



Authors in the Classroom: A Transformative Education Process

By Alma Flor Ada, F. Isabel Campoy

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From Language Arts "It is inappropriate to expect teachers to develop in their students skills with which they are not confident themselves," claim Ada and Campoy (p.2). *Authors in the Classroom* shares years of these authors' experiences working to transform teachers into authors, "from followers of other people's agenda to shapers of our own ideas." (p. 4). One of the most odious aspects of standardized curricula is the instruction of all students in the same way. In order to reach maximum educational potential, students' identities need nourishment. In the first chapter, Ada and Campoy educate readers in anti-bias ethics with informational text and exploration that readers can conduct on their own attitudes through journaling. This counterplay between information and reflection is the cornerstone of the book.

To live the process advocated by Ada and Campoy, teachers (readers) are encouraged to make their own writing public by "publishing" books; by doing so, they provide models that instruct and motivate students and their families to write about and publish their own life stories and ideas. Honest, accepting dialogues, where individuals ask real questions, express different points of views, and help teach, model, practice and problem solve, provide classroom strategies that undergird the writing program.

The second half of the book contains ten units on topics such as Affirming Self, Understanding the Past, Creating the Future and Learning to Know. There are multiple examples of student-, teacher-, and family-authored writing, stimulated by rich children's literature in many different genres. Annotated bibliographies of books for children and young adults accompany each chapter. Using this authoring process, individuals create many small books that can be read by others inside and outside their classroom. By the time you finish reading this captivating book, you have no doubt that the students who have engaged in this process will be readers and writers for life. No matter what happens during the rest of the day, this literacy format needs to fit between the cracks, for from there it will move to center stage.

Linda Leonard Lamme, School of Teaching and Learning, College of Education,

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Editorial Review

Review

"Enthusiastically promoting creative literacy among students, teachers, and parents alike," "an invaluable contribution to academic Education Studies reference collections" - Midwest Book Review

"This book is nearly perfect. It will become a classic."

Stephen Krashen, University of Southern California

"Authors in the Classroom shows us what education can be and should be: a safe environment for intellect and identity to expand and connect with the collective intellectual and cultural accomplishments of our global society. As evidence for its claims about what education can achieve this text provides neither empty theory nor soulless empirical research but rather the voices of teachers, students, parents, and the authors themselves, exploring through writing the limits of human reality and potential."

Jim Cummins, University of Toronto

"I want to start by saying that this is a powerful book which was a joy to read. The book provides a much-needed bridge between theory and practice of Transformative pedagogy. It is what every teacher/prospective teacher looks for: a step-by-step guide to putting lofty ideological ideals into practice. The examples speak for themselves about the rich potential of the model."

Elsa Auerbach, University of Massachusetts–Boston

From the Back Cover

Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy combine inspirational examples and practical how-to's to create a unique resource for teachers!

Authors in the Classroom: Transformative Education for Teachers, Students, and Families

Thousands of teachers have experienced the awakening of their own creative writing voice through participating in the writing courses and workshops offered by Alma Flor Ada and Isabel Campoy. The rich tapestry of these teachers' voices is a major highlight of this book. In turn, teachers have used their own self-published works to inspire students and parents to write their own stories, and those voices are included in here as well.

In addition to offering a plethora of inspiring examples of works authored by classroom teachers, parents, and students, this book also includes practical, step-by-step activities and a solid grounding in theory. Written in a clear and reader-friendly style, this combination will enable teachers to experience the benefits of this creative approach to building strong classroom communities.

- Includes 10 thematic units, with writing starters and activities for teachers, parents, and children.
- Features sections on facilitating classroom dialogue and unlearning oppression/education for liberation.
- Showcases abundant examples of teachers' self-published books, as well as students' and parents' writing.

"This book is nearly perfect. It will become a classic."

Stephen Krashen
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Elsa Auerbach
University of Massachusetts—Boston

Alma Flor Ada directs the Center for Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults at the University of San Francisco, and as professor of Education, guides doctoral research in Transformative Education, Social Justice, and Family Literacy. An internationally recognized speaker and widely published author, one of her recent books is *A Magical Encounter: Latino Children's Literature in the Classroom*. Her books for children have received numerous awards, including the American Library Association Pura Belpre Award for *Under the Royal Palms*, the Christopher Medal for *The Gold Coin*, and the Once Upon a World Award for *Gathering the Sun*. She earned a Ph.D. at the Pontifica Universidad Catolica (Lima, Peru) and was a Research Scholar at Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

F. Isabel Campoy is the author of numerous children's books, including stories, poetry, theatre, biographies, and art. The anthologies she has researched and compiled highlight the richness of Hispanic culture and bring a heightened awareness of its value to the curriculum. As an educator, she specializes in the areas of literacy and home-school interaction, topics on which she lectures nationally. She is also an internationally-recognized scholar in the field of language acquisition, in which she began publishing in 1973 after obtaining her degrees in English Philology from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain, Reading University in England, and UCLA in the United States.

About the Author

Dr. Alma Flor Ada directs the Center for Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults at the University of San Francisco. She is a leading mentor and philosopher of bilingual education in the United States. Dr. Ada was the founder and First Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE).

F. Isabel Campoy is a scholar devoted to the study of language acquisition. She is the well-known author of numerous children's books in the areas of poetry, theatre, stories, biographies, and art.

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