



What If and Why?: Literacy Invitations for Multilingual Classrooms

Katie Van Sluys

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Wouldn't it be great if you could create learning opportunities flexible enough to attend to each child's needs equally while making the most of the diverse resources, skills, and backgrounds each child brings to school?

Now you can.

In *What If and Why?* Katie Van Sluys offers a framework for building critical reading, and writing skills in multilingual classrooms. Through rigorous group projects called invitations, elementary students, including English language learners, are invited to investigate topics of their choice, developing language skills through inquiry processes like researching, reporting, and presenting, as well as through language-based artistic and technological media. As children mine the seemingly simple question at the heart of their invitations, they engage with the increasing complexity of the subject, deepen their critical-literacy abilities, and cultivate a community where respect and risk taking are valued.

Van Sluys offers fifteen field-tested, cross-curricular invitations that you can add to your lesson plans right away or, better yet, use as a template for creating your own invitations. In addition, she goes inside the process, describing real classrooms that show not only the wonderful things students are capable of doing during invitations, but also what you can do to help them make the most of the experience.

Whether you're new to multilingual settings or whether you're a veteran looking for a fresh, new way to nurture students' growth, take an invitation from Katie Van Sluys. Read *What If and Why?* and discover for yourself a powerful approach to expanding the literacy practices of all students.

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David Clark:

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