



Learning from Families and Communities

Catherine Compton-Lilly and Eve Gregory

Language Arts had the distinct pleasure of talking with two literacy scholars, Catherine Compton-Lilly and Eve Gregory, as they shared their latest research involving family members, communities, and the uncovering of varied literacy practices sprinkled throughout homes, faith-based organizations, and community centers. They talk about the reciprocal nature of children's literacy learning and how what is learned at home comes into school, and what is learned in school also shows up for the children as they interact with family members at home. Working from children's funds of knowledge, both Dr. Compton-Lilly and Dr. Gregory demonstrate that ethnographic research and working with families and communities over time reveal a complexity of literacy practices and uses that may not be evident upon first glance.

Catherine Compton-Lilly is an associate professor in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She teaches courses in literacy studies and works with professional development schools in Madison. Among the books she has edited or authored are: *Reading Families: The Literate Lives of Urban Children* (Teachers College Press, 2003); *Rereading Families* (Teachers College Press, 2007); and *Reading Time: The Literate Lives of Urban Secondary Students and Their Families* (Teachers College Press, 2012). In these books, she describes her experiences in following eight of her former first-grade students through middle school. She is currently writing about the high school experiences of these same students. Dr. Compton-Lilly has authored articles in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Early Childhood Lit-*

eracy, and *Language Arts*. She engages in longitudinal research projects that last over long periods of time. Her interests include examining how time operates as a contextual factor in children's lives as they progress through school and construct their identities as students and readers. In an ongoing study, Dr. Compton-Lilly is working with a team of graduate students to follow 15 children from immigrant families from primary school through high school. She is also currently the editor-in-chief of *Networks: An Online Journal for Teacher Research*.

Dr. Eve Gregory is professor of Language and Culture in Education in the Department of Educational Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London. She teaches bachelor's, master's, and doctoral courses. Emerging from her interest in early literacy has been a strong belief in the role of children's families and communities in their learning, with special reference to the learning of literacy in homes often regarded as "disadvantaged." Inspired by the work of Shirley Brice Heath and Denny Taylor, Dr. Gregory has worked for the past two decades as an ethnographer in the homes, communities, and classrooms of both mono- and bilingual children in East London. Counter to official reports and unofficial myths, Dr. Gregory has been able to uncover a wealth of skills possessed by young children in their homes and communities.

Dr. Gregory has published widely, including *City Literacies: Learning to Read across Generations and Cultures* (with Ann Williams, Routledge, 2000) and *Many Pathways to Literacy: Young Children Learning with Siblings, Grandparents, Peers, and Communities* (coedited with Dinah Volk and Susi Long, Routledge, 2004). Other books include

Making Sense of a New World: Learning to Read in a Second Language (Chapman, 1996); *On Writing Educational Ethnography: The Art of Collusion* (Trentham Books, 2005); and *Learning to Read in a New Language: Making Sense of Words and Worlds* (Sage, 2008). Currently Dr. Gregory directs a large project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC): "Becoming Literate in Faith Settings: Language and literacy learning in the lives of new Londoners." This work details ways in which young children from four faith communities in Lon-

don (Bangladeshi Muslim, Ghanaian Pentecostal, Polish Catholic, and Tamil Hindu) negotiate becoming members of their faith. Crucial to the work is the close relationship with the faith communities and particularly with the faith teachers and leaders.

This excerpted conversation was recorded on January 11, 2013, and has been edited for publication. The full conversation is available as a podcast at <http://www.ncte.org/journals/la/podcasts>.

LA: To get us started in the conversation, I thought we might begin with the idea that schools often take the approach that families should replicate at home what is being offered in the classroom. Yet, your work demonstrates that families have a lot to offer when it comes to literacy practices that are not necessarily seen in classrooms. Can you talk about the nature of your work and the implications for classroom practice? Eve, why don't we start with you?



Eve: Hello. Thank you very much for inviting me today. Good afternoon here and good morning to you. Yes, I do agree that generally schools do want parents to replicate school learning. And it is generally

parents who teachers and administrators assume are working with children. I think there are a number of reasons for this but I'm just going to mention a few. One, I think, is that teachers feel that they must be in control of their classrooms. Of course, you might ask, "What does control mean?" I think for many teachers, they're worried about not achieving the grades on the tests, and consequently, they think that as soon as they open up their classrooms to families and communities, it's sort of outside their control. So I think control is something that teachers maybe need to think very carefully about. *How far can they give up control?* Because when you do, all sorts of exciting things might happen.

A second reason is possibly a lack of confidence in themselves as teachers. I do believe

that because of many attacks (certainly here in the UK) that take place on teachers (and I don't mean physical attacks; I mean attacks by the media and the government), they often don't have a great deal of confidence. And if you don't have confidence in yourself, then obviously it's very difficult to involve other people in your classroom and in your teaching. Some teachers, of course, might have a division, and do indeed have a division in their minds, that school learning is one thing, and that home learning, or informal learning, is something very different. Now I hope my work has shown in some way that that's often not the case. A further reason might be that some teachers believe that little or no learning is happening at home, and indeed that parents need training in school approaches. Well, I hope that my work, again, has shown that this certainly isn't the case.

And finally, back to the first part of your question, I think that crucially, many teachers think that home learning has to mean parents. Certainly, my own work has shown that it's not just parents; it is indeed siblings and grandparents who are often working with children. So that's just to address the first part of your question. Shall I go on and talk a bit about my own work straightaway now?

LA: Yes, that will be fine.

Eve: Well, since the 1990s, I've worked as an ethnographer in the homes and communities of children from diverse cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds, striving to document a huge variety of skills being taught and knowledge being conveyed and trying to get all of this

across to teachers. The families have been generally either from an Anglo background or from a Bangladeshi-British background; more recently, families have also been from a Polish or a Tamil or Ghanaian background. So going back to the first part of your question concerning homes and parents, two things have become very apparent from my work. First, a lot of school learning is automatically being transferred from school to home and being practiced in the homes. But it's not always in a straightforward way; it's not necessarily through work that's being given by schools to parents and families at home. And that brings up the second thing: a lot of this work remains implicit, and so students are experiencing implicit learning rather than just explicit learning.

Let me give you just a quick example of that. When I started working with siblings in children's homes, one of the schools that I chose had 99.9% (I think it was) Bangladeshi-British children. The head teacher had an English-only policy in that school because, as she said to me, "These children only speak English at school. They don't speak any English once they get outside the school door because all their friends are Bangladeshi-British, and their parents don't speak any English, either." And when we collected lots of episodes of those siblings working and playing together by just giving them tape recorders to tape themselves, what did they do? They played school, and they played school in English. And not just did they play school in English, but they played school in the teacher's English. They had the teacher's language, the teacher's emphasis, the teacher's accent, the teacher's information and intonation—so much so in fact that when we played these episodes to the teachers, they were absolutely astonished. They just listened and said, "That's me!"

And so [laughter] finally, even if siblings or families don't do school work at home, we're finding out, especially through the faith settings, that there are an enormous number of school-based skills being learned by children in homes informally, or certainly in their faith settings. Here's another way to explain it. If you're cooking, for example (we have episodes of our grandparents cooking with their young children), just imagine all the skills that are being used during that cooking activity: reading recipes,

weighing contents, measuring, dividing up cake mix, monitoring the time that things have to be in the oven, etc. It's a similar situation with faith. If you're reading the Bible or the Koran, or if you're reciting prayers, just imagine all the skills that are taking place. I'm sure your readers can indeed think about that more carefully and imagine or remember when they were in faith settings and the sorts of skills that were taking place.

LA: Those are excellent examples, Eve. I really like the idea of thinking about the informal nature of learning as well as it not necessarily be in a straight line.



Cathy: I think one of the things that contributes to the difficulties that teachers confront when they try and do this sort of work or when teachers try and understand what literacy might be for the children they're teach-

ing is that often the literacy practices that are going on in homes aren't immediately recognizable to teachers. These practices don't always look like what we expect to see. Speaking as a white middle class educator, storybook reading is something that is privileged in my world and among the kinds of things I might expect parents to be doing. Sometimes those expectations will make it harder for me to see the things that are actually going on.

One thing that I think about a lot is the "funds of knowledge" work by Luis Moll and Norma González. They often talk about drawing on families' "funds of knowledge" in classrooms, but what sometimes is forgotten is the careful ethnographic work that took place to identify those "funds of knowledge" and how teachers were actually going out into households and talking with children and parents and observing families, much in the way Eve was just describing her own research. The teachers were taking on the role of researcher to learn about children's literacy practices so they could enable themselves to see things that might not be evident from the perspective of a teacher who is not going into homes and not working directly with the families. So one of the things we need to think about is that even though sometimes it

seems as though things might not be happening, if we take a closer look, we often do see things that are not immediately obvious.

I think that touches on something else that's really critical in this work. Teachers need the time and space—both actual physical time and mental time—to process things and discuss things, to be able to think about children and families in more expanded ways. So when we have scripted curriculum designed to improve test scores and narrow skill-based agendas, we are not asking teachers to learn about children or families and to interact with them — to find out *what are the things that are going on?* This is very political. It's the idea that teachers need to be intellectuals, and they need to be supported in their intellectual interests. And an important piece of being an intellectual involves thinking about families, children, cultures and diverse literacy practices.

I'll give an example of one of the things I learned as a novice first grade teacher in a suburban, upper middle class school. At this school, we started every year by working with the nursery rhymes that were familiar to the children. We put the nursery rhymes on big sheets of paper in large print. The kids already knew the rhymes so they could track the print, point to the words, and develop one-to-one correspondence and left-to-right directionality and other early concepts about print. So that was a great tool for helping the children to learn. A couple years later, however, I found myself in an inner-city school in a high-poverty community teaching mostly African American children. I remember going to the teacher next door the week before school started, and saying, "Let's start with the nursery rhymes and work with those." And the teacher just looked at me and shook her head. She explained, "These kids don't know nursery rhymes. Their parents don't teach them those things." And a whole set of deficit discourses came out about what the kids didn't know.

I thought about that, and a few days later, I went to the community center next door to my school and tape recorded their jump-rope rhymes. I discovered that although the kids didn't recite a lot of *Jack and Jill Went up the Hill* or *Mary Had a Little Lamb* kind of nursery rhymes, they certainly had a huge body of

texts that they did know: they knew jump-rope rhymes, hand clapping rhymes, and all kinds of jingles and songs from TV and from the cartoons they watched. So this is an example of literacy practices and abilities that kids bring, but that teachers might not recognize. Those same jump-rope rhymes can be put onto the same large sheets of paper and used again for teaching one-to-one correspondence and left-to-right directionality just as we did with the nursery rhymes. There are so many different literacy practices that I think teachers will be able to see and utilize in their classrooms if they're given the opportunity to have these in-depth conversations with families and children. As Moll and González explain, teachers can become ethnographers.

Something else that I've found in my own work are complex book exchange networks within urban neighborhoods, where parents are trading books with neighbors and friends, and then the books move through the families. So the mother will read the book, and then the older brother will, and then three years later, the younger daughter reads it. And these books often circulate through these networks. That was a really interesting thing to see because teachers often complain about the lack of books in high-poverty homes. While it may be true that the parents in a particular family were not buying books, there certainly were books in the home.

Another thing I've found is the role of series books, you know, like *Goosebumps* and *The Boxcar Children* and all of those books that we sometimes think of as poor-quality literature. The thing is, the children become very comfortable with them—they know the characters, they know the plots, and these books are often more available than some of the more literature-based kinds of texts. So series books became an incredible tool and a literacy practice, especially for children who might find reading difficult.

Let's not lose sight of the media practices and the online literacy practices that children are developing. So often those are not recognized as much by schools, but even first graders are doing some of these Pokémon things that require a lot of reading—not just to play the game itself, but also reading about Pokémon characters, related storybooks and other texts, websites—all things

that we can draw upon as we help kids with literacy. So I think it's clear that there are these enormous numbers of literacy practices in children's homes, and sometimes it's just about helping ourselves to be able to see them and recognize them and then think about how they can be used, accessed, and built upon in classrooms.

LA: Yes, absolutely I like the idea of thinking about the media piece. We sometimes forget about all the literacies going on in those games. We aren't paying much attention to it. I wonder if either of you can talk a little bit about the power of long-term ethnographic research and being able to really dive in and sift through all of these incredible sorts of engagements that our short-term view doesn't lend itself to.

Cathy: I have been thinking about this an awful lot because having followed the same families and the same children for a decade, and now moving into our fourth year with a second group of children, there's so much that is constructed across time. I'm really thinking about time as a contextual factor in children's lives now, just like spaces and places and social networks and things like that are part of the context within which children learn to read and write. They also learn across time, and I don't think that we as a research community have given enough in-depth thought to what temporality means for children, family, and teachers, so I've been drawing on some different constructs to help me make sense of time.

One helpful construct is the idea that there are different timescales within which we are simultaneously operating. One of them is the immediate timescale—time passing as I'm sitting here talking to you today. It's the minutes going by, the 45-minute lesson, it's the now of time passing and our acting within that time. Another timescale is the time of my life—the stories of myself when I was six and how those stories help me make sense of who I am now. It includes the stories my family tells about me, the memories I think about and those I have forgotten. All people are constructing themselves—as people, as scholars, as students, and as literate citizens. In other words, how have we constructed ourselves over time and what are the relevant pieces of our story that we draw on to make sense of who we are at this time and place?

And then there's a third layer of timescales, and that is the historical piece. So who are we within larger cultural histories? Long social histories for African American children in America have huge significance. Racism is still an issue, and it has a long history that includes slavery and the Civil Rights Movement. The same can be said for anyone from any cultural group. We bring our histories and we bring our role in that social history, so when I'm teaching a fourth-grade student, and we're reading a book about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his struggle, this reading may be particularly salient for students who share his background. Truthfully, I shouldn't say that it is only salient for African American children; the text is potentially salient for everyone. Saliency and the sense we make of that book relates to our own background and how we're situated within a social history that includes Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

So timescales are one way to think about temporality in schooling. Another piece are standards and benchmarks and the temporal markers that label students as successful or not successful in schools. We have expectations for children that are grounded in time. When children in America take a reading test in fourth grade, they're expected to achieve a particular score on that test. If they score that same score in seventh grade, that's a problem. In other words, they need to score the fourth-grade benchmark on the fourth-grade test; doing it three years later is not going to be sufficient. So the whole idea of success in school is based on these temporal markers of being able to do particular things at particular points in time. I think that's a really interesting piece because it gets at the idea of success and failure and how it's constructed within a temporal system.

The final time-related concept that I've been thinking about is what some might call "habitus"—the idea that across our lives, and especially in our early years, there are certain ways of being and understanding and valuing and thinking that we embody. We carry these dispositions throughout our lives. These dispositions can change, but generally they change slowly, not drastically. Dispositions are the ways of understanding the world that we carry with us; they are embedded in our own personal histories

and that sometimes are hard to work outside of. This is part of what constitutes culture—ways of thinking, valuing, believing, and understanding the world that are embodied in people. I also think these three temporal frames help us to think about the complexity of being temporal beings and the role temporality plays as contextual factors in people’s lives. When you look at people over long periods of time, you start to see the ways temporality and these dimensions affect people and how they’re played out.

So to very quickly talk about how I’m thinking about this methodologically, I’ve started to look at discourses across times—the ways children and parents spoke about their teachers when they were in first grade, the way they and their parents spoke about their teachers when they were in fifth grade, and then again in eighth grade, and then again in high school. I explore whether these discourses stay the same or change over time. I’ve noted how discourses are sometimes shared among family and community members.

For example, across the eight families that I have followed for ten years, I often heard people—particularly parents and then later the older children—saying that the teachers are only teaching for the paycheck, that they don’t really care about the children. I believe it is a discourse about connections with schools, caring, and relationships. It’s about how children in many urban schools are feeling very disassociated from their teachers. Other discourses that I tracked over time were very unique to particular families. In one family, for instance, I often heard discourses about what I call the golden rule: *do unto others as you want them to do to you*. I’d hear the parents saying, “You know, if teachers want kids to respect them, they’ve got to respect kids.” Seven years later, I heard the daughter saying the same thing, “My teachers don’t respect me, so I don’t respect them.” So these discourses are often articulated in different ways by different family members, and they become ways of understanding the world.

I’m really interested in how we are being constructed as students and as literate people across long periods of time. If we’re thinking about constructs like identity or literacy practices, we need to remember that these are

not things that happen in six months or a year. They are long-term, temporal processes. Tracing language related to identity and literacy provides many clues about how children develop ways of being and ways of being literate that can potentially be more helpful to them and their future success.

Eve: Yes, I think what I’d like to say complements what Cathy’s been saying as well. I haven’t had the privilege of working with the same families over a decade. I think three years has been the longest that I’ve been able to keep families on a certain piece of research simply because of funding issues. But throughout my own work, I’ve gained certain insights into literacy practices in families over time, and I’d like to just briefly outline a few of those. The first and the most important, I think, is that children’s literacy is of crucial importance to families no matter where they’re from or what social or cultural background they’re from. Sometimes I think it’s easy to forget that, but families, particularly parents, are very concerned about their children’s literacy development.

To listen to the full conversation, please go to the podcast at <http://www.ncte.org/journals/la/podcasts>.

A second issue that has become very important (and I’ve seen personally) over the years is what we in academia refer to as “prolepsis”—the way parents look back into their own past in order to project into their own children’s future, the way they call upon their own memories to predict what’s going to happen to their own children. It’s very, *very* important, and I see it happening over and over again. If parents have had bad memories of their own schooling, then they’re likely to be frightened of school, or they’re likely to convey that fear to their children in some way. That, of course, is something that teachers have to tackle. A part of that issue of prolepsis relates to parents who have shifted countries; many parents of our students have crossed the whole world, really, to come to London or Britain, and they don’t know what to expect in school, so that continuity that many families who remain in the same country over

generations have is really missing. Both of these aspects need to be tackled explicitly by teachers discussing things together in their teacher meetings, and by actually looking at how they can shift bad memories of schooling in order to help families.

A third issue that's become so clear in the families that we've been working with goes back to what Cathy touched on about funds of knowledge by Luis Moll and Norma González. Whatever children's backgrounds are, they will always have funds of knowledge, some of which are usually literacy related. I'm just thinking of one East End little boy. I met a four-year-old who, according to his teacher, was having some problems in beginning reading. When I went into his home, I found him actually able to read the back page of the newspaper—the horse-racing page that his father read keenly each day. He had taught his little boy to understand how to read this page, which he did avidly. We also have found children who were able to read in Bengali or Arabic or various other languages as well as in English. All of that somehow needs to be recognized in our classrooms, I think, by bringing in not just the children's culture, but their languages. Computer literacy is vital, too, of course, as Cathy herself touched on so well.

Another extremely important aspect for me in my work is the acknowledgment of how important teachers are in the sense that it's not *what* they teach, but how their own excitement encourages children. It's the belief that their students can succeed that really comes across to children. So while teachers in Britain often get very hung up on the fact that they're supposed to be teaching synthetic phonics and that without it, children will not succeed, all of that will be for naught unless they can convey the excitement and value of reading to children and their families.

Finally, because I know Cathy has spoken about all of this at length, I just want to mention our recent work on faith literacies and the way in which children of all different backgrounds learn in those faith settings, and how they practice that learning at home. After all, it's not just the many direct literacy and language skills (and I could list probably about 30 or 40 skills that children are learning directly linked with language and

literacy), it's also logical reasoning, it's cultural and social skills, it's learning about the history of their heritage country, learning appropriate ways of behavior and appropriate ways of speaking in intergenerational contexts, learning special language linked with rituals and so on, and learning language linked with special foods. So through something that perhaps many people have thought was a very private activity, you realize that enormous learning is taking place. I suppose I've been privileged to be invited into people's private lives in order to document some of those activities, and I hope we'll be able to publicize those very soon.

LA: I think all of the work that the two of you have engaged in over the years has been fascinating. I'd like to ask if you have any suggestions for supporting teachers in thinking about how to go into students' homes or faith communities or community centers. Do either of you have any practical solutions or strategies for teachers as they navigate structured school spaces? How can we take the amazing work that you've been able to do as researchers and think about it for classroom teachers?

Eve: Well, obviously each context and each setting is very different. Teachers are, of course, experts in their own classrooms and with their own communities, so the ideas that I'm going to offer are very general. I suppose the very first suggestion is to adopt a different mindset. We need to have an openness toward the community, which goes back to what I just talked about—that teachers are sometimes very fearful of that openness in the sense that we tend to think we're losing control, but without that openness, it's very difficult to accomplish anything. So we need to ask ourselves *how can I draw upon the resources of my community?*

Of course, one way is to forge as many links with your local communities as possible. Here in London, we're lucky in that the children are surrounded by cultural resources. We have local churches, temples, and mosques, and other community centers. We have lots of local shops, we have local offices. All of these contain people who are experts in what they do, and have a fund of knowledge that will often excite children. So as teachers, we first need to take our children out to visit these places, to interview people, to

describe the places they're visiting (both orally and in writing), to paint or draw them (if they're young children), to plot their location on a map, and photograph and film them; we might even help them to produce their own newspaper or magazine about them.

We also need to invite people from the community in to visit with us, as well as inviting parents and grandparents to speak to classes, to share their stories, songs, and proverbs. All of this can be done multi-lingually. I think Cathy has spoken about the way she, herself, went out and collected nursery rhymes from other settings. Well, I think that's fine if she can manage that, but we can also ask parents and grandparents to come in and do that for us.

Another suggestion is to ask our children to make scrapbooks with their families. Scrapbooks are very simple—some people might say too simple—but I've run various projects where they have really taken off. The end result has been beautiful books made by families on certain themes; families have stuck plants onto pages, photographs of their families, sweet packets, tickets, print from magazines, etc. They have been created in homes and faith settings, between grandparents and grandchildren or with the whole family. So there are all sorts of ways in which we can show parents and the whole family, as well as the whole community, that we respect them. I suppose it's really showing them that we're not shut off into little school cocoons or little classroom boxes; we want them to know that our students' families matter, that they really matter for us in the classroom. I'm sure teachers can find many of their own ideas, so I won't go into any more here.

Cathy: I think Eve has brought us a wonderful variety of ways that teachers can draw on the knowledge of family members to help us learn about the families. I would also like to mention some valuable ideas from the work of Denny Taylor. She would ask children to bring a text from home that's important to them—not necessarily a book. Some would bring in a theatre ticket, others a birthday card, a note from their mom, or a comic book, whatever was important to them. They shared them with their classmates and talked about them.

Another activity we've tried is having kids write surveys that they take home, asking *what do you read?* or *how did you learn to read?* or *what's your favorite thing to read?* Another option is for them to bring in these different sorts of texts and create "Me" collages—"me as a literate person" or "who I am as a reader." They can actually "collage" their own stories. So there are lots of really nice, interesting activities we can get kids to engage in, and by doing that, we're turning the children into co-researchers and co-ethnographers who can help us to learn about the people, the children, the families we're teaching.

But I wanted to go back to one other point; I think Eve touched on this as well. She spoke about changing mindsets. Mindsets related to literacy need to change; we need to change ideas about what literacy is and the role it plays in people's lives. Again, I think this goes back to political issues around testing and curriculum, and who has a choice about what is taught in classrooms and what is important when it comes to teaching children. Should we prioritize having particular standards and working toward completion of particular literacy schedules? Or are the things we should be working toward more about people and the roles literacy plays in their world, and who they are as literate beings? Again, I think that teachers need the time and space to be able to do this kind of work, and we all have to be advocates for creating those spaces and for having administrative and political support to do that.

LA: Absolutely. Unfortunately, we need to wrap up. I really enjoyed the conversation and just listening to you two. It seems to me the take-aways from this conversation relate to the ideas of sensitivity—teachers thinking about the children coming into the classroom, the families, and the communities—and caring. I think that goes along with the sensitivity piece—the idea of time and how important time really is in how we think about our practice, how we think about children, the way we think about ourselves. It's obviously also related to the idea of diversity, and how diverse these literacy practices are that people and children engage in on an everyday basis. We need to focus on how those practices might complement the work going on in schools, the work that teachers are doing with children,

and the work that parents and grandparents, siblings, and aunts and uncles are doing to support the community. Is there anything else that either of you would like to say before we have to say goodbye?

Eve: Well, I'd just like to say it's been wonderful listening to Cathy, and I totally agree with everything that she's been saying. I suppose a last word I'd like to say is that in London, we have over 300 languages spoken by our children and just as many different cultural backgrounds, so I suppose teachers, reluctant or not, have to realize that they can't know about all of this, they can't know the languages, all these cultures. It's actually saying to parents, "You've got so much to teach me. I want to learn about what you know. Help me in this." Then parents and families can begin to realize that they're experts. It's really an exchange of ideas, and it can't be a one-way process.

Cathy: I just want to add that this has been a very exciting conversation, so thank you. It's been an honor to be here and to talk with you today. Let me add one thing. One of the difficulties with this kind of work is that it is always local. There's no silver bullet. There's no one way of being culturally responsive. There's no singular way of building on home practices. We cannot give you a list of things to do because what you do is always contingent on the children you are teaching and the resources they bring to the classroom. So often in education we want to find the fix, the thing that's going to make everything right. But in this kind of work, and in teaching children from different backgrounds, it's always local. We must continually ask, *who are the particular families and the children I am working with and how do I learn about them?* I think Eve has given us some amazing ways of doing that, so I appreciate that very much. Thank you.

Like Language Arts
Journal on Facebook



Search for New Editor of *English Education*

The Conference on English Education is seeking a new editor for *English Education*. The term of the present editors, Lisa Scherff and Leslie Rush, will end in July 2015. Applicants for the editorship should be tenured (or have completed the tenure process with a reasonable certainty that tenure will be granted) and should have published in *English Education* or a national journal of similar quality.

Applicants should send a letter of application to be received **no later than August 31, 2013**. Letters should be accompanied by the applicant's vita, one published writing sample (article or chapter), a one-page statement of the applicant's vision for the future of the journal, and letter(s) specifying financial support from appropriate administrators at the applicant's institution. Applicants are urged to consult with administrators on the question of time, resources, and other institutional support that may be required for the editorship of this journal.

Applications should be submitted via email in PDF form to kaustin@ncte.org; please include "EE Editor Application" in the subject line. Direct queries to Kurt Austin, NCTE Senior Developer for Publications, at the email address above or call 217-328-3870, extension 3619.

Finalists will be interviewed by the search committee at the NCTE Annual Convention in Boston in November 2013. The applicant appointed by the CEE Executive Committee will effect a transition, preparing for his or her first issue to be published in October 2015. The appointment is for five years, nonrenewable.
