

From the Editors

Utilizing the Spaces

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Classrooms are sacred places. They are places where students come together and try new approaches to learning while practicing the familiar approaches of the past. They are places where students are constantly challenged to be in a perpetual state of creation and evolution as they are introduced to new ideas, new thought processes, new technologies, and new ways of doing. What happens in your classroom is up to you as the creator of this space. Your innovations can empower students to learn and grow in an era that is rapidly changing.

We hope you find this journal, too, to be a sacred place. We invite you to examine some new approaches to learning while reminding you of some familiar theoretical foundations. Within this journal, we uncover a space where we can be interconnected; a space where we can share commonalities of this profession and can think and reflect on what we do and why we do it. This is a space where we can talk about innovativeness in theory and pedagogical approaches as we consider thoughtful ways that we actually make a difference with a most fragile population of students. In some ways, this space is our safe place where we get encouragement when programs falter and we feel devalued. In other ways, this space is a raw space where we share

the challenges of teaching in this fast paced learning environment of the 21st century full of all the complexities it holds.

Regardless, this space is rarely stagnant. In their work, Fine, Weis, Centrie, & Roberts (2000) identify spaces where learning, identity and critical consciousness are constantly evolving and infiltrating one another. These are enmeshed rather than neatly joined. At times, they sustain one another and, at other times, they are in conflict with one another. The borders of their spaces are fluid and it seems difficult to “discern what defines, marks, separates and joins” them (Fine et al., 2000, p.132-133). In these spaces, questions are asked and answers are sought, people are molded and shaped by experience and consciousness builds upon consciousness.

The particular space you find here in Volume 43 allows you to think and reflect on how literacy learning happens in a spectrum where skills are applied to all disciplines and situations, and are brought to scale in very specific ways. We hope this space encourages you to be as innovative in teaching and in research as the students you teach and the colleagues you teach with. Like your classrooms, this is a space where the opportunity of learning can happen.

Each of the articles included in this

volume of JCLL challenges us to think about the typical spaces that exist within the college classroom. **Sonya L. Armstrong** and **Jodi P. Lampi** focus on the potential unfamiliar spaces new-to-college students encounter in their general education or career technical education courses in their article “PILLAR: A Reading Strategy for a New Era of Strategy Instruction at the College Level.” They introduce, discuss, and explain a pre-reading strategy that moves beyond the common “packaged” strategy devices to include a more purposeful and student centered approach to navigating academic literacies. This strategy builds upon the traditional use of reading and learning strategies, often seen in a content area reading (CAR) approach, to help students understand and acknowledge disciplinary literacy (DL).

Looking to also move beyond the use of traditional reading and learning strategy devices, **Teresa Fisher-Ari** and **Omer Ari** introduce the Square-Triangle-Circle (STC) framework for reading, writing and learning. Their article “The STC as a Potential Framework for College Reading, Writing, and Engaged Learning” emphasizes the need to provide students with more opportunities for authentic learning that allow and encourage readers to transfer information from texts into action. The STC serves not only as an active

reading strategy but as one that creates spaces and opportunities for students to respond and react to texts.

In their article, “Measuring the Effectiveness of Critical Literacy as an Instructional Method” colleagues **Edward Lehner**, **Kaemanje Thomas**, **Jean Shaddai**, and **Toni Hernen** discuss the college-level reading performance of linguistically diverse urban community college students. Like the previous authors, their work moves beyond traditional approaches to reading instruction and utilizes a critical literacy method that includes instructional activities such as guided reading and discussions. These activities often focus on student interest and cultural capital and help scaffold students to become better prepared for college-level reading.

We would not have the space here to present this work if it were not for the authors and the work they have created. We appreciate them for allowing us to share their work and for the continued research and service they do for the field of college literacy and learning. We are also very grateful to the many reviewers who contribute their time, energy and expertise and remain committed to the JCLL. And, finally, we wish to thank you, our readership, for sharing this space to stay connected with us. We hope you know how valued you are.

References

- Fine, M., Weis, L., Centrie, C. & Roberts, R. (2000). Educating Beyond the Borders of Schooling. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 31(2), 131-151.

JCLL

Volume 43 • 2017
**Journal of College Literacy
and Learning**

The journal of the College Literacy and Learning ~ Special Interest Group of the
International Literacy Association

JCLL is online at www.J-CLL.org