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# Tenant Partners for Community Education: A Family Literacy Project

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# TENANT PARTNERS FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION: A FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT

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# ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to discuss, describe, and evaluate a family literacy program I developed as a pilot project for Southeast Asian immigrant families with elementary school-aged children living in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco.

I will give an overview of this project and review recent research on the different approaches to family literacy. Using a working definition of family literacy based upon current research and implementation in the field, the Indochinese Housing Family Literacy Project—a description of its structure and expected outcomes, lesson plans, and useful findings from current working programs—will be explored and described. Finally, suggestions for future sessions will be made based upon observation and feedback from participants.

ERIC DESCRIPTORS: Asian Americans, Culture, English (Second Language), Family Programs, Immigrants, Intercultural Programs, Intergenerational Programs, Literacy

CONTENTS

*How much hangs on the love of reading, the instinctive inclination to hold a book! Instinctive. That's what it must be. The reaching out for a book needs to become an organic action, which can happen at this yet formative age. Pleasant words won't do. Respectable words won't do. They must be words organically tied up, organically born from the dynamic life itself. They must be words that are already part of a child's being.*

*Sylvia Ashton-Warner*

## INTRODUCTION

While there are numerous family literacy models, programs, manuals, and analyses in existence to support language development skills for both native English speakers and second language learners, the flow of information and teaching tends to be linear—teacher to student. For example: if a program is designed to teach parents about American schooling and provide reading or writing methods and materials for use at home, little attention is given to the literacy practices already in place. For parents who lack confidence in their ability to help their children with school, this "transmission" model of education (Auerbach, 1989) tends to alienate them further. My work with families as an English teacher for adults, and as the director of an after-school program at the Indochinese Housing Development Corporation (IHDC) in San Francisco, showed me:

(1) Parents want their children to succeed in school and are willing to be active participants in their children's education if given opportunities where they feel comfortable;

(2) Parents with limited English skills often feel unable to help their children with school work due to their "poor" English ability;

(3) Parents with limited schooling in their native countries lack confidence regarding their abilities to teach their children "school" subjects;

(4) Parents rely on their children for translation and for negotiating many interactions with both the local community and the wider world. Children, therefore, assume adult roles at very young ages. Yet, as they grow and become more Americanized, these children often begin to show less respect to their parents, spend more time with their peers, and thus the family unit begins to erode.

My interest in family literacy developed out of these concerns. In addition, my experience as a teacher and student has shown me that language learning is often about relationship. By developing supportive relationships, whether teacher—student, student—student, parent—child, teacher—parent, learning can take place in environments that allow for mistakes and risk-taking. The concern for tangible educational results, in conjunction with the need for supportive relationships for all participants in the learning process led to the following question: How can we bring families together to participate in literacy tasks which build upon the cultures and knowledge of the parents, and at the same time enable the children to share their accomplishments with their parents in ways that encourage mutual respect? This question guided the planning and implementation process of the Indochinese Housing Family Literacy Project.

# CONTEXT

## *The Agency*

The Indochinese Housing Development Corporation (IHDC) is a nonprofit housing agency located in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco. Started in 1981 in response to the large influx of Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees, Indochinese Housing is home to 260 adults and 124 children (under 18 years of age). The tenant families are 32% Vietnamese and Vietnamese-Chinese, 18% Cambodian, 45% Chinese, and 5% Latino, Fijian, Indonesian, Russian, and African-American. Residents do not view the agency as transitional housing—many tenants have been there for more than ten years. The units are studio and one-bedroom apartments; families have left when they qualify for public housing which provides larger apartments.

According to Bruno Hicks[1], one of the original founders of IHDC and the current board chair, a major goal of the agency since its inception has been tenant empowerment. The original plan was to provide low-rent, nonprofit housing that the tenants would eventually own and run. This goal has not been realized. The failure of a multiple-year grant for training tenants as community organizers—all but one of the five participants in the training program dropped out—raised serious questions for the board about the original agency mission of tenant empowerment. The refugee families have been, evidently, more concerned about survival. For example, there has been a reluctance to organize due, in part, to the devastation inflicted by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the "re-education" camps in Vietnam. For the Khmer refugees, the trauma inflicted by the Khmer Rouge may stir up painful memories of abuse: "When they see students sitting together, some refugees are reminded of the Khmer Rouge indoctrination sessions; this upsets them so much they must

leave the room" (Welaratna 1993, 142). At Indochinese Housing, a group of former South Vietnamese soldiers meet weekly for social and political camaraderie. Although hesitant to speak about their lives in prison camps after the war, they would speak of their need to leave the country after their release due to fear of discrimination or violence against their families. Their allegiance is to the Vietnamese community, and more specifically to other former soldiers and their families. For any tenant, however, important to the cause of organizing is the need for a unifying cause to "fight" for. Rent increases, inadequate pest extermination, and building security concerns are issues that have brought tenants together.

One aspect of Indochinese Housing that is quite unique and does support the concept of "tenants as managers" is the fact that 80% of the staff are residents of the buildings. In addition, the IHDC board, staff, and resident organizers have worked hard to provide services that were specifically requested by tenants. As a result, a number of programs and services have been developed through the years, including English language and citizenship classes, translation services, an after-school enrichment program, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Khmer language classes, holiday parties, and assistance in contacting social service agencies and other service providers as needed. As a relatively small organization, the agency has been able to respond to requests for services from tenants on a timely basis and at the same time discontinue services that are no longer in demand.

The overwhelming success of the after-school program and the high rate of tenant participation in the initial family literacy sessions have been seen by the Indochinese Housing board as the most vital example of active tenant participation to date. With both these programs, tenants articulated their needs to program staff and have been active in determining the direction and focus of activities.

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[1] Bruno Hicks, interview by author, San Francisco, California, 9 August 1999.

*The Neighborhood*

Indochinese Housing is located in San Francisco's Tenderloin district. Home to over 25,000 residents, it is one of San Francisco's most diverse, and poorest, neighborhoods. Historically it has been characterized as a blighted, marginalized, and transient neighborhood. Social problems plague the area and it has the highest crime rate in the city. Deemed the city's worst neighborhood, it has been described as a "cesspool of transients, hookers, junkies and thieves."[2] With its supply of relatively inexpensive rental housing, it has become the most active resettlement area for most refugees arriving in San Francisco (Waters 1998). For most city residents, the Tenderloin is known as a focal point for gay and straight prostitution. There are numerous transitional living facilities for recent parolees and patients discharged from mental health institutions. Also, the neighborhood has a number of drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, both residential and walk-in. Support groups for transvestites and transsexuals are located here as well. Once a neighborhood of predominantly retired, white, merchant seamen (NOMPC 1992), current demographics include Latino, Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, African American, Caucasian (including newly arrived Russians and Bosnians), Cambodian, Arabic, Laotian, East Indian, and Pakistani families. Second only to Chinatown in population density, the Tenderloin is home to over 1,000 elementary school aged children (SFUSD 1999).

The following passage effectively describes the contrasts and contradictions that exist in this 50-block, downtown neighborhood:

> Bordered by the theater district and Union Square on the east, and City Hall, the Opera House, Symphony Hall, and the glitzy new public library on the west. The Tenderloin has almost everything. High-

[2]Don Stannard-Friel, an overview of the Tenderloin was provided at an introductory meeting for Tenderloin U. (a collaborative service-learning project involving the College of Notre Dame and a number of social service agencies in the Tenderloin), San Francisco, California, 9 April 1998.

> priced condos on O'Farrell Street. Luxury hotels such as the St. Francis and the Clift…Street hookers by the dozens who work the busiest thoroughfares. Whorehouses posing as massage parlors and strip joints. Drug dealers selling illegal substances and liquor stores vending legal ones. A Vietnamese nightclub busted with a stock of high-powered weapons in the basement, a few doors from a well-managed hotel that caters to European budget travelers. Residential hotels with rooms the size of a large closet, and studio and one-bedroom apartments where the Southeast-Asian families of four, five, six or more members crowd onto the mattresses that get stacked in the corner each morning. (Waters 1998, 303-304).

Obviously, in this environment, the challenges for families living in the Tenderloin are great. Primary concerns for parents are money, safety, and their children's education. For many, the living conditions here are preferable to what they left in their home countries. At the same time, the filth, drugs and daily violence on the streets are extremely frightening and lead to isolation, as well as suspicion of those who are different. Many families operate solely within their ethnic ghetto and seldom leave the immediate one-or-two block radius. As the only family members who venture beyond what is known, it is the children who have learned to negotiate between multiple cultures. In developing the Family Literacy Project, we at Indochinese Housing hoped to reinforce this ability to cross cultural boundaries while helping parents gain confidence in their ability to do the same.

# PROJECT FRAMEWORK

## *Why Family Literacy at Indochinese Housing?*

The original idea for a family literacy project at Indochinese Housing came from one of the agency's board members, Alice Lucas. A retired middle school teacher, Alice had taught many Cambodian students and used their stories and experiences as authentic texts for teaching social studies. She has subsequently traveled to Cambodia and has been a strong advocate for and friend to the Cambodian community in San Francisco. As a mentor for the New College of San Francisco's teacher training program, she suggested I take a look at their successful family literacy program. I attended several sessions and the transformational effects that the New College program had on families were tangible and observable: parents were becoming advocates for their children's education, fathers were attending, and the home cultures of the families were celebrated. The positive energy, the laughter, and the spirit of curiosity in the air were palpable and quite moving to watch. As implemented in the New College program, family literacy is the "collaboration between the family, community, and school in support of student's emerging literacy skills" (McCaleb 1994, 25). Whole-language collaborative activities drawn from family experience and knowledge, and the reciprocal transfer of skills, were themes repeated time and again as I began to read more about family literacy (Ada 1988, Auerbach 1989, 1992, Mandel Morrow 1997, Shanahan et al 1995, Taylor 1997). We decided to talk with families at Indochinese Housing and, if there was interest, try to implement a smaller-scale project at our agency. Further impetus for such a project came as parents of children attending the Indochinese Housing after-school program began making suggestions for improving the program and offered to help by providing snacks, communicating with other parents, and attending with their children.

*The After-School Program*

Serving approximately 20 elementary school children daily, the after-school program has the benefit of being located within the housing facility. The children literally have to "go upstairs" to go home. The program provides assistance with homework assignments, tutoring in basic skills, and recreational activities. Since the after-school program is conveniently located, developing and fostering relationships with families was not difficult and happened organically as parents became interested in what was happening after school. By the time we received funding for the project, I had been with the agency for over a year and had developed supportive relationships with a number of families. Importantly, parents began to visit the program and expressed their happiness and gratitude that this quality program was located in their housing facility.

*My Role*

As the Project Coordinator, I came to Indochinese Housing after interning as an EFL teacher in Mexico, and teaching for a year in Korea. I returned to the States with the desire to work with immigrant communities. I believed that my work would have more impact here and that I could help people access opportunities in this country. In retrospect, my perspective was quite naïve. Within the Indochinese Housing community, I was an "outsider" and I always felt limited by this. I began to see that the most effective change agents were those individuals from the community who "made it" and came back to help others like themselves. These individuals had an authority that I would never have. At the same time, I was the first contact with a white person for some of the very young children and the elderly. What we learned together is that we humans share more in common than we might always believe; in spite of cultural differences, values of decency and integrity transcend culture and

can bring us together. My role became that of a facilitator and trainer. As an educator, I could bring resources to the agency and teach my staff how to do the same. For the Family Literacy Project, I wanted to provide a simple framework that staff and tenants could use to explore issues that mattered to them.

*Program Staff*

The after-school program staff all agreed to help with the family literacy sessions. All the staff, with the exception of myself, are tenants of the agency. There are three adult program assistants—one man and two women—all bi- or trilingual. They are all ethnically Vietnamese or Chinese-Vietnamese. Their experiences coming to the U.S. range from escaping Vietnam by boat, to entry via a ten-year stay in a refugee camp in Hong Kong. In addition to the program assistants, three high school-aged tutors are on staff. The tutors are Cambodian and Chinese and have become positive role models for the younger children. Even before the Family Literacy Project began, one of our strengths was a real sense of community among the families and after-school program staff.

During the family literacy sessions, program staff translated, clarified instructions, and answered questions. Since there were six different primary languages spoken (English, Cantonese and Jil Jao dialects, Khmer, and Vietnamese), the majority of staff activity was translation work during the first two sessions.

*Indochinese Housing Families Participating in the Family Literacy Project*

The family literacy project was launched with nine families. For the first two monthly events, there were two Cambodian, two Vietnamese, and five Chinese families participating. All the families had been involved with the after-school program. The ages of the children ranged from one to eleven, with most families having at least two children. Two families had

both parents participate, but the majority had just mothers coming to the events. Interestingly, there were two families with parents who worked during the sessions so that only the children came to participate; in both families the oldest sibling was responsible for the care and supervision of the rest. Another parent, a father, wanted his son to attend and was curious about the event, but left soon after we started. He did come back for the after-session lunch.

The parents work as custodians, restaurant staff, hairdressers and manicurists, hotel baggage handlers, and in other low-paying jobs. Often the mothers stay home to raise the children, although some families have both parents working. One father had been a Math teacher in China but is not working here. Some families have both parents at home and are supported by public assistance. All of the families participating in the Family Literacy Project have two parents and often have grandparents living in the same apartment or down the hall.

Approximately 90% of the children were born in the United States. These are the children of refugees rather than the child refugees of the 1970s and 80s. Instead of by direct experience, they learn about their home countries through their parents and grandparents. They do speak of themselves as Chinese or Cambodian rather than American and their self-worth is strongly linked to pride in their cultural identities.

All the children, with the exception of one family, are bilingual speakers. Most can not read or write in their native languages, but all oral communication at home is in the native language. The Chinese families pursue native-language literacy instruction for their children either in bilingual classrooms at school or through classes provided by an elderly tenant. In addition, program assistants provide instruction in Chinese and Vietnamese during

the after-school program hours. Several years ago there had been Khmer instruction, but the classes are no longer running.

All the children in the after-school program were given the WRAT (Wide Range Achievement Test) to be used as a baseline measure of their academic skill development during the year. Grant funders, increasingly, ask for quantifiable data for assessing program success. In a case such as academic progress, this can be difficult given that academic skill development occurs in many environments. Our programming leans toward more qualitative assessment and my personal bias has been to assess changes in student attitudes toward themselves, i.e., does our programming support the development of self-confidence? Nonetheless, the WRAT test was chosen because it is easy to administer and the results show general grade-level standing for Math and Spelling/Reading. The test does not assess reading comprehension. The baseline results showed that the majority of students were at or above grade level in Math skills, but approximately 60% were below grade level in Spelling and Reading. In terms of schooling, parents were most concerned about the development of these English language arts skills. This is the area where they felt least capable of assisting their children due to their own limited English proficiency.

*Program Structure*

The Family Literacy Project was designed to meet one Saturday each month during the academic year (for a total of nine sessions per year). Each session runs from 10AM to 12PM, with lunch following the storybook reading and related activities. Although the activities are quite structured, the plan was for families to have choices and freedom within the structure. Also, as the year progresses, the hope is for the families themselves to direct the flow and content of the sessions.

Due to the large number of languages spoken, the primary texts and general instructions are in English. Since the program staff includes bilingual speakers of all these languages, translation is readily available. Literacy development in both the home language and English is encouraged. According to Jim Cummins, a child who reaches a "threshold level" of proficiency in the first language will be able to transfer academic skills in the first language to the second language (Cummins 1981). Research has also shown that bilingualism is an asset to children; bilingual children often have more cognitive flexibility and creativity than their classmates (Grosjean 1982).

To begin the project, I decided to use children's picture books based on daily life experiences in the various home cultures of the participants or those that tell of the cultural challenges and adjustments issues faced in a new country. Because of the illustrations, comprehension of the story is not driven by the textual narrative alone. Since there are several cultures represented in the group, families would have the opportunity to learn about the home cultures of others. Also, my plan was to use stories as the starting point for further discussions; these could include examining prejudices toward and stereotypes of other cultural groups. Finally, I chose children's storybooks because the themes are often applicable beyond the books' contexts.

Although we read the story together in English, families were encouraged to discuss the story and in the language that they felt most comfortable using. The one family with children who were limited English speakers relied on translation from program assistants and other families. The mother told me, through a translator, that it was helpful for them to hear English spoken even if they did not understand everything. She was hopeful that they would learn quickly.

Each session begins with a short whole-group warm up activity. The content of the activity is related in some way to themes in the story to be read that week. Every family receives a copy of the book. After the warm up, the entire group does some prereading activities (such as predicting the possible narrative using the illustrations). After that, we read the story aloud, stopping frequently to check for comprehension. Initially, I had planned to read the story to them, but as the story progressed the children were eager to read. Again, it is important to note that the group was familiar and comfortable together before starting the project. Even children who were not fluent readers wanted a chance to show off for the parents.

When the story is completed, each family is given a set of questions, in English, to prompt discussion within the family. I decided that, initially, I would provide questions, hoping that as the families became familiar with the format, they could be given the book in advance and then prepare their own questions for the group. As much as the program focuses on relationship and attitudes, the expansion of literacy skills is also important. This includes encouraging families to identify literacy uses in their own homes as well as modeling effective reading strategies that children will encounter in school. I chose the creative reading methodology (Ada 1998) as the format for developing questions, since the progression of questions incorporates strategies used by successful readers. Discussion is divided into four phases: (1) the descriptive phase—reading for detail and comprehension; (2) the interpretive/personal phase—connecting the story to self; (3) the critical phase—inferring motivations, analyzing behaviors, and making hypotheses about attitudes; (4) the creative phase—extending and developing problem-solving skills that go beyond the story. I added a fifth phase, the cultural phase, where cultural practices surrounding the story theme are

examined. During the discussion, staff members may join a family, several families may talk together, or a family may work alone. Most discussion occurs in the first language. For future sessions, it would be helpful to have all the materials translated; the problem is that translation is time consuming and tenants volunteer their time to prepare materials. Translation costs need to be budgeted in future funding proposals.

Following discussion, families participate in a collaborative project related to the story. The project may include writing, art, music, and storytelling as the means to incorporate other "literacies." Those who struggle with visual and textual forms of expression may excel in other ways of conveying meaning. It is important for the family to see the diversity of strengths and talents among them. There is one family in the program with an eldest son who excels in school and is an above average reader and writer. His sister, on the other hand, is extremely talented in art but does not do as well in "school" subjects. Her father tells her she's stupid and she believes it. By providing opportunities for the family to work together, each bringing different skills talents, perhaps the gifts of all the family members will be valued and celebrated.

After the families have completed the family activity, the whole group comes together and each family presents their collage (or story or song or object) to the rest. This is another opportunity chance for the children to "show off" for their parents. Finally, we ask members of the group to tell us something they learned from the session and suggest topics or themes for future sessions. We end the session with lunch, provided by the agency, and prepared by program staff (and several children who are excellent cooks).

*Desird Outcomes*

| Aim | Procedure | Evaluation |
|---|---|---|
| FOR PARENTS: | | |
| To help parents know they are their child's first and most important teachers. | Provide structure for family activities that allow for negotiation, collaboration, and problem solving. Encourage parents to examine and reflect upon how learning and teaching are effected in the home. | • Feedback & observation. |
| To improve literacy skills, and the attitudes, values, and behaviors that are linked to literacy. | Share books and useful "tools" (i.e., co-authoring books, photo stories, and interviews) that expand literacy development. | • Feedback & observation. |
| To making literacy culturally relevant to family life. | Use children's stories (about life in the native cultures of the families), folktales, and family-authored texts to provide a cultural context for sharing within and between families. | • Feedback & observation. |
| FOR CHILDREN: | | |
| To encourage between the child and the parent a mutually respectful relationship, in which each values the other's knowledge and expertise. | Provide structure for family activities that allow for negotiation, collaboration, and problem solving. Encourage parents to examine and reflect upon how learning and teaching are effected in the home. | • Feedback & observation. |
| To provide an opportunity for the parent and child to demonstrate, take pride in, and feel confident about literacy skills. | Share books and useful "tools" (i.e., co-authoring books, photo stories, and interviews) that expand literacy development. | • Feedback & observation. |
| To promote cultural transmission between the generations through reading, writing, story telling, and oral history. | Use children's stories (about life in the native cultures of the families), folktales, and family-authored texts to provide a cultural context for sharing within and between families. | • Feedback & observation. |

*Project Evaluation*

This aspect of planning has been the most difficult. This project is very small and informal with qualitative objectives. Initially, family participation is a measure of success. Are families coming to the sessions? Do they return for the next? Is the interest level high? For the first year, this may be the extent of evaluation. A family literacy project implemented several years ago at the Career Development Resource Center in the Tenderloin focused on parenting issue; the project was discontinued due to lack of interest from participants[4]. So, as basic as it may seem, regular, consistent participation is a bona fide criterion for evaluation.

Based on observations made during this first year, evaluation questions will most likely become more specific and extend beyond the issue of attendance. For example: Are parents getting library cards and checking out books for the family? Is there more anecdotal evidence that parents are going to their children's schools and asking for what they need? Do the parents want to return to school themselves? Are they seeking the classical literature of their home cultures, in their home languages, to share with their children?

Since tenant empowerment has been the prime goal of Indochinese Housing, the degree to which the tenants direct the project must be factored into any evaluation. Given the narrow scope and the small size of the Family Literacy Project, there is room for great flexibility and innovation. At this point, I don't think any of us knows what will happen until it actually happens. This project is an experiment necessitating fine-tuning of what is wanted and what is needed. I think it is important to be mindful of the significance of not imposing a structure on the project, but letting the structure grow out of tenant wants and needs.

[4] Julie Gamble, Career Development Resource Center, interview by author, San Francisco, California, Spring 1999.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to underline my goals for the Indochinese Housing Family Literacy Project, I will now examine some of the current literature and research that helped shaped my objectives. Since the family literacy concept is, in a sense, without a "curriculum," the objectives of my program—and programs like it—are marked by a fluidity; each objective is not rigidly distinct from the others and may, in fact, overlap. This "flow," I have found, allows for the flexibility necessary to respond to the unique needs of each population we serve.

*OUTCOMES: To help parents know they are their child's first and most important teachers, and to encourage between the child and parent a mutually respectful relationship, in which each values the other's knowledge and expertise.*

In the "Pajaro Valley Experience," Alma Flor Ada talks about the impetus behind a reading project developed for Spanish-speaking parents:

> The programme grew out of an awareness of the importance of parents' involvement in their children's education, the desire to encourage parents' consciousness of the importance of their role and their opportunities and responsibilities with regard to their children's future, and the decision to help parents recover their sense of dignity and self-identity. (Ada 1988, 224)

It was clear from discussion with parents at Indochinese Housing that they wanted to gain confidence in their ability to help their children academically and intrinsically understood that their interest did make a difference. In terms of their children's schooling, it is in "everyone's best interest that parents understand schools and have the best tools possible to support their children's success" (Weinstein-Shr 1995, 126). At the same time, teachers and administrators must understand the "concerns and expectations of adults whose children are in their hands" (126). There is a two-way flow of information and understanding that allows all educators in a child's life to be mutually supportive of the child. This mutual support

comes from providing parents with "a setting where they can gather information about their new environment and evaluate for themselves both traditional and new strategies for dealing with discipline, with school, or with other complex issues involved in raising children in a complicated world. This is possible when the adults work with educators who believe they have as much to learn as they do to teach" (123). Parents are more likely to be honest when speaking with teachers when they know that teachers are sincerely interested in what they have to say (James 1997, Hensley 1995, McCaleb 1994).

An often tragic consequence of the child's transition to the world of the dominant culture is the fracturing of familial ties, and the frustration of both parent and child as each tries to make sense of new roles. Understanding, and if necessary changing, the power dynamics that surround literacy practices in the family can be positive outcomes of family literacy practices (Auerbach 1992). Gail Weinstein-Shr quotes a Chinese elder as he refers to life in an English-speaking neighborhood: "I have ears, but I am deaf! I have a tongue, but I am mute!" (Weinstein-Shr 1995, 118). Power and authority in the family shift as the children take on the responsibility for solving language and literacy-related problems. "Many Asian parents report their fear of looking stupid to their children" (119). Children, too, feel uncomfortable and either begin to take advantage of their power, or as in one example, a young man suffers embarrassment when he sensed the diminution of his mother when he is treated as an authority in front of her (119). Weinstein-Shr emphasizes the need for educators to be aware of how they may unconsciously support the power shifts (119).

When the parent's experience and knowledge is valued by the dominant culture, the parent gains self-confidence and the child sees and takes pride in the parent's new autonomy and contributions. For example, in the Pajaro Valley project, a father wrote a question on a

blackboard in the garage for his children to answer when they came home from school. Later in the evening they discussed the question and answers together (Ada 1988). At the end of a New College Family Literacy session I attended, one parent spoke about how proud she was when she heard her son speaking to the large group. Seeing her son take risks she began to take more risks herself. As she became more self-confident she began volunteering at her son's school and is currently a paid classroom aide there. In another example, a classroom teacher made visits to students' homes. She discovered a wealth of skill and talent that she otherwise might never have known about. One father in particular became very involved with the class, writing songs and eventually composing the music for a school play. His daughter was proud of her father, and as an extension, proud of herself (Hensley 1995).

*OUTCOMES: To improve literacy skills, and the attitudes, values, and behaviors that are linked to literacy, and to provide an opportunity for the parent and child to demonstrate, take pride in, and feel confident about these skills.*

When the daily activities of "non-literate" families are recognized to incorporate a range of literate practices, these families will begin to view themselves as literate (Elish-Piper 1996, Goodman 1995).

> Literacy at home is tied with daily activities. Often it combines many sorts of reading and writing and draws as well on spoken language, numeracy, and much more. They write and receive personal letters and cards; some keep diaries, some write poems; they deal with official letters, bills, and forms; they have notice boards, calendars, scrapbooks, recipe books, address books; they read local newspapers, catalogues, and advertisements; people keep records of their lives, and read and write to make sense of this complex world...people are even told by written instruction, how, when, and where to put out the rubbish. It is this range of practices that children are exposed to and participate in (Barton 1995, 104).

In an article describing the array of literacies used in daily life, Yetta Goodman states simply: "There is no single road to becoming literate" (Goodman 1995, 56). In fact, studies indicate

that "successful readers' homes provide a variety of contexts for using literacy, and that literacy is integrated socially into many segments of family life, and is not isolated as a separate autonomous add-on activity" (Auerbach 1989, 399).

Many of the literacy practices in the home differ from school-type uses of literacy. At the same time, traditional uses of literacy can be introduced as additional—not better—tools to incorporate into existing practices. The Partnership for Family Reading workshops implemented in Newark, New Jersey used children's books to engage adults in the reading process (Handel 1992). Children's books "offer varied views of family life, sensitive explorations into the relationships of family members, and occasions to observe how normal daily activities become the focus for memorable stories" (Buchoff 1995, 230-231). Adults learn reading strategies (predicting, learning new information, connecting to personal experience) that they can then take home and use with their children. In this way parents "serve as reading resources by bringing more books into the home, fostering higher level reading strategies and recognizing their role as home educators" (Handel 1992, 123).

In a research project designed to connect home and school literacy practices, researchers wanted to motivate children to read for pleasure (Mandel Morrow 1997). They found that when children and adults approach reading as a social activity, the child's motivation did increase (737). In interviews conducted at the end of the study, children commented on the relationship aspect of reading together: "When I need help there is someone there for me. I don't feel lonely. It's nice to work with parents. Sometimes you don't think they love you, but when they work with you, then you know they do" (740).

*OUTCOMES: To make literacy culturally relevant to family life, and to promote cultural transmission between the generations through reading, writing, storytelling, and oral history.*

"Literacy is closely linked to the values and history of each person's culture" (Short 603). Paramount to this idea is recognition on the part of the parents that their cultural history is valuable. Parents with limited formal schooling may themselves have been "products of a racist educational system that has excluded and discouraged them, while destroying their own self-esteem" (McCaleb 1994, 50). One parent participating in the Pajaro Valley described the lack of validation experienced by minority families: "What is happening to us is that no one ever told us that our children are worth something, and no one has ever told us that we are worth something" (Ada 1988, 227).

How do educators validate the experience and culture of the families they support? In one classroom, children were encouraged to maintain "home-school" journals in which the teacher "authorizes" what the student sees, hears, and knows at home as a valuable form of literacy. This literacy includes words, concepts, and stories from the home culture (Doorn 1992). In the Mother's Reading Program, implemented on the Lower East Side of Manhattan for Latina, Chinese, and African American women, the participants created stories, both oral and written. The storytelling was based on the premise that "a story is an agent of life that teaches, questions, directs, resolves, and transforms" (Arrastía 1995, 103). In an Even Start Program in West Contra Costa, California, low-income Latino and Laotian families began a gardening project that developed out of classroom discussion[3].

Curriculum content based on student issues using classroom "tools" such as language experience stories, dialogue journals, picture and photo stories, and written and oral histories,

[3] Annie Agard, Project Director, Catholic Charities/WCCCUSD Family Literacy Program, interview by author, 16 August 1999.

allows for the flexibility to address current issues and emerging concerns. The premise is that "students' experience can best be explored through the use of concrete representations of that experience that provide a focus for language work, social analysis, and change" (Auerbach 1992, 61). Sudia Paloma McCaleb describes possible positive outcomes for families co-authoring books: communication increases; personal histories are validated; self-confidence increases; important life themes and values are shared; and respect and admiration grow (McCaleb 1994, 52-53).

For this project, I read articles and books describing a variety of family literacy programs, and spoke with the directors and participants of three such efforts. Having familiarized myself with the concept of family literacy—via study and observation—I saw a paradox emerge. While it was beneficial to be aware of current research and programs, I couldn't be dogmatic in my frame of reference. I determined that I needed to be open to what happened during the Indochinese Housing sessions, and be willing to adjust my methods. Indeed, what I discovered in the first two sessions was that when I tried to control, interest waned; when I let go, the families took control themselves.

## THE FIRST TWO SESSIONS—REFLECTIONS & SUGGESTIONS

I will now attempt to detail the successes—and challenges—of the first two Indochinese Housing Family Literacy Project sessions. I will also provide suggestions for future sessions.

The first two sessions were held on Saturday, September 18th, and Saturday, October 16, 1999 respectively. When providing anecdotal reports and observations, I will not identify which session unless it is necessary for clarification. In sum, these first two sessions will provide the "database" for the future of the project. Fortunately, the small scope of the project will allow it to be fine-tuned with care and efficiency.

I think it would be helpful, at this point, to describe the physical layout of the Indochinese Housing facility, as it was utilized for the literacy project. The Indochinese Housing community room has two long rectangular tables and two smaller tables. In addition, there is a small kitchen available for food storage and preparation. Adjacent to the community room is an enclosed outdoor play space with a play structure and basketball hoop. In the main office down the hall, there is another large conference table that could be used if needed. There were 35 people in total, including program staff; more people would have been difficult to fit. Families were grouped together and sat with other families they knew. Several mothers brought preschool-aged children and one mom brought her year-old baby. One father, who was playing outside with his two-year-old son, came in and listened. This parent often brings his child to the after-school program to interact with other children and to practice English.

The warm up sessions were noisy and quite funny. We used a stuffed beanbag toy and tossed it randomly around the group; whoever caught it had to tell us something unique or

special about him or herself. The entire activity was in English. The children knew each other well and were eager to be chosen. When the parents received the "toss" they were more hesitant to speak, but one child applauded in support after her parent's turn and the rest continued the pattern. The laughter and the ease of the day are what stand out for me during these sessions.

The storybook reading part of the session was the least successful. The room was noisy. We had children ranging in age from infants to fifth-graders. The text the first day was a Cambodian story called Silent Lotus, about a deaf and mute girl who becomes a famous dancer in the court of the Khmer king and queen. I told the group that it was a Cambodian story and before reading we looked briefly at the illustrations in the book and guessed what the story might be about. Responses ranged from, "Is it a boy or a girl?" to "Where are their clothes?" to getting up and imitating the dance positions. As I said previously, I had planned to read, but the children wanted to read as well, so we let everyone who wanted to have a chance. Most impressive were the first-graders, especially one young boy who was less proficient in English than the others, who still read. His friend, another first-grade boy, helped him when he got stuck. Both mothers were beaming afterwards. When I looked around the room, I saw one mother using her finger to follow the text; she had her first-grade son on one side of her, her second-grade daughter on the other side, and her three-year-old on her lap. In spite of the noise and chaos in the room, they were all focused. From time to time she would reach across the table to assist her friend's family who had recently arrived from China. Attempts on my part to stop the reading and focus on comprehension were not wholly successful. The group wanted to keep reading. I have observed from my work with children, both here and in the elementary classroom, that they often think reading is "just saying the

words" (decoding). After reading the story I gave each family questions to assist with clarifying comprehension, but the questions were too easy for the older children and too difficult for the younger. One boy, a fifth-grader, took the paper and answered the questions by himself in writing. He handed me the paper when he was finished. We asked the Cambodian parents to tell us about dance in their country. They shared information about the costumes and the stories they told through the dancing. Their children, who spoke softly, translated for them. Much of what they said was not heard and after 30 minutes of reading, attention was wandering.

We followed the same reading structure in the next session, this time reading a Vietnamese story titled The Lotus Seed. This story is about a young woman who takes a lotus seed from the emperor's grounds to remind her of her homeland. She carries it with her to America and years later her grandson finds it and plants it. She is devastated when she finds it gone, but when it blooms and later withers, she gives a seed from the pod to each of her grandchildren. For this day, families were asked to bring objects from their home cultures that carried special meaning for them, including photographs and music. During the reading portion, we broke into smaller groups that were facilitated by a staff member. Each group consisted of one to three families that spoke the same first language. The challenges from the previous session were repeated—lots of noise and not much attention given to content. The environment was not conducive to concentrated reading and analysis. When asked what they learned and enjoyed from the day, the response was almost unanimous: it was fun to work together and lunch was good. It became clear to me and to the staff that working on reading comprehension in a large group of multilingual, multiethnic, non-native English speakers with a wide range of ages was going to be difficult, if not impossible. During the reading

portion, the translators were trying to help where they could—and this just added to the cacophony. All the family literacy programs I visited or read about divided the children by age group, with parents working separately, or each family worked independently from the rest. The Indochinese Housing families came to our sessions to work together as families and socialize with others. A lengthy reading activity is not appropriate in this context.

The idea of using children's books seemed like a natural fit for our project. Other family literacy projects had successfully incorporated reading into their programs, so, I thought, why not try it? There are several reasons why I think this approach did not work here. First, I chose the "culturally-relevant" texts. A Vietnamese story is not going to resonate with a Cambodian family and vice versa. The themes can be extended, but the initial interest in reading the book has to be there. One program I reviewed chose not to use children's literature specifically because they wanted to develop a curriculum that had relevance to the participants' everyday lives (Elish-Piper 1995). Additionally, the books are not easy to locate. Many titles were out-of-print and there are not that many children's picture books written in English about daily life in China, Vietnam, and Cambodia. If the families want to include reading in the project, perhaps each family could share a book that they enjoy reading together—regardless of the cultural context. If a book is meaningful to the family then it is indeed culturally relevant.

The extension activities following the reading were much more successful than the reading itself. This is where interaction and exchange occurred, not during the reading. Even the questions I provided didn't provoke discussion. Again, they originated from me, not from the families. As much as I professed to be creating a curriculum out of their concerns and expressed needs, I wasn't using the appropriate tools to elicit discussion and it was, in fact,

my curriculum not theirs. In part, I felt that we needed to implement a basic structure for reading together and responding to the stories, and in future sessions, I concluded, the families would choose the texts and prepare questions themselves. I think that my initial approach was too teacher-driven. The families told the staff that they wanted to work together. Also, talking about their home cultures or their lives in the past did not appear to be pressing needs. They wanted to talk about their lives in the present, which incorporated the home culture and the new culture. Perhaps, too, cultural literacy in the family is a private matter; the families came to the family literacy session to engage in more public activities.

I suggest that future sessions focus on family-centered, not group-centered activities. For example, co-authoring books allows all members of the family to speak with authority about their life experience and history. The book can be written in the home language and/or English. These books can be shared with the larger group and used as the primary texts for developing questions. Additional activities will be described in the Family Activities section of this paper. Rather than look outside the immediate community for cultural content, I propose beginning with the wealth of experience within. As the facilitator of this process, I found it difficult to let go of control. In the course of the sessions, the times that I did were obviously the most authentic and enriching for the participants.

The group activity the first week was to create a family collage in which each family member conveyed something that they would like to do in the future, or expressed a special talent they would like to develop. Each family would then present their collage to the whole group. Families were given large poster-sized sheets of paper, crayons, markers, scissors, glue, and magazines. The room became quiet as everyone began to draw or write something. As they worked, questions began to emerge: "What are you drawing mother?" "What does

this mean?" Most of the discussion was in the native language of the family. One family's poster stands out in my mind. This family is Chinese, the parents are older than the rest (in their forties), with a daughter in second grade. The father drew a picture of a boat, the mother drew a plant, and the daughter a computer. When they presented their collage to the group, the father said that he likes fishing and the mother enjoys growing plants. Their daughter loves computer games and wanted her father to buy her a computer: this was her way of letting him know. The daughter later told me that she didn't know that her father liked to fish. She wondered if there were places to go fishing in San Francisco. I told her there were. She is researching possible trips for her family using the Internet.

At the second session, families shared special objects with the group. Two young Cambodian girls quickly ran home to get two tapestry paintings from Cambodia. The first was a rural scene with water buffalo being used to plow a field. The second painting showed Cambodian dancers and musicians. The girls were so excited to show them to us, and the mother gave them to the program. She said she was happy to share a part of her homeland with the group. One Chinese woman showed us a jade necklace that belonged to her mother, and another family brought down some photographs of their extended family in China.

Having participated in these first sessions, another concern for the future shape of the program arose. How do we reach families that aren't as stable as the families already participating? And, should we? The families that come to the sessions are actively involved with their children; they view academic achievement as the means to economic stability and success. The parents may not have jobs that take them out of the neighborhood, but their children probably will. The children here, schooled in a climate of multiculturalism, are proud of their cultural heritage. When they describe themselves, they say "I am Cambodian"

or "I am Vietnamese." These children are doing well in school and are supported in their identities. So, does this project serve a need? The answer is "yes" when the project is viewed as an agent that enhances supportive relationships. The children want to know their parents care about and want to participate in their schooling. The parents want and have the confidence to do this. One mother, concerned about having to drop her children at the back entrance of the school (an isolated area with homeless people sleeping on the sidewalk), felt confident enough to approach the principal with her worry about safety. Her initial advocacy on behalf of her children has led to increased interaction with teachers, and she now demands more homework for her son who she says is bright but lazy. She still speaks about her "lack of English," but is able to communicate effectively. By example, she has helped other parents approach their children's teachers. Her children are proud that their mother comes to school and visits their classes. Tentative participation leads to more confident advocacy. Yet, we must concede that some families won't or can't come. They may disagree about the benefits of family literacy, or be suspicious of such a program's motives. For other families, issues of economic survival overshadow the potential benefits of any program. Their choice, I think, is to be respected.

In developing this project I have been reminded that a teacher is, first and foremost, a student. I have learned that what I think will work—however well-considered—will not necessarily guarantee success. I have learned to listen better and pay particular attention to what is said without words. I have learned that the parents participating in our project are willing to take risks to help their children succeed. They have inspired me and shown me that strong, supportive, and loving relationships are critical to the development of self-confidence in children and adults alike. Finally, I have learned that there is indeed great potential in

community; through community empowerment people can change their own lives. In his 1998 essay on Robert Kennedy, Michael Beran describes Kennedy's belief that "(a) compassionate community could liberate an individual from his crippling pain, and so give him a degree of control over his destiny; liberated individuals, in turn, could contribute to the vitality of the community that nurtured them" (Beran 1998, 162). Through family literacy programs like ours at Indochinese Housing, this depiction of individual and community empowerment is being realized.

# FAMILY ACTIVITIES

I've included the lesson plans from the first two sessions for the record. The four remaining literacy activities are designed to elicit personal and cultural content from the families, rather than provide them with texts and themes chosen by the facilitator. Especially in the beginning of the project, these activities are designed to "make students feel that their ideas, experiences, and knowledge are valued" (Auerbach 1992, 44). My hope is that these activities will encourage and support the Indochinese Housing families as they come together to share, collaborate, listen, and have fun—all positive factors in supporting learning.

OBJECTIVE: Using the story Silent Lotus, families will understand the story content, and identify and share their own talents and dreams.

RATIONALE: This text was chosen because it attends to the precept that project materials are culturally relevant to the participants. The content of the story can be used as a springboard for exploring personal issues, and also provides an opportunity for the Cambodian families to be the "experts" for other families in the program. The activity provides a forum for making the story content personally relevant and meaningful, as well as encouraging family members to talk about ideas and issues that they might not normally discuss.

SYNOPSIS: This story takes place in Kampuchea (Cambodia) during the Angkor period ($9^{th}$ century) which was the height of the Khmer empire. Lotus, who is born deaf and mute, learns to dance from the herons, cranes, and white egrets that live at the lake near her home. She is lonely and sad. Her parents decide to visit the temple in the city to receive a sign from the gods about what to do to make Lotus happy. At the palace, the queen and king notice how lovely Lotus is and she is invited to become a court dancer. Lotus learns to speak with her hands, body and feet. She becomes the most famous dancer in the Khmer kingdom.

MATERIALS: Copy of Silent Lotus, poster paper, pencils, markers, crayons, glue, magazines, scissors

PROCEDURE:

(1) Each family is given a copy of the book. As a large group, we look at the cover, and illustrations. Facilitator asks WH questions in order to determine setting of the story. Questions include:
Where does the story take place? How do you know?
When does the story take place? How do you know?
Who is the main character?
What do you think the problem in the story might be?

(2) Group reads story aloud. Volunteers take turns reading. Facilitator stops frequently to ask clarification and vocabulary questions. Families are also encouraged to ask questions.

(3) Each family is given discussion questions for the book (in English). They can choose whether or not they want to use these questions as a guide for discussion.

(descriptive)
Why couldn't Lotus speak? How did her parents know?
How did Lotus learn her name?
Who taught Lotus to dance in her village?
What did Lotus do when she saw the dancers in the court?

(interpretive/personal)
Have you ever felt lonely or sad because you were different? If so, what did you do?
How do you express yourself without words? Do other people understand?

(critical)
Why do you think the other children wouldn't play with Lotus? What could they have done differently?
How did Lotus speak? How is this different from using words?

(creative)
If you had a daughter or sister like Lotus, what would you do to help her?

(cultural)
What does the lotus flower represent in your culture?
How is the city in the story different from San Francisco?
Why do people dance? What does dancing express?

(4) Each family is given a poster size piece of paper along with pencils, crayons, markers, scissors, magazines, and glue. Each member of the family draws or writes about something they dream of doing in their lives. The result is a collage that reflects each of them in some way.

(5) Each family presents their collage to the group. They can choose to do this all together or elect one or more family members to present.

EXTENSION: Families are encouraged to explore these questions:
What are the parents' dreams for their children?
What are the children's dreams for themselves?
How do they plan to reach them?

OBJECTIVE: Using the story The Lotus Seed, families will understand the story content, and bring an object to the session (or draw it) that reminds them of their home country.

RATIONALE: This text was chosen because it attends to the precept that project materials are culturally relevant to the participants. The content of the story can be used as a springboard for exploring personal issues, and also provides an opportunity for the Vietnamese families to be the "experts" for other families in the program. The activity provides a forum for making the story content personally relevant and meaningful, as well as encouraging family members to talk about ideas and issues that they might not normally discuss.

SYNOPSIS: In 1945, Bao Dai the last Vietnamese emperor, abdicated his throne. A young Vietnamese woman takes a lotus seed from his garden. She keeps it wrapped in silk and when ever she feels sad or lonely she takes it out. During difficult times in her life the seed provides comfort for her. Her family escapes to America during the Vietnam War. One day her grandson steals the seed and plants it. She is heartbroken. The lotus flower blooms. When it dies, the grandmother gives each of her grandchildren a seed to remember her by. Her granddaughter wraps hers in silk and hides it in a secret place.

MATERIALS: Copy of The Lotus Seed, paper, pencils, markers, crayons

PROCEDURE:

(1) Each family is given a copy of the book. In small groups of one to three families, we look at the cover and illustrations. Facilitator asks WH questions in order to determine setting of the story. Questions include:
Where does the story take place? How do you know?
When does the story take place? How do you know?
Who is the main character?
What do you think the problem in the story might be?

(2) Group reads story aloud. Volunteers take turns reading. Facilitator stops frequently to ask clarification and vocabulary questions. Families are also encouraged to ask questions.

(3) Each family is given discussion questions for the book (in English). They can choose whether or not they want to use these questions as a guide for discussion.

(4)

(descriptive)
Why did the young woman take the Lotus seed from the Imperial garden?
What did she do with it?

(interpretive/personal)
Do you have a special object you keep hidden? If so, what is it?
Why do you keep it?
What does it remind you of?

(critical)
What did the lotus seed mean to the young woman who took it?

(creative)
If you were the grandson who found the lotus seed, what would you have done? Why?
If you were the granddaughter at the end of the story, what would you tell your children about the lotus seed?

(cultural)
Are their objects in your culture that have special meaning (for example, something that brings good luck)? What are they?

(5) Each family was asked to bring an object to the session that reminds them of life in their home country. If they did not bring something, they can draw it or just describe it. Families are given some time to talk about the object and prepare their presentation.

(6) Each family presents their object to the group. They can choose to do this all together or elect one or more family members to present.

EXTENSION: Families are encouraged to explore these questions:
What are memories?
What is more important in order to remember the past—objects or stories?
If you could have any item from the past, what would it be? Why?

ACTIVITY: Our Daily Routine

RATIONALE: This activity enables families to examine what they do together with a focus on interpersonal relationships, issues of responsibility, respect and cooperation. Family members can explore how each of them contributes to the well being of the family.

OBJECTIVE: Family will create a book that describes their typical day.

MATERIALS: blank white paper, lined paper, construction paper, stapler, pencils, markers, crayons

PROCEDURE:

(1) In small groups, facilitator models her own book, describing it in detail, and handing it to the group to look at.

(2) Facilitator asks such questions as:
What time does your day start?
Who wakes up first?
Who prepares a meal?
What do you like to eat in the morning?

(3) Families work using whatever materials they choose. If they do not finish, they can complete the book at home.

EXTENSION: Families are encouraged to explore these questions:
How many roles does each family member play?
How much time does your family spend together?
How do you spend that time?
How does a typical day in America differ from a typical day in your home country?

ACTIVITY: Descriptive Poems

RATIONALE: This activity enables families to celebrate the uniqueness of each member. Each member of the family can contribute their opinions and express their admiration through the collaborative creation of a poem. The focus of this activity is positive affirmation and validation.

OBJECTIVE: Using a simple structure (cinquain poem), each family will write a descriptive poem about each member of the family.

MATERIALS: Paper, pencils, markers, crayons

(1) Facilitator describes the poem structure and uses herself as an example:
Line 1: name of person
Line 2: two adjectives describing the person
Line 3: three verbs showing action of the person
Line 4: four word statement telling something about the person
Line 5: name of person again

For example:

Sally
Silly, creative
Jumping, talking, laughing
Likes to watch TV
Sally

(2) Family writes a poem for each of member of the family.

(3) They can put the poems into a book, draw pictures of themselves to accompany the poems, and share them with others in the large group.

Resource: Poetry Plus by Sally Fisk, Instructional Fair Publications

ACTIVITY: This is what we would do if...

RATIONALE: This activity enables families to negotiate and devise their own conflict resolution strategies in a neutral setting. By examining potential conflicts that might occur because of tensions between the home culture and the new culture, they may be able to anticipate and defuse conflicts before they arise.

OBJECTIVE: Each family role-plays a solution to a potential conflict that might occur within the family.

MATERIALS: Paper, pencils

PROCEDURE:

(1) In a small group, facilitator sets up a hypothetical conflict solution such as: What happens when you are with your parents, who don't speak English, and you begin to speak English to a friend who joins you?

(2) The group discusses the hypothetical conflict, bringing it to a conclusion. Volunteers in the group are asked to dramatize the resolution.

(3) Each family then comes up with its own potential conflict, drawing from their own experiences.

(4) They role-play the conflict and determine a solution.

(5) Families can choose to share their scenario with the large group.

EXTENSION: Families are encouraged to explore these questions:
How many potential conflicts arise each day?
What is meant by the word "compromise"?
Does it help to be sensitive to the feelings of others in your family? How does it help?

ACTIVITY: A Traditional Tale

RATIONALE: This activity enables parents to share a cultural story with their children in a way that allows the children to participate in the storytelling. The parent tells the tale and the children illustrate it. This collaborative activity is a simple way to "pass down" cultural traditions and lessons.

OBJECTIVE: Each family narrates and illustrates a folk tale from their culture.

MATERIALS: Roll of paper, pencils, markers, crayons

(1) In small groups, facilitator presents the tale of Paul Bunyan, for example, with the story told through a series of pictures on a long piece strip of paper. There is no text to accompany the pictures; the pictures accompany the storytelling.

(2) Each family chooses a folk story from their homeland and tells the story sequentially through illustration.

(3) Each family may write the text to accompany the story. If they wish, they can also audio record the story as it is being told.

(4) Each family shares their story with another family.

親愛的家長們：

邀請您們全家

來歡聚 **家庭學習日**

一九九九年九月十八日上午十時至下午十二時

在375 Eddy st.(粉紅色大厦)地下室內

有朗讀，書寫，講故事等活動

有許多有趣味的活動

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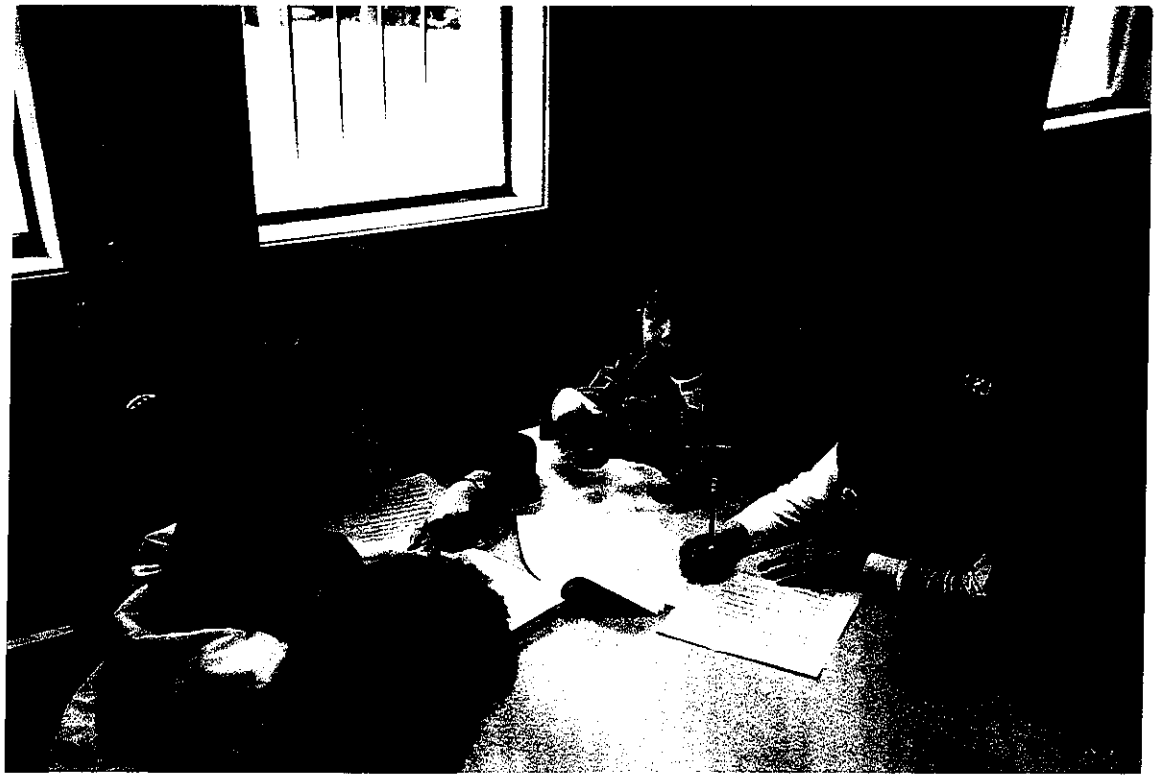
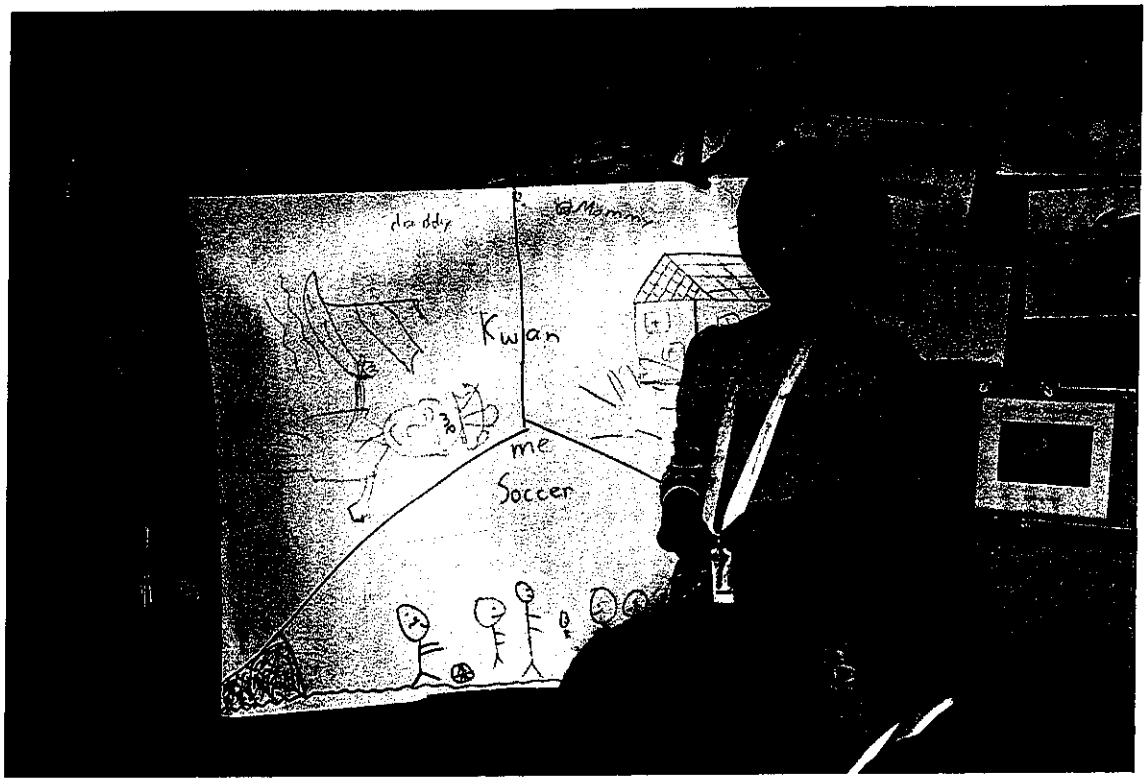
有午餐供應！

星期六見！

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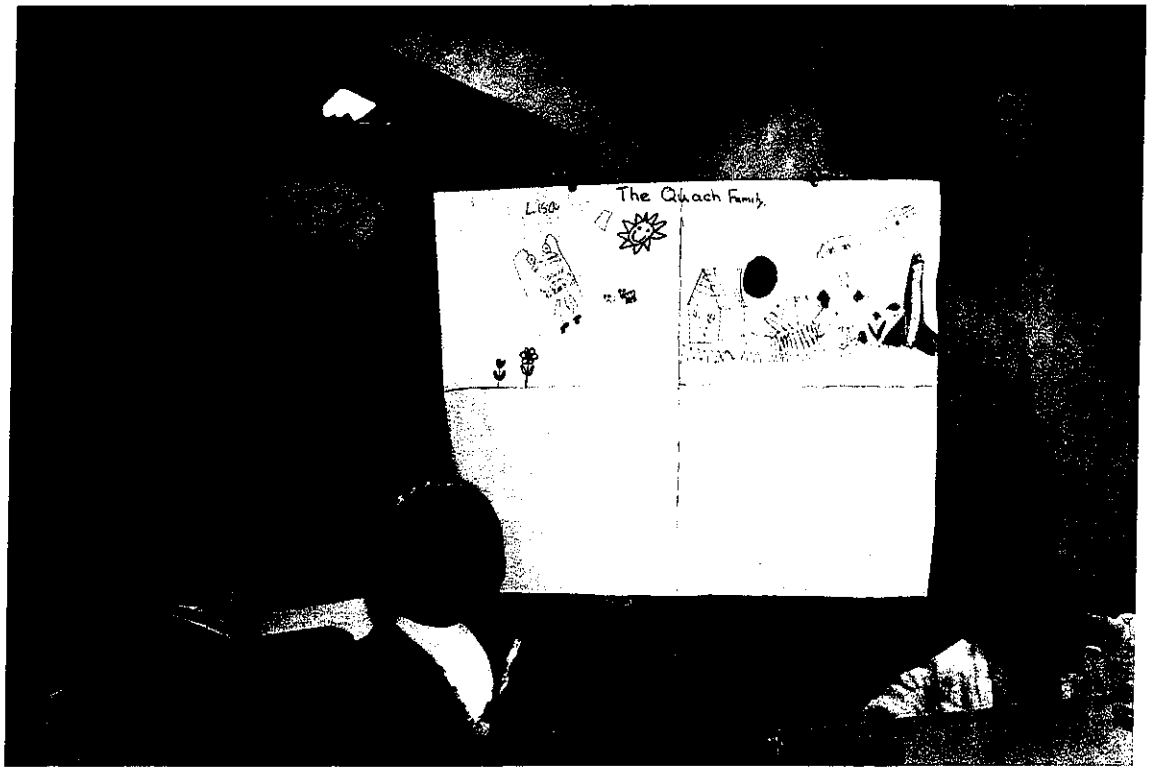
The Qiach Family
Lisa


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## Additional Resources

National Center for Family Literacy
325 West Main Street, Suite 200
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-4251
502/584-1122
http://www.famlit.org

U.S. Department of Education/Even Start
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
800/USA-LEARN
http://www.ed.gov

National Education Association
1201 16th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/833-4000
http://www.nea.org

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
1112 16th Street NW, Suite 340
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/955-6183
http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com