National Council of Teachers of English
(Re)Inventing the Future of English

2013 Annual Convention
November 21–24, 2013
Postconvention Workshops, November 25–26, 2013
Boston, Hynes Convention Center

Register by November 1, 2013, and save!

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CONNECT. GET ENERGIZED. (Re) INVENT YOUR FUTURE

“NCTE’s Annual Convention is the time when we connect in person with all those people we learn with [online] throughout the year. We meet old friends for the first time and we make new friends whom we immediately follow on Twitter. It is a time to connect and reconnect, a time to refocus our conversations.”

—Franki Sibberson, NCTE member and Annual Convention attendee for 20+ years

For Convention information, visit www.ncte.org/annual or call NCTE Customer Service at 877-369-6283.
Dear Readers,

As whole language educators, we are inquirers. It is our burning questions about student learners, teaching contexts and practices, and theoretical and practical beliefs that propel us forward in an increasingly hostile educational climate. Our passion for learning and for the students we teach, and our professional integrity guide us as we systematically search for answers that enrich learning in classroom spaces and beyond. It is our questions that push us to disrupt the dominant discourse of school and make learning accessible to all. We know these questions are critical and there are no easy answers, but we embrace the process because we believe it is worth it.

Over the years, Talking Points has been an important professional space for us. As the new editors, our vision for Talking Points is to continue to put forth a journal that highlights classroom instruction and social action work that disrupt the notion of school as a space where students learn to be passive consumers of a certain kind of knowledge. We embrace “real” learning in which languages and literacies are tools people use to better understand the world and their place in it.

In this issue, we introduce educators whose questions are informing their practices, and highlight professional resources related to teacher research, including an interview with Ruth Shagoury, coauthor of Living the Questions: A Guide for Teacher Researchers. We are excited to invite you into Tara Gutshall’s classroom where she and Candace Kuby explore questions about writing with second graders in “Students as Integral Contributors to Classroom Research.” In an essay titled “Talk a Story,” Ben Ludwig questions traditional writing tools and considers the use of voice recognition software with eighth-grade writers. Finally, you can visit with Emily Whitecott as she looks closely at student and teacher discourse surrounding learning in literature-based Understanding Circles in her article, “Readers Coaching Readers?: A Teacher’s Reflection on Discursive Positioning in an Elementary Classroom.”

We are both humbled and honored to begin our inquiry into editing with an issue of Talking Points that spotlights Teacher Research in Collaborative Contexts. Our hope is that this issue will serve as a catalyst for the development of inquiry as a stance for professional educators. As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) remind us, it is important “to challenge the stranglehold of the current testing regime and radically rethink the purposes of schooling in a democratic society” (p. 117).

We are grateful to Carol Gilles for her support with this transition, and we look forward to continuing the conversation with you over the next three years.

Reference


—Sally Brown and Deborah MacPhee, Editors

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