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Reclaiming Your Time: Tools From Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) for Making General Interventions Local

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Abstract

In the last 20 years, teachers have been placed in an impossible bind: we know that classrooms are situated in geographic and sociohistorical contexts, but we are required to implement one-size-fits-all interventions. In this article, three classroom teachers turned teacher educators share ideas for how to use culturally responsive pedagogy to align mandated interventions to the needs of students. We share our own stories as examples of how these principles look in practice in classroom communities.

Key words: *culturally responsive teaching, cultural sustaining teaching, place-based teaching.*

When teachers leave the classroom, it is often a time to look back and reflect on our efforts: the days that made us proud, and the days that we struggled, and the relationships between the two. The three of us are no exceptions. We are an English language arts teacher from Alaska and Florida, a science teacher from Texas, and a teacher/school counselor from New York. We all have left the classroom to get doctorates in education, and now work with college students who want to be teachers. We have been studying together for several years, reflecting on our classroom experiences and adding layers of new theory and pedagogy. With each new bit of theory we learn, we find ourselves thinking back to our classrooms and wondering: What did I do well? What choices did I make of which I am proud? What things do I wish I had done differently? How can theory help us make sense of our own

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experiences in the classroom, and maybe even guide our current students as they begin their career as teachers?

For us, one of the most memorable images of 2017 came in April, when Representative Maxine Waters stood up to a colleague who tried to speak over her in Congress. She repeatedly declared, "I am reclaiming my time," and those words resonated with the world and with us. As an op-ed in the *Washington Post* asked, "Who among us, after all, hasn't lost irreplaceable time to a uselessly meandering meeting, a pointless conversation or a draining social interaction? Waters' phrase rang out as a rejection of that made manifest, delighting all of us who have been spoken over, ignored or had our time wasted by others" (Emba, 2017, para. 4). For teachers, especially, the idea of "reclaiming our time" in our classrooms struck a deep chord. In this article, we offer a series of guiding principles to help you reclaim your classroom time from the demands of mandated, generalized interventions.

We draw on Culturally Sustaining Teaching and Indigenous theories to develop these guiding principles but attempt to make that theory accessible and practical for implementation in the classroom. In doing so, we hope to help teachers close the gap between theory and practice, and to translate theoretical ideas into the day-to-day lives of their classrooms. We draw from Django Paris' (2012) concept of culturally sustaining pedagogy to articulate tools teachers can use to "support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence" (p. 95). This theory is closely related to the idea of culturally relevant pedagogy but challenges educators to not stop at *relevance* to their local teaching communities, but rather to incorporate practices that work to actively support and *sustain* local knowledge (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Paris & Alim, 2014).

We also draw from Indigenous thinkers, as we seek to articulate classroom practices that acknowledge and respect traditional local knowledges and conceptions of place, while working to upset settler-colonial erasure of peoples and history. We hope to answer the call of Dolores Calderon, and help teachers engage in decolonizing work in their classrooms, which "demands that we resurrect the thread of Indianness that is foundational to settler colonialism" by "identify(ing) how settler grammars continue to be an ongoing project and importantly so in educational contexts" (Calderon, 2014, p. 332). Decentering settler logics can be a valuable tool to help teachers re-center the communities in which they teach, while attending to the historical contexts that inform the anticolonial work of leading students to question common settler tropes and logics (Bang et al., 2014; Calderon, 2014; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Wilson, 2004).

To situate these theories in the classroom, we will weave into this article examples from our classrooms and practices of how we used (or failed to use): Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy and Indigenous knowledges to disrupt, subvert, and localize some common generalized interventions: mandated test preparation, standards-based content and lesson plans, and English language learning. Teachers are not passive carriers of these mandates, nor are their student's generic class sets. Teaching is local, and teachers are in control of what happens in their classrooms. By translating these generalized mandates in ways that

support local communities, and honor and sustain local knowledges, teachers can reclaim their time and classroom communities.

We present here a series of vignettes, each centered around some of the interventions that teachers are required to enact in their classrooms. Each begins with a quote from one of our theoretical sources, and concludes with a guiding principle drawn from that work. The stories in between are woven from thinking our own classroom stories with the theory from which we draw. As you read our stories, we hope you think of your own classroom community, and find a thread or two to weave into your own pedagogy.

Vignette 1 (Kristidel McGregor): From Mandated Test Prep to Literary Analysis

> *For too long, scholarship on "access" and "equity" has centered implicitly or explicitly around the question of how to get working-class students of color to speak and write more like middle-class White ones. (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 87)*

North central Florida is a place of swamps and Spanish moss, heat and humidity. I began my first year of teaching there in a mild state of shock. I was still reeling from transplanting myself and my family from the Pacific Northwest, and this new home and school were distinctly foreign to me. The high school I taught in was a loose grouping of cinder block buildings, and my 10th grade English classroom opened to the sultry Florida air.

The school buildings were built in the 1970s, a direct result of the court-ordered desegregation of the town. This high school, located on the "wrong" side of the tracks, was home to a challenging advanced coursework program that drew in students from across town, effectively integrating the space. Like all too many schools in the American South, what looked integrated when viewed as a whole revealed itself as still firmly segregated when seen at the classroom level, despite the "colorblind" policies the school embraced (Davis, 2014; Wells, Welner, Mathis, & Gunn, 2014). My class was a class comprised of the "major program" students, drawn from the local neighborhood. Of my 125 students that year, all but two were Black.

Like many other schools, the school I worked at made little mention of my students' race, in favor of calling my room full of Black students "diverse" or "at-risk" (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 216). Ironically, that "diverse" classroom was the most homogenous group of students with which I have ever worked.

I made a lot of mistakes, especially at first. I knew nothing about my students, or the cultural and historical forces at work in that classroom. At first, I struggled to find my footing, falling back on what my teacher preparation program had recommended as near-universal interventions: teach grammatical formulas, correcting any mistakes; teach how to recognize and respond to standard forms of writing; teach behavior with classroom management tools. I worked harder than I ever had in my life, trying to control what happened in that classroom, and to teach my students enough literacy skills so they could pass the all-important 10th grade reading test.

My students were patient with me, probably more patient than I deserved. But I struggled to deal with the volume of their voices, their readiness to call out in response to my teaching, and my own difficulties understanding their spoken dialect. I cannot pinpoint the exact moment when I realized I was out of my depth, but I was slowly drowning. The principal recommended using a specially purchased test-prep book, even to the exclusion of other work. The book drained even my own love of reading, and my students and I were collectively miserable.

My first *ah ha!* moment came during a paired poetry lesson I planned one night in an act of quiet rebellion, as an escape from that test book. Drawing on an old in-service handout, I tried pairing a classic poem with a hip-hop song. I realize now the song was decades out of date, an oldie really, but the students' interest was piqued. I quickly realized that they knew more about hip-hop than I did, so I asked them to tell me what the song meant, and we worked together to analyze how the authors used language in the song and poem to create meaning. I left class that day feeling like a teacher for the first time in weeks.

I began to alternate paired poems with test prep, trying to pick poems and songs that complimented the skills in the test-prep book. Things began to improve. Along the way, I assigned a "Poetry Out Loud" project, where each student chose a poem to memorize and deliver in front of the class. After the day of poem readings, one student approached me after class and told me he was going to do a reading of the poem for his church and asked if I would like to come.

As someone who was raised outside of formal religion, I was nervous at the thought of venturing into a church, but in the interest of supporting my students, I agreed. That Sunday, I was one of the few White faces in the building, and I remember the shock of feeling plunged into a different culture. I heard echoes of my own classroom in the ways the sounds filled the room, and folks spoke out in response to the sermon. Attending church that Sunday was a turning point in my practice. When I read, years too late for that class, about culturally sustaining pedagogy, my first thought was of that church and the ways I learned to learn from the community so that I could be the teacher my students needed.

To succeed as a teacher in that community, it was not enough for me to bring my preservice pedagogical lessons, my love of reading, and to try harder. I had to engage with what Paris and Alim call *heritage practices* and *community practices*, "encompassing both past-oriented heritage dimensions and present-oriented community dimensions" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 90). The community of students in my classroom in Florida, like all students, had a rich cultural history, but I could not see it. It was only when I engaged with and listened to the voices of their community that I could begin to make the connections to prior knowledge that student engagement, and deep learning, require.

Vignette II (Deanna Chappell Belcher): Social Justice Teaching In Spite of the Standards

> *The reification of western intellectual traditions is often made possible by the denial or erasure of "Indigenous points of reference." … While the denial or erasure of*

> *Indigenous points of reference may not be intentional, educational environments that uncritically mobilize them and leave settler-colonial interpretations silenced are complicit in this erasure. (Bang et al., 2014)*

So many of what Bang et al. (2014) referred to as "western intellectual traditions" seem like just part of school to many of us. Textbooks … grade levels … percentiles … the constant, pervasive mantra of *college and career ready*—all of these are tools of domination at work in formal schooling in the U.S. nation-state. Learning standards, performance standards, and content standards, whether they are called Common Core, Next Generation, or C3 Framework, are part of the same machine. The battle for the heart and soul of American education is an ongoing struggle between opposing forces: covering and uncovering, hope and despair, erasure and recovering, flattening and growth. Megan Bang might see it as the processes of burying and breaking through, always at work.

My own career in schools, which is topping 25 years at this point, reflects this struggle in many ways. When I look back on the ways I reclaimed my time as a teacher I am proud of how I resisted some of the seemingly random requirements while still meeting them. That is why I offer up the importance of knowing the standards. It is important to know where there is wiggle room for creativity, and trust your own professional knowledge. But I also see many other opportunities that I let pass me by, never even seeing them; or if I did see them, not understanding what was required of me. When it comes to the reification of White settler colonial logics and the erasure of Indigenous ways of knowing, I was complicit. Therefore, my second piece of advice is: Know yourself. Understand that you will always have room to grow.

As teachers, we are constantly subjected to new mandates coming at us seemingly from "on high," as politicians wrestle and jockey for supremacy. At one point in New York City schools we were required to write our standards "for the day" on the board at the front of the room; the administrators said it was in case they came into the classroom to observe, so they could see what we were working on. I know this sounds familiar to a lot of teachers—it seems we waste a lot of time and energy on busy work for the "higher ups" when we could and should be investing that time and energy in our students. These processes of accountability and conformity can deprive us and our children of the sometimes unpredictable journey of real learning.

The root of the word curriculum is *currere*, which means "a course" as in a path to travel (Pinar, 2012). Grimmett and Halvorson (2010) compared curriculum to "a life fabric and a weaving of lives within socio-cultural worlds" (p. 248). But narrowly defined standards and the tests designed to assess them turn a life course of learning into a series of boxes to be checked; they threaten to squash the process (and the joy) of us learning together. One thing of which I am proud from my time in the classroom was how I used the wiggle room in those standards to open up community-oriented learning opportunities for my students.

When I taught in New York City I always tried to make the neighborhood an extension of the classroom. What did my kids see, hear (and yes, smell) on the way to school this

morning? What did they see but not really *see*? What did they see but not fully understand? How can I help them understand? Instead of feeling powerless, how can we, as a classroom or school community, take action to make a difference in our neighborhood? I know my students did not care if we were going to hit "Standard SS.K.ECO.9.a.1" on any given day. But I wrote it on the board anyway, and we did hit it; and we did so in such a way that I did not have to compromise my belief in community-engaged and meaningful learning for my students.

New York State standards for social studies (SS) include, beginning in kindergarten (K), principles of economics (ECO). It's true! "SS.K.ECO.9" refers to the key idea, "People have economic needs and wants. Goods and services can satisfy people's wants. Scarcity is the condition of not being able to have all the goods and services that a person wants or needs" (The State Education Department, 2017). Where others saw a static, unchangeable standard, a box to be checked, I saw "wiggle room." Kindergarteners and first graders know the difference between needs (food, safety, health care, winter coats) and wants (cupcakes, manicures, fancy sneakers). They also have big hearts with lots of compassion for other people.

From a reflection on what we had seen on the way to school grew a robust discussion of "wants and needs" that generated more questions than answers. Why might someone be without a home? Why would someone have to choose between electric service and medication? What does it cost to feed and house a small family in New York City? How does the community help meet people's immediate needs?

I was able to build on that discussion by taking students out into their community and learning from the people there. A local service-oriented church served 14 meals a week to all comers, and hosted a clothes closet for those in need. They allowed the Kinders to visit and ask questions. Seeing the younger ones' excitement and enthusiasm, the older students wanted to join in. Thanks to our art teachers, a multigrade collaboration grew. Soon the third, fifth, and eighth grades were all on board—we all had similar "standards" to meet: wants and needs, scarcity, supply and demand (all the "Econ 101" concepts). Our school and neighborhood community came together, and thanks to someone with mysterious access to a kiln we could use—and clay!—our Empty Bowls Project, one that is replicated across the United States even today,[1] was born. We met the standards, and along the way integrated an art experience and did a ton of research, writing, and neighborhood exploring. For the final showcase of our work, we hosted a meal and invited families and members of our community to make our own version of "Stone Soup" together.

While I was proud of the work I did, as I look back I see so many places where I could have done better; so many times I wished I had done more to disrupt the assumptions of the standards and structures of schooling. I failed to examine how our daily life ways in New York are complicit in *literally* covering up the past. In *The City* we talk in terms of neighborhoods, blocks, school catchment zones, and districts—we divide up the city in terms of street names and numbers. In Manhattan, 125th Street means Harlem, which means Black folks. Below 96th Street means well-to-do, which means White. Washington Heights and Manhattan Valley means Latinx, which means Brown.

All of this geographical/cultural mapping using streets and landmarks built and named by settlers completely ignores the very part of our history that, if examined, would allow us to think of our city's history and current challenges differently, in ways that might get to the heart of issues covered in SS.K.ECO.9. I regret I did not teach my students the Indigenous history of the land on which they live and learn, so we could have experienced the insights and connection to our own history that comes from that act of uncovering.

Wall Street originally ran alongside the wall of the Dutch fort, a wall designed to separate and protect the colonizers from the Indigenous population. Broadway was once an important waterway for travel and fishing. The Upper East Side was home to myriad wild animals, and before Henry Hudson showed up it was an important hunting and meeting area for the people living nearby. We do not envision what we now call The Bronx (named after the Bronck family farm) as a forest, or the foot of the Brooklyn Bridge in Manhattan as a cherry orchard (from which Cherry Street gets its name). Multiple layers of pavement cover the ancestral homelands of the Lenai Lenape. Their common and sacred spaces have been covered up by the infrastructure of a settler colonial city that has become the self-proclaimed center of the capitalist world.

What does it mean for me as a teacher to help my students learn about social injustices in our community without recognizing the "original sin" of settler colonialism? Ironically, my passion for addressing urban poverty and hunger and housing issues with my young students was what Tuck and Yang (2012, p. 1) called a "move to innocence." Even as I sought to enact "critical service-learning" (Mitchell, 2008, p. 50), I was completely clueless as to what was *literally* right under my feet. Through my engagement with curriculum theorizing and Indigenous Feminist theory I came to understand that thinking deeply about place-based teaching is essential to creating a culturally responsive learning community. Native ways of knowing and being are critical to how I understand *place*, and to how the places we learn influence the learning we do. If I could go back, what would I do differently?

I would help my students look at Morningside Park, and especially Central Park, as settler colonial projects intent on domination of land. I would ask them to look more deeply into the history of the neighborhoods we call "home" and to use their compassion-powered critical thinking skills to think about how we, as city dwellers, use the natural resources of the land, and where our food comes from, and why. Our own neighborhood food banks or soup kitchens are not the only resources available. The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian is at the southern tip of the Manhattan—a longish fieldtrip but well worth the effort. A member of the Lenape tribe is one of the educators there, and provides an important connection for students to learn about the land we now inhabit and its original and current Native occupants. I have also learned that New York City has the largest population of Native American people of any city in what is now the United States. If I had known then, I could have reached out in an effort to form a partnership. I wish I had known that an active group of Lenape descendants is hard at work in New Jersey preserving the peoples' culture and heritage and planning for the future with an active tribal government and cultural programming. All of this was invisible to me.

From my vantage point 3,000 miles away and 7 years later, I look back at my teaching in New York with a mix of pride and regret. But I do not spend time fantasizing about a time machine that could take me back and give me a chance at doing better. I cannot reclaim that time in the past, but I can do so in the present. Now that I know more and am working to integrate "Indigenous points of reference" into my own thinking and teaching and research, I have the knowledge and the energy to stand up to those who would continue to erase or deny Indigenous histories and the role of settler colonial logics in our everyday lives.

I try hard take my own advice and I hope our readers will too. Know your standards: know that they are incomplete and at times antithetical to what you are trying to teach, and find that wiggle room. Know yourself: know that you will likely never be perfect, but you can continually be open to improving your practice. You can learn new content and new ways to make your pedagogy culturally sustaining, and to value the input of your local community—even those who may be rendered *almost* invisible by centuries of marginalization and denial.

Vignette 3 (Katie Fitch): From Engaging to Sustaining Practices

> *"Raciolinguistic ideologies" … conflate certain racialized bodies with linguistic deficiency unrelated to any objective linguistic practices … culturally sustaining pedagogies can challenge the educational inequalities that these ideologies (re)produce. (Rosa & Flores, 2017, p. 175)*

I taught high school chemistry for seven years in Houston, Texas before starting graduate school. The school I taught in had a student body that was approximately 90% Latinx, and approximately 25% of the students were classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). Some students were long-term ELLs, children who had been in American schools for years, receiving linguistic supports and learning English, while others had recently migrated to the United States. Another uncounted group of students had been ELL students in elementary and middle school, but exited the program before high school. For a majority of my students, English was not their first language. Therefore, as a teacher in this school, my ideological stance on language was as integral to my teaching as my knowledge of chemistry and pedagogy. My attitudes and emotions around language use affected my students in multiple ways.

How we, as teachers, think about language is also integral to culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). "CSP seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as a part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). Within a CSP frame no language or dialect is considered inherently superior to another. In this way, CSP challenges the dominant language hierarchy that we often see in schools, where a certain, "proper" dialect of English is often seen as the only appropriate language for learning, even when it is not the language that our students most comfortably speak.

What follows are some moments in my teaching career where different language ideologies played out in my classroom. Some are examples of a raciolinguistic ideology where

Lantix students' language was deemed as less than, and therefore the students were as well. The ideology I believe I practiced most often in my classroom was an asset-based frame, where I built on students' Spanish language skills and helped to foster their growth in the English language. Reflecting back, I know I sometimes fell short of Alim and Paris' charge to sustain linguistic pluralism. Despite that, I do believe the following lessons can help teachers build the groundwork to move toward that revolutionary call.

First, the starting point to building a pluralistic language environment is to never punish students for speaking a language other than English. I held firm to this principle, but students would often tell me how they got in trouble for speaking Spanish in other classes. I have learned this is not something that only happened at my particular school. When Jason Irizarry (2017) conducted research with Latinx students, the students noted, "When we speak Spanish we get punished for it, sent to the principal's office, but when White kids do it, there isn't a problem" (p. 88). This shows a double standard for language use and a language hierarchy that intersects with the race of the students. White students learning a second "foreign" or "world" language in school were praised, but students using their home languages were punished.

It is through these dynamics that students are socialized into a language hierarchy. Punishment clearly communicates what language is valued more than another and whose culture is valued more than another. But within CSP, students should never be restricted from accessing all of their linguistic tools when navigating content within schools. All language is important to learning and understanding, and when we open space for our students' languages in our classrooms, we also welcome their cultures and communities.

One of my favorite memories from teaching is an example of opening space for students to use multiple languages as they learn subject-area content. One year a natural partnership blossomed in my chemistry class between a female student, who had stronger speaking and listening skills in English, and a male student who had stronger mathematics and pattern recognition skills. Both students spoke Spanish. The female student would explain directions and initial concepts to the male student in Spanish. He would then catch on to the chemistry patterns and be able to explain it back to her and help her through some of the more complex problems. Together, they were accessing their complete linguistic and academic repertoire to help each other navigate and learn chemistry together.

This is a good example of an asset-based model. Their Spanish helped them to build their content knowledge, and also increased their English language skills. But as I reflect, I realize it falls short of actually sustaining students' Spanish language. I taught only in English. The students' final responses had to be communicated back to me in English. Rosa and Flores (2017) taught us that "culturally sustaining pedagogies can help us to reimagine the linguistic practices of Latinx students not simply as starting point from which to learn appropriate academic language, but as legitimate practices in their own right" (p. 178). So how can culturally sustaining pedagogies help me to reimagine this situation? How could students communicate their understanding to me in Spanish, or in a combination of the Spanish and English that were always already present in my classroom?

The final story I share will help to illustrate why it is important for teachers and schools to embrace the concept of CSP. Asset-based approaches do not require schools or teachers to upend raciolinguistic ideologies, and therefore they often reproduce this dangerous ideology. When we require English as the end product of our students' learning, we are reinforcing the language hierarchies that see their home languages as "less-than."

Looking back on my teaching experience, I can see where that ideology was at work for my students. Let us take the example of a student I had over two school years, who was classified as ELL. The first year she was in my first-year chemistry class, and the following year she was in my Advanced Placement (AP) chemistry class. In Texas, each year ELL students are assessed through the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System. As part of the assessment, teachers collect writing samples across the curriculum. When this student was in AP chemistry, I took in one of her lab report conclusions as her writing sample. As the reviewer was checking it over, she looked at me skeptically, and asked me, "Are you sure she wrote this?" I calmly replied, "Yes," although I was anything but calm in my head.

This student had done everything that was asked of her in this assimilationist school system. She had command of academic English and second-year chemistry content. But because she was classified as ELL, her language and academic ability were questioned. I am thankful to this day that she was not present to hear this comment, but I can only imagine how many other times her abilities were doubted because of her ELL status.

Until reading Rosa and Flores' (2017) work on raciolinguistic ideologies, I was not able to fully understand what had occurred that day. They explain, "simply adding 'appropriate' forms of language to the linguistic repertoires of language-minoritized student will not lead to social transformation … even when Latinx long-term English learners … adopt idealized linguistic practices, they are still heard as deficient language users" (p. 186). This is exactly what had happened to my student. Even though the school's stated goal was to have ELL students use "academic" English proficiently, when students did so, they were not trusted. Ultimately, they were still seen as inferior students. This incident had nothing to do with my student, and everything to do the racialization of ELL students. It happened because raciolinguistic ideologies positioned that reviewer to see, hear, and interpret ELL students as deficient. Thus, instead of only adding English to a student's linguistic repertoire, we must follow Rosa and Flores' (2017) call to seek "to denaturalize standardized linguistic categories" (p. 187). As educators, we need to break down the rigid barriers of social/academic or school/home language, and create a language-rich environment that allows students to access, use, build, and sustain all the languages and dialects they bring to our classrooms, as they discover concepts and content throughout their schooling experience.

Conclusion

In today's educational climate, it would be easy to see CSP and engagement with Indigenous ways of knowing as just another thing to do, one added to the all-too-long list that teachers already juggle every day. We hope that by sharing our own stories of how these practices have helped us teach in a community-oriented way, we have shown you their value and what they can add to your classroom pedagogy.

In this article, we presented a few guiding principles aligned with CSP from our own classroom experience: (a) to engage with the heritage and community practices of the students we teach, (b) to find the wiggle room in our standards that allow us to open the door to place-based learning, and (c) to create a language-rich environment that sustains and builds on the dialects and languages our students bring. We hope you see these not as one more thing to add to your plate, but as ways to actually transform your classroom practices to be more culturally sustaining, place-based, and localized.

In our reflective story weaving for this article, we did not just gather the threads of the times we succeeded; the times our teaching worked, our classroom community was engaged, and the sun was shining. We also wove in our regrets, the moments of "if I had only" in our teaching. One of the things we all have realized is that these darker threads are an essential part of our stories, and they support and define the lighter ones. When we reflect on our successes, we also look at our not-so-great moments of teaching and think of what we could have done, what we will try to do differently in the future.

Part of doing this work is realizing that there will be times when it will not work, when the lesson flops and the students disengage. Creating CSP is not work that is completed with a perfect lesson plan, but rather is a daily way of moving through the world as teachers, and it is one that includes many missteps, and times when you feel you are making it up as you go. But we are educators, and we know that the mistakes we make while learning can often lead to greater things. And so that is what we offer to you: a braid of teacher stories of using Culturally Sustaining and Indigenous Pedagogies in the classroom. These stories are personal and full of growth, showing both light and dark, successes and failures. We hope you found a thread here that you can take up, a guiding principle that can be woven into your own classroom community.

Note

1. The Empty Bowls Project is almost folklore at this point, it is so widely replicated across the U.S. For an example, see Blackburn & Hartom (2007).

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