

2023

Back Matter

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Recommended Citation

(2023) "Back Matter," *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*: Vol. 38: Iss. 1, Article 14.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.9707/2168-149X.2383>

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Practical Issues for English Teachers

And two chances to write about them for the LAJM

Spring/Summer 2023: "Teaching to Transgress:" Amplifying Voices, Lesson Plans, and (Classroom) Communities as Spaces for Healing and Justice
Deadline: May 15, 2023

The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility, we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.

- bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*

In the spirit of the late bell hooks' activism, brilliance, and legacy, we believe in the power of teaching to transgress. We believe in liberation and freedom. We believe in creating and sustaining classrooms and varying educative spaces for the advancement of a more socially just and humanizing world. The rate in which racial disparities, mass school shootings, and teachers leaving the education profession is occurring is widening and alarming. Children and teachers deserve safe spaces to learn and collaborate, take academic risks, engage with diverse cultures, celebrate each other, and heal through literacy frameworks and project-based learning. Similarly, they deserve to hug and hi-five one another in literature circles, math centers, hallways, and at graduation ceremonies. Collectively, we all must (re)imagine supporting classrooms and other community spaces as locations of possibility and healing. Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to exacerbate teaching and learning. However, we must speak up and against harmful and antiracist practices that silence and debilitate marginalized people and communities, including their language identities. We must fight for the linguistic justice of Black and Brown youth (Baker-Bell, 2000). The act of 'teaching to transgress' must become our shared mantra for liberation and moving toward freedom at all grade levels. In all neighborhoods.

As women of color, teacher-activists and storytellers, our commitments to English language arts (ELA), literacy, and affirming others are rooted in our own individual and collective experiences inside and outside of school spaces. Likewise, we deem it our responsibility as educators to seek to provide opportunities for ourselves and others to address and learn from educational inequities within ELA and education. In this call for proposals, we invite manuscripts that seek to dismantle oppressive literacy instruction and practices and highlight humanizing and social justice teaching and learning. We are seeking works that center antiracist pedagogies. Authors (teachers, instructors, college educators, administrators, superintendents, community activists, etc.) might consider one of the following questions:

- How do educators represent and amplify diverse voices across disciplines and differences, including those from marginalized communities, and systems of inequality, inclusive of ethnicity,

race, language, class, gender, sexuality status, and other categories of difference?

- Describe how educators can partner with local stakeholders (i.e., organizations, community colleges, post-secondary institutions, etc.) to advance community-wide literacy and ELA collaborations. How can these collaborations deepen literacy instruction, learning, and partnering with joy?
- How are students, parents, and teachers engaging with mental health and wellness resources? How might traumatic events (i.e., COVID-19 loss, mass school shootings, family displacement, etc.) impact teaching and learning? Why is this important to unpack?
- What considerations and resources should administrators, superintendents, and other educators seek to support teachers from experiencing burn-out and leaving the profession? What tensions exist that highlight this decision-making?
- In what ways are teachers and other educators using literacy to center racial equity and social justice frameworks in their classrooms? Schools? Professional development trainings?

Please submit manuscripts through [Scholarworks](http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lajm) (<http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lajm>).

Fall/Winter 2023: To Be Determined
Deadline: September 15, 2023