

Introduction:

The Worlds of Words community's scholarship and teaching is informed by and situated in inquiry, a framework for organizing curriculum that encompasses the learner's personal and social knowing, knowledge systems, and sign systems (Short, Harste, with Burke, 1996). Inquiry is "a collaborative process of connecting to and reaching beyond current understandings to explore tensions significant to learners" (Short, 2009).

This issue of WOW Stories presents readers with a range of articles that demonstrate how, through engagement with global literature, students and teachers draw upon personal experiences and beliefs, implement information across knowledge systems, such as economics and critical theory, and utilize sign systems including written and spoken languages and mathematics to examine current understandings about themselves and their worlds, expand perspectives, and pose new questions.

The issue begins with two classroom-based studies into language. The first article, "Cosmopolitan Explorations of Culture Through an Intentionally Curated Text Set," is a teacher research study in which J.M. Lopez describes how she initiated an inquiry into students' personal and family cultures through a carefully curated text set that reflected what she learned from administering a home culture survey. Lopez documents students' use of translanguaging in their responses to the texts, as well as what they learned through their reading and discussions. The next article, "Inquiring about Language through Dual Language Picturebooks: A Case Study," describes a collaborative inquiry that explored how a student in an after school global cultures club "engaged with dual language picturebooks to develop language awareness and inquire about how these languages are used in books, her life, and the world around her." Dorea Kleker, Kathy G. Short, and Nicola Daly, through careful observations of and discussions with Safita, illuminate the rich linguistic resources available to children in multilingual communities, as well as their natural curiosity about language and culture as they engage with high quality texts with multilingual representations.

Additionally, this issue includes articles that present readers with rich descriptions of instructional engagements through stories and curricular planning. In the article "Paychecks, Bills, and...Zines?: Exploring Financial Literacy and Systemic Poverty with Eighth Graders," Antonia Moore describes a simulation she created to foster better understandings of economic systems that privilege some, while disadvantaging others. She tells the story of how she constructed the simulations and engaged students in the writing and publication of 'zines to reflect on what they learned through the classroom engagements. Mary L. Fahrenbruck and Leanna Lucero, in their article "Using Math to Better Comprehend Picturebooks," demonstrate that, while picturebooks are more commonly used to teach specific math concepts and skills, math can be utilized to enhance comprehension of stories and illustrations. Their curricular recommendations include lesson objectives, connections to the Common Core math standards, and possible uses for the picturebooks around which they designed these engagements. Lastly, this issue presents readers with the story of a university school collaboration committed to the professional development of teachers and teacher candidates through engagement with linguistically and culturally diverse students and quality multicultural and international texts. In this vignette, titled "Embedded Classrooms, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Growing Early Childhood Literacy Educators," Julia

López-Robertson, Jennifer D. Morrison, India Grady, Joan Morgan, and DeAnna Savage present examples of instructional engagements across their university/school partnerships and how the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic impacted their work.

This issue also marks my last as co-editor of WOW Stories: Connections from the Classroom. Working with this journal has been nothing short of an honor and privilege, and I want to thank the authors, reviewers, and publication managers for your patience and hard work in making this journal such an important publication for promoting the rich possibilities found in bringing children and adolescents together with global literature. And I want to extend my deep appreciation to Dr. Mary Fahrenbruck, Co-Editor of WOW Stories, the Director of Worlds of Words Dr. Kathy G. Short, and Associate Director of Worlds of Words, Rebecca Ballenger for your guidance, commitment, and belief in my ability to do this work. Thank you all.

Short, K. (2009). Curriculum as inquiry. In S. Carber & S. Davidson, (Eds.). International perspectives on inquiry learning (pp. 11-26). London: John Catt.

Short, K.G., & Harste, J., with Burke, C. (1996). Creating classrooms for authors and inquirers. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

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Based on work by Tracy L. Smiles at <https://wowlit.org/on-line-publications/stories/volume-ix-issue-1/2/>.