

# CHAPTER ONE

## NATIONAL STANDARDS, COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

To teach. That was what Judy (who represents a real teacher) had always wanted to do.

To be a teacher. It seemed to her to be a calling, one of those pursuits in this world most worth the doing. A vocation, an act of faith in the future, the job of jobs. The only other career she had even briefly considered was medicine.

When people asked her what she did, she proudly told them, "I'm a teacher," and the act of teaching and her identity, the doing and the being, were like synonymous and synchronous chambers of her innermost heart.

Community was an important thing to Judy. She liked the idea that she taught in the town where she had lived for the past seventeen years, that she had helped a generation of students on their journey through school and into the joy and problems, the art and business of living. She liked, too, to be a part of a community of teachers, a community of learners, a community of teachers *as* learners. She liked being a member of what she considered to be a most necessary profession.

When she was in the Peace Corps in Jamaica, she remembered sitting on top of a hill towards evening. The sky was splashed with brilliant red streaks across a darkening cobalt blue. She was with an old man who had been the teacher for the village below. He picked up his cane and swept it across the valley. "I have taught everyone in this village. I have educated the generations," he told her, and then fell silent again. That had really impressed Judy. Here was a man whose life was intertwined with every life in his community. He had made a commitment to the humanity of this place and he could watch the commitment unfold and be fulfilled. What satisfaction that must be! Though not as old and bent as her Jamaican friend, she was beginning to feel some of his satisfaction.

Seventeen years. Judy could hardly believe that she had been teaching the language arts for seventeen years. And every year brought new challenges. When she had started she was overwhelmed by what she felt to be the awesome responsibility and complexity of teaching. It was as exciting, exhilarating, and exhausting a profession as one could imagine. It was interesting to her that at the outset of her career she had conceived

of her responsibility primarily as dispensing information, and she was terrified by how little she knew. Now she felt her responsibility was to facilitate and guide student learning, helping students to construct meaning. Part of that responsibility was to articulate goals—or standards—to identify what students should know and be able to do with what they know.

Judy taught in a growing suburban district near a large midwestern city. The population of the school was steadily growing, more and more racially diverse families were moving to the area, and the community work force was becoming more engaged in the light industries and services as the neighboring farms were gobbled up by housing developments. And changes, as always, bring challenges.

About seven years ago the junior high where Judy taught began the transition to becoming a middle school. At that time, the school divided into houses and teams of teachers. The teams were made up of five or six teachers representing different content areas. There was staff development and an invitation to transform the curriculum "delivery" (a term Judy disliked) into student-centered themes. Important skills and content could be embedded in these integrated units, and there was an understanding that teaching teams would have some freedom to transform the content of their courses as they designed these units.

After seven years, the different teams were at different points on their journey towards a more student-centered and integrated curriculum. Some teams had designed and implemented units integrating all of the subject areas. Other teams, like Judy's, worked in pairs or triads on various units that integrated content and skills primarily from two or three subject areas. Still other teams continued to teach their individual classes independently, according to the junior high model, or tried to teach units with similar themes during the same time of year without actually team teaching or integrating assignments. Everybody, including Judy and her teammates, was struggling to move in small ways towards better middle school teaching.

The teams taught all of the students assigned to their particular house. Judy's team met daily, worked to integrate instruction, and tried hard to work together to help all of the students in their "school within a school." This was their special challenge, because Judy's house served all of the students at that grade level who were labeled EEN, or as having exceptional educational needs. This year she would have a total of 130 students, and about fifteen were labeled LD (learning disabled), four were labeled as ED (emotionally disturbed), and several were also labeled as ESL (English as a Second Language). Most of these ESL students were Chicano or Hmong, although there were small but growing populations of Portuguese and Polish immigrants as well. All of these ESL students were judged as proficient enough in their English language ability to benefit from mainstreaming.

While conversing one night on the Internet's xtar discussion group on teacher research, Judy had complained that her EEN students' only real problem was that they were "severely *labeled*" and that "they didn't learn in the ways schools privilege learning. They have talents and strengths and intelligences, but they are not recognized or rewarded by the ways we typically do things in school."

Judy smiled to herself as she thought about Rick, who ran around the hallways making motor noises. Rick's father owned a stock car, and Rick would spend his weekends at the track. He was labeled LD and really struggled in school. He was a tremendously friendly kid with a quick smile. But he could not, would not, absolutely refused to read—despite all of Judy's best efforts.

In spite of Rick's friendly brand of recalcitrance, Judy was frustrated and had once or twice snapped at him. She blamed his problems on his learning disability and a lack of motivation. One rainy day, she could not start her car. Who emerged from the building, without a coat, fresh from detention? Who but Rick. "Release the hood," he told her and she obeyed. "Got any WD-40?" She did. He sprayed it on the spark plugs and the wires leading to them. "Turn it over." She did and the engine roared to life. Sopping wet, he leaned in her open window. "The viscosity of the oil draws out the water and seals the wires so you can get your spark." And with a wave he was off, before Judy could offer him a ride. She wondered who was LD now. Later in the school year, she successfully encouraged Rick to read by asking him to research and create his own illustrated auto manual for people who knew nothing about cars.

One of Judy's guiding principles as a teacher was to "make sure that kids know their education is about *them*." She thought back again to last year and one of her Hmong students named Tongo, who had arrived in this country from Thailand only a few months earlier. Though he struggled mightily through the early part of the year, she had involved him by encouraging him to illustrate, dramatize, and then write stories about what it was like in Laos, in the camps of Thailand, and what it was now like to be a newly arrived immigrant. In this way he was able to teach his classmates and help them to know him. Later in the year he was the point man for his group's cultural journalism project about Laos. He brought in his family for interviews and provided many cultural artifacts that had helped his group in their study. He had become a part of the class and had used his past to find a place in the present.

Judy wanted to help all of her students learn and build from their strengths—to see themselves as meaning makers, readers, and writers. She wanted to help them use language with fluency and control to gain knowledge, create ideas, and solve problems. She saw the role of the teacher as an enabler, a landscape architect creating climates of opportunity, choice, and possibility where students could exercise agency and ownership as they learned.

The diverse needs of her students, the changes in her school and community, the demands of working as a team, all of these challenges made Judy consider the question: What is literacy? For her, it used to be the ability to read and write well enough to succeed in school and at work. She thought about this quite often. For example, the other day she was at a fast food restaurant and was being served by a former student when the electricity went out. "Oh no," he said, turning a horrified eye at the blinking cash register, "now I'll have to do it the *old fashioned way*." After rummaging in a drawer for a moment, he pulled out a calculator. It was an amusing incident, but it made her think again about the kind of world that students live and will work in.

Now, Judy was coming to think of literacy as the ability to comprehend, interpret, critique, and construct meanings with a variety of symbols and tools. In this quickly changing world, students needed the ability to traffic in signs and meanings, whether it be with technology or with a pencil and a book. To help serve her evolving definition, she and her social studies partner Peter had begun

using a lot of student-centered and student-designed learning projects that involved drama, art, computers, hypermedia, and video. What was the goal? She wanted her students to become informed and critical citizens, trafficking in culturally relevant systems of signs and meanings, who worked for democracy. But what did it mean to be a democratic citizen anyway? For Judy, a democratic citizen was an individual who could pursue her own meanings and happiness, do useful and fulfilling work, exercise informed choices, work for justice and the good of the community.

As she thought about the approaching school year, there was yet another challenge and consideration, and it was lying on the middle of her desk: the national standards. How should she think about them? How should they inform her own work?

Judy was actually pretty excited about receiving the standards. She regarded her whole career as a conversation, a grand dialogue with students, parents, colleagues, authors, and the profession itself about how to best educate our children. Judy was a member of both the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association, the two groups that had collaborated to create the standards document. It was important to her that teachers like herself, from all levels, had been an integral part of drafting the document.

Now that the document lay on her desk, it seemed like another opportunity to dialogue with her profession. The standards were concerned with professional knowledge and helped to explore a philosophical basis for teacher decision making. They were also concerned with what students should be able to know and do and how teachers could help make this possible. The standards therefore reflected much of the best of what was currently thought and known in language arts education. They were a conversation about the challenge of the future, about the needs of students in that future, about what preparation students needed for lifelong literacy. The standards were a dialogue about doing her job well, about helping her students to become independent learners and thinkers. That was a conversation in which Judy wanted to take part.

Judy had originally approached the standards with some apprehensions. In her experience, there was often a tension between progressive childcenteredness and the setting of higher standards. She wanted to enable and help *all* of her students, not sort them into categories, and she sometimes had a feeling that higher standards required a lot of kids to fail. Sorting the wheat from the chaff and all that. Judy felt that her job, no matter what new challenges emerged, remained essentially the same: to come to know and to teach *all* of the real kids who came through her door—no matter what their past or their label.

She wanted to raise the ante for all of her students. What she wanted was greater success for more students measured against higher standards for knowing and doing.

With apologies to Bobby McFerrin, one of Judy's favorite epigrams was "Be Happy, Not Satisfied." When she finished a lesson or a school year she wanted to celebrate the success of the students and the hard, worthwhile, and noble work she had done; but she always tried to keep in mind that she and her students could do better.

Judy had read through the standards, looking for challenges to her thinking. Did she agree with the standards? Did they reflect her values? Could they help her teach better? Did they help her to think about ways to invite students into the classroom as learners; to know and understand them; to offer them a repertoire of ways to know, understand, and grow themselves; to connect themselves to the world and find a place in it?

Her first reading of the standards document had made her think about how to include more of the kids' concerns and experiences in her teaching, how to blend speaking, listening, and media literacy into her reading and writing assignments, how to include more about language and about cultural diversity. These were not new issues for Judy, but the standards helped her to view them yet again, and with a new lens.

She wanted to consciously run her class with respect for her kids and their backgrounds. She wanted to be direct and kind with them, to listen attentively and take them seriously. That meant attending to their individual needs and interests *and* guiding them clearly towards becoming more powerful and self-actualized people. It was a high-wire act balanced between what they knew, what they wanted to know, and what they needed to know. So always there was the unceasing question hovering in the air: What did they need to know and be able to do?

Judy felt that almost everything she knew about teaching was contingent, situational, and categorically tentative. Teaching, to her, was the struggle to remain open to meeting new challenges and opportunities. She didn't look to the standards to solve that condition, but to increase the openness by encouraging teachers to think once again, as a community, about what to do and how to do it better.

Although it was a few days before the inservices and the beginning of the school year, Judy and several other teachers were already at work in their classrooms. Later that day, two of her colleagues in the language arts department congregated in her room. Rob and Diane both had their copies of the national standards and wanted to talk about them.

Rob taught down the corridor from Judy, and she had nicknamed him "John Dewey Junior." His teaching always took astonishing directions. This past year, while reading C. S. Lewis's *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, his students had become interested in researching island habitats and other isolated ecosystems. When they were done, a giant papier-mâché rainforest was growing out of his classroom and into the hallway. And money had been raised through various initiatives to buy two acres of rainforest in Central America for perpetual preservation.

Diane was wearing a T-shirt that announced, "I know it can't be true because I heard it in the teachers' lounge." She taught on the second floor and was a bit more traditional than Judy or Rob. She still used the anthology (Judy used it as a resource, and Rob didn't use it at all) and was fairly careful to try and address not only the spirit but also the letter of the department's published curriculum, which antedated the school's transition to middle school status. But she wasn't afraid to adapt instruction or use the textbook in creative ways. She had been through the National Writing Project and did great work with her student writers, publishing lots of their work in her role as editor of the school literary magazine. She was a doer and organized schoolwide book swaps,

readings, a homeroom-sustained silent reading program, and a summer reading initiative. Judy regarded both of her colleagues and friends, different as they were, as excellent teachers and as intelligent innovators.

Last year, the three had written and shared metaphors for teaching. All three had come up with journey metaphors, but with very different roles for themselves. Rob's role on the journey was to "help them get to the library, the zoo, the woodshop or a pond, or wherever they want to go and set them loose. See what they find." Judy's role was to act as an "adventure guide" on a "somewhat planned safari," to shape the environment, guide the learners, help set up and engage them in challenging activities that they had a voice in creating. Diane was a "tour guide leading the class" through the itinerary laid out for the journey, "pointing out items of importance" and "encouraging occasional side trips."

Rob had just picked up his copy of the standards and his dander was up. "Here we go again!" he complained. "It looks like some more top-down spoonfeeding from those who live in ivory towers! Teaching once again reduced to a set of recipes. Let the oatmeal cooking begin!"

"Whoa, Rob, slow down there," Judy teased. "Let me quote one of your favorite sayings: 'We aren't successful unless our students are successful.' I've read through this and it's *not* a national curriculum like they have in Japan and other places. This is a set of shared professional understandings about what kids should be able to know and do. As a profession, we need to clearly define what those things are so that we can ask how to teach them and how we'll know when students have achieved them. As professionals, we need to know what we are trying to accomplish, how to do it, and how to know we've done it."

Diane broke in, "If we don't have special expertise, if any Joe on the street can teach, then we're not a profession. Besides, Rob," she continued, "almost all of your work with students involves getting them to build their own critical standards about their own work and about what's going on or could go on in the world. And you do that through conversation and comparison. If it's important for students, it's certainly important for teachers too."

Rob laughed. "You tag-teamers have really put it to me! Still," he mused, "there's something I don't like about it. Curriculum, to me, is something you negotiate and create with students, not something that can be planned or set out ahead of time."

"Rob, listen up! Clean the potatoes out of your ears! This is *not* a national curriculum."

"Oh, come on, Judy. Should standards be first, or should they emerge from good classroom practice? Should they come from what a bureaucrat values or what real teachers in real classrooms have come to value . . . ?"

Judy interrupted him, "Rob, these standards *did* emerge from good teaching practices. . ."

But Rob plowed on, "You know as well as I do that standards will be set and then the bureaucrats will have to assess whether kids meet the standards. And *that* is going to change what and how we teach. Curriculum will become a race course to run students around, as its Latin root word suggests, instead of a path of discovery like it should be. Standards are going to impact on curriculum. You know they will!"

"Of course. But the standards are only being stated. It's up to us, individual teachers in individual schools, to enact the standards. If we don't, nothing will change for the kids. So it's up to us to think about the standards and decide how they will inform our teaching. It seems to me that the standards should provide a broad framework for purposeful planning. It's kind of like providing a notion of a kitchen and the kinds of things you should be able to do in one, but still leaving it up to us to choose recipes and serve meals. Standards should create possibilities, not preclude them."

"I don't like that kitchen metaphor, Jude," Diane complained. "I know I'm traditional, but I want to keep my classroom a classroom."

"Instead of what?" Rob prodded. "Instead of a learning environment? Instead of a slice of life?"

Diane turned to him. "You know, I think I do well for my kids—they like me and my class—they learn. That doesn't mean that I'm not willing to consider making some changes, but I want to be careful about fixing what's not broke."

"There are a lot of ways to teach well," Judy reminded her. "If we all came from the same mold, that would make the kids' education less rich—but still, the key to making education better is a broad kind of shared vision so that we can make intelligent changes and educate each other and the public with some awareness."

"What *does* bug me about the standards," Diane said, "is that they're too interpretive, not factual enough—maybe even too politically correct or something—not explicit enough about things like grammar and the literary canon . . ."

"The specifics are being left up to us. That's part of the respect the standards grant us," Judy jumped in. Diane was left shaking her head.

"Geez," said Rob, "I had the opposite reaction, that the standards were too mainstream."

"Let me tell you something you *are* really going to like about the standards," Diane said to Rob, "once you've *really* read them! They emphasize that all students can learn. The standards ask us to value children's backgrounds and individuality. To take them, their language, what they say and how they learn, all with the utmost seriousness . . ."

"Like all of my teaching heroes, Vivian Paley, Maxine Greene, Gloria Ladson-Billings, my namesake John Dewey," Rob joked.

"Right," Diane continued, "and the standards are for everybody—for every single student. They are a vision of what is possible for every single child, and a vision of what they will be enabled to know and do as they live their lives."

"OK," Rob relented, "but these things are always an implicit slam on teachers, suggesting that we could do our jobs better and implying an agenda of how we could do so."

"This is Big Picture stuff, Rob," said Judy. "We can always do our jobs better. You embody that desire as much as anybody. Regarding the standards, it's up to us to test and interrogate them. They're meant to help us ask questions—and better questions lead to better practice and better results. We are the ones who will accept, reject, figure out, and deliver the details."

"And, Rob, this thing has been written with a lot of respect for teachers, students, and the acts of teaching and learning. It recognizes up front that teachers are being successful and that kids are learning more than ever before. The document asks me to consider and be open to alternatives and to test my professional conclusions instead of just listening to myself and looking in the mirror all

the time. Hiding in my classroom would certainly be easier and less controversial, but ultimately it would be a lot less satisfying than engaging in conversation. People don't fight change, Rob; they fight the price they think change is going to make them pay. What price do *you* think that's going to be?"

Rob was silent a moment. "I'm not sure, but I want to be careful. The price could be big. We could lose some of our autonomy that helps us meet kids' needs . . . or definitions of good teaching could get set in concrete . . . become reified instead of creative, spontaneous, and open. Listen to this!" Rob said as he eagerly flipped through a copy of Frank Smith's *Insult to Intelligence*. "Let's see, page eighteen. Here it is. 'We underrate our brains and our intelligence. Formal education has become such a complicated, self-conscious and overregulated activity that learning is widely regarded as something difficult that the brain would rather not do. . . . But reluctance to learn cannot be attributed to the brain. Learning is the brain's primary function, its constant concern, and we become restless and frustrated if there is no learning to be done. We are all capable of huge and unsuspected learning accomplishments without effort.' " Rob closed the book "There. I believe that. That's why I don't want standards to lead to some more formalized, overdefined curriculum or method of teaching. It will just get in the way."

Judy agreed. "You should keep being careful, but be open too. A lot of what the standards do is articulate general principles: learning is a process; we have to start with student backgrounds, needs, and interests; learning is best when students *do* the things to be learned, when they actively construct their own meanings . . . I think I'm already meeting most of these standards, but I'm asking how to do it better, and other standards are really making me think hard. As I've been thinking about this coming school year, the standards have helped me to ask a lot of questions."

"What kinds of questions?" Rob and Diane asked almost simultaneously.

Judy picked up a list from her desk and the three laughed. She was famous for her lists and schedules and notes to herself. A study hall student last year had called her "Ms. List-Maker the Attendance Taker."

"All right," Judy said, "this is what I've got: What are worthwhile and personally urgent tasks that involve the language arts? How can I engage student interests *and* develop understanding and strategies? How can I move more towards a student-designed learning environment where kids ask their own questions, find information, organize it, analyze it, add to it, represent what they've found out in a variety of ways, revise it, and share it? How can I provide for student choice yet still have curriculum that is a coherent whole? How can I be more sensitive to and accommodate diversity in student backgrounds, learning styles, needs, and interests? How can I focus more on the importance of culture? How can I approach content and help students to connect to it? What can the group do: how can they teach and support each other? In short, how can I make what we do together an intensely human pursuit of making meaning with the language arts?"

"Reading through the standards stimulated those questions?" Diane asked.

Judy nodded as Rob said, "What I like about that list, Jude, is that it asks, 'What are the language arts for?' And like all the other subjects, language arts aren't an end in themselves but a means to larger understandings and social actions. But those questions you asked are the kinds of questions we ask anyway, Judy."



"But, Rob, the standards are helping me to ask them again, in new and more specific ways. They provide a template to converse with, a reason and a means to think about pedagogy not only by myself, but with others. These standards should be part of an evolving, generative process, a part of a conversation about what matters and how to bring that about."

"What about parents?" Rob retorted. "They've all been to school, so they all think they know about schooling. What if things get too different from their idea of school? And then there's the issue of time and support. How are we going to enact more changes when we are already so overworked and have so many students?"

"The standards," Diane began, "aren't going to be a panacea, but they should work as a tool for change. They provide a kind of justification for what we do. And it will become apparent if schools and teachers can't address the spirit of the standards because of how little time and resources they have. It will encourage policy makers to consider what makes up an adequate opportunity to learn. It's a chance for us to educate parents too, since these standards are about professional knowledge and who we are as professionals. This is a chance," Diane concluded, "to professionally redefine ourselves for ourselves, for our students, and for the public. If we're not doing some of that, then we're not growing and changing and educating *ourselves* in the way that we are asking the kids to do for *themselves*. I don't think the standards are prescriptive—there are more things that would bug me about them if they were. I think they are very forward-looking, asking us to look ahead to what is possible for our students. Why are you laughing?"

Rob recovered from his chuckle. "I was just thinking that I would have expected you to be more skeptical of the standards."

"Maybe I was. I've said some things I don't like about the standards. I kept asking—but what kinds of materials should we use? Aren't there works of literature and rules of language everybody should know? Why aren't these specified? Then I thought maybe this isn't about *what* to teach but *how* to teach—so that students will own and be changed by what they do. Maybe it's not a question of what they should read now, but a question of what they should want and be able to read later in life. I still find this whole issue troublesome. But I've read the standards now and I'm ready to think and talk about them. I think it will push me in good ways, make me critical and wide-awake about justifying what I do and how I do it. By the way, why haven't *you* carefully read them, Rob?" Her tone was one she used with slightly recalcitrant students.

"Well," joked Rob, "I would have but Boulder ate them when I accidentally laid them in the dog dish last night. But I've got a fresh copy and I'm off to read them right now!" And with a wave of his hand, he was gone.

"I guess it's time to start planning, try to think of ways to put some of these things I agree with into play," Judy told Diane as she sat down at her desk. "The hard thing will be to sequence things, to build some coherence through the year. To lay the groundwork to enable kids to reach for those higher level literacy standards. Because I want to increasingly provide kids with cultural tools for finding and expressing their own meanings."

"You bet. I'm looking forward to the next chapter of our conversation. And to hearing what Rob thinks when he's actually read the standards."

Judy laughed. "It kind of reminds me of whole language and lots of other ideas that I'm afraid could bite the dust without ever really being understood or tried. The standards should be a tool to help me take stock of where the field is, how I fit in it, where it's trying to go, how I can help or resist. It should be a powerful way to understand learning and teaching. I hope people aren't afraid to do that. Standards should encourage us to look hard at what we do, why we do it, encourage people to continue working on improving what they do, as well as to get out of the rut and be informed enough to try some new things. Yeah, pardner," she smiled, "there's a lot to think and talk about. Let's keep the conversation alive."

"If Rob were still here he'd quote Dewey: 'Democracy *is* conversation.'" And with a wave, Diane was off to her own room.

Judy sat alone at her desk and was revisited by that feeling, experienced so often earlier in her career, of the awesome responsibility of the teacher to touch and shape the future. What students know and are able to do, the choices they will be able to exercise, what they will be enabled to become depends in part on the opportunities they are given in school. Judy was gratified that the standards recognized that education happens where the rubber hits the road—where teachers and students and opportunities meet, with all the daily diversity and complexity that entails.

The important and difficult work of educating is pursued between teacher and student in whatever environment opportunity arises. So the success of the educational enterprise depends on what they do together, and only the teacher will be there to recognize and actualize the opportunity in the best way for those individual students. The task of the profession is to equip teachers to act and choose, not to prescribe.

For these reasons, articulating and considering standards seemed to Judy to be both a practical venture and an ethical imperative. All teaching, whether we are conscious of it or not, deals with the awesome choice of what knowledge, experiences, and abilities are most worthwhile and useful to our children. And then all teaching must consider the question: What are the best ways of helping each student to live through, own, and make use of what is so important to being human in our culture?



And there was so much Judy wanted for all of her kids. Certainly that they could communicate with others through reading, writing, speaking, and listening. But there was much more than that: that they

could find, analyze, and critique information and be strengthened and invigorated to act on what they knew. She wanted them to recognize and go about solving problems. She wanted them to be able to interact and get things done in communities, to recognize and cherish values, accept responsibility, understand and appreciate the various forms of art and how they express and explore the truths of human experience. There was so much she wanted for them. How could she help them on their journeys?

This was the importance of standards to Judy. They informed her thinking and her choices. This was vitally important because what

we choose to do in classrooms is what enables the choice and possibilities of students, empowering them in the most human impulse and endeavor of growing and becoming and taking their place in the human community.

Teaching was the most powerful act Judy could conceive of because it enabled the choices of others. In many ways, teaching was an act of faith, situated in a vision and hope for the future, rooted in an environment of care and concern for others. Teaching, and how she went about it, undoubtedly shaped the future. And standards were a clear and powerful way of focusing on what she did.

### POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- Standards are *not a* national curriculum.
- Standards *are* an attempt to define what students should be able to know and do.
- The standards are informed by the latest theory and research regarding language arts education.
- Standards are field based; they build on past successes of teachers and students.
- Standards can be met through a variety of teaching styles and strategies.
- The standards project emphasizes that *all* students can learn and achieve at high levels if their background, needs, and interests are considered.
- Standards should be a source of professional conversation and critique about what to do and how to do it.
- Teachers are members of a professional community, and there are a variety of professional organizations available to support teacher growth.
- The literacy demands of the 21st century will require students to construct meaning with a variety of tools and texts.

## Resources

### Literacy as Exploration and Meaning Making

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- Wilhelm, J. (in press). *Developing readers: Teaching engaged and reflective reading with adolescents*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Willinsky, J. (1990). *The new literacy: Redefining reading and writing in the schools*. New York: Routledge.

### Reflective Practice

- Grimmett, P., & Erickson, G. (1988). *Reflection in teacher education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Grossman, P. L. (1990). *The making of a teacher: Teacher knowledge and teacher education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Handal, G., & Lauvas, P. (1987). *Promoting reflective teaching: Supervision in practice*. Milton Keynes (Buckinghamshire); Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Rose, M. (1989). *Lives on the boundary*. New York: Free Press.
- Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schon, D. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schon, D. (Ed.) (1991). *The reflective turn: Case studies in and on educational practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Tabachnick, B. R., & Zeichner, K. M. (1991). *Issues and practices in inquiry-oriented teacher education*. New York: Falmer.

### **Professional Associations**

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International Reading Association  
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National Middle School Association  
2600 Corporate Exchange Drive, Suite 370  
Columbus, OH 43231-1672

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
1250 North Pitt Street  
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National Writing Project  
University of California  
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State and local associations