FURTHER READING
Starting an Annotated Bibliography of Teacher Research for an Urban K–8 School

In her work supporting teacher-researchers, school inquiry coach Elizabeth Radin Simons has often wished for an annotated bibliography of the growing literature of research by teachers, to use with teacher-inquirers as a source of both inspiration and solid teacher knowledge gained through classroom research. As a member of the TRC Planning Team, Simons had the opportunity to start this bibliography, which she tailored to the questions she heard from the teachers at ASCEND, a K–8 school in a low-income, working-class area of Oakland, California. This bibliography, a bare-bones beginning, is offered as a work in progress. It begins with a brief narrative essay in which Simons explains the process of compiling the bibliography.

By Elizabeth Radin Simons

Introduction

For years I’ve admired the practical and important teacher research coming from teachers working full-time in urban schools, who manage to find the time not only to do some “systematic and intentional research”—to use Cochran-Smith and Lytle’s phrase (1993, 23–24)—but to write about it as well. A credit to their profession, these teachers are contributing to a growing body of knowledge about teaching and learning coming not from the university or from policymakers, but from classroom teachers. I was introduced to teacher research through the Bay Area Writing Project in the 1980s. My interest grew into something of a passion in the years from 1993 to 1999 when, with Sarah Freedman, a UC Berkeley professor, I codirected the Multicultural Collaborative for Literacy in Secondary Schools (M-CLASS).1 Since 2000, with my colleague and fellow coach Tom Malarkey at the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools (BayCES), I have continued to support teachers doing research.

Usually described by one of three names—teacher research, teacher inquiry, or action research—the practice of teacher research (even though most teachers in this country have probably never heard of it) is widespread in teacher-credential programs, in school-reform work, at National Writing Project sites, at the Coalition of Essential Schools, and in schools and school districts throughout the country.

1 The M-CLASS book Inside City Schools: Investigating Literacy in Multicultural Classrooms (Freedman et al. 1999) features articles by classroom teachers.
The genre of research written by teachers is distinguished from university research by teachers’ depth of knowledge of their classrooms and students. Only teachers, who are with their students daily, year in and year out, have access to the rich and subtle data that underlie their studies. Teachers are there through the daily routines and continuous learning, and also at the unpredictable moments of challenge and breakthrough. The best teacher research articles and books are often written in a passionate first-person voice; they make compelling literature, with surprises at every turn about what students and teachers are feeling, thinking, and learning. Like good university research, teacher research is grounded in theory—drawn from university research or from teaching experience, or from a combination of these. But an important difference from university research is in the type of questions that are asked. Teachers ask questions that emerge from their authentic classroom challenges: How can I make my students learn to love reading? What can I learn about my own practice by researching four case-study students over three years? Why can’t my students understand math word problems, even if they know the literal meaning of the words in the problem? These questions, which are fundamental to the achievement of their particular students, also resonate with national educational challenges. Teachers obsessed with such questions come up with research findings that can contribute to the achievement of their own students and to the larger body of educational knowledge and policy.

For a number of years I’ve wanted to read through the teacher research literature and assemble a bibliography. I’ve had in mind a specific kind of bibliography, one I’ve often wished I had when supporting an inquiry group or a teacher engaged in inquiry. I long for this bibliography, for example, when talking with a third grade teacher who is researching writers’ workshops in an urban school. At that moment I may not have time for a library search, but I know that somewhere there exists a teacher research article on third grade writing workshops in an urban, multicultural classroom.

As part of the Teacher Research Collaborative (TRC) planning team, I naïvely took on as my project creating such a bibliography. But as I began to understand the scope of the project, I felt guilty each time we met and I reported on my meager progress. Things weren’t going well. The project was unwieldy and complicated. In one of my moments of desperation, my colleagues reminded me that my role was simply to start or pilot a bibliography. What a relief! The bibliography that follows this essay is the result of these efforts.

For several reasons we wanted to include in this bibliography as much research that is written primarily by teachers—rather than university professors—as possible. First, teacher-authored articles inspire teachers, whether they have never heard about teacher research, are considering teacher research for the first time, or are already doing research. Second, teacher-authored articles serve as models for teachers who are not enrolled in university programs but want to write about their research. Third, these articles are a rich source of pedagogical information, in both their content and references. Finally, articles written by teach-

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2 We also set a long-term TRC goal of building the bibliography I dream about. It will be an interactive, online, bibliographic resource: facilitators of teacher research groups, teacher-researchers, and others could find books and articles, add comments about whether they found a book or article useful or not (think amazon.com!), add new descriptors, and—most important—add new entries. In other words, this bibliography will be an ongoing and collaborative endeavor.
ers introduce other teachers to the impressive national and international teacher research movement, and invite them to participate.

**Context: A Bibliography for ASCEND School**

As a school coach at BayCES, I’ve been providing support for inquiry at the ASCEND school in Oakland, California, for three years. ASCEND, a new, small, autonomous school, opened in the fall of 2001. It currently has about 270 students, and that number will grow to 400 when its new building is completed in 2006. The student population is 62 percent Latino, 20 percent Asian, 17 percent African American, and 1 percent other. Teachers “loop,” or stay with their students for two years. When teachers are hired at ASCEND, which in its development stage was called “The School for Inquiry,” they commit to making classroom inquiry part of their professional development. As a BayCES coach, I spend one day a week at ASCEND, where one of my roles is to support teacher inquiry. The teachers meet twice a month for two hours to work on their inquiry, sometimes as a whole staff but more often in smaller, cross-grade focus groups.

In the 2003–2004 academic year, four of the more experienced teacher-inquirers—Davina Katz, Elena Aguilar, Hatti Saunders, and Stephanie Sisk-Hilton—designed and led the teacher inquiry work at ASCEND. (Elena has contributed an essay to this guide.) Early in our planning, these four teachers said they wanted to read more teacher research in general, and in particular more research related to their inquiry questions. We also planned to incorporate more writing into the inquiry process, and wanted the teachers to be reading models of teacher research. I agreed to start looking for articles.

What was I looking for? ASCEND teachers and staff do their inquiry in four small groups, each with a focus: arts/family, math, English-language development, and literacy. The teachers’ questions and focus areas were one guide in my quest for articles. But I also had a guiding framework. The ASCEND staff had begun to work with BayCES on issues of equity in student achievement, focusing on the role played by race, class, gender, and culture (of both students and teachers) in teaching and learning. So I was particularly interested in articles that included an equity perspective. I looked for articles by white teachers and teachers of color alike who were studying and reflecting on their assumptions about students of color and their families. Mostly, however, I was not aware of the race or ethnicity of the authors unless they mentioned it in their article or biographic note.

**How I’ve Used the Articles**

To date I’ve used the articles in three ways. We copied five or six articles that we believed would be of special interest to the whole staff, and handed them out at several meetings. Teachers each then chose one article to read and discuss in small groups, both as a model of writing and for its content; teachers reveled in the luxury of having reading time during a staff meeting.
Besides this more formal use of the articles, I regularly gave articles to individuals as I came across them. For the most part, I have found that teachers read the articles and incorporate the ideas they get from them into their teaching and inquiry. One teacher, for example, whose inquiry is on how to encourage quiet Latinas in her class to participate in whole-class discussions, read the article by Goldstone that appears in the bibliography, and got the idea to involve the girls’ mothers in her inquiry. She called a meeting with the mothers, where she shared her concern and explained why she wanted the girls to speak more. She asked the mothers about their own experiences in school, and they told her they had never been encouraged to speak up. This teacher found her work with mothers to be a critical and ongoing component to fostering change in the girls’ behavior.

A third way I’ve used these articles is as models of written teacher research. The teachers at ASCEND write about their inquiry twice a year. In January they write a midyear process report, which they share with their colleagues. At the end of the year they write at some length, using these prompts:

- your question
- your process and what data you collected
- your data analysis
- a change you made in your teaching as a result of your inquiry
- a challenge for the ASCEND community that comes out of your inquiry
- a finding—something you learned or any piece of information that you would like to be included in a collection of “teacher knowledge about teaching at ASCEND.”

I was very impressed with these reports, and I believe that the quality of the writing may have been influenced by their reading of teacher research. Another measure, I think, of the articles’ impact is that four teachers are spending time over the summer working on articles to submit for publication.

Finding the Books and Articles

What I’m about to report is no model of how to do research. I sporadically looked for articles while I was working at two jobs; I looked when I had a free moment or needed a specific article. I didn’t keep a good record of the bibliographies or the websites I scanned. I do have all my notes, however, and hope, at some future date, to pull them together in an orderly fashion. For now, then, this is an overview of my process.

3 As I’ve prepared this bibliography, rereading many of the articles I handed out to teachers, I’ve been thinking, How can I make these a more accessible resource for overworked teachers? Noticing in the articles information and ideas that teachers who read them did not incorporate in their inquiry, I’m formulating a plan to highlight key points in the article, or write a note about why I think the teacher might find it particularly fascinating—and then have a five-minute chat with the person about it.
I started by asking my friends for references. Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, director of national programs and site development at the National Writing Project, suggested I look in the NWP library at *Teacher Research: The Journal of Classroom Inquiry*, edited by Ruth Shagoury Hubbard and Brenda Miller Power. Although the NWP library had only a few issues, these contained exactly what I was looking for: articles written by teachers with a wide range of experience both in teaching and in teacher research. I used some of them right away in my coaching at ASCEND.

I reviewed bibliographies, including one I had saved a few years ago from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) website, compiled by Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle. The best articles for my purposes from this twenty-six-page bibliography were published in the journal *Language Arts*, which turned out to be a rich source of teacher research. The National Writing Project Teacher Inquiry Communities network has an annotated bibliography on the NWP website, a useful resource listing books and giving Web links to teacher research resources. I followed up on the Web links, used ERIC and the NCTE website, found teacher research sites from search engines, and got books from the UC Berkeley library. (Most of the websites focus on how to do teacher research. One exception is *Networks: An Online Journal for Teacher Research* from the University of Toronto, which yielded a number of articles. The CRESS center at the University of California, Davis, also has an archive of research articles written by K–12 teachers across the disciplines.) I looked at books that I’d used in the past, notably Cityscape (Banford et al. 1996), *Class Acts* (Hall, Campbell, and Miech 1997), and the Practitioner Inquiry Series from Teachers College Press. Whenever I read an article, I also checked its bibliography for more sources.

At first I thought I would limit my search to the work of classroom teachers who were not in graduate programs or getting Ph.D.s, since I wanted a more grassroots teacher voice. But much excellent teacher research is done in graduate programs, so I included these researchers. I came across many enticing titles that I didn’t pursue because they didn’t fit my particular needs, but which, in another life, I would love to have time to search out and read. In fact, I didn’t have time to read everything that looked relevant and interesting, and I came away with a to-do list of articles to read and books to check out. These were often in journals from areas such as emotional behavior or staff development, and were on topics such as building learning communities through teacher research, or multisite parent-teacher action research projects.

**A Few Things I Noticed**

Most bibliographies devoted to teacher research cite primarily the work of professors studying and supporting teacher research, and a growing literature on how to do teacher research. Much of this work is excellent, but articles by teachers, as opposed to college and university researchers, represent a small portion of the literature.

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4 Unfortunately, the journal was discontinued after six years.

5 Cooperative Research and Extension Services for Schools.
From my cursory look at websites, I noticed a growing corpus of teacher research, but this research is not indexed and is therefore difficult to find. In fact, the genre is somewhat murky; often articles that I have included in this bibliography aren’t specifically described as teacher research by the author, yet they clearly fit into the genre. In short, it will take some detective work to ferret out an extensive bibliography of teacher research.

In articles by teachers, I seldom found references or citations to other teacher research. References to published teacher research are mostly limited to citations of each other by the authors of different chapters in a book resulting from a particular project. This general lack of cross-referencing speaks to another potential function of a bibliography of teacher research.

**The Bibliographic Descriptors**

Coming up with descriptors has been a challenge. Because I want them to serve multiple purposes, I have changed them several times and am still not satisfied. This is the current working list of descriptors:

- Citation: author, date, title, publisher or journal, page numbers, etc.
- Author (information about)
- Grade
- Demographics (school or classroom)
- Bilingual (if relevant)
- Research focus/question
- Equity focus
- Content area (e.g., language arts, math)
- Description of the study
- Type of research (e.g., whole-class, case study, qualitative, quantitative)
- Data
- Student achievement/outcomes
- Other findings
- References (if references are cited or if there is a literature review)
- Recommendation (when and for whom this article could be useful)
- Online availability

These descriptors cover the annotation basics of author, grade, and topic. And because I know that classroom teachers often do not have access to journals, this bibliography includes URLs for articles that can be found online. Unfortunately, the entries are not always parallel; for example, I know quite a bit about some authors, little about others. I have a “bilingual” descriptor mostly because 70 percent of ASCEND students are second-language learners.
learners. When I shared an earlier draft of this bibliography with some ASCEND teachers, they said they also wanted to know what the article was about, so I added the “description of the study” descriptor. I kept trying to make the descriptors easy to use, because even though ASCEND teachers appreciated having articles given to them, they said they weren’t sure if they would have time to search a bibliography. (Some had had negative experiences using the ERIC database.) They thought that this bibliography would be a great tool for teachers leading inquiry groups, if they had the time to use it and if it were organized in a way that made it easy to access.

While I would like the bibliography to be objective, I’ve found that goal difficult to achieve. For example, I wanted to include issues of equity. Often authors do not explicitly name their work as equity focused, and while I might call an article equity focused, I have no idea if the author would agree. I would also like these articles to be informational resources for teachers on research in the area they are studying, so one descriptor indicates whether the article includes something akin to a reference list or a literature review. The other descriptors are, I hope, self-explanatory.

It is important to make clear that the descriptors do not include a critique of the research. While I believe critique to be imperative if teacher research is to achieve the stature it deserves, that is not within the scope of this project. Of course, by choosing not to include certain articles, I have already engaged in one form of critique. However, if this were a university project, it would include explicit critiques of each article—something I presently leave up to the readers.

Final Thoughts

My TRC colleagues asked me how my process of assembling this bibliography might serve as a model for others who want to create a bibliography for a particular group of teachers. My first response was that this has been a personal adventure for me. I enjoy reading teacher research; I enjoy discovering a great article that I know will excite a teacher. I’ve been watching the evolution of teacher inquiry at ASCEND. The time seemed right to ramp up our reading, so we did. Certainly the teachers who were planning and leading the four inquiry groups at ASCEND did not have the time to do the literature searches that I did. I was in a lucky position, since seeking out the articles fulfilled part of two jobs at once, that as an NWP member of the TRC, and that as a BayCES coach at ASCEND.

I chose books that serve my work, so this is admittedly an idiosyncratic list, and what I have included is a tiny fraction of the potential corpus. The list is tailored to the teachers at ASCEND; its usefulness to others will depend on their focuses and questions. For example, the kindergarten teacher was interested in integrating visual and performing arts into her curriculum, so the kindergarten articles tend to be about art. Some articles are classics of teacher research; others are probably seldom read or used. Anyone doing or leading teacher research knows that good articles are a godsend. My hope is that this bibliography will be a useful beginning resource.
References


Elizabeth (Liz) R. Simons taught high school history in New York City and Newton, Massachusetts, before moving to California, where she attended the University of California, Berkeley, and received a Ph.D. in interdisciplinary studies. For several years she pursued research, directing the Minority Education Project for the late John Ogbu, professor at UC Berkeley. She then turned to school reform work and for six years was a high school coordinator for the University of California’s Puente Project. More recently she worked at the National Writing Project, editing its monograph series, *National Writing Project at Work*. She is currently a school coach for the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools. Simons is the author of *Student Worlds, Student Words: Teaching Writing Through Folklore* (Heinemann, 1990) and, with Sarah Freedman, Julie Kalnin, and the M-CLASS teachers, coauthor of *Inside City Schools: Investigating Literacy in Multicultural Classrooms* (Teachers College Press, 1999).

**Author:** Toronto primary school teacher with research interests in race, class, gender, social justice, and marginalization.

**Grade:** 2.

**Demographics:** “Culturally, racially, and religiously diverse, working-class, urban community. . . . immigrant and/or working class from the Caribbean, East Africa, and South and East Asia.” Toronto, Canada.

**Research questions:**
- “Do elementary students come to school already aware of the social inequities in their environment?”
- “Is there a need to raise these issues in an elementary classroom . . . and are students at this stage developmentally capable of recognizing and dealing with bias in the classroom materials or the curriculum?”
- “How [teachers] . . . can identify, respond to, and facilitate the taking up of these issues with children.”

**Equity focus:** Social justice and equity in an elementary classroom.

**Content area:** Bias and racism in the curriculum, the media.
Description of the study: Allen decided that as a teacher he had to be proactive about equity and social justice in his classroom. He writes, “My approach to anti-racist/anti-biased education includes the following steps: helping students identify and name bias in classroom learning materials, allowing time for discussions and taking up social issues in the classroom, and encouraging students to respond to inequities and validating the voices and perspectives of each student.” For example, his second grade black students uncovered one hidden message in the curriculum: blacks were more likely to be characterized as poor in their readings.

Type of research: Whole-class study based on several years of teaching, uses the development of one student as an example.

Data: Teacher journal, classroom observation, curriculum, social justice curriculum.

Student achievement/outcomes: Students develop a common language about bias and equity, and the concepts become integrated into the curriculum.

References: References on the role of institutions promoting injustice, development of stereotypes, racial attitudes and identity.

Recommendation: Teachers and inquiry group leaders interested in strategies and background on helping students use their “natural sense of fairness as a foundation for constructing an anti-racist/anti-bias curriculum.”

Online availability: Yes. Go to www.NCTE.org; search the phrase “creating space for discussions.” View abstract free. Full text available only to Language Arts subscribers. $25/year for NCTE members, $75/year for nonmembers.


Author: Literacy teacher of the 3rd and 4th grade in a diverse urban school, a researcher at the Chechen Konnen Center for Science Education Reform, and a member of the Brookline Teacher-Research Seminar.

Grade: Preschool.

Demographics: Haitian preschoolers in a urban school.

Research question: “In this article, I will discuss the process I went through in learning to control a class of four-year-old Haitian children.” Or “What was it that Haitian teachers did that I did not do?”

Equity focus: Young Haitian students misbehaving because North American teacher did not understand Haitian cultural approach to disciplining bad behavior.

Content area: Discipline

Description of the study: Engaging narrative about a white middle-class teacher learning the culture of her students through inquiry. Ballenger transcribed successful disciplinary exchanges between Haitian children and their Haitian teachers. She showed these exchanges to her teacher research group and to Haitian teachers, and analyzed the differences between her disciplinary practices and those of the Haitian teachers in order to change her teaching.

Type of research: Whole-class study.

Data: Interviews, observations, transcripts of dialogue, vignettes.

Student achievement/outcomes: Well-behaved preschool children.

Other findings: Role of language in social control.

References: Academic references on language, social control, and socialization.
**Recommendations:**
- Teachers and inquiry group leaders looking for an engaging narrative about a white middle-class teacher learning the culture of her students through inquiry.
- Teachers researching how to teach children of cultures and ethnicities different from their own.
- A model for teacher inquiry.


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**Author:** Literacy teacher of the 3rd and 4th grade in a diverse urban school, a researcher at the Chechen Konnen Center for Science Education Reform, and a member of the Brookline Teacher-Research Seminar.

**Grade:** Preschool.

**Demographics:** Haitian children in an urban school.

**Research focus/question:** Ballenger, who is white and middle class, looks at the difference between her understanding of the meaning of books and storytelling and that of her students, who are from Haitian immigrant families.

**Equity focus:** Researching students’ cultural values and behavior, which differ from the teacher’s, in order to better understand baffling student behavior and to better teach the students.

**Content area:** Literacy, preschool reading, and storytelling.

**Description of study:** Ballenger, whose past teaching experience was with middle-class students, was dismayed by what she at first perceived as a disrespect for books and an inability to listen and respond properly to storybook reading. Through her inquiry, Ballenger learned why her students’ interaction with books was so different from hers, why it baffled and frustrated her. She also learned the ways in which their experience of books was similar to hers.

**Type of research:** Whole-class study.

**Data:** Observational journals/field notes (which are good models of journals), audiotapes, transcriptions of tapes.

**Student achievement/outcomes:** Student literacy behavior understood and appreciated by the teacher.

**Other findings:** Understanding different cultural ideas of reading.

**References:** Academic references on literacy and students of color.

**Recommendations:**
- Teachers and inquiry groups researching cultural differences between themselves and their students.
- As a model of teacher research.

**Online availability:** No. Journal is out of print. To purchase journal reprints, back volumes, and back issues go to [http://www.periodicals.com](http://www.periodicals.com) and click on search stock/T/Teacher Research.

Grade: 2.

Bilingual: Study of student whose home language is Tagalog.

Research focus/question: “I wanted to see writing workshop through her (Maricar, a quiet Philippina) eyes. I was interested in how writing workshop met her needs and the needs of others like her, and what a close look at Maricar could teach me about improving writing workshop and student learning in general.”

Equity focus: Quiet, low-achieving immigrant girl.

Content area: Language arts, writers’ workshop.

Description of the study: “Every teacher has a student like Maricar. She is the quiet girl, the one I could not remember when I sat down to make out the seating chart three weeks into the semester. She is, in the expression I learned from my Urban Sites colleague Marceline Torres, one of those ‘phantom students,’ one of those children whose voices are heard little or not at all in the whole class discussions and daily classroom work.” This yearlong study of a below-average, quiet girl whose home language is not English, traces the development of her writing and social skills through writing workshop.

Type of research: Case study.

Data: Student writing from 86 writing workshop sessions, audiotapes of her response group, interviews with the student, and teacher’s journal of his observations.

Student achievement/outcomes: Banford writes, “Maricar grew in ways I would not have anticipated.” She grew from a below-average (the slowest writer he had ever seen) to an average writer.

Recommendations:

– Teachers and inquiry leaders looking for a useful model for introducing teacher research to teachers.
– A good model study of a quiet, elementary-school Asian American female student, and a good study of writers’ workshop.

Online availability: No.


Author: Marlene Carter, an African American teacher at Dorsey High School Math/Science and Technology Magnet in Los Angeles, CA, is a National Board Certified Teacher, a Carnegie Scholar, and associate director of the UCLA Writing Project. She lives in the community where she teaches.

Grade: High school.

Demographics: Urban high school of 2,000 students, 65% African American, 34% Latino. Students come from a mixed neighborhood of stable working- and middle-class families and low-income apartments.

Research focus/question: What curriculum, strategies, and attitudes best help African American males to be successful in Advanced Placement English and college?

Equity focus: Academic achievement of African American males.

Content area: Academic achievement of African American males.

Description of the study: Carter was distressed that the African American males who entered her senior AP class were “content to do mediocre work, doing just enough to get by.” In a two-year study, she focused the first year on why they underperformed. She reviewed the literature to see if the six most commonly cited factors for low performance influenced her students, and found that they didn’t. She then lists the fac-
tors that she felt did hinder them. During the second year of her study, six of the seven African American males in her AP class were high performers, and she studied them as well for factors explaining their achievement. Her study thus paints two portraits of African American males: one of underachievement and one of high achievement.

**Type of research:** Study of focal students.

**Data:** Written surveys, classroom observations, student work.

**Student achievement/outcomes:** Being in an AP class helped even the underperforming males achieve in college.

**Other findings:** The conflicting influence of sports keeps students in school but may prevent them from high achievement.

**References:** African American males and academic achievement.

**Recommendation:** Model for teachers or groups seeking information about factors contributing to achievement and nonachievement of African American male high school students, studied by an African American teacher.

**Online availability:** Yes, see above.

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**Author:** Carole Chin, Chinese American teacher in Berkeley, CA.

**Grade:** 4.

**Demographics of school:** 50% African American, 40% Caucasian, 10% Hispanic and Asian. Grades 4–6, 600 students.

**Research focus/question:** Study of parents and children writing on the same subject in order to involve parents in their child’s education.

**Equity focus:** Bringing parents who might feel alienated from the school into the school and their children’s education.

**Content area:** Writing and parent involvement.

**Description of the study:** To build a school/family community, Chin invited parents to write on the same subjects as their children, such as, What does it feel like to be a parent of a fourth-grader? What do students write when they write about what it feels like to be a fourth-grader? (In this district, students went to a K–3 and a 4–6 school, so it was a new school for the students.) Throughout the year parents wrote on different topics (but not too much to be a burden) in their native language, and Chin had their writing translated. The writing was shared with the students. Parents became part of the classroom community.

**Type of research:** Whole-class study, one year.

**Data:** Parent writing, parent/child writing curriculum.

**Findings:** Parents who normally were reluctant to participate in school came to parent meetings. The writing made them partners in their children’s education. They shared their stories with their children and discovered their own writing skills.

**Recommendation:** Teachers interested in building home/school community through writing.

**Online availability:** No.

Grade: 5.

Demographics: 26 students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Research question/focus: “What is considered to be the value of such an incentive program? What was my role going to be in this process?” “What did students perceive as the value and purpose of such a program?”

Equity focus: “Bad Boys.”

Content area: Classroom culture, incentive programs.

Description of the study: Davis and her students had a vision of a “caring, equitable and inclusive” classroom, but that was not what they were experiencing. Davis planned a teacher research project with her students, who requested an incentive program to solve classroom problems of noise and wasted time. Although uncomfortable with the rewards-based incentive program her students chose, Davis allowed her students to start one, and they costudied it. Students, especially boys and “bad boys,” began to question the program and alter it from an individual rewards system to one of group rewards.

Type of research: Whole-class study.

Data: Critical incident, audiotape transcripts, transcripts of class meetings, student journals.

Student achievement/outcomes: Students moved from their first choice of individual incentives to whole-group incentives through their research.

Other findings: Value of co-researching with students.

Recommendations:

– For teachers and groups: Useful model of a teacher abandoning a question that interested her but did not interest her students, with whom she was co-researching.

– Useful resource on finding a research question using a critical classroom incident.

Online availability: Yes, go to [http://education.ucsc.edu](http://education.ucsc.edu). Click on faculty/Gordon Wells: website/Networks/previous issues/ volume 6, issue 1.

The website of *Networks: Online Journal for Teacher Research* is [http://education.ucsc.edu/faculty/gwells/networks](http://education.ucsc.edu/faculty/gwells/networks).


Grade: 8.

Demographics of the class: 15 African American, 10 European American, 6 Latino, 1 Asian American, 1 East Indian (3 students were biracial). (Students are bussed from the inner city to this school in a suburban-like neighborhood.)

Research focus/question: What happens when adolescent students begin to explore the themes of racism and prejudice as they discuss and write about literature? Specifically, can they separate how they feel from what they have heard from their family, friends, and community?

Equity focus: Explicit study of racism, encouraging all ethnic groups in the class to be honest about their racial experience.
Content area: Multicultural literature.

Description of the study: Diaz-Gemmati assumed that her class, which she had taught the previous year, would maturely and intellectually study race and culture since the class was caring and “safe.” But the class shattered as the students brought in their outside-of-school attitudes and beliefs. In this chapter she describes what happened in her multicultural class as students read To Kill a Mocking Bird and Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry through the lens of racism.

Type of research: Whole-class study.

Data: Teacher journal, transcripts of class discussions, student writing.

Student achievement/outcomes: Students honestly explored their racist images of one another, experienced pain, fought, but ended up with some common understanding.

Recommendation: For teachers and leaders of inquiry, a useful model of a Latina teacher taking the risk to introduce race as a literature focus in a class with students from different races and economic classes.


Author: Eidman-Aadahl is director of national programs and site development at the National Writing Project. She has also had an extensive career as a high school English teacher, teacher educator, and teacher-researcher while serving as a National Writing Project teacher-consultant and, later, director of the Maryland Writing Project. This article was written as part of the Basic Writing Teacher Researcher Network, a research collaborative she founded. Her articles have appeared in the Journal of Teaching Writing and the New Advocate.

Grade: 11.

Demographics: 36 special assistance students (who had failed the Maryland Functional Writing Test in 9th and 10th grades); mostly white and working-class.

Research questions: Can teacher research become a vehicle for creating just and politically sensitive accounts of how educational policies affect real lives? Who does the test ask the student to be?

Equity focus: Eidman-Aadahl and her students expose the class-bias of the writing prompts and evaluation criteria of the Maryland Functional Writing Test (MWT).

Content area: Writing assessment.

Description of study: In 1986 Eidman-Aadahl, six 12th grade tutors, and thirty-six 11th grade students in a special assistance class to prepare students for their final chance to pass the MWT (a graduation requirement) conducted an inquiry on how educational policy is lived in the classroom.

Type of research: Qualitative study.

Data: Drawn from two spring 1986 special assistance classes, including papers, journal entries, transcripts of audiotaped conferences, interviews, and peer response groups, questionnaires, and interviews.

Findings: While the MWT was designed so that “teaching to the test” involved teaching writing as a process, students who failed the test were tracked into remedial programs and their failure affected the attitudes and expectations of teachers, parents, and the students themselves. Those students who failed the test twice (in 9th and 10th grades) came to see this as individual failure rather than questioning the merits of the test. Patterns emerged showing success and failure on the MWT to be largely correlated with the students’ socioeconomic class. English teachers found themselves unable to negotiate a curriculum with their students and generally stifled in their creativity. Ultimately, writers and readers in the classroom are undercut as potential judges of quality, evaluators of writing in their own communities, champions of the local voice.
**Student achievement/outcomes:** Students did what the author describes as their most powerful writing of the semester in connection with this inquiry. They also wrote an extensive letter to the editor of the county paper and deposited petitions arguing that the test be waived for a year in a central holding tank. Tutors wrote about their experiences in their college application essays and sociology classes.

**References:** Functional literacy, tracking, class antagonism, educational policy, local vs. central control, cultural imperialism, minimum competency tests.

**Online Availability:** No.


**Author:** This article was written when Fecho was teaching in Philadelphia, PA. He is currently professor at the University of Georgia and author of *“Is This English?”: Race, Language, and Culture in the Classroom* (Teachers College Press, 2003).

**Grade:** High school.

**Demographics:** Primarily working-class African American students in a city high school.

**Research focus/question:** Students were studying the question, How does learning about language connect you to your world? Fecho focuses on what he and his students taught each other about standard English and nonstandard Black English.

**Equity focus:** White teacher and African American students learning from each other about the power and politics of language and dialects.

**Content area:** Language study of Black dialect, standard English, and home, street, and academic languages.

**Description of the study:** Case study of Laura, a student leader skilled in her ability to code-switch between home, street, and academic languages and to understand the power and politics of each. Laura taught Fecho about where students learn street language and how they use it, and challenged the academy’s labeling of “Black” English.

**Type of research:** Case study.

**Data:** Class transcripts, interviews, student work.

**Findings:** Fecho writes that his study of students’ language “shook my assumptions, challenged my beliefs, and stirred my curiosity.” Now as a daily practice, “all students consider the import of language in all texts, particularly the texts they create for themselves.”

**References:** Academic references in critical pedagogy, linguistics, and race.

**Recommendations:**

- Useful for teachers of middle and high school students of color interested in understanding the language codes of home, school, and the street.

- For teachers and leaders of inquiry, a model of teacher-student inquiry collaboration.

**Online availability:** No.

Grade: Kindergarten.

Demographics: 3 students speak no English, 14 students speak another language at home, “a mix of other races, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds.”

Research question/focus: “How does the dramatization of familiar stories and rhymes help kindergartners develop a sense of story structure?”

Content area: Language arts, storytelling.

Description of the study: Franklin discovered that at the end of a kindergarten year, only 2 of her students could retell a story. They could answer questions about characters and other aspects of the story, but they couldn’t retell the story. The next year Franklin experimented with dramatization of stories. She started by having the students act out nursery rhymes and then moved to stories. At the end of the year she interviewed them about the effect of the dramatization on their learning.

Type of research: Whole-class study.

Data: Student dialogue, teacher observations, story-telling assessment.

Student achievement/outcomes: 28 out of 40 students were able to retell stories without assistance. In the previous year only 2 students could do so.

Recommendations:
– For elementary teachers and inquiry leaders, a useful short article on integrating arts into the learning of oral literacy skills in kindergarten.
– A good model of a manageable, focused inquiry for beginning teacher-researchers.

Online availability: No. Journal is out of print. To purchase journal reprints, back volumes, and back issues go to http://www.periodicals.com and click on search stock/T/Teacher Research.


Author: Elementary teacher, author of books and articles written as a teacher-researcher focusing on language, literacy, and culture and issues of equity, race, gender, and power.

Grade: 1.

Demographics: 22 students, 4 language groups, range of socioeconomic backgrounds. One-third not native English speakers; racially mixed, including 3 African American children, 11 Caucasians, 6 Japanese, a black South African, and an Ethiopian.

Research focus/question: “What is the value of sharing time in the primary grades?”

Equity issue: An African American child who did not understand “mainstream classroom discourse and who looked as though she belonged in special education but did not.”

Content area: Story time, oral language development, community development.

Description of the study: Gallas found sharing time “deadly boring and repetitive” but “wanted to acknowledge [her] belief that narrative (storying, storytelling, story making) should be located at the center of the learning process in the classroom.” Gallas took herself out of sharing time and left it in the hands of the children. She focuses on the impact of one homeless child who arrived with little language ability, who developed her own discourse style, becoming a storyteller and “culture builder” in the class.

Type of research: Whole class and case study.

Data: Field notes and taped sharing sessions from October through May.
**Student achievement:** Growth in story-telling skills and supportive class culture of case-study student and others.

**Other findings:** The importance of storytelling in individual and group language development and social development.

**References:** Academic references on classroom discourse and story making.

**Recommendations:**
- For teachers, teacher inquiry leaders, this is a polished model of inquiry into the cultural differences between a caring, sensitive teacher and students from different backgrounds.
- For administrators wanting to learn about teacher research, this is a fine model.
- For elementary teachers, this article is useful for expanding their understanding of sharing/storytelling time in the classroom.

**Online availability:** No. NCTE’s *Language Arts* online archives go back only to 1997.

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**Author:** Elementary teacher, author of books and articles written as a teacher-researcher focusing on language, literacy, and culture and issues of equity, race, gender, and power.

**Grade:** 1.

**Demographics:** 18 children from a range of socioeconomic, racial, and cultural backgrounds; 4 different language groups.

**Research focus/question:** “How arts can play an essential role in forming and extending all aspects of a curriculum.”

**Equity focus:** Equity of access to learning, not just through traditional academic routes, but through the arts; case study of immigrant student.

**Content area:** Unit on insects with arts integration.

**Description of the study:** Gallas describes a unit on insects, showing the points at which she integrated the arts and the moments when students had their own ideas about when to bring in arts. Gallas illustrates her theory that “most children depend on play, movement, song, dramatic play, and artistic activity as their means of making sense of the world.”

**Type of research:** Whole-class study and brief case study of immigrant student.

**Data:** Student drawings, whole-class work, individual student art and written work, student dialogue.

**Student achievement:** Gallas is interested in “moving beyond simple knowledge acquisition towards true assimilation of learning.” The children show this through a variety of art forms.

**References:** Children’s literature.

**Recommendations:**
- For teachers and teacher inquiry leaders, this is a polished model of inquiry.
- Useful for any arts or classroom teacher interested in integrating arts into the curriculum at any grade level.


Author: Experienced teacher who has taught in Oakland, CA, and Manhattan, and currently teaches in a charter school in Los Angeles.

Grade: 6.

Demographics: Small middle school in Manhattan Chinatown. 80% Chinese or Chinese American and 20% other; Puerto Rican, Ecuadorian, African American, and Caucasian.

Bilingual: Study of Cantonese speakers.

Research question/focus: What happens when I communicate explicitly with parents about the New Middle School English Language Arts Standards for Student Achievement? More specifically, what is the impact of potential understanding of the new standards for speaking and listening on their children’s performance?

Content area: English language arts.

Equity issue: Second-language learners’ performance on the language arts speaking and listening standards.

Subject of the study: English Language Arts Standards for listening and speaking, and Asian American students.

Description of the study: Goldstone found that her Asian American students were performing poorly on the listening and speaking English Language Arts Standards, while they improved on reading and writing standards. She followed three case-study students and talked with parents (often through an interpreter) to find out what the community norms were on speaking and listening. She discovered several reasons the students weren’t speaking up, some age-related and some cultural.

Data: Assessment of student achievement (report cards), notes on parent conferences, three case-study students.

Type of research: Whole-class study of 66 students and 3 case-study students.

Student outcomes: With parental understanding and support, the three case-study students improved on the standards.

Other findings: Cultural and home conflicts between state speaking and listening standards. In the home, quiet was valued, and parents did not have argumentative discussions with children—the culture valued children being quiet and listening.

References: Review of literature of speaking and listening.

Recommendations:
- Teachers and leaders of inquiry will find this a useful study about a teacher of a race and culture different from those of her students, about quiet Asian American students, and about the value of parental understanding and support of students’ academic goals.
- For administrators and teachers, includes a discussion of policy concerns about under-resourced inner-city schools.

Online availability: No.

**Grade:** Kindergarten.

**Demographics:** Suburban public school, 600 K–5 students, kindergarten classroom of 23 heterogeneous-ly grouped children. 50% African American, 45% European American, and 5% other.

**Research focus/question:** “If African American children consistently perform less well than their white counterparts in my classroom, could I be the problem?”

**Equity focus:** White teacher of African American students looked at her personal history to better understand herself and three of her students who were fetal alcohol syndrome or crack/cocaine babies.

**Content area:** Self-reflection of white teacher of students of color.

**Description of the study:** Through personal journals and memoirs, especially about her family’s treatment of a learning-disabled sister, the author bravely looks to her life in probing her research question. By scrutinizing her own history to better understand and teach her students, she came to “acknowledge my own place in the problem of racism” and changed as a teacher, beginning by questioning the labels that come with children.

**Type of research:** Yearlong case studies of three African American children who had fetal alcohol syndrome or were crack/cocaine babies.

**Data:** Journal of family memoirs; observations of her class, her feelings, and challenges in her classroom. She sees three types of entries: “head notes—mental notes”; “hard notes—direct observations”; and “heart-notes—my feelings and reflections” (83).

**Student achievement:** Three kindergartners identified as learning disabled join the classroom community and have some successes.

**Other findings:** “Accepting my previously unexamined attitudes” led to “recognizing their parents as co-teachers, as partners in the education of their children” (92–93).

**References:** Ethnography, racial and learning differences, teaching.

**Recommendations:**

– Teachers and leaders of inquiry groups will find this useful for teachers considering the impact of their personal history on their teaching and on which students resonate with them and which don’t, and why.

– Useful model of a teacher studying race and class differences between a teacher and her students.


**Grade:** 1.

**Demographics:** Suburban school, 1st grade class of Asian, Hispanic, White, Turkish, and Indian. 20 students, 17 bilingual.

**Research focus/question:** “Can I increase the intrinsic motivation of my first grade students through three suggested teaching approaches? . . . teacher enthusiasm, student choice, or cooperative learning . . . [and which is] the most effective in intrinsically motivating my students?”

**Content area:** Student motivation.

**Description of the study:** Hansen implemented three motivational strategies in three different content areas: teacher enthusiasm in writing, student choice in math, and cooperative learning in reading. She
describes each of the three. She had two colleagues who also experimented with the strategies. She observed her students throughout and interviewed parents.

**Type of research:** Whole class (inquiry didn't last all year but time frame is not indicated).

**Student achievement/outcomes:** All three strategies worked, but the most striking change was in student behavior in cooperative reading groups.

**Other findings:** Student acting as teacher was a particularly successful cooperative learning strategy. Cooperative learning was the most successful technique, followed by student choice and then by teacher enthusiasm. Hansen learned how teacher-centered her teaching had been, and how easily she could slip back into that mode after the study.

**References:** Literature review of student motivation.

**Recommendation:** Teachers and leaders of inquiry interested in student motivation and in changing practice to be more student-centered.

**Online availability:** Yes, go to http://education.ucsc.edu. Click on faculty/Gordon Wells: website/Networks/previous issues/Volume 4, Issue 2. The website of Networks: Online Journal for Teacher Research is http://education.ucsc.edu/faculty/gwells/networks/.

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**Author:** Kathryn Herr is on the faculty of the College of Education at the University of New Mexico. She has taught middle school and been a counselor.

**Grade:** Middle school.

**Demographics:** Until going co-ed in the ’80s, “Markham Prep” (a private school) served predominantly white, male, upper-class students; in the ’90s the school mission changed to include students from diverse race and class backgrounds. No specific demographic information is provided.

**Research question/focus:** How can students of color be successful at “Markham Prep” without sacrificing “a sense of racialized self?”

**Equity focus:** A small number of students of color in a predominantly white prep school.

**Content area:** The experiences of students of color in a predominantly white prep school.

**Description of the study:** After two years at “Markham Prep,” Herr realized that many of the students of color were struggling and “in jeopardy of being disenrolled.” Her study aimed to uncover why these students were having such a difficult time, and how school structures and teaching practices could be changed to ensure their success. Herr began by interviewing successful and struggling students of color, asking them: “Tell me what it is like being a student of color here.” In these and later group interviews, Herr heard how students felt pressure to “act white.” This inquiry raised questions that the school did not want to consider, and Herr raises the question of what happens when teacher’s research becomes politically volatile.

**Type of research:** Qualitative study of group of students of color.

**Data:** Student interviews, memos, faculty and parent meeting notes.

**Student achievement/outcomes:** NA

**Other findings:** Herr questions the typical definition of teacher research as a method of improving practice. Her research leads to questioning the culture of a school.

**References:** Academic articles on teacher research and black student identity.
Recommendations:
- This article is useful to teachers and administrators curious about how students of different races and ethnicities are experiencing their school.
- Useful model of checking assumptions, and the potential challenges of such investigations to a school administration and staff.
- For teachers and leaders of inquiry this article also speaks to the messy nature of teacher research (“The site does not stand still as the researchers analyze their data . . . decisions were being made daily as to the future of the very students we were concerned about.”), as well as the frequency with which “seemingly innocent research questions develop into political quagmires.”

Online availability: Yes, go to http://www.ncte.org. Click on publications/journals/Language Arts/Tables of Contents/Volume 77 (1). Nonsubscribers may view the abstract; subscribers may view the entire article.


Author: Simon Hole is a 4th grade teacher at Narragansett Elementary School in Narragansett, Rhode Island. Grace Hall McEntee is cofounder of Educators Writing for Change.

Grade: K–16+.

Research question/focus: How can reflecting on the ordinary experiences of our teaching days inform and improve our practice?

Content area: Teacher research/inquiry.

Description of the study: Simon Hole describes an ordinary event in his classroom, which he tells as a story called “The Geese and the Blinds.” He and McEntee take that event through two protocols—the Guided Reflection Protocol and the Critical Incidents Protocol—and demonstrate how an ordinary but dramatic moment in Hole’s teaching, in which he made a “bad decision,” illustrates the value of deep reflection on a small critical incident. They then show how a group of teachers can go through a similar protocol.

Type of research: Narrative retelling.

Data: Journals, classroom notes.

Student achievement/outcomes: NA

Other findings: NA

References: Two academic references, one on “critical incident.”

Recommendation: Leaders of inquiry groups will find in this an excellent example of using protocols to help teachers see the value of both using protocols and scrutinizing small incidents in their inquiry. (The protocols in this article were widely used by the Teacher Research Collaborative.)

Online availability: No.


Author: J. Alleyne Johnson (now Jennifer Obidah), African American professor at UCLA. Former teacher and teacher-researcher in Richmond and Oakland, CA. Coauthored Because of the Kids (Teachers College Press, 2001) with Karen Mannheim Teel, a teacher research account of cross-race collaboration in service of equity. This article was written when she was a graduate student and a junior high teacher.

Grade: 7th–8th grade “special” class.
Demographics: School: 62% African American. Students were a mix of poor, middle-class, and upper-class. School was in upper-class neighborhood. Author’s class: 21 black students, 2 Asian, 1 Mexican.

Research question/focus: “The purpose of this article is to assert the need to make connections between the day-to-day realities of students’ lives and the day-to-day process of teaching and learning that takes place in urban public schools across the United States” (p. 110).

Equity focus: Educating and empowering students of color who have been identified as under-performing and placed in a special class.

Content area: Critical pedagogy, special-education classes, middle school language arts.

Description of the study: Johnson’s goal is to “show how I transformed the notions of teacher authority and legitimated knowledge within my classroom.” She accomplishes this by asking students what and how they want to learn, and by making connections between the students’ lives and the curriculum, specifically by acknowledging their experiences with the deaths of their family and friends. Johnson reflects on death in America and its role and impact on the lives of her students. She considers their experience in their “special class” for low-performing students as ostracism from the school community, and another type of death. She then shows what they are capable of, by bringing their lives into the classroom and bringing the students into the school community as authors of a successful school newspaper. Johnson, who bases her pedagogy on the teachings of Paulo Freire, demonstrates how as a teacher of critical pedagogy she helped students experience academic success and power in a school where they had been ostracized as “special” students.

Type of research: Qualitative, whole-class study.

Data: Observations of students, student talk, student writing, curriculum.

Student achievement/outcomes: Special-education students of color experienced academic success and achieved status in the school.

References: On critical pedagogy, black history and culture, death and adolescence.

Recommendation: Teachers and leaders of inquiry in urban schools where students get labeled as marginal will find this article interesting. It offers a model of how to bring teenagers’ experiences with death in their community (and other topics) into the curriculum, to help them feel successful and seen in school.


Author: Deborah Juarez, a Latina, has been teaching in Oakland, CA, middle and high schools since 1989. She has offered many workshops as a Bay Area Writing Project teacher-consultant, and has led an inquiry group through the process of incubation and the first years of a new, small high school, Mandela High School in Oakland, CA (one of five small interdependent high schools located at the former Fremont High School campus).

Grade: 8th grade.

Demographics: 51% Latino, 31% African American, 12% Asian American, 2% white, 4% other.

Research focus/question: “What happens when race, culture, and class become explicit topics in the classroom?”

Equity focus: Juarez talks of her “journey of social consciousness” and how it provided “a sense of empowerment” (p. 112) when she was in college. She wants her students to have that experience earlier.
Content area: Language arts, multicultural study of racism, immigration, and biculturalism through literature.

Description of the study: Juarez documents a semester’s study and describes what she heard from the students. She began with a unit on race and noticed that African Americans were vocal while the immigrant students were silent. She then moved to a unit on immigration, where both groups talked and disagreed. She then moved on to a topic where the class had common experiences: marginalization and what it means to be “American.” She encourages sitting in the discomfort of “hard talk” about race.

Type of research: Whole-class study, one semester.

Data: Student writing, transcripts of whole-class discussion, curriculum.

Student achievement/outcomes: Students experienced a multicultural curriculum and addressed issues of difference and commonality.

Recommendation: Teachers and leaders of inquiry interested in how a teacher of color addressed race, class, and culture in a class predominantly of students of color.

Online availability: No.


Author: Veteran African American teacher, principal of Beeber Middle School in Philadelphia, PA, has done extensive writing, teacher and parent training, and presentations at conferences.

Grade: High school, 15- to 17-year-olds.

Demographics: Majority African American, some Latino.

Research focus/question: Juupp looks at the use of portfolios among at-risk students in two Philadelphia high schools. Her question: How can parents use portfolios?

Equity focus: Concerned about using one writing sample on a standardized test as the assessment of a student’s writing, Juupp looks at portfolios as a more authentic means of assessing writing.

Content area: Writing across the curriculum, parent involvement, writing assessment.

Description of the study: This article reports on one piece of a larger study of portfolios among at-risk students in two Philadelphia high schools. In this article Juupp reports on 26 of her students and their collaboration with their parents in assessing their portfolios. Juupp asked parents to answer questions about their child’s writing: What do you see in the writing? What did you like about the writing? What do I need to do as a teacher to facilitate your child’s growth as a writer? Juupp’s data include the parents’ responses (to the questions and to other aspects of their children’s learning), the students’ responses, and what she learned. Many parents reported it was the first time they had interacted with their children like this.

Type of research: Qualitative study of parent, student, teacher interaction.

Data: Student portfolios, parent responses, teacher observations.

Student achievement/outcomes: Students enjoyed sharing their writing with parents and were amazed that their parents were interested and so encouraging of them as writers.

Other findings: The value of a learning community of students and their parents. Parents became mediators in their children’s learning, empowering parents to tell Juupp what they wanted for their children.

References: Lisa Delpit and a book about portfolios.

Recommendation: Teachers and leaders of inquiry at all grade levels who are interested in authentic assessment and parent participation in language arts.

Online availability: No.

**Author:** Lew is a San Francisco teacher since 1972, whose interest in second-language learners dates back to her childhood, when as an immigrant she started school speaking only Japanese. She is involved in local school reform, was twice a summer Fulbright scholar, and has published in the English Journal and Education Week.

**Grade:** High school.

**Demographics:** Multicultural urban high school.

**Bilingual:** Study of Cantonese-speaking student from Hong Kong.

**Research focus/question:** “What is the role of writing correctness in the overall development of the writing of students who do not speak standard English? What is the most appropriate role for the teacher of writing in teaching the conventions of writing? How is standard English internalized?”

**Equity focus:** Immigrant students who will not succeed in the high-tech world without a good command of standard English (academic English).

**Content area:** English language learners in language arts.

**Description of study:** In this four-year study of a bilingual immigrant student (Cantonese/English), Lew compares samples of her writing in her freshmen and senior years to show what she did and did not master and reports on the student’s theories of English-language acquisition. Lew reflects on the changes she has made as a teacher of English language learners as the result of two inquiries she has done.

**Type of research:** Four-year case study.

**Data:** Student writing, student interviews, curriculum, observations of the student.

**Student achievement/outcomes:** Case-study student made impressive gains in control of written English over four years.

**Recommendation:** Teachers and leaders of inquiry looking for a four-year case study of the writing development of an Asian American student learning to write academic English.

**Online availability:** No.


**Author:** Teacher-researcher with San Diego Writing Project, UC San Diego, teacher of multiage class at Cardiff Elementary School, Cardiff-by-the-Sea, California.

**Grade:** Multigrade: 2 and 3.

**Bilingual:** Study includes a second-language learner and describes how he benefited from sketching.

**Research question:** What happens to early writing when it is scaffolded by daily sketching of tangible objects and students make detailed observations during the sketching using their senses?

**Content area:** Integrating sketching and writing, arts and language arts.

**Description of the study:** McNamara introduced two types of sketching in her class—contour sketching and blind contour—as “a scaffolding technique to support students’ writing.” Sketching “helps us look closely, focus, make observations and look again only to see something we hadn’t seen before.” McNamara gives examples of the sketches and writing of several students. The process, she reports, supported discovery of “the joy, excitement and mystery of the world.”
**Type of research:** Qualitative study of teaching practice.

**Data:** Student sketches, writing, dialogue, teacher observations.

**Student achievement/outcomes:** Reports positive change in writing.

**References:** Rachel Carson and academic researchers on literacy learning.

**Recommendation:** Useful for elementary teachers interested in integrating sketching into language arts.

**Online availability:** Yes, at http://www.ebookstore.tandf.co.uk/. Type the book title, *Teacher Inquiry: Living the Research*, into the eBooks search. A section of the book is available to view free. Website allows registered users to purchase, print, and copy chapters or pages from any of their eBooks. Costs per page vary depending on the publication and can be as low as a few cents per page.

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**Author:** Teacher in Hackney, London; now a deputy principal.

**Grade:** 10-year-olds in a British school.

**Equity issues:** The “neutral” role of the teacher; power and language of boys, and the language of boys versus girls.

**Research question/focus:** What does it mean to be “neutral” as a teacher in a discussion? How can teacher’s language, given the position of a teacher in a class, create space for student discussions of issues of race, class, and gender? How do we “nurture minds that perceive alternatives, minds that have a sense of wonder, minds that will challenge and subvert ‘facts’” (p. 73)?

**Equity focus:** Control of teacher versus students; male/female equity as impacted by language from society.

**Content area:** Language arts and gender.

**Description of study:** Newland analyzes a transcript of himself and 13 or 14 students from his class. The students began discussing a book that girls identified as a “boys” book. Thus began a rich conversation about being a girl or a boy. In studying the tape, Newland looks at identity development in his students and how it is shaped by language. He also looks at his role in the discussion. He assumes what he calls a neutral stance to teach a “sense of uncertainty towards ‘knowledge . . . ’” (p. 73).

**Type of research:** Study of a transcript of a classroom discussion.

**Data:** Transcript of classroom discussion, observations of students.

**References:** Language and identity.

**Recommendation:** For teachers and leaders of inquiry, this is a useful short article introducing teacher research and issues of students’ perception of gender and teacher stance in class discussions.

**Online availability:** No. NCTE’s *Language Arts* online archives go back only to 1997.

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**Author:** Trained bilingual teacher in a district without bilingual education, teaching ESL and native language Spanish literacy in a pull-out program, K–5.

**Grade:** 6-year-old student.

**Demographics:** Portland, Oregon; a mix of recent immigrants from various parts of the world. Lower- and middle-income.

**Bilingual:** Study of bilingual student.
**Research focus/question:** Schardt looks at language development using Halliday's seven categories of language (versus the usual tests).

**Equity focus:** Using the lens of M. A. K. Halliday's categories, more diverse and more important language skills are identified than from testing.

**Content area:** Second-language learners

**Description of the study:** Schardt first assessed her student—a 6-year-old with parents from Guatemala who grew up speaking English, Spanish, and Conjoval—from his behavior in class, as having little language. However, when she analyzed his reading using Halliday's seven functions of language, she realized that he had many skills she'd overlooked. This led her to rethink her teaching of second-language learners.

**Type of research:** Case study.

**Data:** Transcripts of teacher/student dialogue.

**Findings:** Author changed her ideas about assessment and teaching second-language learners.

**References:** M. A. K. Halliday.

**Recommendation:** Bilingual inquirers interested in how authentic assessment can help them rethink their instruction.

**Online availability:** No. Journal is out of print. To purchase journal reprints, back volumes, and back issues go to http://www.periodicals.com and click on search stock/T/Teacher Research. Article also appears in Miller, B., and R.S. Hubbard, eds. 2002. Language Development: A Reader for Teachers, 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

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**Schiller, Laura. 1996. “Coming to America: Community from Diversity.” Language Arts 73: 46–51.**

**Author:** Sixth grade teacher at Birney Middle School in Southfield, Michigan, and co-director of the Oakland (Michigan) Writing Project.

**Grade:** 6.

**Demographics:** 50% African American, rest Chaldean (Christians from Northern Iraq), Caucasian, Jewish, and Asian.

**Bilingual:** Project brings bilingual parents into the curriculum.

**Research focus/question:** “How could I stimulate the building of the community of learners Dewey envisioned? How could I create an atmosphere that invites all students to learn? Could I look to who we are as a people for clues that would help me shape our curriculum and tie learning to our lives? Could we learn to value one another and live together in a society that’s becoming increasingly multicultural?” (p. 50).

**Equity focus:** Bringing all racial and ethnic groups into the curriculum.

**Content area:** Multicultural language arts.

**Description of the study:** Schiller designed a curriculum, “Coming to America,” where all students and their families examine, write about, and share their stories of coming to America. Students read related books, watched videos, and created a book for which they ultimately had a book-signing at the local Border’s Books. A parent committee edited, typed, and laid out the book.

**Type of research:** Yearlong, whole-class study.

**Data:** Curriculum, student writing, young adult literature.

**Student achievement/outcomes:** Students learned their own histories and those of their peers, creating common appreciation and understanding, and building a learning community that included their families.
References: Young adult literature.

Recommendation: Teachers and leaders of inquiry looking for a model of creating a multicultural unit with school-community collaboration.

Online availability: No.

Stafford, Liz. 1991. “Writer’s Workshop in the Primary Grades—Writing for a Life (and a Lifetime).” In Visions and Revisions: Research for Writing Teachers, 3–17. Davis: The CRESS Center, UC Davis. To obtain a copy of this article, email Rose Bacchini at the CRESS Center: rabacchini@ucdavis.edu.

Author: Liz Stafford teaches kindergarten and 1st grade at St. Helena Elementary School in St. Helena, California.

Grade: K–2.

Demographics: St. Helena is predominantly white, “25% Hispanic, and has a sprinkling of other ethnic groups.”

Bilingual: Kimmie, the case-study student, is Chinese American with limited English.

Research question/focus: What impact does writers’ workshop have on an elementary school English language learner?

Equity focus: Elementary ELL.

Content area: Writing and ELD.

Description of the study: Over the course of three years (kindergarten through 2nd grade), Stafford tracked the skills and behavior of Kimmie, a Chinese American student who did not speak much English and had been repeatedly deserted by family members. Quick to lash out at her teacher and fellow students, Kimmie found a new outlet for her anger and sadness through writers’ workshop. Through the ritual of dictating anything she wanted to Stafford and then copying the words her teacher wrote down, Kimmie learned English while at the same time finding a means to express herself. Eventually, the trusting relationship Kimmie developed with Stafford transferred to an increased ability to make and keep friends at school. She successfully proceeded to the second grade, where she developed a positive relationship with her new teacher.

Type of research: Three-year case study.

Data: Classroom notes, writers’ workshop assignments, letters from Kimmie, Kimmie’s journal entries.

Student achievement/outcomes: Chinese American ELL improved her English and social relationships from kindergarten to second grade.

Other findings: Reaffirms the value of the personal relationship between the teacher and student.

References: One pedagogical reference.

Recommendations:
– For elementary teachers, a useful case study of an immigrant English Language Learner.
– For teachers of all levels, a good model of a case study.

Online availability: No.

Grade: 3.

Demographics: Twenty children from four different language groups with a range of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Research focus/question: “[H]ow can children connect through their writing and what constitutes an honest response to this writing?” (p. 118).

Description of the study: Swain’s dilemma and challenge was that his students were using the language he was teaching in minilessons on revision, but that language wasn’t connecting them to the real intentions of the author or to one another. This led to his questioning what he meant by “honest response and natural connection through writing.” Students were “versed in the language of revision, but not in the actual knowledge of how to revise” (p. 119), what Bloom (1987) calls “procedural display.” The training Swain had given them in revision “prevented children from responding on their own terms with their own language to the content of stories” (p. 119). Using The Bat Poet by Randall Jarrell, in which a mockingbird and a chipmunk offer a bat two different models of response, Swain moved the class toward “honest response and natural connection” to each other’s writing (p. 120).

Type of research: Two-year whole-class study including a case-study student.

Data: Observation, student writing, transcripts of small-group and whole-class student discussions.

Student achievement/outcomes: Change in student response so they were “thinking and listening to [a student’s] story like writers or world creators, not like readers concerned with information and clarity” (p. 124).

Other findings: Author changed his metaphor of student response from “critical readers concerned with clarity, detail, voice, and correctness,” to students who are “thinking and listening to [a student’s] story like writers or world creators” (p. 124).

References: Writing and reading theory.

Recommendation: Language arts teachers who want to move their students from the limitation of predictable rote response to authentic engaged response.

Online availability: Yes, at http://www.ncte.org/pubs/journals/la. View abstract free. Full text available only to Language Arts subscribers. $25/year for NCTE members, $75/year for nonmembers.


Grade: Kindergarten.

Research focus/question: Looking at a kindergartner’s emergent writing: “What does Kirsten know about writing? What is she doing? How do I understand what she is doing? How do I become a student of her work so that I may encourage and support her growth?” (p. 127).

Content area: Language arts, emergent writing.

Description of the study: In order to make some sense of a kindergartner’s emergent writing, Williams applied Judith Newman’s categories of writing to six examples of her writing and drawings. The categories are intention, organization, experimentation, and orchestration.

Type of research: Case study.

Data: Student drawing, writing, dialogue; teacher observation.

Recommendation: Useful example of short, simple, early teacher research that helped a kindergarten teacher make sense of emergent literacy.


Author: Ziolkowski is vice principal at Tecumseh P.S. in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

Grade: K–6

Research question/focus: What are the benefits of a reading buddies program?

Content area: Reading.

Description of the study: Ziolkowski, who at the time of the study was new to teaching reading to second and third grade students, involved her sixth grade students in a research study on reading buddies. In the school’s reading buddies program, a sixth grade student is paired with a second or third grade student, regularly meets with and listens to him/her read out loud, and makes corrections as needed. Participants cited this opportunity to read out loud and get on-the-spot assistance with difficult words or passages as very important for the process of learning to read. In addition to fostering reading skills, the program also provided a forum for the development of friendships between younger and older students—friendships that often extended beyond the classroom. In fact, Ziolkowski concludes that it was the friendship “which actually fuelled the assumed purpose of reading buddies, the development of reading skills.” Taking the time to develop a friendship resulted in “sensitivity to the needs of the younger student, continual on-the-spot assistance with reading skills, and persistent use of problem solving to make the buddy program work for all concerned.” The reading buddies program eventually evolved to the joint writing and publishing of stories that were then read to others on a special literature-circle day. Ziolkowski speaks eloquently to the power of action research to uncover one’s assumptions and reveal new discoveries.

Type of research: Longitudinal qualitative study.

Data: Transcripts of audiotaped conversations, journal notes.

Student achievement/outcomes: NA

Other findings: By watching her students teach other students, Ziolkowski learned about the emergent stages of reading skills (of the first-graders her students were tutoring)—information she was later able to use to improve her own practices in teaching reading. She also discovered a difference between how the teachers and the students valued the friendship-development aspect of reading buddies, as opposed to the development of reading skills.

References: On buddy reading, action research, and school reform.

Recommendation: Teachers interested in cross-grade collaboration, especially those interested in middle school and elementary reading buddy programs.

Tools
Introduction to the Tools in This Section

The Teacher Research Collaborative (TRC) Planning Team members compiled this separate “Tools” section in addition to other tools contributed by authors in this volume. The section includes materials we used and adapted to support writing and talking about inquiry for equity. Some of these tools were developed by members of the planning team; others have been refined as they passed from teacher to teacher, school to school, organization to organization through our extended networks. The first five tools were used to facilitate discussions during the 2002 TRC Summer Institute. The remaining tools were used in writing groups during the summer 2003 TRC Writing Retreat as authors began developing their essays.

The Tools

Guidelines for Conversations
1. Sample Meeting Norms and Procedural Norms
2. Protocol Background Descriptions
3. Tuning Protocol
4. Consultancy Protocol
5. BayCES Teacher Inquiry Protocol

Guidelines for Writing Groups
6. Suggestions for Writing Response Groups
7. Notes for Writing Group Facilitators
8. Loop Writing to Support Inquiry
9. Response Group Protocol for First-Draft Writing
10. Response Group Protocol for Mid-draft Writing
Tool 1: Sample Meeting Norms and Procedural Norms

Sample Meeting Norms

- Speak your truth.
- Assume positive intent; seek first to understand.
- Be intentional about and take risks toward building alliances across race, class, gender, experience, organization, and role.
- Speak from your own experience (race, class, gender, age, and so forth)—and question what is happening from the vantage point of this experience. Take risks and ask for the type of support you need (emotional, physical, intellectual).

Procedural Norms

- Respect starting and ending times.
- Clarify and negotiate the focus of the process observer and the role of the documenter.
- No cell phones unless negotiated with the group.

Developed by the Teacher Research Collaborative, Summer Institute 2002. These norms have been adapted from the “BayCES Community Agreements,” originally developed by BayCES in 2001.
Tool 2: Protocol Background Descriptions

A protocol consists of agreed-upon guidelines for a conversation that builds the skills and culture necessary for collaborative work. It allows a presenter to get feedback on some aspect of his or her research, allows a group to build trust by actually doing substantive work together, and ensures the participation of all group members. There are many different versions of protocols.

A “typical” protocol looks like this:

A group of twelve to fifteen participants gather in a circle. One of the participants presents his or her research and any accompanying issues or questions. A facilitator gets the discussion going and makes sure that the guidelines and agenda for the protocol are followed. The protocol specifies that time be allotted for different purposes, which may include asking a focusing question, presenting the context of the research, describing the research, asking clarifying questions, asking probing questions, providing feedback on the research, reflecting on the feedback, and more. Protocols can last from 25 minutes to more than an hour. We have included protocols that last between 35 and 40 minutes.

Tuning Protocol

The tuning protocol was originally developed as a means for the five high schools in the Coalition of Essential Schools’ Exhibitions Project to receive feedback and fine-tune their developing student assessment systems, including exhibitions, portfolios, and design projects. This protocol engages participants in looking at a presenter’s materials (e.g., an assessment, a piece of curriculum, or a piece of writing) and taking the piece of work to the next level through examination and feedback.

Consultancy Protocol

A Consultancy is a structured process for helping an individual or a team think more expansively about a particular concrete dilemma. Outside perspective is critical to this protocol working effectively; therefore, some of the participants in the group must be people who do not share the presenter’s specific dilemma at that time. The creators of this protocol strongly urge using it in its full form (as it is printed here) in order to derive its full benefit. However, owing to time constraints we faced in the TRC we adapted this protocol to fit our particular needs, and we still found it a very useful tool.

Additional Resources

Additional protocols for giving and receiving feedback can be found at the Looking at Student Work website: http://www.lasw.org.
Tool 3: Tuning Protocol

The Tuning Protocol has been used by groups of teachers, individual schools, networks of schools, and school–university partnerships. Its users include the Chicago Learning Collaborative, the Southern Maine Partnership, the California Center for School Restructuring, BayCES, the Coalition of Essential Schools, and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform’s National School Reform Faculty (NSRF). The protocol was originally developed in 1992 by Joe McDonald and David Allen for the Coalition of Essential Schools’ Exhibitions Project as a means for member high schools to receive feedback and fine-tune their developing student assessment systems, which include exhibitions, portfolios, and design projects. Later it was revised by the National School Reform Faculty. This particular version was adapted from the Looking at School Work Spring Colloquium 2001. For more information on this protocol, please refer to the following books:


Time 35 – 40 minutes

Steps

Introduction (2 minutes)
1. Facilitator briefly introduces protocol goals, guidelines, and schedule.
2. Participants briefly introduce themselves (if necessary).

Presentation (10 minutes)
Participants are silent.
Educator presents:
1. Context (what the students tend to be like, where they are in school, where they are in the year)
2. Assignment or prompt that generated the work
3. Student learning goals that inform the work
4. Samples of work (photocopies of written work, video clips)
5. Evaluation format (e.g., scoring rubric, test)
6. Focusing question for feedback
Note: You may adapt items 1–5 to address your particular research question and/or specific classroom practice.

Clarifying Questions (2–3 minutes)
Clarifying questions are matters of fact (“How many students will you have in this class?” “What kind of prior experience in this subject can you count on?”). The facilitator judges which questions more properly belong in warm/cool feedback. Presenter answers the questions briefly.
Pause to Reflect on Warm and Cool Feedback (1 minute)
Participants may take a couple of minutes to reflect on what they would like to contribute to the feedback session.

Warm and Cool Feedback (10 minutes)
Participants share feedback while the teacher-presenter is silent. They begin with ways in which the work seems to meet the goals, and continue with possible disconnects and problems. These don’t need to be in tight sequence, but participants should always begin with some positive feedback. Some groups prefer to structure the session by beginning with 5–7 minutes of warm feedback (“What are the strengths here?”), followed by 5–7 minutes of cool feedback (“Where are the gaps” “What are the problems here?”). Sometimes groups end with one or two “probing” or reflective questions for the presenting teacher to consider. The facilitator may need to remind the participants of the presenter’s focusing question. Presenter is silent and takes notes as appropriate.

Reflection (2 minutes)
Presenter speaks to those comments/questions he or she chooses to while participants are silent. This is not a time to defend oneself, but a time to explore further interesting ideas that have come out of the feedback section. At any point the presenter may open the conversation to the entire group (or not).

Debrief (2 minutes)
Facilitator-led open discussion of this tuning experience.
Tuning Protocol Guidelines

Participation in a structured process of professional collaboration like this can be intimidating and anxiety-producing, especially for the teacher presenting student work. Having a shared set of guidelines or norms helps everybody participate in a manner that is respectful as well as conducive to helpful feedback. Below is one set of guidelines and the schedule, to be agreed to before starting the protocol. The facilitator must feel free to remind participants of the guidelines and schedule at any time in the process.

1. **Be respectful of presenters.** By making their work more public, teachers are exposing themselves to kinds of critiques they may not be used to receiving. If inappropriate comments or questions are posed, the facilitator should make sure they are blocked or withdrawn.

2. **Contribute to substantive discourse.** Resist offering only blanket praise or silence. Without thoughtful, probing questions and comments, the presenter will not benefit from the tuning protocol.

3. **Be appreciative of the facilitator’s role, particularly in regard to following the norms and keeping time.** A tuning protocol that doesn’t allow for all components (presentation, feedback, response, debrief) to be enacted properly will do a disservice to the teacher-presenters and to the participants.

4. **Facilitators need to keep the conversation constructive.** There is a delicate balance between feedback that only strokes and feedback that does damage. It is the facilitator’s job to make sure that balance is maintained. At the end of the session, the presenter should be able to revise the work productively on the basis of what was said.

5. **Don’t skip the debrief.** It is tempting to move to the next item of business once the feedback section is over. If you do that, the quality of responses will not improve and the presenters will not get increasingly useful kinds of feedback.

Schedule

- **Introduction** (2 minutes)
- **Presentation** (10 minutes)
- **Clarifying Questions** (2–3 minutes)
- **Examination of Work** (5–10 minutes)
- **Pause to Reflect on Warm and Cool Feedback** (1 minute)
- **Warm and Cool Feedback** (10 minutes)
- **Reflection** (2 minutes)
- **Debrief** (2 minutes)
Tool 4: Consultancy Protocol

Consultancy Protocol

Developed by Gene Thompson-Grove, Paula Evans, and Faith Dunne
National School Reform Faculty Project (NSRF)

Purpose: A Consultancy is a structured process for helping an individual or a team think more expansively about a particular, concrete dilemma.

Time: Approximately 50 minutes

Roles: Presenter (whose work is being discussed by the group)
Facilitator (who sometimes participates, depending on the size of the group)

Steps:

1. The presenter gives an overview of the dilemma with which s/he is struggling, and frames a question for the Consultancy group to consider. The framing of this question, as well as the quality of the presenter’s reflection on the dilemma being discussed, are key features of this protocol. If the presenter has brought student work, educator work, or other “artifacts,” there is a pause here to silently examine the work/documents. The focus of the group’s conversation is on the dilemma. (5-10 minutes)

2. The Consultancy group asks clarifying questions of the presenter—that is, questions that have brief, factual answers. (5 minutes)

3. The group asks probing questions of the presenter. These questions should be worded so that they help the presenter clarify and expand his/her thinking about the dilemma presented to the Consultancy group. The goal here is for the presenter to learn more about the question s/he framed or to do some analysis of the dilemma presented. The presenter may respond to the group’s questions, but there is no discussion by the Consultancy group of the presenter’s responses. At the end of the ten minutes, the facilitator asks the presenter to restate his/her question for the group. (10 minutes)
4. The group members talk with each other about the dilemma presented.  
   (15 minutes)

Possible questions to frame the discussion:

What did we hear?  
What didn’t we hear that we think might be relevant?  
What assumptions seem to be operating?  
What questions does the dilemma raise for us?  
What do we think about the dilemma?  
What might we do or try if faced with a similar dilemma? What have we done in similar situations?

Members of the group sometimes suggest actions the presenter might consider taking. Most often, however, they work to define the issues more thoroughly and objectively. The presenter doesn’t speak during this discussion, but instead listens and takes notes.

5. The presenter reflects on what s/he heard and on what s/he is now thinking, sharing with the group anything that particularly resonated for him/her during any part of the Consultancy. (5 minutes)

6. The facilitator leads a brief conversation about the group’s observation of the Consultancy process. (5 minutes)

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**Some Tips**

**Step 1:** The success of the Consultancy often depends on the quality of the presenter’s reflection in Step 1 as well as on the quality and authenticity of the question framed for the Consultancy group. However, it is not uncommon for the presenter, at the end of a Consultancy, to say, “Now I know what my real question is.” That is fine, too. It is sometimes helpful for the presenter to prepare ahead of time a brief (one- or two-page) written description of the dilemma and the issues related to it for the Consultancy group to read as part of Step 1.
Step 2: Clarifying questions are for the person asking them. They ask the presenter “who, what, where, when, and how.” These are not “why” questions. They can be answered quickly and succinctly, often with a phrase or two.

Step 3: Probing questions are for the person answering them. They ask the presenter “why” (among other things), and are open-ended. They take longer to answer, and often require deep thought on the part of the presenter before s/he speaks.

Step 4: When the group talks while the presenter listens, it is helpful for the presenter to pull his/her chair back slightly away from the group. This protocol asks the Consultancy group to talk about the presenter in the third person, almost as if s/he is not there. As awkward as this may feel at first, it often opens up a rich conversation, and it gives the presenter an opportunity to listen and take notes without having to respond to the group in any way. Remember that it is the group’s job to offer an analysis of the dilemma or question presented. It is not necessary to solve the dilemma or to offer a definitive answer.

It is important for the presenter to listen in a nondefensive manner. Listen for new ideas, perspectives, and approaches. Listen to the group’s analysis of your question/issues. Listen for assumptions—both your own and the group’s—implicit in the conversation. Don’t listen for judgment of you by the group. This is not supposed to be about you, but about a question you have raised. Remember that you asked the group to help you with this dilemma.

Step 5: The point of this time period is not for the presenter to give a “blow by blow” response to the group’s conversation, nor is it to defend or further explain. Rather, this is a time for the presenter to talk about what were, for him/her, the most significant comments, ideas, and questions s/he heard. The presenter can also share any new thoughts or questions s/he had while listening to the Consultancy group.

Step 6: Debriefing the process is key. Don’t short-change this step.
### Tool 5: BayCES Teacher Inquiry Protocol

**BayCES TEACHER INQUIRY PROTOCOL (30 minutes)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Purposes/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Facilitator introduces</strong> protocol and goes over format.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Group reads data</strong>/materials (if necessary—otherwise presenter can use this for more presentation or discussion time)</td>
<td><strong>A chance for listeners to engage actual materials from the teacher’s work.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5    | **Presenter shares** his/her inquiry-in-progress. This includes:  
- Research question/focus  
- Context: class, kids, curriculum…  
- Overview of his/her inquiry process  
- Question, struggle—what he/she wants group to think about when looking at the data | **Presenter needs to give enough context so that listeners can have an informed discussion—but does not need to give lengthy background.** |
| 5    | **Questions** from listeners; presenter responds. Start with clarifying questions (factual) and move to probing questions (for benefit of presenter). | **A chance for listeners to get clarification and to get deeper into the presenter’s thinking and dilemma.** |
| 10   | **Discussion** by the group  
- feedback (“I liked,” “It struck me”…)  
- reflective questions (“I wonder…”)  
- possible directions (“What if…”) | **Facilitator reminds group of what the presenter wants feedback on.**  
**Presenter is quiet; group speaks to each other, not to the presenter.**  
**The presenter does not need to respond to issues or questions raised.** |
| 3    | **Presenter reflections**  
The presenter talks about what s/he heard, learned, is thinking now—whatever feels most useful. |  |
| 2    | **Process reflections** (presenter first)  
Facilitator closes protocol. | **Important to check on process.** |
Tool 6: Suggestions for Writing Response Groups

As a writer, I want helpful feedback that

- allows me to retain a sense of authorship and ownership
- is an honest response with kindness
- is thoughtful, reflective
- tells me what you are hearing in my piece, i.e., active listening or listening loudly
- uses “I statements”: “this works for me,” etc.
- tells me what you like, what works best, the strengths
- tells me what provokes feeling and thought is specific and targeted feedback (not general) and stays focused on the piece
- includes questions: Why? What changes would you make? Is there continuity, authenticity in this piece?
- prompts me to access my own knowledge
- is a response to structure/organization
- gives ideas for expanding parts of my writing
- gives me ideas for omitting/deleting what distracts
- separates editing from responding, voice and content vs. mechanics
- happens in discussion and conversation rather than margin notes
- gives equal response time to all in the group
- has everyone working with his/her own copy of the piece being read

Listen Loudly!

Developed by the participants in the Bay Area Writing Project’s 2003 Invitational Summer Institute, and also used in the 2003 Teacher Research Collaborative Summer Institute.
As a responder, I want to:

- get the gist of the whole piece, giving a holistic response, asking myself, what is the writer actually trying to say?
- understand the writer’s intention, know what the author is concerned about
- respond to the specific feedback the writer wants
- have room, time to respond, a few minutes without interruption
- name the things that move or interest me as a reader
- ask questions to help expand the writing
- be able to share what I am curious about, unclear or confused about
- give feedback that makes you want to write more
- avoid trying to make others write like me
- avoid leading the discussion away from the writing by focusing on my own experiences
- identify detail flaws, make editorial suggestions
- point out spelling/grammar errors the author may have missed

Listen Loudly!

Developed by the participants in the Bay Area Writing Project’s 2003 Invitational Summer Institute, and also used in the 2003 Teacher Research Collaborative Summer Institute.
### Tool 7: Notes for Writing Group Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Purposes and Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:00–2:00 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong> of this hour is to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• build confidence for the writers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• build an interest community around people’s topics and issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• establish value around their proposed work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• engage folks in one another’s ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• help folks leave ready to write, to work with a facilitator with some solid leads and clear possibilities, or to participate in looping activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Sharing Ideas: (15 minutes)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> To have a generative discussion so people are raring to go with their writing.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Activity:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants write for about 4 minutes about the focus for their writing right now—why this choice—and initial thoughts about how they think it could benefit other teacher-researchers.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each person shares, 10 minutes per person: 5 minutes sharing and 5 minutes clarifying questions and responding to strengthen people’s ideas and highlight how their work can be of use to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Facilitators are taking notes on individual discussions on their computers; notes will be printed out and shared with individual writers; separate document for each writer.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15–4:30 P.M.</td>
<td><strong>First Response Groups</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong> of this session is to provide norming for the group, to facilitate the first round of responses, and to provide soft preparation for the next day.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Norming Discussion: (20 minutes)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• revisit aspirations &amp; anxieties by folks sharing something raised during morning discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• discuss the why of norming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• draw common purposes for the writing group from the members by discussing what folks want out of the group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes for Facilitators on purposes, examples:
- to move work forward
- to provide a real audience of teacher-researchers/writers
- to continue to make concrete the ideas in Working Toward Equity through the writing, experiences, and knowledge of the teacher-researchers gathered here
- to deepen, expand, and refine the content and form of what folks are writing about, e.g., to move from surface knowledge to deeper knowledge as well as find ways to make it accessible to other teacher-researchers

Review Ways to Respond and Begin First Responses
- Review “Suggestions for Writing Response Groups.” Discuss and add to the list. (10 minutes)
- Review Tool 9, “Response Group Protocol for Short First-Draft Writing,” and hear and respond to two or more pieces. (20 minutes per person = 40 minutes)

Note: There will probably not be time for each group member to read his or her entire piece in this session, so decide on two people to go today. We feel it is important for whoever reads to get the full time and a full response to his or her writing rather than try to get to everybody today.

Debrief process and clarify beginning steps for the morning. (10 minutes)

Note to Facilitators: 5 minutes wiggle room. Yea!
Tool 8: Loop Writing to Support Inquiry

Loop Writing is a writing activity developed by Peter Elbow that helps the writer find many ways into his/her own thinking, reasoning, or observations. You may find that your writing loops away or veers off even as you move deeper into the heart of your thinking.¹

Key Notions:

- Do not worry about your final product. Trust where your pen leads you.

- Questions to help jump-start your thinking/writing:
  What about your teaching/research keeps you awake at night or makes you jabber at your friends whether they are teachers or not?
  What comes to your mind all of the time?
  What are you most confused or perplexed about in your teaching/research?
  What dilemmas have you been wrestling with this year?
  What captures your imagination, piques your curiosity?
  What excites you?
  What makes you want to know more?

Looping Processes:

1. You will write to the three prompts. I will let you know when to move on to the next prompt. (20 minutes)

2. Read what you have written to your partner. Do not preface, explain, or apologize—just read. Your partner will do the same with his/her writing. (7 minutes)

3. When done reading, take your partner’s writing, reread it, and say back in writing what you think your partner is asking, wondering about, or wrestling with, e.g., Dear Jean, What I think you’re saying or What I hear you asking…. (7 minutes)

4. After you have read your partner’s written feedback, say back to yourself in writing what you think you are saying or asking. The goal here is to clarify for yourself what you think you are looking at or wrestling with, e.g., I think I’m saying or wondering about…. (7 minutes)

5. Create a road map for yourself. [Given my question(s), here are some possible ways for me to deepen my question and direct my search.] Be as specific as you can. If you are collecting student artifacts, what would those be? If you are going to do interviews, who would you be interviewing? The goal is to list things you can do and steps you can take that are concrete. (7 minutes)

6. Read your partner’s road map and write a brief response. It could be comments, questions, observations, or suggestions. Include your e-mail address so your partner can pursue your response with you at a different time should it be helpful. (6 minutes)

Loop Writing Prompts
Teacher Research Collaborative
Summer 2003

First thoughts, questions, prejudices, preconceptions
Pick a topic and free write on this topic. Write down whatever first comes to your mind about your topic. One way to start: *When I think of this topic, I think of/remember/wonder...... then I think of...... And this leads me to ask/wonder/question......* Jump into your topic and keep writing even when you think you are not making sense.

Moments, stories, portraits
When prompted, jump into whatever moments, incidents, events, and people you think of that somehow seem linked to your question, or for whatever reason are now appearing in your mind. It is not necessary to connect these moments to the writing you’ve already done. Focus on *capturing the experiences* rather than *explaining* them. Don’t worry about analyzing or explaining the significance of these moments unless it happens naturally as you write.

Dialogue
This could take various forms. It could be real, fictitious, or projected. It could be a dialogue you have had with yourself, with a colleague, with a school administrator, etc. It could represent dialogues you have engaged in willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously. It could be a dialogue you have overheard or imagined. The emphasis here is to bring a new form of energy into your thinking and/or writing. “The goal is not fidelity, but thought stimulation.” (Elbow, p. 58)

Variations on Audience
Now focus on your question in a different way. You could ask your question from a different point of view (e.g., a student, an administrator, a parent) or explain your question to a different audience. You could write about your question using a different form or structure (e.g., a play, a monologue, a letter). You might experiment with time or context (write about your question in the past or future). Approach your question from a different angle and see what emerges.
Tool 9: Response Group Protocol for Short First-Draft Writing

Recommended for:

- Early drafts
- Inexperienced writers
- Providing a balance between positive feedback and suggestions for revision

Procedure:

1. The writer reads the paper and does not comment until after the other group members have commented.

2. The responders begin by addressing these two areas:
   - What was the strongest or most positive aspect of the piece? This includes commenting on particularly striking words, images, constructions, etc., as well as global positive aspects.
   - Did you find any part, word, or assumption confusing? Is there something the writer assumed you knew that you didn’t know?

3. How would you go about expanding this piece of writing?

4. Are there questions of mechanics, grammar, spelling, or usage that should be corrected?

Tool 10: Response Group Protocol for Mid-draft Writing

Recommended for:

- Writer-directed response
- Groups of four writers sharing brief works within an hour’s time

Procedure:

1. The group assigns a facilitator and timekeeper for each round.
2. The first writer talks a little about the writing and identifies the kind of feedback that would be most helpful. (3 minutes) Examples:
   - “I would like to hear anything positive that you have to say about this piece.”
   - “I know what’s good about this piece. Please raise some questions for me to think about.”
   - “I’d like to hear both the strengths of the piece and questions that will lead me into a revision.”
3. The writer reads the work-in-progress aloud while the responders listen and make notes. (3 minutes)
4. The facilitator leads the discussion around the feedback that the writer requested while the writer listens and makes notes. (9 minutes)
5. The group repeats the process for each manuscript.

Tool 11: “Overhearing” Response Group Protocol for Longer Manuscripts

Recommended for:

- Longer pieces
- Manuscripts near the final draft stage

Procedure:

1. Prior to the peer response session, each writer provides a copy of the manuscript for each of the responders with a brief written or oral introduction which includes:
   - What stage of development does he/she perceive the manuscript to be in?
   - What are its strengths? Where does he/she need help?
   - What kind of feedback would he/she like?

2. At the start of the session, group members select a timekeeper and facilitator for each round.

3. The peer editors talk together about the manuscript while the writer “overhears” without joining in. They talk about the strengths as they see them and about what they see as the next steps for the manuscript (within the parameters of the feedback requested by the writer).

4. The writer responds to the “overheard” conversation in a general discussion about the manuscript led by the appointed facilitator.

5. The group repeats the process for each manuscript.
