in my research, students were taking books home and going to the library on a regular basis.

The staff lunchroom conversation was often dominated by what was happening in the "writing class." Often Tony and I were in awe of the honesty, power, and beauty of the student's words. Writing no longer appeared to be a task to these students; instead, writing was a means of expressing their innermost thoughts. These young learners were finding something important about school on Saturday mornings. They were realizing that education could open doors, and it could also open their minds. Literacy brought them face to face with freedom. Frederick Douglass said, "Once you learn to read--you are forever free." Literacy held meaning in their lives now, and these young ones were thankful for the discovery. Literature had opened a new door, and the ending of Jennifer's poem echoed:

I have learned many things
Teacher and I'm so grateful.
Thank you Jesse
And I am going to get out
of that little room to grow.
I'm going to open that door
and that window is going to shatter
and
the world is going to know
Jennifer

Not only were the students' attitudes changing, Ms. Listo, Tony, and I were rediscovering the power of the written word on young minds. All three of us knew that what was needed at Upward Bound was: (a) to read and share the words of powerful writers; and (b) to read and respond freely to powerful literature. The real discovery was that as teachers and administrators, we, too, had grown and changed by reading and sharing the authors chosen by the students. James Baldwin (1979) writes ". . . how

literature is indispensable to the world." I decided, as a result of the student's responses, that no power on earth would keep me from shattering those windows that locked Native kids into an empty and meaningless literacy cycle of skills and drills. Before Spring semester ended, a ray of sunlight appeared at Upward Bound. It came in the form of a literature course--Literature 086.

Summer Year 1: Literature 086

Upward Bound students spend the month of June in the dorms at the University of Arizona. Traditionally, they take a writing class, math class, and a personal development class. An issue that quickly emerged for me was how to keep intact the sense of community we had developed during the year? The policy at Pima Community College groups students according to standardized measures based on math, reading, and writing skills assessment. This testing does not reflect the shift away from a skills-based model that we had all worked for during the year.

The director expected that I would teach one of the writing courses during the summer. I wanted a way to continue the students' shift in literacy perceptions. I wanted a way to keep this community of writers going. The original group I had been working with for the past two semesters would now (in the summer) be divided in two, between the Writing 070 course, (a course on writing paragraphs) and the Writing 100 course (a course on writing essays). Both courses focus on a deficit view of literacy, and are strongly geared towards a basic-skills curriculum. Both writing courses have very few, if any, meaningful engagements with powerful literature. I was in a dilemma. I could, if I so chose, teach the class in a subversive way. Still that would not solve the issue of

breaking up the group of students. I needed to keep the momentum going, and find a means of permanently circumventing those skills-driven courses. During the school year, I had complete curricular freedom. The summer program grant was tied to basic-skills courses taught at Pima Community College. An extra course was needed--an entry-level course--with room to continue changing those literacy perceptions of the learners in our program.

I clearly remember that night sitting at home searching through the Pima Community College catalog, hoping against hope for a course that would effectively keep the group together. Out of the blue I came across "Literature 086," a literature course that required no test scores, and that came with a holistic focus. I could not believe my luck. All I had to do now was persuade the powers-that-be to offer this course to our students during the summer. The course had not been taught at Pima Community College for many years, but it was listed in the catalog as an approved course that carried three college credits. The catalog description stated:

> This course explores a wide variety of popular authors in order to develop the attitudes, habits, and skills which make reading personally and socially meaningful and even enjoyable.

Nothing else could have described our journey, thus far, better than the above catalog description. Literature 086 became a vehicle to keep our community of learners together. It was not a writing course, but it was a literature course. In my classroom, the elements of literacy are not isolated. Where there is literature, there are reasons to write and discuss; reasons to create new ways to respond and to dream. This course was exactly what I needed not only for my study, but more importantly, it was what the

Upward Bound students needed. Pima Community College accepted the idea of the Literature 086 course being taught over the summer. The administration understood the need for such a course. Students would still take the required math and personal development courses along with the Literature 086. The syllabus I developed for the 086 course is in Appendix B and selected sections follow:

> Upward Bound students--Welcome to Pima Community College: A community of readers and writers using literature to view the world differently.
>
> We have believed in the power of the written word, when engaged by the imagination of a reader, to promote positive attitudes and to develop insight and understanding of what it means to be an honorable, respectable human being in this society. (Sims Bishop, 1990)
>
> Theme:
> Using literature as a means to reclaim a Native past and to understand the present portrayal of Native languages, culture, and tradition.
>
> Requirements:
> Students will keep a personal journal
> Students will collaborate together for:
> - literature circles
> - projects
> - computer days.
> - presentations
> - peer editing
>
> Texts:
> A Breeze Swept Through It. Luci Tapahonso
> Days of Obsidian, Days of Grace. Al Hunter, Denise Sweet, Jim Northrup, and Adrian C. Louis.
>
> Selections from:
> Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Nicholasa Mohr, Louis Rodriguez, Walt Whitman and many others.

One of our field trips during the summer was to a public reading of two nationally known Native American poets, Ofelia Zepeda and Luci Tapahonso. Ofelia Zepeda had

of her new book *Ocean Power* to both students and staff of Upward Bound. Hearing these poets read their own work was sheer rapture. The students and the entire Upward Bound staff enjoyed the evening tremendously. Ms. Listo authorized me to use summer program funds to purchase a copy of Luci Tapahonso's *A Breeze Swept Through It* for each student. Students brought their copy to the reading hoping for an autograph. Each of the authors read her work in a powerful, dignified, and serene voice. Luci read one poem, "Alvin," that my students remembered. We had shared this poem earlier during the Fall semester. At the reading I was sitting behind Andrew, who turned to me at one point saying, "Jesse, I can't believe she is reading 'Alvin.'"

When Ofelia Zepeda spoke, she acknowledged the presence of the students. Many, she said, were from her own home community. The smiles of the students at that moment will be held in my heart forever. I watched the faces of my students as she read her poem "Ocean Power." I remember thinking that their smiles must resemble the smiles of African American's when Jackie Robinson broke America's color line in baseball. There is something divine to seeing your culture, your race, and your people validated before your eyes.

The following day in class I asked everyone how they felt when Ofelia read her work. Each one repeated the mantra of "powerful and special." Josie shared the words Ofelia had said to her while signing her book: "You can do it. . . . We can do great things. . . . We are O'odham." Right through that summer, and probably for the rest of their lives, Ofelia's words will continue to whisper in their ears: "You can do it. . . . We can do great things. . . . We are O'odham." The impact of hearing Luci Tapahonso and Ofelia

Zepeda was still felt during Year 2 as we read Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Al Hunter, Langston Hughes, Adrian C. Louis, Nicholasa Mohr, Jim Northrup, Louis Rodriguez, Denise Sweet, and Walt Whitman. The students were so inspired by the poetry reading that we decided to publish our own poetry book. We accepted Zepeda's words; we could do great things.

Poetry Café

Feeling more and more confident that literature had begun to weave its magic on my students, I asked them if they could come up with a way to share their love of poetry with other Upward Bound students. The students came up with the idea of a night of poetry at the dorms and the "Poetry Café" was born. I approached Ms. Listo with the idea, and she gave the "green light" with a bonus of $50 for soda, nachos, and salsa. I cannot overstate that the professional and emotional support that the director, Ms. Listo, provided me with throughout my time at Upward Bound was priceless. With our budget of $50, the students and I brainstormed possibilities of having outsiders attend our poetry café. Once again our social writing sheets filled up with all kinds of suggestions. Some were realistic while others were not, some went as far as throwing a house party with DJ's and dancing. Finally, we went with two suggestions: (a) every student would write a poem for a class poetry book, and (b) those who so desired would read their poems at the Poetry Café. I suggested we create a cover for our book and dedicate it to someone whom the students admired within their community. They made their decision in no time. They wanted to dedicate their book of poetry to Ms. Listo. This pleased me tremendously. It was Ms. Listo who had given the "OK" to purchase for each student a

copy of Luci Tapahonso's book, who arranged for the students to attend the poetry reading, and who spoke to Ofelia Zepeda about a bunch of O'odham and Yaqui kids who loved her poetry.

In the classroom, students were writing new poems all week. They went to the computer room, typed them up, and helped each other edit. They shared ideas for poems. Together we planned our book of poetry. The cover was a cut and paste job from a clip art program. During class we practiced reading our poems. I was also writing a poem that all the students wanted to hear, but it was my secret. The students' poems ran the gamut from ordinary poems expected of secondary students to simply astounding ones. One poem was written by 15-year-old Sophia, as a result of her regular use of the library, where she discovered Marcus Garvey, an African American revolutionary leader of the 1930s. Sophia came to class very excited one day to tell us all about Garvey. She was making connections between Native Americans and other Americans, who were also oppressed, whose culture and heritage were also being lost. Sophia saw in Garvey hope for Native Americans. Her poem shows how Ofelia Zepeda touched her with her words, "You can do it. . . . We can do great things. . . . We are O'odham." With those words and the thoughts of Marcus Garvey, Sophia wrote her own words of hope for her fellow students:

Blessed my eyes this morning.
The Sun is on the rise once again.
We are blessed with the light
Blessed with the life to see that bright light once again.
Another chance to see the one's I love.
Although,
there is so much trouble in the world today.

But, everyone is a million miles away.
Everyone has the right to choose their own
Destiny.
But,
some follow the choices of others.
They follow the dreams and hopes of their friends
Forgetting their own dreams and hopes for the best.
Let us fight and rebuild our Indian nations
Fight for our rights.
Let us divide and rule.
In every chest there is a heart that beats with pride and happiness.
But,
some steal our pride.
WHY?
WHY, does it have to be this way?
Some must refuse to follow.
Some must lead.
People say they care.
Look around,
see the suffering on our reservations
I'll tell you something:
Some people got everything
Some people got nothing
Some people got hopes and dreams
Some got no aim it seems
Words echo in my mind
Marcus Garvey speaks:
"A people without the knowledge of their past history,
origin and culture is like a tree without roots"
Blessed my eyes this morning
Saw a new light, Brighter than before
A New Destiny
FOR ALL INDIAN NATIONS
NEW HOPES AND NEW DREAMS
All our own
A place called Change --Sophia

When Sophia finished reading her poem, a silence swept over the classroom. No one said a word. With her poem, Sophia had expressed what every Yaqui and O'odham student in that class felt about living in present day America. Everyone agreed that

Sophia would be our first reader at the Poetry Café. Talking about Sophia's poem, Luke said it best: "That poem will let them know we have power." I caught Luke's word "power" and asked whether or not he thought writing had power. Luke was a tough kid, experimenting with gang life in Tucson; he carried some weight in our class. At first he did not reply, but quietly after class he told me that ". . . there was no power in school writing, but the writing in here has power." I assured Luke that this class is school, and he replied, "But in here we read and write because we want to--because we have things to say." Luke's statement is a marker for this study. He reminded me that literature is powerful and writing about how you feel is powerful as well. Huck (1987), about the power to transform in literature, writes: "Literature has the power to take us out of ourselves and return us to ourselves, a changed self" (p. 69). Sophia is an example of a changed self via her experience with Marcus Garvey and her pen.

Once Sophia had read her poem all the students now wanted to share the limelight. Another poem that caught me by surprise was written by Ralph. Ralph, a Yaqui, often expressed himself artistically. Initially, he chose to sketch or paint religious icons: the Madonna, etc. During my first year at Upward Bound, I did not realize how significant his many drawings were; they often showed up on the edge of his class assignments. This day though he chose to write a poem. Ralph's poem is dedicated to "The Creator:"

GREAT SPIRIT

I give the medicine you give to us to heal one another.
I show others the power that it has, that you put in it.
I pray for hope, the people.

I pray for the land we have.
I pray for the old,
may they live forever in spirit and life.

I give you my heart,
I give the power and love to you great spirit.
I give
I stand
I deliver--for you.
I give leadership to others.
I give and that's what I do.
I am a giver for you and my people to you.
Oh great spirit I follow you.

Once again, a silence swept over the class as Ralph read. We were all aware of Ralph's artistic talents with his drawings, but his poetry took us by surprise. Ralph's smile was the only evidence I needed to understand that this Poetry Café was transforming my students into writers. On the night of the Poetry Café we had a packed house. All Upward Bound students were there. Some family members had driven at least an hour from the reservation in Sells to hear these young O'odham and Yaqui voices. The event began with a student reading the dedication to Ms. Listo. This small gesture had Ms. Listo smiling one of her biggest smiles. Sophia then read her poem. Ralph and every other student, one after the other, stood up at the podium and read with vigor. Finally it was my turn. There is a great deal a teacher learns about his or her students in the course of a school year. I learned that these students, though so young, had lived hard lives and experienced a level of poverty seldom acknowledged in America. With my students in mind, I wrote this poem for them, my teachers. With trembling hands, I read:

A Teacher's Dream

Your smiles, your laughs
your dreams
they are my reasons for being.
This classroom of cold empty chairs
these four walls and chalkboards
this is my place.
This is where I stand against
NIGHTMARES.
This world is hard, it can ruin a life.
Drugs,
Crime,
Poverty
Racism
these are the nightmares waiting for you.
Here in this room I stand against
these things armed with
Love
Hope
Literature
Poetry
and
a vision.
I have come to love you all.
I will not allow the NIGHTMARES
to come for you.
I will teach you how to dream
I will give you visions of hope
I will arm you with knowledge
You will be educational warriors.
Giants armed with truth
Your arrows will be
Justice
and
Hope.
Your bow a vision.
This classroom,
these walls,
these chairs,
and this chalkboard
they hold our dreams
our divinity,

our future,
We are stars in a dark sky
You are light in a dark world.

In my heart
you have planted seeds of hope
and visions of
educational warriors
reaching
for your language
your culture
your traditions.
You have forever changed me
You have made me a better man.
You have taught me the power of truth.

I say to the NIGHTMARES of life
Come
They are ready
They are strong
They are stars in the night
Shining brightly for all to see
You can't beat these young ones
They are hope
They are truth
They are our visions
of tomorrow.
They are a new kind of warrior.
You NIGHTMARES better run
from my educational warriors
No NIGHTMARE can harm these young ones.
No NIGHTMARE can touch them
The world is changing
These new warriors will bring back their
CULTURE,
TRADITIONS,
and
LANGUAGE.

When they grow old
and teach
their young ones
about fighting

you
NIGHTMARES
they will remember
who taught them
how to shatter you.

The word teacher
will be whispered
and hope
will be born again.

Go be my educational warriors
change the world
You are hope
You are truth
You are pieces of my heart
Be stars in the night.
When you are gone
Your teacher will be looking for you in the stars at night.
I will hear echoes of you speaking
O'odham, Yaqui and Diné
I will see your traditions in schools
Your culture will change the world.
Your names will be power and I will say I was their
teacher.
My heart will sing your songs.

It had been just a year since I first met these O'odham and Yaqui adolescents. A common theme that cut across their writing was their dark struggle with poverty and all the social problems that accompanied being poor and Native American in America. In *Literacy Events in a Community of Young Writers* (Y. Goodman & Wilde, 1992), Bird writes about similar themes, especially when students are exploring fantasy genres. Many of my students attended the same school that Bird studied. The only real difference between her study and mine was the conflicts with evil in her study were based on fantasy

and the problems for my students were now based in reality. My poem was a naive attempt to protect these students whom I had come to both admire and love.

During the year, we read powerful Native American authors, among others. I read about the student's hopes and fears in their journals, from poems and reactions they had to an array of literature. They had written letters to their future children. In their letters they warned future generations about drugs and crime. They told their future generations why language and culture means everything to Native people.

There was magic in the air that night as we read our poems in the student lounge at the University of Arizona. Afterwards, we drank soda and ate nachos with salsa, knowing we had celebrated the gift of literature, and for a moment all our nightmares disappeared. My students that night were giants, they were published poets, and there were laughter and tears as we signed copies of each others' poetry books.

At school the following day, I repeatedly heard of the need to have a Poetry Café every year. Thus, a reputation developed in the Native American community for the Upward Bound program as the place to find new and upcoming great young poets. After the Poetry Café, students were invited to read poems on the reservation for important events. The Poetry Café was a sign of things to come. As Jennifer wrote in her poem, these students were ready to shatter those reservation windows. I realized, once we had our Poetry Café, that my students had become full members of what Smith (1988) calls the Literacy Club.

Open House Invites Parents into the Curriculum

Ms. Listo approached me before the end of the summer to enlist the help of my students at the yearly Open House. This is a big event for everyone involved at Upward Bound, where the families of every student are invited for dinner in the ballroom at the University of Arizona. Ms. Listo wanted to share with the parents what had become known in the Upward Bound Program as our "Sacred Journey." She hoped the students would conduct the welcome, give the opening speech, and read their poems throughout the evening. Parents would be visiting our classroom, and the social writing sheets would remain on the walls. Ms. Listo wanted me to share with the parents what happens in our classroom. We spent 3 days preparing for Open House, selecting the poems that would be read and the students who would perform different assignments. To fully understand the power that this Open House has on students, I share the entry in my curriculum notebook from the day before open house:

> Today I witnessed a miracle, I saw students everywhere working diligently on their own, revising and editing their papers with extreme care, every single word and sentence. Emerson, who has told me on many occasions: "I don't do second drafts and that's it," was asking for help working on his poem. I have in the past pushed him to use the computer, without success, but today he spent the entire day painfully typing away one finger at a time. (Summer Year 1)

This Open House, even to my most reluctant learners, was a powerful authentic literacy event worthy of all their effort. Heine and Hornstein (1996) write about their own evolving pedagogy and the creation of authentic learning experiences for learners:

> Learning happens best in wholes rather than in disjointed, decontextualized parts.
>
> Learning happens best when learners perceive and participate in authentic learning uses of what is being learned.

> Learning happens best when we value and take advantage of the social nature of learning.
>
> Learning happens best when learners have control over what, when, and how they learn.
>
> Learning happens best when learners have the opportunity to reflect on their own learning. (p. 181)

Heine and Hornstein list the premises of their own understanding of authentic learning engagements. These Upward Bound students were working together, revising, editing, typing, even cleaning up the classroom for Open House. They did not have to be pushed or asked. The power of having a real purpose for using the writing strategies we worked on all year was again taking hold of this community of writers. Like the Poetry Café, Open House was another authentic event, unplanned in our curriculum, that brought the need for revising and editing to the forefront of our writing community. I knew that in the future these literacy events could become a natural part of my curriculum. Only now did I begin to understand that the power of publication had come from the walls of our classroom. Publication continued to influence my classroom and my own evolving pedagogy. The curriculum of emerging authentic learning experiences that Heine and Hornstein write about began to make perfect sense to me. Authentic literacy events and inquiry provided me with a meaningful focus for my curriculum. We were not just learning to read and write better, we were learning to use literacy to change the world by presenting our thoughts to those who mattered most. Baldwin (1979) claims people write to change the world: "If you change just one man's view, you change it all."

Students desperately wanted to welcome their parents in their native tongue. Rudy, who is Yaqui, agreed to make the opening welcome in all four languages: Yaqui, Tohono O'odham, Spanish, and English. "We are honored by your presence tonight, and we are happy to share bread with you here at our Open House." Rudy spent the day on the phone checking with his family for Yaqui and Spanish translations, and then checking the O'odham translation with his peers at Upward Bound. During the day, Rudy commented on a piece I shared earlier in the year with his class: it was Scott Momaday's concept of the significance of words. Ofelia Zepeda, in her introduction to Yetta Goodman's study of writing O'odham, used the Momaday quote to emphasize the importance of words in the O'odham Nation. I copied this quote, and placed it on the wall in the Fall semester

> Some words that are thrown into the air are regular everyday words, but others are meant to invoke, to heal, to harm. But even everyday words, like the words that are meant to have special power, are embedded with their own strength. It is for this reason that so many believe in the power of words. (Momaday, 1995)

It was with Momaday's words in mind that Rudy chose and translated his welcome for Open House. Language is important in Native communities, and translations are checked and rechecked many times to ensure that there are no mistakes. Rudy, an honorable young Yaqui, understood this responsibility well. He worked long and hard to ensure that his translation would not offend anyone present. The night of the Open House Rudy opened in O'odham "Seen sup en the-ath nup th a je yah." He repeated the welcome in Yaqui, Spanish, and finally in English. Ms. Listo, Tony, and I

understood this moment as a sign of what was to come. Later that night in my curriculum journal, I wrote:

> Rudy's words certainly opened a new door for his generation. It is not uncommon to hear an elder greet an audience in his Native tongue, but a young man of 15 opening a public gathering and greeting everyone present in their native tongue was for sure an eye opener.

I had asked Angelica, a Yaqui student, if she would write a speech, sharing what she and the other students had learned all year. Angelica is an outstanding writer, who became quite an outspoken young lady. I knew Angelica would explain what we had learned at Upward Bound. Writing the speech was easy for her, but Angelica did not want to refer to her writing during her speech. This task was especially important to Angelica who had often quoted these words:

> Where I come from, the words most highly valued are those from the heart, unpremeditated and unrehearsed. Among the Pueblo people, a written speech or statement is highly suspect because the true feelings of the speaker remain hidden as she reads words that are detached from occasion and the audience. (Silko, 1996, p. 48)

Angelica wrote and practiced her speech for 2 days. She wanted, more than anything else, for the words of her speech to come from her heart. Her speech that night began:

> I want to welcome the parents and families of Upward Bound students to our open house. I was asked to share what we have learned at Upward Bound. We have learned that there are things in the hearts of young Native Americans that cannot be buried. We have important things to say, we have powerful feelings to share, and we must not hide them from the outside world. We must challenge the world, change it and remind it that like Vine Deloria said, "If we surrender, we die. . . . Our ideas will overcome your ideas. . . ." We have discovered our past, and learned that our language does not have to stay lost. We have found a new power in our hearts inspired by the voices of Native American authors like Ofelia Zepeda, Sherman Alexie, Leslie Marmon Silko, Luci Tapahonso. We have read

> the words of Chief Joseph, and of warriors like Crazy Horse, and medicine men like Geronimo. We have found our future in our past, and from Dylan Thomas we have learned that Native Americans cannot go gently in that good night. I have things in my heart to share, and I am no longer fearful of sharing them. I have learned that my pen can become the wings of my dreams. . . .

Angelica forced me to understand that this study and our classes were about so much more than reading and writing. She opened my eyes to how much is gained from placing inquiry at the center of curriculum, rather than reading and writing. What Momaday said about the power of words and the O'odham people is true for all Native people. The words of these Native American young people held power that night. Just like our Poetry Café, Open House was a complete success. Language rooted in personal and social inquiry became the outlet for this gathering of Native voices.

What Does It All Mean?

At the Upward Bound program, I connected knowing the human truth to understanding what makes learners eager to come to school. I am reminded of De Saint-Exupery's "The Little Prince." There is a message in a conversation near the end of the book that no teacher researcher can forget when seeking the truth.

> The little Prince asked: "Then the men where you live raise five thousand roses in the same garden, and they do not find in it what they are looking for."
>
> Antoine's reply: "They do not find it."
>
> The Little Prince: "And yet what they are looking for could be found in one single rose, or in a little water. . . . But the eyes are blind. One must look with heart. . . ." (1982)

I hope that those who read my study realize that what educators are looking for can be found in one single learner if they search with more than just their eyes. My role

as a teacher researcher provided me the option to follow both my heart and the facts, as Demott said the "human truth." The small and large group discussions, the comments from student response journals, the issues exposed in the social writing sheets, authentic literacy events like the Poetry Café and Open House along with my observations proposed that I find the human truth. As the researcher I end chapter 5 with my after class journal entry from the last day of class, Summer Year 1:

> Today as I left class I asked myself the question "What did I learn?" I keep returning to James Baldwin and "The bottom line is this: You write in order to change the world, knowing perfectly well that you probably can't, but also knowing that literature is indispensable to the world."
>
> What did I do to build on Baldwin words "changing the world"--
>
> I had encouraged their voices, I set no limitations. I saw my job as a proponent of opportunity to write without restrictions. I needed my students to feel safe with their thoughts and hopes. I worked to create an atmosphere of wonder where writing was celebrated not judged. Every piece of paper, every word, every effort I cheered on. In the beginning writing was a task for them. I am not claiming to have created great writers, only to have created students who feel wonderful about writing. If I had my way, I would howl this point at the moon until every teacher knew this idea of feeling wonderful about writing, and the significance of it. This is how I feel about writing and this is what I wanted for my students. This "feeling wonderful" about writing is destroyed somewhere in their schooling, I wanted them to remember it is not always that way.
>
> And then what did I learn?
>
> I learned that very first year that Native Americans do not just "put words on paper." Momaday, Tapahonso and Harjo, know. The rich history of the great Native American Orator's in *To Touch the Earth,* they too know that the Native American culture is rich in the power of expression. My curriculum followed one direction, and that is to give back to my students the richness of their heritage, a heritage that is so neglected outside Upward Bound. This must be my one and only goal. If I can continue to do this the rest will follow. In essence I want my students to be Scott and Luci. In my heart they are. Today in class the students wrote on the board the words "Thank you." No teacher could ask for more.

The above is a piece of my human truth. Curriculum forces surfacing in the study at this point are:

- Getting to know my students,
- Sharing my personal self,
- Discovering my own culture as I explored my students',
- The importance of real choice and providing time for choice,
- Honesty about what I don't know,
- Readings selected by students, their own and those of professionals,
- Literature circles and time for talk and self reflection.

Chapters 4 and 5 set the stage for chapter 6, by continuing to examine the context of how curriculum emerged through literacy perceptions, interviews, journals, and my curriculum notebook. The search for truth will continue in chapter 6 as we boldly step into the second year.

CHAPTER 6

A SACRED MESSENGER CALLS HIS NAME: FOR ALEX

In this chapter I provide data to document the growth of the students over the 2-year period. I paint with words and pictures our curriculum, where writing empowers the imaginations of students to respond to personal and social issues in new and meaningful ways.

In O'odham culture there is a very sacred symbol known as "The Man in the Maze." According to Angie Listo, "It represents their universal worldview as a people and their origins. It is unique and the only symbol of its kind. It does not exist anywhere else in the world but in the land of the Tohono O'odham."

This chapter details five literacy events that became lasting impressions from the journey we made through the maze during the second year of this study. I focus on student reactions to certain events.

These literacy events are listed as follows:

1. We Join the Art World—Fall Year 2
2. The Emergence of a Living Poets Society—Spring Year 2
3. Poetry Reading at Borders Book Shop—Summer Year 2
4. Changing History through Drama—Summer Year 2
5. The Walls Themselves Speak Our Names—Summer Year 2

The writing of these five literacy events takes on a somewhat different tone than previous chapters. I write it with a Tohono O'odham student, Alex Torres, in my mind.

During my two years at Upward Bound, Alex was a special student. He had high hopes and bright dreams; one of the finest O'odham young men I have had the honor to teach. Sadly, Alex died this past year in an automobile accident in Tucson, Arizona. His sudden death was a tragic loss to all who knew him, and his short life was a gift we will treasure forever.

For me chapter 6 came with major writer's block; for 3 months or so I could not move past the first line. In my sleep I had visions of all my Tucson students, Alex was there, and it was his voice that I heard over everything else. "Jesse," he said, "tell the story of our journey so your readers hear my voice." So with memories of Alex Torres standing in our classroom behind a video camera, I tell our story.

By the second year the students and I were engaged in the literacy events germinating within our community of learners. Our writing program had a growing passion that overwhelmed students, staff, and teachers alike. The students eagerly looked forward to our Saturday meetings. By the middle of the Fall semester we increased our every-other-week meetings to weekly meetings. Students came to school during the holidays for a writing workshop and two poetry workshops during the second year. The students and I seemed to want more encounters with literacy, like the ones we had during the first year. Students knew they had choices and a voice in our writing class. They were fully aware that there were no traditional ways of responding and thinking about literature. They knew they were free to express their thoughts on being Native American, being young, or just being. The atmosphere of our classroom was "this is a friendly place—join in the discussion" in keeping with the song from the popular '80s television show Cheers:

". . . where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came. . . ." We were continuously learning as we joked, laughed, cried, and showed our frustration while responding to our readings. During our second year together we knew each other by more than just our names. We saw our classroom as a community engaging in a new outlook, one that shifted from hopelessness to a vision of the future. In our classroom there were endless possibilities. In Joel Spring's book *The Sorting Machine Revisited*, he argues that schooling can be a dichotomy:

> Education can be for freedom or slavery. . . . On one side, it can be used to give future citizens the knowledge and ability to protest and advance their political rights and beliefs. On the other side, it can be used to enslave citizens by shaping behavior and beliefs to conform to the needs of political power. (Spring, 1989, p. VII)

We transformed our classroom, shifting that dichotomy to an education for freedom. Spring (1989) states that the shift to "education . . . for freedom" is a conscious choice (p. VII).

Curriculum as inquiry and access to multiple sign systems freed the students in our classroom from any notion of a disconnected curriculum. The students in our classroom became writers who learned to care about school for the first time in their lives. This "caring" was purposeful; it was not some unplanned outcome. Everything happening at Upward Bound was the result of an understanding of curriculum as an emerging process. Harste (1993) explains the emerging curriculum process as the criteria for judging our own as well as our students' learning and inquiry:

> Curriculum as conversations between disciplines, sign systems, and personalized knowing provides the teacher with a frame for planning an inquiry curriculum. This frame alerts teachers to curriculum possibilities of a specific topic and

> provides them a process vehicle for readying themselves for handling an emerging curriculum. (p. 5)

As Harste states, inquiry becomes a way to handle an emerging curriculum of possibilities. In our classroom both my students and I are free to care about what is learned. In *Radical Reflections* (1993), Fox calls this kind of learning "freedom." She writes about "aching to care." The students in my classroom are aching to care about learning and the celebration of our literacy.

How does one document caring? In order to show the reader how and what changes took place for the students, over the 2-year period I recorded the actual changes: the approximate number of words students would write; do their writings have any spelling errors?; how many? The same questions I ask with punctuation. Are sentences complete? Do the students use outside sources? What are the prominent themes? Do the students see writing as powerful? Tables 6.1 and 6.2 provide statistics on the analysis of more than 500 individual writing samples from Year 1 and Year 2.

Table 6.1

Writing Statistics from Year 1

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Average length	50 words	120 words	250 words
Spelling errors	> 5%	> 5%	> 3%
Punctuation errors	> 25%	> 20%	> 10%
Complete sentences	< 50%	< 60%	> 80%
Quoting outside source	0%	30%	60%
Theme of Hopelessness	90%	70%	40%
Themes of Hope	10%	30%	60%
Power of writing	0%	30%	70%

Table 6.2

Writing Statistics from Year 2

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Average length	280 words	350 words	>400 words
Spelling errors	> 5%	> 5%	> 3%
Punctuation errors	10%	10%	5%
Complete sentences	80%	85%	98%
Quoting outside source	60%	60%	65%
Theme of Hopelessness	40%	20%	10%
Themes of Hope	60%	80%	90%
Power of writing	70%	75%	90%

I read each of the writing samples marking them for length, spelling, punctuation, and complete sentences. I also noted for each writing piece whether or not the writer quoted an outside source and represented the collective theme of hope, hopelessness, and the power of writing. The table shows that in the Fall Year 1 semester students' writing length was an average of 50 words and by the end of Year 1 they were writing an average of 250 words. Their spelling errors diminished from 5% at the beginning of the year to 3% at the end of the year. Punctuation errors diminished from 25% at the beginning of the year to 10% at the end of the year. Punctuation and spelling errors are recorded only from final drafts. The reason for the drop is consistent with the practice of writing workshop (Atwell, 1998). As students immerse themselves in peer/self editing, errors eventually decrease.

Another aspect of writing I documented statistically was the themes on which the students wrote. The majority of students' writing focused on a sense of hopelessness in

relationship to the loss of language, tradition, and culture, especially during Fall Year 1. This diminished over the first year while a sense of hope appeared and increased from 30% in the Fall to 60% in the Summer. Another theme that emerged from their writing during Spring Year 1 was seeing writing as powerful. As students were exposed to Native American authors and had the freedom to react and write about the literature they were reading, students increasingly wrote about their writing as a means of personal expression. The following is one such example:

> Dear Jesse, So far in this class I have learned that just one single word gives a lot of meaning and has many different definitions. I have learned that music and poems can be interpreted by anyone and there doesn't have to be a right or wrong answer because only the author/tribe it is about will know. (Also with paintings.) I have also learned that reading and writing are very powerful to many cultures and is a way of expression. When people get together, many things (sometimes the impossible) can be done. [Felipa, Year 2]

I read every one of the students' writing samples and marked them for length, spelling, punctuation, complete sentences, quotations, and themes. The table shows that their length of writing increased from an average length of 280 to 400 words. Their spelling errors diminished from 5% at the beginning of Year 2 to 3% at the end of the year. Punctuation errors diminished from 10% to 5%. The concept of viewing writing as powerful continued to grow during Year 2. By the end of Year 2, 18 students had directly discussed a view that writing was a form of power in at least three of their writing samples. A significant change is seen in their overall themes, a sense of hopelessness seemed to decrease while themes of hope became more prominent.

Both tables show that the quality and quantity of students' writing improved. What the numbers do not point out is that the freedom to choose topics and write about

culturally meaningful themes impacted the intensity of writing engagements. To understand the change in intensity or "aching to write" one needs to go beyond mere numbers and hear the voices involved. In this chapter I use pictures and words to move beyond the numbers.

During the second year in the program, I continued to teach the students I had from the previous year. The only difference was that Tony Gatewood was now teaching another writing class. Tony and I still got together and shared ideas and literature over lunch, but in essence I was on my own again. I missed Tony's presence; he left behind a powerful tale of Native authors for us to follow.

We Join the Art World—Fall Year 2

The following is a snapshot at the beginning of Year 2 of my students working on an art project that is to go on display for a month at the art gallery in Tucson High Magnet School. I want to move our art journey forward a bit, but will return back to the beginning of that journey right after this quick preview of our learning journey.

Imagine, if you will, an art studio (our classroom) with these words coming from the compact disk player at the center of the room as you enter, ". . . You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one—I hope one day you'll join us—and the world will be as one. . ." (Lennon, 1971). At one edge of the room, two female adolescents sit intently reading, searching for some perfect quotes. At the other end, two adolescent males are mixing acrylic paints, while searching for the most perfect colors. They talk and joke as they set up plastic plates filled with bright colors. There are art supplies, paint, and easels carefully pushed to the outer edges of the room. In the center of the room covering the

floor is a 10' by 10' cream colored canvas. The scene initially appears somewhat chaotic, but a closer look establishes that everyone is working. Some are talking, others are sketching outlines on the canvas. Two or three other students' hands are covered in red, yellow, black, or white paint, and they are singing in harmony with, ". . . People say I'm lazy dreaming my life away—When I say I'm OK—I'm just watching the wheels go by. . ." (Lennon, 1980). At the same time, two students are having a serious discussion as to the position of the American flag in their art project. The conversation goes like this:

> Sha-Shin: I think it should be upside down 'cause Native people are in distress all over this country.
>
> Damon: And what do you think the elders will say—our people who served this nation in war
>
> Sha-Shin: Well, I say we vote on it. What do you think Jesse?
>
> Jesse: I like the voting. Go with it. (Transcript from art project video, Fall Year 2)

As Sha-Shin and Damon leave the room to get the opinion of others, two more students enter, smiling and laughing. They are carrying large pieces of paper, burnt at the edges. It is a listing of the names of hundreds of broken treaties smeared with red handprints. One student is heard pleading, "Oh no! Not Jesse's hippie music! Let me hook up some real Rasta chants." The music changes to a strong Jamaican accent, ". . . One good thing about music—when it hits you feel OK—Trenchtown rock—groving—Groving—hit me with music. . ." (Marley, 1975). In the classroom students are moving this way and that way, talking about paint, cutting and pasting, and the movement of creation. A contagious sense of joy and excitement fills every corner of the room.

Students are engaged in a dance of art, movement, music, words, and meaning. There is no need to imagine any longer. These young people are not "watching the wheels go by;" they are turning their own wheels. This scene is one or two segments of a regular Saturday morning in the Upward Bound Writing Program.

> How should teachers be prepared? . . . [W]e should help them learn how to inquire, to seek connections between their chosen subject and other subjects, to give up the notion of teaching their own subject only for its own sake, and to inquire deeply into its place in the human life broadly construed. (Noddings, 1992, p. 178)

Noddings is addressing how teachers need to be prepared. She provides a glimpse of an alternative approach to education for learners. Noddings (1992), in *The Challenge to Care In Schools,* argues that a factor of student dissatisfaction lies with the traditional curriculum in secondary schools.

At the Upward Bound Program when I abandoned the traditional way of covering curriculum, the students were transformed from reluctant readers and writers to eager users of multiple sign systems. These users of multiple sign systems were always there, but I never recognized them in the past. The recognition of multiple sign systems came to the forefront early on during the second year as we joined the art world.

Our entry into the art world began innocently enough. Students often drew sacred symbols, such as the man in the maze on the board, on their folders, and even on the papers they handed in. Art was frequently used during social writing engagements. I knew art was important to these students but I never embraced it fully into the writing class. In the Fall of the second year that changed.

There was a new assistant coordinator at Upward Bound, Ryan Huna. Ryan is an artist, and he had just completed the illustrations for a new comic book, *Tribal Force*. This comic book is the first ever to be written and illustrated by a Native American. Ryan often visited our classroom and commented on the students' sketches in their writing pieces. One day Ryan suggested that our class take up an offer from the Art Gallery at Tucson High Magnet School.

Edna San Miguel, manager of the year round Art Gallery at Tucson High Magnet School, had invited the students to submit a piece for the Gallery. The November theme was "Broken Words." Over lunch Ryan and I discussed the possibility and decided on a project that integrated art and writing simultaneously. Ryan clearly had a positive impact on the students in my class, especially on those who called themselves artists. Even students who previously never expressed themselves artistically were interested in what Ryan had to say when he came to speak to our class the second Saturday in September. Once Ryan planted the seed with the students about the piece for the gallery, I did not give it much more thought until much later at home that evening. An event had taken place that morning in class that set in motion our entry into the world of art.

Sha-Shin took a book from the "give away" table in the school library. The "give away" table consisted of books the library was about to discard. Students really seem to appreciate that the library would give away their old books.

On reading the title of one book, *Reading America* (Schenck, 1978), Sha-Shin immediately picked up the book. As any good reader does, she scanned the pages and towards the end of the book found a list of treaties. The list was impressively long. In

this particular book on reading skills, the purpose of the list is to help students practice their scanning skills. Sha-Shin, who is a politically cognizant Native American adolescent, was deeply saddened to see the list of about 250 treaties used in this fashion. After class she showed me the list, and said, "Every treaty here was broken, so many lives destroyed by White lies, and now their lives reduced to some stupid list to enhance your memory." On a separate sheet of paper Sha-Shin wrote the names and dates of several of the treaties. She then repeatedly crossed each one out with a red pen. I asked her if she wanted to share her responses with the whole class the following week. She agreed.

That evening, as I wrote in my notebook about the incident, I thought about how we might use Sha-Shin's response as part of our art project. The following week in class Sha-Shin passed the book around so everyone could see the list for themselves. She expressed how she felt and listened to see if her colleagues had similar feelings. Support came from the entire class. One student said, "Man those treaties are smeared with the blood of our people." Our discussion continued, and I asked them if there was a way they could show their disapproval. The previous Saturday Sha-Shin had me thinking "visual literacy," but I wanted the students to explore possibilities for themselves, so I kept quiet. Damon, one of our resident artists, came up with an idea. He was holding the list that Sha-Shin had made with the treaties all crossed out in red. "We could blow them up to posters, like Jesse does with our poems, and then smear them with red hand prints, and hang them around our class room for the whole world to see."

Before the next class, I went to Kinko's and turned the list into 12 individual posters. With the art gallery offer on my mind, I was consumed with thinking how we

could incorporate these treaties with bloodied hands into the art display. I went to sleep that night thinking about those red hands, and awoke later unable to sleep. In my dream I saw a tepee covered with multi-colored hands. With a fresh cup of coffee, I took my laptop outside and typed under the Tucson star-filled sky:

> Jesse, you are restless, you could never have felt that way about the list. Not the way Sha-Shin did. Not until she shared her feelings about it with you did you even think about it, but that thought is important Jesse. The question now is "Could art help others understand how she feels?" Perhaps we could build a tepee, and write the names of the treaties on it, and smear them with handprints. Wow it would have to be big—we will see. (Curriculum Notebook, Year 2)

During the week I spoke with Ryan over the phone, and I told him of the current events in our classroom and our ideas for the art piece. I also told him we would need lots of paint. He appeared to like the idea and agreed to pick up some paint for us. My agenda for class that day addresses the issue of visual literacy and the possibility of creating an exhibit for the Art Gallery. Taking a look at the agenda provides insight into my thinking:

> Dear Colleagues,
>
> A couple of weeks ago Edna San Miguel, the Art Gallery Manager from Tucson High School, invited students from the Upward Bound Program to submit a piece of work for their November gallery on the theme "Broken Words.". We have since discussed how we could show our distaste for the list of treaties Sha-Shin found in the book. I have been thinking, maybe we could submit something connected to the posters of the treaties to the gallery.
>
> Everyone knows they should never give Jesse BIG IDEAS, because then his ideas just get bigger and crazier. Then Jesse's students start to think of even bigger and crazier ideas. Then everyone has to work hard. And finally when it is all over, the whole world realizes that Native American young people can do anything they really want to. So forgive me, but I think I might have volunteered you all to doing some big crazy project for the exhibit. I love it. Put a mountain in front of Upward Bound students—and they will climb it—put an ocean in front of them—and they will either swim it or drink it—put a cookie on the Moon—and they will find a way to eat it. Welcome to the Upward Bound's writing class

where Native American students climb mountains, swim oceans, and find cookies on the Moon. How about a vote on it.
Jesse

You see things and you say "Why?"; but I dream things that never were and say "Why not?"—George Bernard Shaw

Agenda:
Rethinking visual literacy
Art project for the "Broken Words" exhibit
Jesse's tepee idea

"Our life is earth And Climbing. We couldn't be butterflies inside. Make the best of it and enjoy caterpillar living! . . . (But) . . . I saw a butterfly—There can be more to life."
(Hope for the Flowers by Trina Paulus)
*Are we butterflies or caterpillars? (Curriculum Notebook, Year 2)

I brought the posters to class, thinking I could sell everyone on the tepee idea. I learned a great deal that day about art, authenticity, and the fact that I still knew little about big art projects and Native Americans. I read the agenda to class at the beginning. I had initially planned a mini-lesson on visual literacy, but the students were so excited about the art project, we just kept returning to it. I shared my idea about the tepee, together with Damon's idea of smearing red handprints over it. They were quiet, then someone got bold and told me in a very lighthearted way that tepees are not now, and never were, used by southwest Native people. The students were not put off by my tepee idea, just slightly amused at my knowledge--or lack thereof! We decided to brainstorm ideas in small groups and each group would present their idea back to the whole class, and we would vote. The winning project would be something the entire class would work on together.

One group started by discussing what the students, as young Native Americans, wanted this art project to express. Students from this group went around the class polling their classmates about the theme, "Broken Words." They asked, "What exactly did the students want non-Native people to think about as they looked at their art piece, and for that thinking to continue when they leave the art gallery." My tepee idea had fallen to the side. We voted instead to replace it with the idea of a two-sided large hide in the shape of a hogan (the hogan is the traditional-style home of the Navajo people in northern Arizona). Our project was to have two sides: one side that dealt with the broken treaties and the other side that offered hope for the future. The walls of the hogan would tell the Native American side of the story. We would also include the poems written by the students last semester somewhere on our art project. The posters of the broken treaties smeared with red hands (representing blood) would also be there. We would also include pieces from the eyewitness accounts in the book, *To Touch the Earth.*

I spoke later with Ryan and Ms. Listo about our idea. While they both liked it, Ryan questioned the hide aspect. Did I honestly know how heavy and costly these things are? Instead, Ryan suggested a look-alike material that would be more workable and a lot less expensive. With the excitement this project was creating within our classroom, I had not even once stopped to think about cost. Ryan explained that a hogan would take some serious construction even if we were to just use 2 by 4s or PVC. Ms. Listo suggested that the students ask the math teachers for help to figure out this project. Two students, Rudy and Christina, worked with their math teacher on the numbers. When they returned, they

had drawn up some very basic architectural drawings with the help of the math teacher. (See Figure 6.1.)

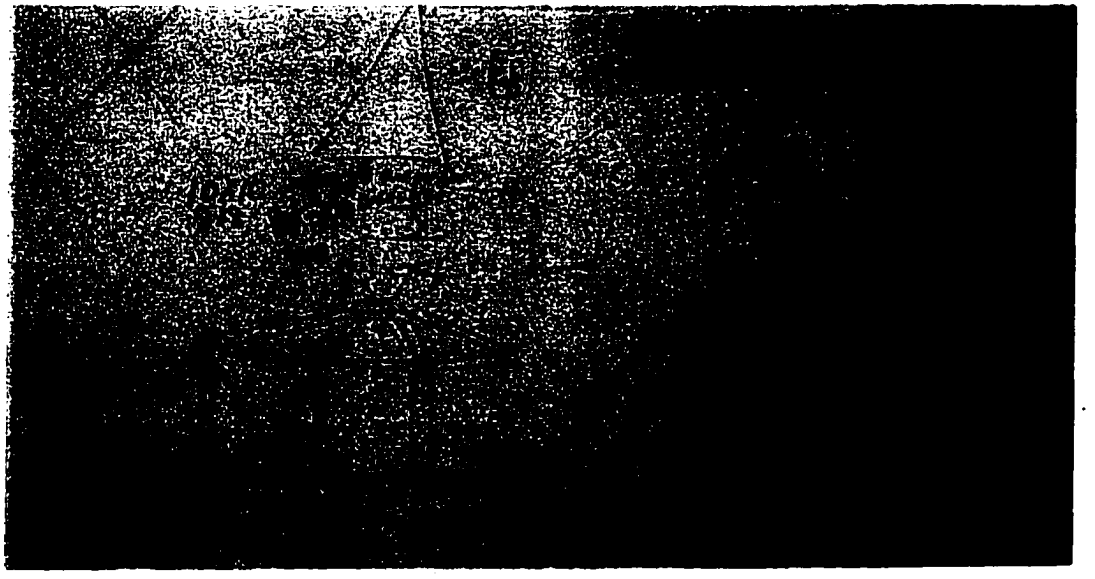


Figure 6.1. Visualizing with numbers.

Ms. Listo wanted to know where the idea of the art project had originated. I explained about Sha-Shin's encounter with the treaty list in *Reading America*, and Damon's idea about smearing red paint all over the posters. I also told her of my "Hollywood" dream with the tepee with multi-colored hands on it, and how the students had expressed no desire whatsoever to fulfill my dream; this was their project. Ms. Listo commented, "Your dream balances the red hands that go with the theme of two sides.

outside deals with the pain those broken words cause leaving people angry and sad, but the inner side heals with words of truth" (Curriculum Notebook, Year 2).

Things were still very rough, but it was slowly coming together. The math teachers were excited and came to me with dimensions and cost figures. They came up with an idea of 4 by 6 panels of PVC to create an open hogan by linking hinges together. I was beginning to realize that indeed this art project could cost quite a sum of money. Ms. Listo, as ever, said to both Ryan and me:

> Jesse, you work on the art and the posters, Ryan you find a way to make the walls, and I will find the funds. We have about three weeks before this project is due—wow, that's not much time—can we do it?

The students and I chose the quotes from *To Touch the Earth* that would be pinned to the walls; those, too, would be smeared with blood (red paint) (see Figure 6.2).

The students divided into three groups. One group was looking for "Healing" words. They were using their own poems and the poems of other students I had collected during the past year and a half. We also searched the works of great Native Americans in history, as well as our own words, written when discussing these historians. Another group was looking through *To Touch the Earth.* This group wanted powerful eyewitness accounts of the coming of the White man. They needed to think about where these events might fit chronologically on the posters of the broken treaties.

I had set up my video camera before class started. I knew the completion of this art project would involve every sign system. What follows next is a series of written snapshots and photos to provide a visual context to understand this event to the fullest.

Figure 6.2. Damon works on our art project.

A video camera moves around the room and the camera operator--this time it is Alex (Torres)--asks his fellow student to talk about what they are doing with this art project.

Alex: "What are you doing over here?"

Student 1: "Reading."

Alex: "Reading what?"

Student 1: "We are reading through poems and things."

Alex: "Whose poems?"

Student 1: "You know our poems from Upward Bound."

Alex: "Why?"

Student 1: "We are looking for ones we can be proud of that are about our heritage and stuff like Jennifer's poem and Sonia's."

Alex: "What are you going to do with them?"

Student 1: "We are going to put them between the words of great chiefs and writers like Ofelia Zepeda, Luci Tapahonso, Scott Momaday, and Joy Harjo."

Alex: "Why?"

Student 1: "To bring the good words of the past, present and future together, to show people words don't have to be broken."

Alex: "WOW! That's cool."

The camera moves along again focusing this time on a young lady drawing the maze. (See Figure 6.3.)

Figure 6.3. Abigail draws the man in the maze.

Alex: "What are you drawing?"

Student 2: "I'm drawing 'the man in the maze.'"

Alex: "Why?"

Student 2: "Because it represents the Tohono O'odham people and our journey through life searching for knowledge."

Alex: "Tell us more about the man in the maze."

Student 2: "Ever since I can remember he has been a part of my life. I have been drawing it forever, you know, you draw it too, we all do. It reminds me that I belong to this world, and I have a purpose. It calms me."

Alex: "Cool—I can go with that."

The camera operator moves on to another student whose hands are full of paint.

Alex: "What are you doing?"

Student 3: "I'm drawing a thunderbird and an eclipsed moon."

Alex: "Why are you drawing that?" (See Figure 6.4.)

Figure 6.4. Thunderbird and eclipsed moon.

Student 3: "It's for Black Elk—it's a ghost dance symbol. Don't you remember when we read *Black Elk Speaks?* Remember the crying baby in the midst of gunfire all around him. He just stops his horse . . . gets off and walks over to pick up the baby, then he wraps his scarf around the baby and places him out of danger. Then rides right back into the gunfire. He said his ghost shirt protected him. Well this ghost symbol is going to protect our work."

Alex: "That's cool—I forgot about Black Elk—I think I'll read about that one again."

The lens moves directly onto the hide where one of the students has just pasted an American Flag. (See Figure 6.5.)

Figure 6.5. The somewhat controversial placing of the American flag.

Alex: "Why are you putting the American flag there?"

Student 4: "You know . . . we voted on it."

Alex: "Tell me about it."

Student 4: "Well, we were going to hang it upside down to be controversial, but some of us said no, we should not do that with the flag."

Alex: "What did they say?"

Student 4: "Well Christina is pasting a story about the Navajo Code Talkers, and they would not want any upside down flag near them. I know we should do it . . . because of all the bad things, but it would be wrong to offend the Elders. They would know and think less of us and besides it is our flag too."

Alex: "I know what you mean—I'm glad we did it this way."

The camera moves to yet another student working on the project.

Alex: "Hey you what are you doing?"

Student 5: "I'm mixing color and trying to write a poem for the . . . hey what are we calling this thing?"

Student 6: "It's called 'Broken Words.' It's like performance art."

Student 5: "Whatever, I know it's going to be the bomb, [great]."

Alex: "Yeah what do you have so far?"

Student 5: "Blood may be shed
blood may be shed
my tears may be shed
my tears may be shed
my body may be shed
my body may be shed
but I will not
shed my duty to
help my people"

Figure 6.6. "Performance art--blood may be shed."

Student 5: "Then I think maybe two blue shooting stars falling and surround the whole thing in bloody red hands."

Alex: "Why blue shooting stars?"

Student 5: "Because these stars are not random, they are spiritual messengers."

The camera zooms down to the canvas lying flat on the floor and settles on a large face surrounded by multicolored hands. Ryan Huna enters the room, scans the entire piece, and smiles. He has been coming in and out of the classroom all morning guiding our progress. In essence, he is part cheerleader and part art consultant on our art project. Our camera operator asks Ryan to explain his interpretation of the piece. Ryan smiles and in a soft voice explains:

We are just adding the finishing touches on our visual communication project and as you can see a lot of the space has been taken up. At one time it was going to be a tepee, and now it's going to be a hanging piece displayed over at the Tucson High School art exhibit "Broken Words." There are a lot of powerful writings on it, and a lot of treaties that were made and broken. A few of the students have put some important Native images on there which are very sacred to their respective tribes. Over here in this corner here . . . we have an image with the thunderbird or the eagle and just restful bodies and stars, the eclipse of the moon. Panning over there, we have the man in the maze from the Tohono O'odham nation (Figure 6.7), a significant symbol to many of our students.

Figure 6.7. The man in the maze.

Ryan continues:

We have a portrait of a Native American, who has paint on his face that symbolizes tears (Figure 6.8), and next to that we have a shield that has been divided into four, the four sacred directions with their respective colors, red, yellow, white, and black. Next to that we have a Zuni or Hopi . . . Hopi cloud design with rain and lightning coming out of it (Figure 6.9). We are fixing the colors because we originally painted it black, and it is not supposed to be black. We are in the process of making changes to that. . . .

Figure 6.8. Tears of the Native American.

Figure 6.9. Hopi cloud design.

> . . . A lot of the students have gone ahead and written the names of their tribes. There are a lot of tribes that are represented here in this piece, and you know it's pretty powerful, though it might not look that way to a regular person who appreciates art, you know. It's more than just a perfect piece of art, it's not a perfection piece, it's a piece you know that makes a statement, not only using words, but visual images to complement each other, to help get the message across. It's that visual literacy thing . . . you know words with art or art with words that the Upward Bound writing class emphasizes. It's pretty deep, also a piece I forgot to mention, everyone that came to class today participated in this Upward Bound Project. Everyone this morning has put their contribution onto the piece and has put their handprint on. I think that's very appropriate. It's a unity piece so appropriate to the concept of the inner peace symbolizing healing words as opposed to the outer portion being the broken words. . . .

Transcribing Ryan's words helps me understand that curriculum is a term alluded to by some as a predictable outcome. Both Ryan and I, as an artist and a whole language teacher, could not have predicted how the piece would finally look that day. Instead we raised the expectations of our students. We trusted that they would meet these expectations, and they may have even higher expectations of their own.

Ryan speaks of all the Upward Bound students that morning making their contribution to the piece. Taba and Elkins (1966) discuss how and when educational programs meet the needs of students' learning in parallel cultures:

> . . . [A]llow each student to find his [or her] own way to the concept. . . . Both the gaining of command and contributing are of utmost importance, because involvement in what is being learned is absolutely necessary to keep the class going. Participation and contribution are part and parcel of that involvement. (p. 276)

What Ryan views as "very appropriate" is exactly the participation and contribution Taba and Elkins view as necessary for learning. Using multiple sign systems ensures that "part and parcel" of student involvement. Curriculum is not guiding learning; the needs of learners to participate and contribute constitute guiding learning.

Making their literacy visible through combining illustration, art, and graphic design enabled students to express themselves in new ways. The students incorporated visible text language with other visual symbols. In reality, this mixture of symbol systems often appeared in their free writing. Students, when stretching for something to say in print, would pencil in on the sides of their journal entries a sketch, such as the man in the maze, mountains, or feathers. Many of the symbols in this art project were found on my students' writing cover folders. Students view their writing folders as their personal domain. This time though, these symbols so important in Tohono O'odham and Yaqui culture found their way into the social context of this art project that would hang in the gallery and represent Upward Bound as an institution.

The art project took on a life of its own. The sheer dimensions alone—the hide measured 10' by 10'—demanded an explanation. Several students and I worked together to paint a verbal picture of the piece. We came up with a written description that would be displayed separately on an easel.

Contrary to what I had initially thought of as a routine task, the explanation became a thought-provoking piece of the project. At first we had the title of the art project with a few words and a history of Upward Bound. Over the weeks, as we worked on the art piece itself, we realized there was a need for our description to be more than just a simple paragraph.

The first image spectators would have of our art project is that of regular office dividers covered with giant 4' by 3' posters smeared with bloody red hands prints. When

we took a spectator's point of view, we realized that the piece looked shockingly angry (Figure 6.10).

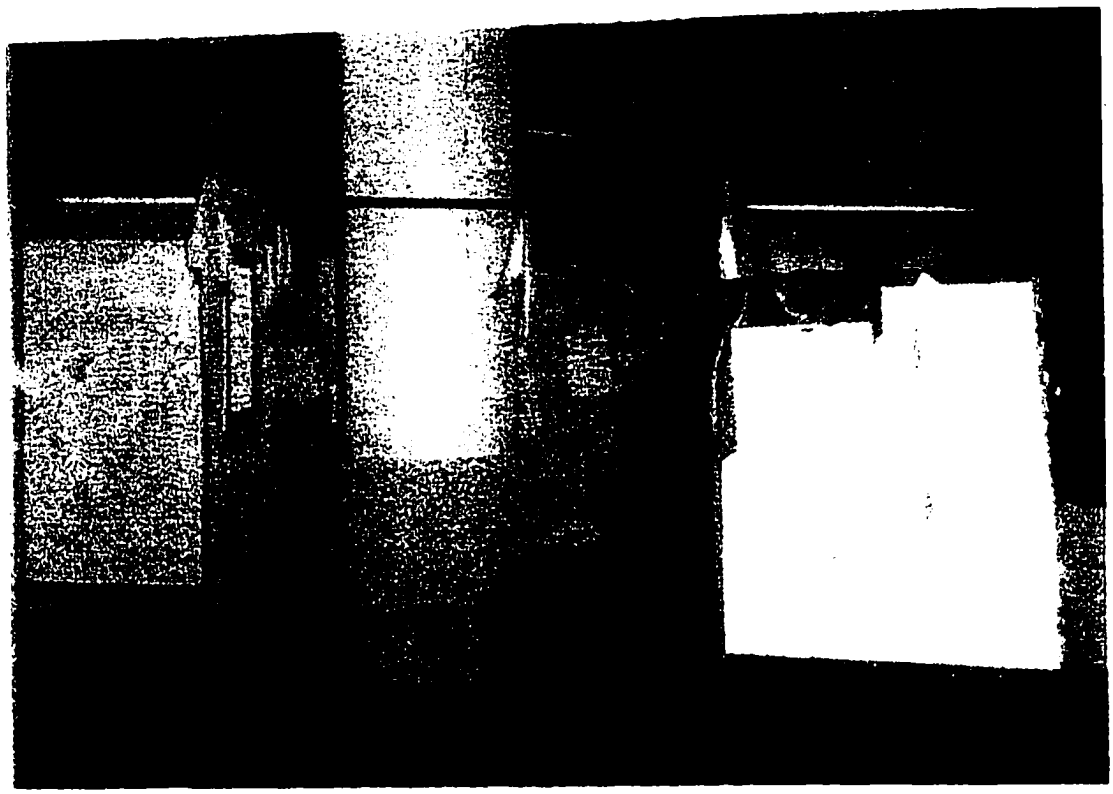


Figure 6.10. Spectator's view--shockingly angry.

This was not what all of the students wanted. Some students' thinking about the tone of the writing was more in tune with the anger of the bloody hands on the outer walls, while others were more in line with the hopeful message of the inner walls. An entry in my curriculum notebook at that time reads:

> It's funny the intro. appears to be holding everything up. The kids see this as more an educational display than an art piece. I have never seen them so serious, as if Tucson High were the Metropolitan Museum in New York . . . Sha-Shin and some others want the raw anger as the focal point of the piece. Kind of a political slap in the face to White society. Others contend that message will only have non-

> Natives view Native people as not being able to move beyond the anger of the past. They want a unified healing voice, they are working toward consensus. The best part of the morning was when Rudy quoted from Maya Angelou's (1993) "On the pulse of morning" . . . he commented that the purpose should focus on a line from her poem, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." (Jesse, Curriculum Notebook, Fall Year 2)

Just before we submitted the piece to the art gallery, we renamed it "Hope and Memory," a name the students felt was more in tune with their message than "Broken Words." Rudy set up this idea by suggesting the connection to Maya Angelou. After several revisions and discussions the following week, we agreed on an introduction for the piece as well as hints for spectators about how to view the project. Their introduction began as seen in Figure 6.11.

A simple introduction was not enough for my students. They wanted their project to educate others. They wanted spectators to know their influences (see Figure 6.12). The idea of their first source came from an audio tape of Maya Angelou's (1993), *On The Pulse Of Morning*. Angelou speaks candidly about the sources of inspiration that she drew upon to write her inaugural poem. The students wanted to ensure that spectators in the Tucson High Art Gallery would know the sources from which they drew strength. They collaborated on another piece of text that was to accompany the introduction:

Title: Hope & Memory

"History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." (Maya Angelou, 1993, On The Pulse Of Morning)

This piece of art is not a perfection piece, nor is it representative of the anger Native American people might feel. Instead it attempts to make sense of the past, and build a bridge to the future based on truth and respect.

In this piece we draw from three sources. The first source is taken from Maya Angelou's inaugural poem "On The Pulse Of Morning." We draw upon hope, hope that America will face the truth, the truth that in our eyes has never been told about this nation's Broken Promises to Native Americans. The posters around our piece display only a sample of those broken treaties Native people entered into with the United States Government. These posters are covered in red handprints to represent the loss of life that these broken promises brought to Native people. We are not doing this to be controversial, but instead we hope to draw attention to the fact that history often ignores the cost of these broken promises to Native people. We place this piece of art here to provide America the opportunity to face its history, as Maya Angelou suggests, with courage—so that it need not be lived ever again.

The second source we draw from is Joy Harjo's poem "Remember" in which she calls upon Native people to remember their language, their mothers and their fathers. From Joy Harjo we take the idea that we the Native American youth must remember our past. We remember the past to honor our mothers and fathers. The interior of our piece is lined with our own poems, thoughts, dreams and hope for the future.

The third source we draw from is Chief Joseph's "Indian Appeal for Justice." We are honored to place his words on our inner walls, and hope you draw the same strength we do from his words. The words of many great Native Americans both guided and supported us in our art creation. We ask that you read and reflect on their sense of justice as you read their words. We have placed some educational artifacts and works within our piece to help educate. These help to represent moments of historical significance to American history, like the role of the Navajo code talkers in W.W. II and the story of Ira Hayes.

We see our art as being raw, just as we know the truth often is. The truth is not clear, and never easy, but cannot be buried. Our piece shouts out with the hope that high school American history books begin to share the truth about our past. Our piece is rough and honest, it is not meant to be offensive, but instead to be thought provoking.

We hope you enjoy our piece, and remember that it was created with HOPE.

The students of Upward Bound Fall '96.

Figure 6.11. An introduction to the students' submission to the art gallery.

Hints for viewing:

1. The salmon color cards contain the words of great Native American leaders chosen from the book "To Touch the Earth." The color salmon is chosen to represent returning, just as the salmon return to spawn each year to their homes.

2. The burnt 11" X 17" pieces contain:
   a) The thoughts of Upward Bound students from our summer program,
   b) Chief Joseph's "Indian Appeal For Justice"
   c) Joy Harjo's poem "Remember."

We burnt the edges of the paper as a reminder that these words are burnt in our memories.

3. The large white posters on the outside walls contain the names of numerous treaties signed by Native people with the United States, and later broken. The color white represents white promises. The red hands represent the Native blood shed when these promises were broken. These posters are on the outside because they are broken words. These painful words must be kept far from our hearts. The inner walls represent hope; the outer walls represent loss.

4. The Red poster is the proclamation which was read and distributed by Native Americans in 1969 when they seized the island of Alcatraz, the old prison site, in protest against the government's lack of support for Native American reservations. The color red represents red power.

5. The multi-colored poster is Chief Joseph's "Indian Appeal for Justice." Its many colors represent HOPE. It is placed in our piece, because as Native Americans we wait and pray for real justice from the American Government not just words spoken or written.

6. The symbols on this display are also placed as reminders of hope for Native Americans. They are selected by the individual artists, and the multi-colored hands placed here are by over 30 Upward Bound students to represent all races, as symbols of hope and peace.

7. The American flag is placed near the top center as another sign of hope. At first we thought it should hang upside down, but then that would be disrespectful to the many Native American veterans who have served this nation. We also realized that by doing that our piece might appear controversial and mean-spirited. Our display is hopeful, and hope begins with respect not disrespect.

8. Our art contains sacred symbols to protect all who enter the inner circle. We offer white feathers, sage, tobacco, medicine bundles and medicine bags. We ask that all who enter into the inner circle of our work do so with respect. And when leaving reflect not

(figure continues)

only on the broken words, but on words that heal. The sacred symbols are added to protect those who created this piece (as well as those who view it) from the outside walls that are lined with broken and painful words.

9. There are two blankets on the floor of our display; one is an old United States Army blanket. It is on this type of blanket that most treaties were signed. The other blanket is Indian; these blankets were essential to Native American survival. The Army blanket represents loss, while the Indian one represents survival and once again HOPE.

May your life be full of words that heal you and all those you love.

All quotes were taken from "To Touch the Earth" compiled by T. C. McLuhan (1971), and from the book "Famous Native Americans" (1995).

Figure 6.12. Hints for viewing.

I did not fathom the unbelievable power of the project until students wrote their "Hints for Viewing." I had become so involved in the actual creation of the project, that I sometimes lost touch with its purpose. The "Hints" brought it all back together for me. The choice of colors were well thought out: the salmon color represents return, white represents government promises, red represents the beginning of the red power movement, and then multi-colored for Chief Joseph's piece portrays hope. The burnt edges gave an impression of old curling rough-edged paper.

The director, Ms. Listo, and one of our students, Ava, insisted on including the feathers and medicine bags to protect us from the anger of the words. Sadly, the power of our project is not fully realized in my copies of photographs.

In order to have our project viewed objectively I asked a colleague of mine to arrange for his freshman college class from Pima Community College West campus to

make a visit to the gallery while our work was displayed. He agreed, and asked his students to write a reaction to any one piece they viewed at the gallery. He explained to them that their reactions would be shared with one of the artists who contributed to the event but did not say which artist.

Since a field trip could not be arranged during school hours, he gave his students an extra credit for going on their own to the gallery and handing in a reaction. The following week, he gave me their reactions. Out of a class of 24 students, 17 had attended the gallery and handed in written reactions. He gave me all 17 responses to share with my students. To my astonishment and gratification, all 17 of the responses referred to the Upward Bound piece as being the most powerful piece there. One response, in particular, stands out:

> Tucson High Art Gallery Reaction
>
> The piece of art that impressed me most was the Upward Bound piece. At first it was the mere size of it that caught my attention. It was big, and it felt like a gallery all by itself. The treaties on the outside at first made me feel ashamed that this government treated Native Americans this way. The bloody hand prints and all those broken treaties with those quotations from great Native Americans felt like a hard cold wind slapping me in my face, telling me a great lie was being exposed here. I pictured "The Day of the Hundred Slain" and had a difficult time accepting the piece with all the bloody hands smeared around President Andrew Jackson. Last year I did a book report about how great a president he was, now I wish I picked someone else. The whole outside made me question history.
>
> The outside was compelling, but the inside was moving. All the feathers, medicine bundles, and the student's poems made me feel enlightened. I mean Sir it was like a church. Everyone was quiet and respectful in there. You could see people reading and learning inside. I think everyone gained a new respect for Native Americans. I sat down inside when I was alone, because I wanted to feel this place some more. I read Chief Joseph's appeal for Indian justice, the story about Ira Hayes, and a piece by a girl named Christina about why Native Americans should write. I thought about that girl, and wondered what did she look like. I thought about the artist who drew the Thunder Bird, and wondered

> what do they look like. I wonder who these young people are, and thought I would like to have met such powerful artists and thinkers. I smiled when I read that the poem by Josie called the Master Piece. The poems about elders impressed me. Just before I left I read a student's poem about unity, and I thought how wise she must be. I had to pray to god inside that place. I asked god to help heal us all, and to bless these young people and their quest for truth. Power to these young kids, and may god heal all of us.
>
> I guess you know why I did not hand this in until today, I was so moved by that place I could not do it justice. I needed some time to reflect and to put things in order. I was so glad they decided not to place our flag upside down, because it left room for hope for America. We can change, we can't change the past, but we can change the future. [Curriculum Notebook, Year 2]

Another response from my colleague's class that caught my attention related to another sign system that was part of our presentation. Before final submission to the gallery, one of my students, Leo, a pow wow dancer, suggested that music be played in the background during the exhibit. He suggested the music of Robbie Robertson and the Red Road Ensemble's *Music for the Native Americans.* When we were assembling the piece at the gallery, I asked the gallery director if she would kindly play the CD during the day as people wandered through the gallery, which she did.

This second response connects to the music. The writer who describes himself (or herself) as Mexican, writes about the total impact of the strong visual messages, written messages, and the haunting sound of Robbie Roberson's song *Ghost Dance*:

> The words of the song that was playing while I visited the piece called Hope and Memory stayed in my mind all day:
> "You don't stand a chance against my prayers,
> against my love,
> they outlawed the ghost dance,
> but we shall live again,
> we shall live again,
> you got the big drum in the distance,
> we shall live again."

> Those words tormented my conscience. If the purpose of that piece was to make Mexicans think, then my friends you have succeeded. I felt like Geronimo, that Chief Joseph guy took hold of my mind, and walked me around the piece. It was like a voice saying this is what you have done, and this is what you need to see in order that we might live again. I have been to the art gallery in Mexico City before, but somehow I have this feeling that nothing will ever move me like this again. Those words we shall live again mixed with those bloody hands, and the feathers just moved me to rethink my Mexican heritage. I know we did the same as the Anglos in America to indio people, but now I more fully understand why we Mexicans dig up those pyramids in our country. We are helping our ancestors live again. By far the piece called Hope and Memory touched me more than any other. On Thursday I am going back with my sister to show it to her, and to get the name of the song.

Our project hung in the gallery for the month of November. When we took it down, I shared the responses from the Pima Community College students and others with the Upward Bound students. They understood that everything they had hoped and dreamed for had been accomplished. Their project which combined art, music and language left viewers with a better understanding of the injustice that has been done to Native Americans since the coming of Columbus. The students were really sad and moved when we went to the art gallery to take their project down. I tried to comfort them with notions that we would be putting it up again at other events, but I could see in their eyes how they wished the entire world could have seen it—not just Tucson High Magnet School Art Gallery visitors. In class the following week I suggested a whole-class social writing response. On the board I wrote the Chinese proverb: "The greatest conqueror is he who overcomes the enemy without a blow." Everyone would think of one word or one line that best described their feelings on their art project. The following are the responses students wrote:

Proud	Strong	Powerful
Noble	Splendid	Righteous
Great	Worthy	Magnificent

I felt so connected to my past.

I felt like our ancestors were smiling the whole time.

I feel amazed that we could do a project like that—it was the bomb!

I feel like we showed everyone how Native Americans feel.

I am afraid we could never do anything like that again.

I just feel thankful to Angie, Ryan, Jesse and all of my classmates for letting me put my handprints on "Hope and Memory."

It helped me understand who I am.

Proud of being an Upward Bound kid.

Close to my grandmother's spirit.

I thought about that African American Randall dude's poem we read "The Melting Pot," and I knew Native people were no longer melting.

These words written by the students are reminiscent of Deloria:

> Our ideas will overcome your ideas. We are going to cut the country's whole value system to shreds. It isn't important that there are only 500,000 of us Indians . . . What is important is that we have a superior way of life. We Indians will show this country how to act human. Someday this country will revise its constitution, its laws, in terms of human beings, instead of property. If Red Power is to be a power in this country it is because it is ideological . . . What is the ultimate value of a man's life? That is the question. (1971, p. 159)

I wonder if Deloria is thinking precisely about Native American youth very much like my students when he writes: "We Indians will show this country how to act human" (1971, p. 159).

If literacy is to empower Native youth, it must be linked to Deloria's understanding of Red Power as an ideological force that questions the ultimate value of a

person's life. The kind of curriculum that approaches Deloria's question as to "the ultimate value of a man's life" is the one that Harste (1994) suggests as:

> Curriculum is a device for conveying the past and shaping consciousness. Curriculum planning is not a neutral activity. The way we conceptualize curriculum and the questions we ask about it have a critical impact on the kind of school setting we create. Curriculum planning is a moral activity involving commitments to beliefs in people and the role we envision schools playing in democracy. (pp. 1237-1238)

Harste's curriculum is the ideological democratic vision that has been absent for many Native American learners of any age. Harste and Short (1989) report:

> Classrooms are not here to silence children, but to hear from them. In a democracy, schools should not marginalize some children. It is by hearing all voices that new conversations about the kind of life we want to live and the kind of people we want to be are started. Strong democratic communities are created when we know what contribution each voice makes, and we take new action collaboratively. (p. 9)

The key to curriculum and democracy in our community at Upward Bound is the hearing of all voices. Clearly that is what Ryan intends by his words "very appropriate," when referring to the fact that students made sure everyone's hand print was on our art project. It gives birth to what Garis (1992) quotes from Susan Sontag:

> . . . To produce food for the mind, for the senses, for the heart. To keep language alive . . . What do we have from the past? Art and Thought. That's what lasts. That's what continues to feed people and give them an idea of something better. (p. 43)

Curriculum as inquiry led my Upward Bound Students and me to that place where learning is the creation of "art and thought," where it is that food for the mind that Sontag sees as lasting. "Hope and Memory," like our precious memories and thoughts of Alex Torres, are the food that we live for in the Upward Bound writing community.

The Emergence of a Living Poets Society—Spring Year 2

By Spring, the writing workshop was in full swing. We had mini-lessons covering writing strategies on grammar, spelling, powerful opening/closing lines. More importantly, the fact that students were given the freedom to respond to issues and literature that were relevant to their own lives had as much, or maybe even more, to do with the change in length and quality of their writing. Poetry had clearly become the genre of choice for many of the students. Poetry marked the transition from writing as "knowing words" to writing as "power."

> When power leads man toward arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the areas of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses. —John Fitzgerald Kennedy (Harrison & Terris, 1992, p. 94)

The poetry of Tapahonso and Harjo reminded students of the richness and diversity of their existence. Poetry enabled students to live with the past, while also providing a means to deal with the present by writing about a new future: "Remember your birth, how your mother struggled to give you form and breath, you are evidence of her life, and her mother's and hers" (Harjo, 1997, p. 190). Harjo's poetry reminds students that the future they are writing about is linked to their memory, kinship and language. The student's poetry is their thoughts, their dreams of the future. "Poetry comes nearer to vital truth than history" (Plato, Wordstar, 1991). The opportunity for my students to share their truth would soon come.

We received an offer to read our poetry at the Native American Day Celebration from the Pima Community College Native American Club at the west campus. Pima

Community College is the fifth largest community college in the nation. The West campus has a student population of approximately 12,000 (Pima Community College Catalog, 1993). For many Upward Bound students, Pima Community College West campus is the stepping stone to either the University of Arizona in Tucson or Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. What was probably most important to my students was that the offer came from their older, college-going peers. Many of the West campus Native students were at one time Upward Bound students themselves.

When I asked my students to write on how they feel about publicly sharing their poems, the response was positive. Sonia's writing is representative:

> When I think about sharing my poems with others, I think about Elie Wiesel's *Night*. There was this part he explains to new prisoners the truth that they are in Auschwitz, the line: "The first human words." The words Wiesel heard were the first human words he heard on his journey to Auschwitz. I want my poem to be the sharing of my human voice. (Curriculum Notebook, Year 2, Sonia)

Sonia's connection between her poem and Wiesel's "The first human words" provides insight into the inter-textual connections my students were making. Many students stepped-up their writing efforts for the Native American Day celebration at Pima. Andrew surprised me most. What follows is a snapshot of Andrew's journey.

I silently came to call Andrew my miracle student. When Andrew first came into class he never said a word; never wrote a line; he did smile though. Andrew would never be called difficult, rather he just preferred not to participate. I gently pushed, but he only wrote when he had to, and even at those times, it was with reluctance. At one point I thought perhaps Andrew might prefer another class where the teaching style is more traditional, but when I made this suggestion, he requested not to be moved. After some

time he began to speak up in class but still never wrote much, wrote a line or two or maybe a paragraph, but never any more. Something inside me knew he was capable. He had no difficulty in math or science, only his English classes. Andrew had already been accepted into a prestigious Rhode Island university in his junior year. His reply when asked to write, however, continued to be "I don't have anything to write yet."

In January as we were preparing for the Native American day celebration at PCC, something clicked for Andrew. At the end of class one morning Andrew handed me four crumpled pieces of paper and said, "Jesse, do you want my poem?" All week long I cherished "Andrew's poem," reading it repeatedly. I was excited and proud of him.

When I asked him if I could share his poem with the class, he agreed and made some revisions during writing workshop. I had copies made of his poem for everyone in class and one copy enlarged to poster size. When I asked Andrew to read his poem, he said he would prefer that I read for him. As I read his poem, I tried to empty 2 years of hope into his words, and I hoped he would hear his soul beating in my reading of his words:

The Spectral Question

What is an Indian?
We are always answering this question for:
The Whites
The Mexicans
The African Americans
Even ourselves
The question varies
But remains the same

Sometimes even poorly stated, and

Sometimes even answered by others
But
Usually adds up to one question
What is an Indian?

They say he is a person who doesn't work
But gets a monthly check from the government
They say that the Indians are lazy

Still others say:
He is a man who got a raw deal from the government
Therefore he deserves what he gets from the government.

Others say:
He is a drunkard
Who never amounts to anything.
So therefore terminate the government checks
Let him make his own way in the white man's society

Myself, I do not see an Indian in this light
My question is not who is the Indian
But why others cannot
See the Indian as a unified group
All different in their ways
but held together
by a common bond
Called
"CULTURE"

I see us as a people
Who fought courageously
against overwhelming odds.
And never giving in
despite every treaty broken
One after the other.

I see the Indian as an individual
Who when this America was in danger
Went
to the front voluntarily
And gave their last final measure of devotion
In all your wars
We came forward to defend

this land

I see the Indians as a group of people
Who are proud
And rightfully so
Because they possess the secrets of life
No white man has ever discovered.
As a group even in
broken English
our children are told how important it is to get an education in
This modern world.

I see Indians as people
Who cross a cultural barrier into the dominant society
becoming the best in their chosen professions

I see Indians in the houses of:
Law
Politics
Athletics
Medicine, and
Military service

So—when I think of the question
What is an Indian?
MY CHEST SUDDENLY EXPANDS
and
I think
I AM AN INDIAN
[by Andrew Thomas (96)]

When I finished there was a moment of silence, then every one clapped—and the grin on Andrew's face was worth the long wait. Andrew had not mentioned before that he was interested in participating in the celebration day, but now he wanted to practice with everyone during the week. As Andrew read his poem at the Native American Day celebration, he personified the sheer power of poetry that afternoon. Andrew continues to write poetry and is for me the miracle student who I know is special. Just as E. B. White

knew Charlotte was special, because it is not often someone comes along that is both "a true friend and a good writer," I knew the first time I read Andrew's poem that he, like Charlotte, was both (1980, p. 195). In retrospect, the moment Andrew recited his poem at the Native American Celebration is not consequential in itself, rather the journey that Andrew and I traveled to that moment is what is significant.

Thinking of Andrew's initial silence in my classroom I ask, what does this silence from a student to a teacher mean? The Indian Nations at Risk Task Force recommends that teachers of Native learners should be aware of Number 1 on the INRTF list:

> The cultural heritage of the Native students needs to be recognized as an asset to the class. The various ethnic and cultural groups represented in the classroom provide many resources that can be used to enhance learning for all students. (Brown, 1992, p. 68)

Andrew and his fellow students clearly benefited from a curriculum that recognized their cultural heritage. Number 2 on the INRTF list: "Native students need warm, accepting environments that allow them to become risk-takers in learning new skills or content areas" (Brown, 1992, p. 68). Andrew benefited from that type of accepting environment. Number 3 on the INRTF list, and perhaps the most crucial:

> Individual students may need to have a "silent period." These are periods during which they listen to a great deal of language in order to get a feel for the new sounds and vocabulary that have meaning for that particular content area. (Brown, 1992, p. 69)

Possibly this silent period for Andrew was his internal engagement with the language of poetry.

The last two suggestions from the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force are:

> Content material should include concepts appropriate for Native students' grade and achievement levels. Instructional programs in the content areas should incorporate the use of concrete materials, shared experiences, and prior knowledge. (Brown, 1992, p. 69)

My experiences suggest that a Language Arts curriculum that incorporates and values Native American literature, while using multiple sign systems, meets the conditions the task force recommends. It is not only Andrew, but all learners, who benefit from these recommendations. In Andrew's poem, I find possibility for the next generation of Native Americans in America's schools. The possibility is there if Americans are willing to face the truth that our educational institutions are the cornerstones of a false dichotomy of an American melting pot. Even now when I read Andrew's poem, I remember the responses the students wrote on the blackboard as they were reflecting on their feelings about their Art project:

> Proud, Strong, Powerful, Noble; I felt so connected to my past; I thought about that Dudley Randall poem we read *The Melting Pot*, and I knew Native people were no longer melting (Lanell, 1996)

In our classroom Andrew and Lanell were immersed in transactional literacy experiences that surrounded them not only with multi-cultural literature, but with the kinds of experiences that Nieto (1992) describes as multi-cultural education:

> Multi-cultural education . . . a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that permeates the curriculum and instructional strategies used in schools, as well as the interactions among teachers, students and parents, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning. . . . (p. 208)

For Nieto (1992), the challenge for a rejection of racism and discrimination in schools is rooted in critical influences:

> Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change, multi-cultural education furthers the democratic principles of social justice. (p. 208)

The concept of inquiry as curriculum helps me to create opportunities for my students to focus on knowledge and reflection. It facilitates the use of multiple sign systems and leads the students to action in the form of public poetry readings and art projects such as "Hope and Memory." Rosenblatt (1978) views these responses as events in time based on a dynamic transaction between the reader and the text. Both are essential agents in constructing meaning or in making the literary work come alive:

> The reader brings to the text his past experience and present personality. Under the magnetism of the ordered symbols of the text, he marshals his resources and crystallizes out of the stuff of memory, and a feeling, a new order, a new experience, which he sees as the poem [the literary work]. (p. 12)

By including expressive literacy events, students extend Rosenblatt's view on reading. The new experience, while reading, holds similar for other expressive literacy events, such as speaking or writing. The focus of meaningful multi-cultural learning experiences is rooted in more than multi-cultural texts themselves. It has more to do with the context of classroom learning than the environment itself. Central to any concept of multi-cultural education is whose voice, whose questions mediate an emerging curriculum? For this investigation, Upward Bound students were provided with curricular invitations and engagements that focused on their questions, and sought out their voices.

One last word on Andrew. During spring break Year 2, I accompanied the students on a trip to San Diego. For some, this was their first time to see the ocean, the first time leaving the reservation near Tucson. When we arrived at the beach, the students were in awe of the magnificence of the Pacific Ocean. Since I am from the East Coast where the Jersey Shore is my second home, I pulled off my shirt and ran into the ocean. The students needed a little coaching: first one student, then another, and still not everyone came into the water. Andrew sat on the beach reading a book. At one point he called out to all of us to come see what he had been reading and writing:

> We are O'odham and Yaqui people. We respect you ocean. My name is Andrew—I offer you the poem *Ocean Power* written by Ofelia Zepeda a great O'odham poet. We young Native people have important things to say about life, and we are learning to write them down on paper like Ofelia. So Ocean I might become a great O'odham writer some day like Ofelia. (Curriculum Notebook, Year 2)

There was a moment of quiet and Andrew continued in his strong quiet O'odham voice the words of Zepeda. As evening approached poems were being read aloud by teachers and students amidst the soft splashing of the waves. Two O'odham students, Margaret and Renee, sang a rattle song using ice from the cooler, and two empty soda cups as rattles. (In traditional O'odham songs, the rattle, made of a dried gourd with granules of seeds or dried beans, is used to create the instrumental sound.) As we broke up that night, carting everything back to the vans, Andrew caught up with me calling: "Hey Jesse, I did OK didn't I?" I smiled my proudest smile, telling him how proud I was of him, and we both left the beach heading for the vans knowing well that the memory of our trip to San Diego would be one to treasure forever. What was important about the

San Diego trip was not the sunset, nor the magnificence of the Pacific Ocean, but that my students had become passionate about poetry. When students become passionate about a genre, all future engagements become more bountiful.

Poetry Reading at Borders Book Shop—Summer Year 2

Tucson's newest bookstore, Borders, invited the students to participate in a public poetry reading. In preparation we began to experiment with poems called language weaves. These are poems which are written in English with Native words at key points. Students took the idea from our word wall which contained both English and Native words. Students would write a poem, and then look for just the right spot to replace an English word with a Yaqui or Tohono O'odham word: a word that fit both the meaning and rhythm of the poetry. We wanted the final drafts of the poetry to contain a translation box so that readers could understand the Native words used in the poems. Every student wrote at least one of these poems. The students were not trained in the correct form and spelling of their native language; the following are the students' original writings. The following is an example of a language weave by Abigail:

The Eagle In My Dreams
I see the eagle in my dreams.
Flying in the sky
looking for its family and friends.
This eagle full with Ap edag
that his family will soon reunite.
Flying place to place
Looking, crying
using all his
Sma:sik
and
Si:has'em-elid
to be strong,

and not give up.
Flying night and day, looking the amongst
the stars, and looking through the clouds.
Feather by feather,
he finds,
only what is left behind.
Why have they drifted?
Where have they gone?
Have they gone into the spirit world?
Will it be up to me to keep our families Hi:madag?
GREAT SPIRIT
Hear my cries, feel my pain
I am alone . . .
This eagle is alone
This eagle is my Ap'edag
This eagle is my Smas:sik
This eagle points the way to my Hi:madag
This eagle is my sma:sik
I awaken with my tears and a feather in my hand.

Translation
Smas:sik = wisdom Ap edag = hope
Si:has em-elid = dignity Hi:madag = tradition

Abigail's language weave poem was the first and led the way for others. She was our inspiration. Her poem has rhythm, and her use of Tohono O'odham is at the right points; she enhances the meaning. Another example of a language weave comes from Brightstar Benson:

Wui'Chac'Piyoyapi'
My parents named me Wui'chac'piyoyapi'.
That is who I am and who I will always be.
No matter where I go, no matter what I do,
I will not be ashamed of my name, my
heritage or my blood.
I will live up to my name.
I will be an example, a light, that
everyone can see.
I will not dishonor my name.
I will rise above my imperfections and
failures to be great.

I will bear the yoke for a greater reward
rather than give into the temptation of the hour.
My name is Wui'chac'piyoyapi'
That is who I will always be.

Translation
Wui'chac'piyoyapi = Brightstar

This poem caused Brightstar to rethink the significance of his name. He had gone home from class one day and had a discussion with his parents as to their choice of his birth name. Brightstar had to learn how to pronounce his name Wui'chac'piyoyapi', in his Native Sioux language. The other students loved his idea and did the same for themselves. In the weeks before our poetry reading at Borders we had one full wall of language weave poems. With the help of poetry we had extended our "word wall" from just knowing Native words, to now being able to use these words in both personal and socially meaningful ways. We also had some poems that were not weaves to read. We needed to practice reading aloud with a microphone. Class time was taken up with the writing so we held practice readings at the dorms where the students were living for the Summer.

Finally, it was Thursday night, the night we would read. Quite a few of the parents and other family members were making the trip from the reservation to the Tucson Mall to hear the students read in public. I was nervous. I had been to poetry readings at Borders before and thought they were quite professional. I drove a van with 15 students, none of whom had been to Borders prior to this. When they first saw the store, Karen loudly exclaimed, "Oh my God, Jesse, you never told us it was so big. Their sign is bigger than anything on the reservation." Another student, Clay, normally known

for his calmness and confidence, simply stated, "Turn the van around, I can't do this in front of all those people." I reassured everyone that we would be surrounded by friends and family. I reassured myself by thinking how important it was that their young Native voices would finally be heard in what the students themselves referred to as the "White world," the Tucson Mall. Ms. Listo had reminded the students earlier that day: "I expect your voices to be clear. You should stand tall, and let everyone see how proud you are of your heritage, and each other. The great words you say today will change the way non-Indians view all people—as proud and intelligent."

Upon our arrival students walked around the store enjoying its inviting sense of literacy while I spoke with a manager. Some of them practiced their poems in any nook and cranny they could find. At the center of the store there was a podium and a microphone; chairs had already been set up. Tony's class was joining us for the readings. Between both classes, we had 28 readers. With students, families, and teachers we numbered 67. The store itself is quite large, and like any other given Thursday night it was pretty busy. Borders personnel were pleased. All the chairs were filled, and it was standing room only, just counting our group. The students were quite anxious and could not help feeling that all eyes were on them. It is not the poems alone that told their story that night, but the many faces of the students, anxious and nervous prior to reading, confident and proud while reading, and absolutely elated after they finished reading. (See Figure 6.13.) Every student read his or her poem with a confident voice. Borders

shoppers stopped to listen to a poem or two. Some even stayed to congratulate these fine young poets.

Remembering that wonderful evening at Borders, I think of Emily Dickinson's words:

A word is dead
When it is said,
some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
That day.

Figure 6.13. Students read their poetry at Borders.

These young Native voices were just beginning to live. In chapter 5, I referred to Short and Pierce's (1990) six specific conditions for establishing a community of learners

and for understanding inquiry as curriculum with six specific conditions. In chapter 5, I connected to only the first four conditions, and said later I would return to the last two. My experiences at Upward Bound suggest that through poetry we were meeting all six. We came to:

1. know each other;

2. value what each has to offer;

3. focus on problem solving and inquiry;

4. share responsibility and control. (p. 35)

It was not until the second year that we truly met conditions five and six. Conditions five and six are:

5. learn through action, reflection, and demonstration; and

6. establish a learning atmosphere that is predictable and full of real choices.

(Short & Pierce, 1990, p. 35)

Through the action of public readings of our poetry, we became published in a manner that took our learning community through a process of real choice, public demonstration, and deep reflection. Using poetry was our predictable means to react to what these young Native Americans viewed as unfair and unjust in the world.

As a community of writers, students chose the genre of poetry to protest and recreate the world around them. Still, poetry was only one example of how our community used multiple sign systems to explore inquiry. We were users of drama, art, multiple written genres, and music when constructing meaning. Eventually we turned to

the stage as a form of publication to demonstrate how the students felt about a crucial Native historical incident.

Changing History Through Drama—Summer Year 2

During the Summer Year 2, one of our literature circles became interested in Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee.* This literature circle discussion led the students to a desire to learn more about "The Sand Creek Massacre." The Sand Creek Massacre became, for the students at Upward Bound, the worst ever injustice inflicted upon Native people by Whites. The sheer brutality of the massacre, and the dark image of the man history calls "The Fighting Parson Colonel Chivington" is considered by many Native Americans as America's darkest moment. History books report that the Arapaho and Southern Cheyenne Indians along with their leader Chief Black Kettle, were under the protection of the United States government in 1884. Black Kettle traveled to Washington, DC to meet with President Abraham Lincoln where he secured government protection for his people. Black Kettle returned with a peace medal and a large American Flag, a gift from Lincoln. Upon his return he visited Fort Lyon at the invitation of John Evans, the governor of Colorado. He was informed that his people could safely join the other peace chiefs camped at Sand Creek. The Natives were armed only to hunt for game. It was at Sand Creek that many of Chief Black Kettle's people were massacred by an order from Colonel John Chivington on November 29, 1864. Chivington ordered his men to kill every living Indian, including women and children.

The Dee Brown text uses eyewitness accounts to describe historical events. The eyewitness accounts are as brutal as any I have ever read. The literature group focusing

on Sand Creek used a text set containing *Black Elk Speaks*, *500 Nations, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, biographies of Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. After a week of reading and discussion within their own group, the students asked to speak to the whole class about the Sand Creek Massacre. Their presentation to the class used video clips from the televised series "500 Nations" along with old clips of war trials at the Hague. They explained to their fellow students how Chivington's troops rode into Denver with the mutilated body parts of dead men, women, and children, and how they were received as heroes. The students questioned why there were no war trials for Chivington and his men. Discussion after their presentation prompted the students to put Chivington on trial in their own classroom. By the end of class, the students had agreed to perform a fictional play of Chivington's war trial at the Open House that was to take place the following week. When I stated that this appeared to be a near impossible task, the students reminded me that this was so important I couldn't possibly say "no."

Ms. Listo arranged for some legal technical advice from the assistant attorney general of the Tohono O'odham Nation and Ryan Huna gave me his promise to help with some stage props. Tony Gatewood, who was teaching a computer course at Upward Bound, offered his help in the evenings. The following morning every student in class was ready to go with this new project. When I asked them exactly what was their purpose for a fictional trial, Angelica (a Yaqui student) explained that it was an alternative expression of a historical injustice. Her words: "People should know there were alternatives, and knowing there were makes all the difference . . . plus people should know how Native Americans feel" (Curriculum Notebook, Angelica, Summer Year 2).

We moved forward with the play. Our research for the trial led us on a class trip to the library at the University of Arizona. Students needed as much information on the Sand Creek Massacre as possible. At the library they discovered that there had indeed been both military and civilian investigations of the incident. Both investigations condemned the entire event, and Colonel Chivington had resigned from the military as a result of the investigations, but Chivington walked away with little more than a slap in their view. To our disgust we learned that neither Chivington nor his men were individually ever brought to trial for their actions. Students researched the transcripts of one of the investigations. With those transcripts the students worked on creating a script for the trial and we assigned parts. The students decided not to use costumes except for a cavalry hat for the character of Colonel Chivington. We worked frantically both in and out of class for the next few days. In the evenings Tony Gatewood and I worked with students to create a set for the trial. Two days before the Open House Ms. Listo wondered aloud if we could really pull it off, suggesting that maybe we should save it for another time. She decided to speak to the students, but they convinced her that they could do it. Their discussion with Ms. Listo caused them to work even harder, and it was only then that they came up with an ending for their play. Students decided they would have two verdicts, one innocent and one guilty. The innocent verdict would be given by a jury of 12 wearing white masks to represent an all-White jury. Then the jury would turn around, remove their white masks and read the guilty verdict. At this point one person would step forward and read to the audience:

> This play does not change history, but it does express how different history could have been if Native people were considered equals under the law. Black Kettle and his wife survived the Sand Creek massacre, but both were murdered four years later on November 27, 1868 in a similar massacre by General Custer and his 7th Cavalry. The descendants of the Indians at Sand Creek are seeking restitution for the massacre from the United States Government today. Our production of this trail is our contribution to those who were murdered at Sand Creek. We hope you understand why we wanted to portray this trial the way we did. We must always remember the truth, sometimes it is buried deep, but it must never be forgotten. (Curriculum Notebook, Jeanine, Summer Year 2)

To summarize, students researched the event, wrote the script, and put on a trial with opening statements, witnesses and a verdict. The play, which lasted about 15 minutes, was a hit at Open House. The audience made up of parents, teachers, and students gave the students a standing ovation. In a little more than a week these students had worked together to pull off an event that I and many others had thought impossible. Creating a play based on historical events depends on research. It was clearly evident that these students had learned a great deal about Colonel Chivington, the Sand Creek Massacre, and Black Kettle. More importantly they learned so much more about themselves. The play provided insight into how this group worked collaboratively. Judith Newman writes:

> Collaboration is at the heart of any enterprise-based curriculum. For collaboration to work people have to value the contribution of other students. To nurture that valuing I have to make the students' contribution an integral part of what's going on. It's not enough to pay lip service to collaboration. I have to create situations which foster working together. (1992, p. 96)

It is important to note that while I did not believe the students would be able to perform their play at Open House due to a lack of time, I did not stop them from pursuing their inquiry. As Newman suggests, teachers must make students an integral part of what

takes place in the classroom. This means, in this case, trusting their decision to pursue their Sand Creek inquiry through the production of a play. Late at home the night of the play I sat with a cup of coffee reading through *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. I came upon the following quote from Black Elk as he reflected upon his memories of Wounded Knee:

> . . . When I look back now from this hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream . . . the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead. (Black Elk, in Neihardt, 1988, p. 270)

My Journal entry that night reads:

> While walking tonight I thought about why this play had to be performed by my students. For the first time I understood that this is their means to mend the hoop, to re-establish the center. Their chance to plant a new garden of sacred trees. Black Elk is somewhere in the spirit world tonight telling Black Kettle how these sacred trees honor his memory this night. (Jesse, Curriculum Notebook, Summer Year 2)

Once again multiple sign systems and inquiry had led us through a cycle of learning that provided students a means to go beyond the normal limitations of any traditional classroom. In class the following day, we began with a discussion about what we had learned by producing the play. I listed them on the board:

How to do research; How to speak in front of an audience; How to write a script; How to create a stage setting; How a trial works; About opening and closing statements; How to use visuals (the masks) to represent change; About microphones; How to play the villain; How to use multiple sources; How to work together; How to

assign work to different groups; How to work with an Assistant Attorney General; and finally, How to convince your teacher and the director that you can do something.

In addition, something was learned that was not on that list: today's Native American students can become the living means to heal the sacred hoop of the nation. Somehow I think Black Kettle and Black Elk would have wanted that one on my list.

The Walls Themselves Speak Our Names—Summer Year 2

As I discussed in Chapter 5, in relation to Summer Year 1, in order to once again keep the group together for Summer Year 2, we had to come up with another course that would not necessitate any standardized testing. Once again I examined the college catalog. Pima Community College writing courses are all linked to standardized test scores which would mean separating the students. Ms. Listo and I finally found two college reading courses that were not linked to any test scores. A one-credit Vocabulary course (068), and a two-credit course called Reading for Understanding (073). The Reading for Understanding course seemed to fit right into our thinking, although it was the one-credit vocabulary class that turned out to be a real gift. I had decided to use a vocabulary journal and create a word wall to meet the curriculum requirements of the course. I did not expect it to have much of an impact on my students. With The Reading for Understanding portion, I decided to continue with a browsing table, adding multiple copies of novels. I reminded students that the core of our reading selections would come from their choices. See Appendix B for the syllabi for Reading 068 and Reading 073 Summer Year 2.

The two courses fulfilled the 3-hour time frame we needed. In essence I thought of both courses as one, or at least closely connected. By taking both courses together my students were able to stay together as a group.

The one-credit vocabulary course produced one of the richest learning experiences for my students in the form of "the Word Wall." The word wall positively impacted my students' feelings about loss of language more than anything else during the 2-year study. Students had often expressed a feeling of hopelessness about the loss of their language. The word wall was to become a source of hope and inspiration for all Upward Bound students. Lederer (1991) talks about language: "May our thoughts and aspirations become words that serve to build bridges from mind to mind and from heart to heart, creating a fellowship of those who would hold fast to that which is good" (p. 243).

During Summer Year 2, we used the word wall as a new twist on our reader response sheets. Before this, students had used response sheets during literature circles to open up discussion. Students would first react to a reading by sharing a one or two word gut reaction, and then go on to cite a line from the reading. Finally their reaction and the cited line would begin a literature discussion group. Now, instead of response sheets we had our "Word Wall." We used the entire south wall of the classroom that had no windows, just a plain bare wall. During one such literature circle discussion on Martin Luther King's (1962), *Letter from a Birmingham Jail,* I notice that their gut reaction words (Freedom, Justice, Equality, Direct Action) were many of the words democracies hold most sacred. Students were making strong connections to King's cause and the

struggle of Native Americans. One student, Lanell, pointed out how Chief Joseph in his speech *The Appeal for Indian Justice*, had addressed the very same issues:

> Treat all men alike. Give them all the same law. . . . Let me be a free man—free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to think and talk and act for myself—and I will obey the law, or submit to the penalty. (Chief Joseph, January 14, 1879, Speech to President Hayes and other cabinet officers in Washington, DC)

Lanell made the suggestion of placing their gut reaction words in English, and if possible, to also give the native language translation. This suggestion made all the difference to students. It added something new, exciting and challenging. As a classroom teacher I know that vocabulary classes are generally viewed by high school students as boring and useless. I wanted my students to love words. I wanted my students to view words the way Oliver Wendell Holmes did. Vocabulary is not only food for the mind, but food for the soul. I would use this one-credit course to help them understand that. Lanell's idea of translating the words on the word wall to Native words was the key to bringing these kids around to valuing vocabulary.

This new venture including Native language translation turned our 2-year discussion of language loss into a possibility for new beginnings. McPherson thinks next to life our most precious possession is language:

> Language is . . . the beginning of responsibility, a word whose Latin root means to respond (answer, justify, defend). Without language we can react like beasts and fish; with it we can respond like men and women, responsibly. One of the things we are responsible for is language itself, next to life our most precious possession. (in Lederer, 1991, p. 229)

The students at Upward Bound viewed the word wall as the beginning of their responsibility to the preservation of their Native language. The wall began to fill with both English and Native vocabulary, opening the possibility of reclaiming their native tongue, one or two words at a time. It helped lift us to a higher level in the struggle against language loss. My students became responsible for language preservation. Preservation begins with hope; the word wall offered a ray of hope for the students. Students wrote what the word wall meant to them:

> Translating the words to our own language was very meaningful. It made me feel better about not really knowing my language because it showed me I can learn it and that it is not too late to learn it. (Donna, Summer Year 2)

> . . . Our class is so inspiring to me because we get to express how we feel and what we think the writer is trying to say. I like it. And I never heard the Yaqui language spoken before; it is just as beautiful as any other language. (Delilah, Summer Year 2)

> . . . Translating words from English to my native tongue made it more meaningful because I now know that I can still learn my language and have hope. It makes me want to learn more. (Angelique, Summer Year 2)

Translating gut reaction words in English to Native words turned out to be a family affair. In our classroom there were two students who spoke their native tongue on a daily basis at home and a few could understand light conversation in the native tongue, but the vast majority did not speak it at all. There were certain words that no student could translate and when this happened, students returned to their dorms in the evening and called family members discussing translations. Students often came back to class with the translations, and interesting stories about how their families tracked down the translation by contacting other relatives and community members. Positive comments

about our vocabulary word wall continued through out the summer from students and administrators.

As our word wall grew, so too did our other walls, which were filled with poetry and quotes. Before the course was finished, we did not have one inch of uncovered wall space. Students often arrived to class early, bringing students from other classes to show them around our room. My class schedule eventually included a weekly wall report. Never before have my classroom walls affected students in this way. Rafael and Sha-Shin's responses are typical to the prompt, "Looking around these classroom walls:"

> Mere words could never express my feeling about these walls. Before this class, school walls were things that made me feel confined. These walls are helping to unlock the confusion I have felt since I was a little kid, right since that first day I started school. Jesse these walls now hold my heart. When I feel down, I look for Chief Joseph's "Appeal for Indian Justice." I feel proud to be alive. When I feel confused about school I look up at Chief Dan George's words using the white man's tools of education, and I understand I need to focus my attention back on school. I can see my effort to be educated on these walls. The walls of this room tell the story of my journey to learn. On these walls my Native language lives, and on these walls lives my hope. I even brought my friends to see these walls, and at Open House I brought my younger brother to show him. (Rafael, Summer Year 2)

> Never before have my classroom walls affected students in this way.

> The words and pictures on these walls are inspirational to me. They have touched my heart in one way or another-these words touch our hearts and souls with words of wisdom to push us up in the world. . . . We all write powerful words and speak from the heart. I have touched them and they have touched me. (Sha-Shin, Summer Year 2)

Mia suggests what made these walls different from the walls of their other classrooms:

> I am very proud of the walls of this classroom. They hold so many words of power—our wisdom. The walls of the past classrooms were usually bare-none of

> them contained what these walls contain today. . . . Translating English to our Native words helped us get in touch with our own culture, and learn our peer's culture also. (Mia, Summer Year 2)

Students drew strength from the walls, the contents of which were student generated. The walls had, in essence, become an extension to the ageless pictographs on Picture Rock near Baboquivari Mountain on the Tohono O'odham Reservation (just outside of Tucson). We had previously visited Picture Rock, which in my view is a realization that Native Americans want the world to know that this is their land, they alone hold title to this wonderful place. Could it be possible that the students felt the same about the walls in our classroom? Sandra wrote:

> I like the walls in the room, the walls at school are just stuff you might see in every classroom . . . I have never seen a classroom full of students work. If you look at it with your heart and not just your eyes it is very meaningful in its own way . . . (Sandra, Summer Year 2)

The walls gave access to the publication of their voice, their language, their heroes, their hopes, and their belief in the power of the written word. The significance of these walls to this investigation is revealed as I respond to the third question of my inquiry:

> What are the experiences students have in a transactional classroom that affect passive views of these elements of literacy; reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing?

At the start of this investigation my students accepted reading and writing as passive literacy processes. Besides their art projects, their public readings, and the publication of their words, the very walls of this transactional classroom are themselves evidence of anything but a passive view of literacy (see Figure 6.14). One may wonder

our classroom contained that provide such evidence; what evidence is there that represents this change for visual literacy?

Figure 6.14 represents a visual protest of the loss of Native American land and visually represents how the students felt about the Indian Removal and Dawes Act signed by Andrew Johnson. The red hands clearly represent the blood shed by their ancestors as a result of "Indian removals." This visual statement by the students from Summer Year 1 does not change history, just as their art project "Hope and Memory" does not alter the past; instead such displays are their attempts to face history. As Maya Angelou writes in *On The Pulse of Morning:* "History despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again" (1993).

Figure 6.14. Visual protest.

The walls in our classroom gave students the courage to face and respond to 500 years of injustice with dignity and pride. Pride in themselves as individuals and as Native Americans. I long for the day when students across our nation respond in similar ways to historical events. I imagine pictures of Hitler smeared in red, and large red X's placed upon reproductions of historical documents announcing the sale of slaves.

The walls in my classroom represent a very active reading that involves what Rosenblatt (1978) calls "evoking the poem," the reading of the word which invokes the reader aesthetically and efferently. It is the combination of aesthetic and efferent response that links us to the political side of the written word. The evoking of the literary responses of my students that was displayed on the walls of their classroom, their journals, and other forms of expression terminated all the restraints on literary expression. The students are moving literacy beyond Freire's (1986) concept of idle chatter, which is crucial in order for literacy to become transformative. "We human beings are not computers that generate objective, bias-free, and mistake proof words, phrases, and sentences. Our speech and our writing inevitably reflect the fearful asymmetry of our kind" (Lederer, 1991, p. 51).

The appeal of a transactional view of literacy is that it demands the classroom free itself from the asymmetrical power structure of traditional curriculum. Lederer is no critical theorist, instead he is a lover of language, in particular, the English language. He continues: "Language is a window through which we look at the world. A growing number of people have begun to wonder if our window on reality has a glass that distorts the view" (Lederer, 1991, p. 51).

He suggests that language both reflects and influences culture, and then raises the question, "Can language be prejudiced? If language reflects culture and in turn influences culture, could it be that the window through which we see life is marked by cracks, smudges, blind spots and filters? In short is language prejudice?" (Lederer, 1991, p. 51)

Perhaps then, the hope of whole language, inquiry, transactional thinking, and critical theory is that language can become the very means of liberating us from any notion of language prejudice. Access to all the elements of literacy, and the right to respond, both subjectively and objectively, open Freire's door to transformative literacy.

In this chapter, I explored important literacy events that illuminated the liberating literacy development of these students during the second year of this study. The events represent the end of our journey, and to the realization that these kinds of responses are just the beginning of a more active literacy. One that reaches beyond just the written word. It is fitting that I end this dissertation in chapter 7, by returning to the voices of my students and my original research questions.

CHAPTER 7

MENDING THE "SACRED HOOP"

I embarked upon this study intending to determine how curriculum emerged within one whole language classroom. During the 2 years of this study, however, I discovered that literacy, when used to invite and engage students, culturally changes the asymmetrical nature of the traditional classroom.

Together we transformed our classroom, shifting the dichotomy to an education for freedom. Spring (1989) states that the shift to "education . . . for freedom" (p. 195) is a conscious choice. The move may initially appear chaotic to outsiders, but a closer look reveals the powerful commitment and purpose to learning that emerges. In this investigation, the conscious choice to freedom began the day Ms. Listo went looking for a teacher who would embrace the recommendations of the 1991 Indian Nations at Risk Task Force Report. The final data I categorized and analyzed came from the focus interview held during the last week of class Year 2.

The Last Word

Since choice was a major influence in our literacy program I asked for volunteers for the final focus interview. Fifteen of the 20 students in class volunteered. The names were placed into a hat and six names were randomly selected. These six were given permission slips to be signed by their parents. Once again this was a little reminder to everyone that all of their voices were important to telling our story. The final focus interviews were held the last week of class with all six students.

I started the interview by addressing the students with the following prompt:

> Two years ago we began a sacred journey together, and today I make a final request of you. Please be honest and open during this interview. My role as interviewer is to provide the questions and keep the conversation going. You may ask any questions of your own. Please feel free to respond in any way you desire. There will not be any names given when sharing this information. On the written transcript you (participants) will be referred to as student #'s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Thank you for helping me with my research.

Focus Question # 1

Is this class at Upward Bound any different from your classes at school? If so, how, and why?

Student # 1:

> There is a real big difference-here at Upward Bound. We read and learn interesting things. We learn about our past and everybody else's past, instead of what is called America's past. I don't know how to explain it, but look around this room, the walls. We don't only learn our own language but we learn others language too. It feels good to be in a class with just Native Americans. I don't go to a res(ervation) school. I go to regular public school, everything is mixed there. Here everything is specific. To tell you the truth I wish I could have gone to a class like this all four years of high school.

Clearly this young man feels a part of the greater Native American community at Upward Bound. He states "everything here is specific," everything is clear for him at Upward Bound. Some of the clarity is a strong connection to Native American literature, and the Native American lens that we placed on all the readings we responded to and discussed.

This is significant because it was access to the Native lens that changed how students felt about reading, writing, and language. It is important to note that the walls

(in our classroom) had a positive influence on him. The walls helped him learn his own Native language and the language of his classmates.

Student # 2 also discusses the walls:

> The obvious difference of this class and regular school is what is hanging on the walls. Like all the quotes, our poems and powerful words. In our regular English classes we don't translate words into Native Language. Here we get to give our own opinion, and write how we feel about what we read. There is a class at regular school that teaches O'odham language, but the kids are not into it, it is boring, we read these text books and write long dull essays, but if they had a class like this that is interesting. A class where you get to speak your mind about the things you read. "Here you get to participate and decide what the lessons are gonna be—and that is about it."

This young lady begins with the classroom walls. She immediately points out that students at her high school do not translate English words into her Native Language. The key to understanding her comments is filtered through inquiry. She states: "Here we get to give our own opinion, and write how we feel about what we read." She goes on to suggest that her O'odham language class at school lacks the excitement she experiences in our class here at Upward Bound. Inquiry is the driving force behind the excitement, inquiry is there on the walls, in their poetry, and in the literature we read. This student understands that at Upward Bound students have a voice.

From her point of view, Upward Bound students have access to the curriculum. This access to curriculum supports Freire's (1986) position that to critically educate people, literacy must avoid the "idle chatter" in which banking system models are rooted. To critically educate a group of people the dialogue must move beyond the notion that literacy materials are neutral. Another issue that emerges from choice is that discussion in transactional classrooms begins with subjective responses.

Student # 3 continues:

> There are many things that are different like #1 said, the quotes on the walls, the power words. I go to school on the reservation. At school we get to do only the things the teachers want us to do. But sometimes I like to read Native American authors and about Native American issues, because that is who we are. We are the majority at our school, there is only one white student anyway. This class is just different, we would do better if our classes at school were like this.
> I know that most others agree, the books at school are about white ways. I just think we should read more Native American authors . . . it's more than that. I guess us making the choices from the selections, here you don't have everything set. You have agendas, we write, I don't really know how to explain it . . .

Through critical words "I don't really know how to explain it," he is expressing that this experience at Upward Bound is not one with which he is familiar. The potential of a transactional curriculum rooted in inquiry creates a genuine critical stance for both teacher and students. Darder (1995) suggests:

> We are in search of the true America—an America of multiple cultures, multiple histories, multiple realities, multiple identities, multiple ways of living, surviving and being human. And no where is this struggle for the true America more profoundly being waged than in the classrooms of public schools in the United states. (p. 5)

Darder (1995) views the true purpose of education as being the search for the true America. That true America is one of multiple perspectives. Literacy became an invitation to discover the elusive true America for Upward Bound students. The difference between their regular classes and classes here at Upward Bound is that they used literacy to explore their culture and traditions, their history and even their language. Literacy at Upward Bound centered not only on students' ways of knowing but also their cultural struggles to preserve those ways of knowing in a diverse changing world.

In the struggle to celebrate America's richness in the diverse beauty of its people, student # 4 says:

> Here we are free to speak our minds and share our thoughts openly. Like when I come into this class, it's like before I come I'm tired, but here these walls perk me up and inspire me--because these words are great words from great people. When you read them, some of them are sad, like pity, hatred, disgust. Let's see, cruel prejudice, but all these words have power in them, they are not words you can just say and not think about them. When they are translated they are more powerful. Yes it makes me think more.

The search for what Darder (1995) calls a true America, must begin in learning communities where the right of students to speak their minds is respected. In a transactional classroom that right of students is rooted in a curriculum that respects the personal and social inquiries of all the members of their community.

During the interview, I pointed to two social writing sheets that were hanging on the wall. They were from the very beginning of the previous year, and they were both quite different. I said:

> Over here is one of our first social writing sheets. Remember how I had everyone webbing issues they found in the literature. One group objected to my style of webbing. I was using the big circle in the center, then connecting others smaller circles to the center. Look at the first ones, and then look at the one produced by the group who didn't appreciate my style of webbing. For me that class was a changing point—the students changed the way I saw the world. They reminded me how we all do and see things differently.
>
> My question for you today is: Do you remember this particular class and was it a changing moment for you?
>
> Student # 4:
>
> Yeah, I remember that day and all that webbing stuff. I think you begged us to respond and share our feelings . . . it's like the language thing, some of us do not speak our own language—but we remember the language—the poem by Joy Harjo, remember that was a changing point for me. She

> says "Remember your Native language—your mother" you gave us that poem—Jesse—remember! That was a changing point for me.

While my changing moment was the webs, I discovered during the final focus interview that everyone had changing moments of their own. For some it happened right up front, for others it happened much later. Students knew early on that this class was different. They genuinely felt that I cared about them and the issues that were of concern to them. Goodman (1987) and Whitmore (1994) refer to learning as a continuing process of invention and convention. The concepts that learners invent are respected, and conventional concepts are negotiated through inventions. At Upward Bound the moments of change occurred during literacy events where students found their invented concepts respected and valued.

Another key point during the focus interviews reflects on tradition:

Student # 5:

> The change moment for me was when I discovered that tradition is not just knowing things. It is a way of living. A way of feeling and thinking, and I do not have to wait until I am an elder to live traditionally.

My dear friend and mentor Dorothy Menosky (one of the original miscue researchers) is rather fond of explaining to teachers: "What is taught is not always learned, and what is learned is not always taught." An open curriculum gives rise to learning for personal and meaningful purposes. This kind of openness can only create an atmosphere of caring.

Student # 6:

> At school they don't care about what we read. They don't care about us. They don't let us respond differently. Here we picked the words on the walls, that is why they are powerful, we picked them . . .

This student is not alone when he perceives teachers as not caring about what he reads. Perhaps this is the cost of keeping choice out of our literacy agendas, and forcing students to respond in traditional evaluative ways. He continues:

> It's like Lord of the Flies, we read it just to do a critical analytical essay. She told us that was why we were reading it. She didn't care about the book, just the essay. So then we didn't care about the book . . .

Reading in school is often a passive act, rooted in efferent responses, separated from aesthetic reactions. This type of literacy agenda produces students who really do not care about what they read or write. At Upward Bound, the literacy agenda is rooted in caring about what is read. Students respond to the literature in their own ways. Two very different literacy agendas, one produces students who may well be able to read, but just do not get it, while the other agenda produces students who learn not only how to read but the value of reading itself.

Finally, as student # 4 put it during our focus interview:

> The reading and writing in this class made a big difference from our own school cause like, the reading we do, some hide the truth. But we have to know the past, in our own school we read about the past but we don't read about what we need to know. We read about what the school needs us to know, like the writing in this class we got to speak our own thoughts, what we feel inside . . .

Clearly the difference for student # 4 is looking to the broader sense of why schools teach what they teach. The traditional agenda deconstructs Native American ways of knowing through a literacy agenda directed by what the school wants students to

know. At Upward Bound, we propose a literacy agenda that structures a classroom life to affirm and encourage the voices of our students. As Giroux (1988) states:

> Teachers must organize classroom relationships so that students can draw on and confirm those dimensions of their histories and experiences that are deeply rooted in the surrounding community assume pedagogical responsibility for attempting to understand the relationships and forces that influence students outside the immediate context of the classroom . . . develop curricula and pedagogical practices around those community traditions, histories and forms of knowledge that are often ignored within the dominant school culture. . . . (pp. 199-201)

The real difference for students at Upward Bound was access to a curriculum which valued their language, traditions, histories, and ways of knowing: a curriculum which above all respects their inquiry.

Answering My Research Questions

My original four questions of this inquiry seem naive at this point. They are:

1. How does a transactional curriculum affect adolescent Native American high school students considered to be reluctant readers and writers?

2. Will a transactional view of literature change passive perceptions of literacy in the classroom for at-risk Native American students?

3. What are the experiences students have in a transactional classroom that affect passive views of literacy: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing?

4. What evidence is found in the written, spoken, and visual response to literature that there is a growth in the reading and writing abilities of adolescents in a transactional classroom?

I will address the questions individually.

Question # 1:

> How does a transactional curriculum affect adolescent Native American high school students considered to be reluctant readers and writers?

After 2 years, the first question seems too simple. The final focus interview clearly portrays students who are actively engaged in personal and socially meaningful literacy events. A transactional curriculum affects students in many positive ways, but more importantly, it provides learners with a personal purpose for reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Question # 2:

> Will a transactional view of literature change passive perceptions of literacy in the classroom for at risk Native American students?

A transactional view of literature is rooted in both choice and respect for diverse reader responses. Literature in itself is not enough to change passive perceptions of literacy for Native American adolescents. Active literacy is achieved by opening the curriculum for learners to an inquiry stance. The answer to this question starts growing in chapters 4 and 5 and thunders its way into chapter 6.

Question # 3:

> What are the experiences students have in a transactional classroom that affect passive views of these elements of literacy; reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing?

The literacy experiences that help learners become active users of literacy are created by learning conditions that bring students together as a community. This community engages them in sharing their stories, voicing their concerns and answering their questions. Together they negotiate the curriculum, establishing a social community

of learners. Experiences like those at Upward Bound will strengthen rather than weaken students' possibilities for active citizenship.

Question # 4:

> What evidence is found in the written, verbal, spoken and visual response to literature that there is a growth in the reading and writing abilities of adolescents in a transactional classroom?

In the previous chapter, I provided tables (Tables 6.1 and 6.2) indicating how students' writing had changed over the first and second year. These statistics directly answer my final question concerning the growth in student writing. In traditional circles the worry about loss of growth is what links teachers and curriculum to boredom. In transactional circles curriculum is viewed as a dynamic process of discovery. This dynamic flow of discovery ensures that skills are addressed within the context of learning and that growth can occur. At the Upward Bound there was demonstrable writing growth in areas, such as number of words, spelling, etc., across the 2-year period.

Students at the beginning of my research did not view writing as powerful. As they were further exposed to literature students slowly began to discover powerful writers. At the same time, their own growth rapidly expanded. They started to view themselves as powerful writers. The eventual *Red Ink* publication of 14 of their poems began quite small with our own class publication. We had publication via the walls of our classroom and bulletin boards around the college. We never could have guessed that the vocabulary class could be so effective. Initially, we were just translating their response words to Native words and hanging them on the walls. Then we hung our

favorite quotes on the walls; soon we were all out of walls. All of this helped students to perceive writing as powerful.

My Growth

My findings recount a journey of change not only for my students, but for me. During this investigation, my understanding of curriculum and literacy expanded greatly. The nature of a transactional curriculum is to break down the traditional asymmetrical learning relationships within a classroom. When this happens learning becomes reciprocal. As faith in the power of literacy increased for students, it also increased for me. The Upward Bound students stretched my beliefs about language, literacy, and literature. But most importantly, they stretched my beliefs about learning and teaching. Teaching at its best envisions literature as the food that nourishes the roots of every culture. As teachers, we must never sell literacy as a mere means to an end. Teaching demands that literature is the main key to open the door to literacy. It is a form of liberation. Literature offers the possibility of a place no less wondrous and mysterious than the constellations themselves. Teachers must use literature to conduct the beautiful and glorious diverse American symphony.

I dedicate this final chapter to a wonderful student, Alex Torres. It is my sincere hope that the readers of this study will understand that while Alex is no longer among us every day, he lives within our hearts and most definitely within my teaching. The symphony of my teaching and learning is linked forever to Alex. I arrive at the end of my journey acknowledging that Alex is to me what Abraham Lincoln was to Walt Whitman: "Captain—Oh My Captain." It was Alex's memories that guided me through the final

writing of my investigation. His memory ensures that my journey holds true to the many Native voices that traveled with him as he moved on to a better place. Thank you, Alex.

Conclusions

I began this study looking at the creation of a transactional classroom. I chose the term transactional to highlight Rosenblatt's reading model (1994) and to continue Dewey's (1899) rejection of simple stimulus response models. This study rejects the notion of curriculum of the known, for a curriculum model of coming to know. I sought to model the thinking of Bentley and Dewey, both of whom replace the term interaction with transaction in order to highlight knowing as the right to see together. Curriculum in transactional classrooms is a coming to know together.

My investigation is situated in the complex and complicated world of the classroom. This study is an invitation for teachers and researchers to take the journey through the maze. The maze for the Tohono O'odham, according to Angie Listo (1997), ". . . is a representation of an individual's life long journey to discover a deeper understanding of life. It is t-apidag, our right to attain knowledge as our birthright as it was given to us by the Creator I'Itoi to sustain ourselves as a people, but also to let all people know who we are, and how long we have survived the turbulent times of a changing world, past and present, and in the future to come." The creation of a transactional classroom is the perfect guide for my journey through the maze. It is my sincere hope that other teacher researchers take similar journeys of discovery within their own classrooms, and that they too will share their teaching journeys.

Our journey started with the hope of changing a traditional writing program to that of a rich and natural writing program respecting Native American ways of knowing. Theory informs practice, and thus this investigation is filtered through five theoretical threads: whole language, teacher research, transactional theory, critical theory, and American Indian education. Embedded in this investigation are multiple sources of data: focus interviews, both individual and group written artifacts, video transcripts, and photos. This study is rooted in a narrative tradition of teacher research that embarks both writer and reader on a transactional journey, one that acknowledges the reader as an active partner in the construction of new possibilities.

My conclusions give rise to the larger issue of how transactional theory can help teachers create a generative curriculum that respects the Native American Task Force recommendations of 1991. At the same time it helps Native American adolescents perceive literacy as a viable means to preserve their language, traditions, and culture. My conclusions give emphasis to the five prominent conditions for emerging curriculum that facilitate (a) creating space for transactional dialogs, (b) sharing responsibility, (c) trusting inquiry, (d) using multiple sign systems, and (e) accessing personal and social ways of knowing. These conditions respect and value the voices of American marginalized communities.

The literacy events in my study illustrate first the complexity of a generative curriculum and the interdependent theoretical thinking that impacts teacher student relationships. Secondly, this study illustrates how literacy itself emerges within a transactional classroom. The response of one student in his/her literature circle frequently

affected all members of the classroom. For learners in this study, inquiry means access to curriculum, and curriculum emerges from the responses of students. The classroom had become for them a place where their language and voice were valued. The very walls of our classroom held meaning for every student.

This portrait could affect other teacher researchers as they attempt to struggle with the complexity of curriculum as it emerges within their own classrooms. For some, this investigation will lead them to question literacy, language, and curriculum in America. Others will rightfully question the investigation. Perhaps their questioning will lead to new inquiries, and that in itself is the very purpose of research.

Although my conclusions imply that certain theoretical perspectives are more meaningful than others, the generalizations I make in no way constitute a prescription. Throughout this investigation, I have tried to explicate my theories concerning literacy and curriculum by giving specific examples that might serve as guidelines. My study found support for an emerging curriculum that moved Native Americans students beyond a passive view of literacy. It also replaced feelings of loss in those same students. Their new view of literacy held the possibility of preservation for their language, traditions, and culture.

The remainder of this chapter explores in-depth the five conditions I set forth as the pillars of my findings:

1. Creating space for transactional dialogues
2. Sharing responsibility supports active participation for learners in transactional communities
3. Trusting inquiry as curriculum
4. Using multiple sign systems
5. Accessing personal and social ways of knowing that constitute the major conclusions of my study.

Transactional Dialogues

Transactional dialogues extend Louise Rosenblatt's notion of transactional theory beyond reading and writing to what Newman (1992) calls a transactional view of learning. There is no set linear sequence to curriculum in transactional classrooms. Teachers begin by planning initial learning engagements that create opportunities which extend inquiry, thus avoiding dictating inquiry. The engagements provide curricular conversations that focus on learners becoming integral parts of an emerging curriculum. Teachers in such classrooms do not guide learners to answers. They join with their students in a process of coming to know together. The assumption is that learning is a reciprocal venture, one in which teacher and students actively engage in an emerging curriculum exploring new inquires. This reciprocal venture is grounded in an atmosphere of democratic principles that break down the walls of asymmetrical conversations. This first condition is the creation of a studio-like atmosphere where teacher and students are immersed in a dialogue for the purpose of coming to know. Both teacher and students are members of a community of learners seeking, constructing, and exploring meaning. In

essence, they enter the maze together, collaboratively seeking a deeper understanding. (Refer to the beginning of chapter 6 for O'odham culture symbol.)

Sharing Responsibility Supports Active Participation for Learners in Transactional Communities

The second condition is an acknowledgment that transactional curriculum is grounded in learner responsibility. Learners are expected to be active participants in small and large group discussions. They are the creators of alternative responses. In literature circles students come prepared to share their reactions about what they read. Students and teacher are responsible for maintaining an atmosphere that respects choice: respecting choice not only in the selection of readings, but respecting the questions of others. All transactional communities are rooted in respect for responsible choices.

Trusting Inquiry as Curriculum.

Short, Harste, and Burke (1996) propose that an inquiry curriculum is a "process that cuts across and integrates personal and social knowing, knowledge systems, sign systems and an environment based on education for democracy" (p. 260). Progress means acquiring new understandings and new questions. The focus of teaching in transactional communities is not on acquiring new information, or the teaching of skills, but on offering new possibilities of understanding. An inquiry curriculum creates a focus on authentic learning events, moving learners between personal and social ways of knowing, towards a deeper understanding of themselves and their world.

Using Multiple Sign Systems

In a transactional learning community, the role of teacher and student is centered on respect for choice, and an understanding that in democratic communities people view the world in unique ways. Music, art and drama are as central to the curriculum as are language and math.

Accessing Personal and Social Ways of Knowing

The final condition for the establishment of a transactional curriculum is access to the cultural and political frameworks that all learners bring. These frameworks are necessary in order to make learning meaningful. Dewey (1963) suggests that education begins with learners' passions and questions, growing from their beliefs, values, and their position in the world. Each member of the transactional community has access to their own lens for viewing new knowledge. Each one travels the maze individually, and all members are enriched by each other's journeys.

Walt Whitman writes:

> I myself but write one or two indicative words for the future, I but advance a moment only to wheel and hurry back in the darkness. I am a man who sauntering along without fully stopping, turns a casual look upon you and then averts his face, leaving it to you to prove and define it, expecting the main things from you. (1992, p. 178)

There is no doubt in my mind that others hold the power to prove and define this study. Some will bring forth new questions and point us in new directions. I salute them and wish them well on their journey through the maze. I have a place in my heart for the Tohono O'odham and Yaqui students who guided me through my maze. I recognize Alex Torres (Figure 7.1) as the messenger of truth ensuring I understood that Black Elk's

Tree of Life will bloom again in classrooms that respect and honor Native American ways of knowing. This journey takes place at a time in American education when more and more schools are caught up in the game of high stakes assessment, where standardized test scores are valued more than the actual classroom learning journeys our students embark on. The potential for education to restore our faith in the powerful American symphony of possibility is recorded here within these pages. Dr. Martin Luther King (1964), during his acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize, said, "I refuse to accept the idea that the isness of man's present nature makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the oughtness that forever confronts him." This study reaches beyond the isness of test scores to the oughtness of a view of schooling that respects and values Native Americans' language, culture and traditions.

> Come, my friends,
> 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world. . . .
> It may be that gulfs will wash us down:
> It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
> And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
> Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
> We are not now that strength which in old days
> Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Make weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not yield.
>
> Alfred Lord Tennyson (1985, pp. 58-59)

In this investigation I sought to strive for something different. I reached out far and wide for that concept of a newer world. I challenge others to do the same. Farewell, Alex, my messenger of truth.

Figure 7.1. Alex Torres, a very special Upward Bound student.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO PARENTS FOR PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS FOR RESEARCH

PERMISSION SLIP

Please be informed I give Mr. Jesse Turner permission to use my child's writings (or part thereof) during conferences and for educational research.

I understand my child's first name only may be used. His/her full name will never be used in any presentations, research papers or educational publications without my written permission.

Signed by:

Student: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE PRINT STUDENT'S NAME:_____

****

A little note on this project:

This research project is a study of the use of Native American literature in our writing program here at the Upward Bound Program at Pima Community College. The purpose of the research is to share with other teachers how high school students react to exploring and sharing their own cultural literature.

We would appreciate hearing from you regarding our writing program, and so from time to time we will be asking the student's to have you interview them just to see what it is they are learning here. I really believe you would enjoy the powerful ideas they write about while here. There is something your son or daughter may not have told you, (I have told them) they are the brightest and best students I have taught in 16 years.

This research project is really a story of how reading and writing can help students to learn about themselves. I was taught by my grand mother never to ask for something without saying please, and so it is I ask for "your" permission to allow your son or daughter to participate in this wonderful project.

Respectfully,

Angie Listo
Jesse Turner

I give permission to Jesse Turner to use audio, video and photographs to record Upward Bound students in his class for educational research. I also grant Mr. Turner permission to collect the written work from Upward Bound for the purpose of educational research. His work may be use only for educational presentations and educational publications provided permission is granted by the participant's parent or legal guardian. This permission is granted with the knowledge that Mr. Turner will share his findings with the Tohono O'odham Tribal Educational Committee.

Signature printed

Signature written

APPENDIX B

COURSE SYLLABI

Welcome to Reading 068/Techniques of Vocabulary

This course will improve your vocabulary through a variety of strategies such as structured analysis and context clues. Emphasis on understanding words roots, derivatives, antonyms and synonyms to enable students to expand their existing vocabulary strategies.

Henry Beston said: It is the word which opens the door of the treasure cave, the word which builds the universe and commands its power.

Requirements:

Students will keep a vocabulary journal containing all completed strategy exercises.

Students will work together collaboratively to prepare themselves for strategy sharing sessions.

Texts:

Will be the same ones used in 073

Attendance:

A. (1) absence will result in a meeting with the Upward Bound Director.

B (2) absences will result in a warning and a lowering of your grade.

C. (3) absences could result in dismissal from this course.

Tardiness:

This is a college course, tardiness will lower your grade, and will not be tolerated.

Grade Evaluation:

Vocabulary strategy journal	**=**	**50 points**
Class participation	**=**	**05 points**
Attendance (perfect)	**=**	**10 points**
Strategy sessions	**=**	**15 points**
Word Wall contribution	**=**	**20 points**

Grade Scale:

90 to 100 points	**=**	**A**
80 to 89 points	**=**	**B**
70 to 79 points	**=**	**C**
60 to 69 points	**=**	**D**
< 59 points	**=**	**F**

Upward Bound Students - Welcome to Reading 073.
A community of readers and writers
using literacy to change the world.

This course builds upon the strategies' students use to follow directions, recognize main ideas, find important details, make inferences, draw conclusions, separate facts from opinion and judge cause and effect.

Once you learn to read you will be forever free
-Frederick Douglass

Theme: Reading our way to freedom through the untold stories of America

Focus:
This course will focus on higher thinking order capabilities helpful to cultivating better reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies. This course will enable students to understand the connection between all elements of literacy.

Requirements:

students will keep a reader response journal:
students will collaborate together for:

- **literature circles**
- **presentations**
- **project**
- **Reading strategy sessions**
- **computer days**

Texts:

Will be provided by the Upward Bound Program and the Pima Community College and University of Arizona libraries. As usual readings will be self selected by students and the instructor. Your choices will be respected in this course. Thus readings will come from a broad range of Authors from diverse cultural backgrounds.

REFERENCES

Allen, J. (1995). It's never too late. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Angelou, M. (1993). On the pulse of morning. New York: Random House Inc.

Applebee, A. (1981). Writing and learning in school settings. New York: Academic Press.

Applebee, A. (1993). Literature in the secondary school. Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Applebee, A., Langer, J., & Mullis, I. (1985). The reading report card. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Applebee, A., Langer, J., & Mullis, I. (1986). The writing report card. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

Atwell, N. (1998). In the middle: New understandings about writing, reading, and learning (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc.

Baldwin, J. (1979). On language, race and the Black writer. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times.

Barnard, J., & Burner, D. (Eds.). (1975). The American experience in education. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc.

Bransford, J. D., & Johnson, M. K. (1972). Contextual prerequisites for understanding: Some investigations of comprehension and recall. Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 11, 717-726.

Brause, R. S., & Mayher, J. (Eds.). (1991). Search and re-search: What the inquiring teacher needs to know. Bristol, PA: The Falmer Press.

Brown, D. (1970). Bury my heart at Wounded Knee. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Brown, G. (1992). Reading and language arts curriculum in elementary and secondary education for American Indians and Alaskan Natives. In P. Cahape & C. B. Howley (Eds.), Indian nations at risk: Listening to the people (pp. 66-70). West Virginia: ERIC.

Bruner, J. S. (1960). The process of education. A landmark in education theory. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. S. (1962). On knowing, lessons for the left hand. Cambridge, MA: Bellknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Burke, C., & Crafton, L. (1994). Inquiry based evaluation: Teachers and students reflecting together. Primary Voices K-6, 2(2), 2-7.

Cahape, P., & Howley, C. B. (Eds.). (1992). Indian nations at risk: Listening to the people. West Virginia: ERIC.

Chomsky, N. (1965). Aspects of the theory of syntax. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. (1990). Research on teaching and teacher research: The issues that divide. Educational Researcher, 19(2), 2-11.

Code, L. (1991). What can she know? Feminist theory and the construction of knowledge. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Coles, G. (1998). Reading lessons: The debate over literacy. New York: Hill & Wang.

Cummins, J. (1994). The empowerment of Indian students. In J. Reyhner (Ed.), Teaching American Indian students (pp. 1-12). Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Darder, A. (1995). Buscando America: Contributions of critical Latino educators to the academic development and empowerment of Latino students in the U.S. In C. E. Sleeter & P. L. McLaren (Eds.), Multicultural education, critical pedagogy, and the politics of difference (pp. 319-348). New York: State University of New York Press.

Deloria, V., Jr. (1971). Touch the earth. A self-portrait of Indian existence. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). Handbook of qualitative research. California: Sage Publications, Inc.

De Saint-Exupery, A. (1982). The little prince. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace & World.

Dewey, J. (1976a). The middle works, Volume 1: 1899-1901. Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, J. (1976b). The middle works, Volume 2: 1902-1903. Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dewey, John. (1976c). The middle works, Volume 5: 1908. Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press.

Elbow, P. (1981). Writing with power: Techniques for mastering the writing process. New York: Oxford University Press.

Elbow, P. (1990). What is English? New York: MLA.

Eisner, E. W. (1991). The enlightened eye. New York: Macmillan.

Eisner, E. W. (1994). Cognition and curriculum reconsidered (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia.

Flood, J. (1990). Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Flores, B., Tefft Cousin, P., & Diaz, E. (1991). Transforming deficit myths about learning, language and culture. Language Arts, 68(5), 369-79.

Fox, M. (1993). Radical reflections: Passionate opinions on teaching, learning and living. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Fox, M., & Wilkinson, L. (1993). English essentials. Melbourne, Australia: Macmillan.

Freire, P. (1986). Pedagogy of the oppressed. New York: Continuum Publishing Corporation.

Freire, P. (1993). A critical encounter. London: Routledge Publishing.

Gallo, D. R. (Ed.). (1992). Author's insights: Turning teenagers into readers and writers. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Heinemann.

Garis, L. (1992, August 2). Susan Sontag finds romance. New York Times Magazine, 20-23, 31, 43.

Giroux, H. (1988). Teachers as intellectuals. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Goodman, K. (1965). Cues and miscues in reading: A linguistic study. Elementary English, 42(6), 635-642.

Goodman, K. S. (1986). What's whole in whole language. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Goodman, K. S. (1988). Language and learning: Toward a social-personal view. Paper presented at Brisbane Conference on Language and Learning, Brisbane, Australia.

Goodman, K. S. (1994). Reading, writing and written text. A transactional sociopsycholinguistic view. In R. B. Ruddell (Ed.), Theoretical models and processes of reading (pp. 1093-1130). Newark, DE: IRA.

Goodman, K. S., & Burke, C. (1973). Theoretically based studies of patterns of miscues in oral reading performance (Project # 9-0375). Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Education.

Goodman, K. S., & Goodman, Y. (1994). Reading, writing, and written texts: A transactional sociolinguistic view. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), Theoretical models and processes of reading (4th ed., pp. 1093-1130). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Goodman, K. S., Goodman, Y., & Hood, W. (1989). The whole language evaluation book. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Goodman, K. S., Goodman, Y., & Hood, W. (1991). Organizing for whole language. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Goodman, Y. (1970). Using children's miscues for teaching reading strategies. Reading Teacher, 23(3), 455-459.

Goodman, Y. M. (1978). Kidwatching: An alternate to testing. National Elementary Principal, 57(4), 41-45.

Goodman, Y. M. (Ed.). (1991). How children construct literacy: Piagetian perspectives. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Goodman, Y. M., & Wilde, S. (1992). A community of writers. New York: Teachers College Press.

Graves, D. H. (1981). Donald Graves in Australia. "Children want to write." NSW, Australia: Bridge Printery Pty. Ltd.

Graves, D. H. (1983). Writing: Teachers and children at work. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Graves, D. H. (1994). A fresh look at writing. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). Learning how to mean: Explorations in the development of language. London: Edward Arnold.

Harjo, J. (1997). She had some horses. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press.

Harste, J. C. (1993). Inquiry based instruction. Primary Voices K-6, 1, 2–5.

Harste, J. C. (1994). Literacy as curricular conversations about knowledge, inquiry, and morality. In R. B. Ruddell (Ed.), Theoretical models and processes of reading (pp. 1220-1242). Newark, DE: IRA.

Harste, J. C., & Burke, C. L. (1977). A new hypothesis for reading teacher education research: Both the teaching and learning of reading are theoretically based. In P. D. Pearson (Ed.), Reading: Research, theory, and practice (26th yearbook of the National Reading Conference). Chicago, IL: National Reading Conference.

Harste, J. C., & Burke, C. L. (Eds.). (1991). Curriculum as inquiry: Help for the inner-city reading teacher, 1990-91, Report of the Lilly/IPS Teacher Exchange Project. Indianapolis, IN: Office of Professional Development, Indianapolis Public Schools.

Heine, D., & Hornstein, S. (1996). Living and learning whole language with pre-service teachers. In K. Whitmore & Y. Goodman (Eds.), Whole language voices in teacher education (pp. 181-192). Maine: Stenhouse.

Huck, C. (1987). Children's literature in the elementary school (4th ed.). New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston.

Indian Nations at Risk Task Force. (1991). Indian nations at risk: An educational strategy for action. (Final report of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

IRA/NCTE. (1994). Standards for the assessment of reading and writing: Joint task force on assessment. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Jervis, K., & Montag, C. (Eds.). (1991). Progressive education for the 1990s. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Kirby, D., Liner, T., & Vinz, R. (1988). Inside out: Developing strategies for teaching writing. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Kozol, J. (1991). Savage inequalities, children in America's schools. New York: Harper Perennial Publishers.

Langer, J. A. (1992). Literature instruction a focus on student response. Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Langer, J. A. (1995). Envisioning literature: Literary understanding. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Lederer, R. (1991). The miracle of language. New York: Pocket Books.

Mandel, B. J. (1980). Three language-arts curriculum models. Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Martusewicz, R. A., & Reynolds, W. (1994). Inside out, contemporary critical perspectives in education. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Mazer, N. F. (1992). The ice-cream syndrome (aka promoting good reading habits). In D. R. Gallo (Ed.), Authors' insights (pp. 21-31). New Hampshire: Heinemann.

McDermott, J. J. (Ed.). (1973). The philosophy of John Dewey: Two volumes in one. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

McLaren, P., & Leonard, P. (Eds.). (1993). Paulo Freire, a critical encounter. New York: Routledge.

Meriam, L. (Ed.). (1928). The problem of Indian administration. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Merriam, S. B. (1988). Case study research in education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Moll, L. (1990). Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Momaday, N. S. (1975). A note on contemporary Native American poetry. In Duane Niatum (Ed.), Carriers of the dream wheel: Contemporary Native American poetry (pp. xix-xx). New York: Harper & Row.

Neihardt, J. G. (1988). Black Elk speaks: Being the life story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Neruda, P. (1997). Full woman, fleshly apple, hot moon. Selected poems. New York: Harper Flamingo.

Newman, J. (1992). Interwoven conversations: Learning and teaching through critical reflection. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

Nieto, S. (1992). Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education. New York: Longman Publishing Group.

Nixon, R. (1999). Presidential materials at archives II. (On-line) http://www.ibiblio.org/lia/president/nixon.html.

Noddings, N. (1992). The challenge to care in schools. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Paris, C. L. (1993). Teacher agency and curriculum making in classrooms. New York: Teachers College Press.

Patterson, L., Santa Minnick, C., Short, K., & Smith, K. (1993). Teachers are researchers. Delaware: International Reading Association.

Patterson, L., Stansell, J., & Lee, S. (1990). Teacher research: From promise to power. New York: Richard C. Owen.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). Qualitative education and research methods (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Ray, R. E. (1993). The practice of theory. Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.

Reyhner, J. (Ed.). (1988). Teaching American Indian students. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Reyhner, J. (1994). American Indian/Alaska Native education. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1981). The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1983). Literature as exploration (4th ed.). New York: Teachers College.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1990). Retrospect. In E. J. Farrell (Ed.), Transactions with literature: A fifty-year perspective (pp. 97-107). Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1991). Literary theory. In J. Flood, J. Jensen, D. Lapp, & J. Squire (Eds.), Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts (pp. 57-61). New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1994). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. B. Ruddell (Ed.), Theoretical models and processes of reading (pp. 1057-1092). Newark, DE: IRA.

Ruddell, R. B., Ruddell, R., & Singer, H. (Eds.). (1994). Theoretical models and processes of reading (4th ed.). Delaware: International Reading Association.

Schenck, E. M. (1978). Reading America. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Schon, D. (1983). The reflective practitioner. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Seidman, I. E. (1991). Interviewing as qualitative research. New York: Columbia University Teachers College.

Silko, L. M. (1996). Yellow woman and a beauty of the spirit. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Short, K. G., & Armstrong, K. (1993). Moving toward inquiry. The New Advocate.

Short, K. G., & Burke, C. L. (1991). Creating curriculum: Teachers and students as a community of learners. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Short, K. G., Harste, J. C., & Burke, C. L. (1996). Creating classrooms for authors and inquirers. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Short, K. G., & Pierce, K. M. (Eds.). (1990). Talking about books. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Sims Bishop, R. (1990). Fifty years of exploring children's books. In E. J. Farrell (Ed.), Transactions with literature: A fifty-year perspective (pp. 1-9). Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Smith, F. (1971). Understanding reading. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston Inc.

Smith, F. (1988). Joining the literacy club. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Spring, J. (1989). The sorting machine revisited: National Education Policy since 1945. New York: Longman.

Straight, M. (1963). A very small remnant. New York: Knopf.

Taba, H., & Elkins, D. (1966). Teaching strategies for the culturally disadvantaged. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Tapahonso, L. (1997). Blue horses rush in: Poems and stories. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.

Vacca, R., & Rasinski, T. (1992). Case studies in whole language. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Press.

Weaver, C. (1988). Reading process and practice: From socio-psycholinguistics to whole language. New Hampshire: Heinemann.

White, E. B. (1980). Charlotte's web. New York: Harper Collins

Whitman, W. (1992). Walt Whitman selected poems. New York: Gramercy Books.

Woods, C. J. (1994). Tears of our mother. Red Ink: A Native American student publication, 3(1), 10-11.

Wordstar International Incorporated. (1991). Correct quotes. Career Publishing Inc.

Zepeda, O. (1995, June). The 16th Annual American Indian Language Development Institute. AILDI Symposium conducted at the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Zepeda, O. (1995). Ocean power. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.