When Kim Huber finally decided to read *The Lady in the Box* (McGovern, 1997) to her first graders, she was not convinced that they would get much out of a book about homelessness. She wondered what they would think about the main character, a woman who was attempting to survive the winter living in a cardboard box. In some ways, Kim was also in a box at that time, but her box was conceptual; it caused her to think about literacy and what was appropriate for first-grade children in specific and somewhat narrow ways. This box positioned her to choose “happy” books to read at story time and to...
focus book discussions more on story elements like beginning, middle, and end than on more abstract topics like equity and social justice.

Kim had been teaching first grade for five years when she took a graduate class and was introduced to the idea of critical literacy. She had never considered the possibility of reading books about tough social issues to her students. Kim was intrigued, but not convinced that she wanted to discuss what might be seen as controversial topics with children. Two years later, she was still interested in critical literacy and joined teachers who were investigating critical literacy as part of a university-funded research project. The “Collaborations for Peace” grant at Indiana University provided support for groups of teachers at two different sites to come together on a monthly basis to share the progress of their investigations of critical literacy in K–8 classrooms. The grant also provided a library of critical picture books and adolescent novels (Harste, Breau, Leland, Lewison, Ociepka & Vasquez, 2000; Leland & Harste, 2002) that participants could take back to their classrooms. These books typically focused on difficult social issues and involved situations where characters were marginalized in some way as a result of the existing systems of power. While the stories rarely had happy endings where all of the problems were solved, they did leave readers thinking about fairness and what could or should be done differently (Leland, Harste, Ociepka, Lewison & Vasquez, 1999).

One group of teachers involved in this project worked in suburban and rural schools while the other group consisted of urban teachers from the Indianapolis Public Schools. Kim joined the urban teachers since she was geographically closer to them, but initially felt out of place since she taught in a rural setting and had no racial diversity in her classroom. Many of the books being explored by the urban teachers focused on racism, and Kim wondered if her white students would be able to connect to these stories. She listened with interest to what other teachers in the study group were saying about their experiences with the books, but she was not sure they would mean as much to her students. It was with some apprehension that she began reading books from the peace grant library to her first graders late in the fall.

This article traces Kim’s preliminary exploration of critical literacy and shares her conclusions. While she initially worried that her students would not be able to make personal connections to stories that addressed topics like homelessness, racism, and war, what she discovered was that they made stronger connections to these books than to the “happy books” that she usually read. And while she was not surprised that their awareness of social issues showed considerable growth when she started to read books that focused on these topics, she did not expect to find that the children would start treating each other with more compassion and understanding. She was also surprised to find that they put considerably more effort into their written and artistic responses, took on multiple perspectives, and made lots of intertextual connections when they were reacting to these books. She had many questions to consider: What made books like The Lady in the Box so different for these children? Could it be that her classroom became a different place when she started sharing the social issues books with her children at story time? These questions and many others fueled Kim’s inquiry into the role that critical literacy might be playing in the evolving culture of her classroom.

**Your Cultural Niche Matters**

“Culture is never static” because “the belief systems and practices associated with cultural groups are always under negotiation with new generations” (Lee, 2003, p. 4). As a result, it is important that “educational researchers understand the cultural niches in which young people develop” (Lee, Spencer, & Harpalani, 2003, p. 6). Formal and informal preschools and primary schools constitute some of the most salient cultural niches in which young people begin the process of becoming literate. It is in settings like Kim Huber’s first-grade classroom that children expand their understandings of the purposes of literacy and begin to see how literacy relates to their interactions with others. The instructional approaches and the culture that children experience in these settings play a major role in shaping their emerging identities as cultural and literate beings.

Kim was intrigued, but not convinced that she wanted to discuss what might be seen as controversial topics with children.
ing the author's intent. They are atate alternative explanations regard-

"read between the lines" and gener-
critical approach to literacy learn to contrast, children who experience a
process of critique and analysis. In
ment of young learners in deeper
and repetition settings is the involve-
What is missing in these replication
common activities in the latter
group include filling in blanks,
copying letters or words, and color-
ing in pictures. This is problematic
because it means that some children
are beginning their academic ca-
children are involved in communicative
practices that engage them in produ-
ction, analysis, and response, others appear to be experiencing 
"piecemeal recycled literacies of replication and repetition" (p. 13).
The absence of productive and ana-
tical practices from some children's
literate repertoires is an urgent
equity issue throughout schooling.
Early childhood is a crucial site of
practice because it is during that
period that children form initial rela-
tionships with schooling and formal
learning; it is there where they are
first constituted as learners and there
where most children are first consti-
tuted as readers. (p. 14)
What is missing in these replication
and repetition settings is the involve-
ment of young learners in deeper
processes of critique and analysis. In
contrast, children who experience a
critical approach to literacy learn to 
"read between the lines" and gener-
ate alternative explanations regarding
the author's intent. They are encouraged to take an active role in questioning both the texts them-
selves and the beliefs and personal
experiences they bring to them.

CONCEPTUAL FRAME
Conceptually, critical literacy is an-
chored in Luke and Freebody’s
(1997) "four resources model of
reading as social practice." This
model describes four resources or
types of knowledge that are essen-
tial to the process of becoming a
truly literate person: decoding prac-
tices, text-meaning practices, prag-
matic practices, and critical
practices.
• According to the first view, reading
is primarily a process of decoding,
and the main function of reading in-
struction is to help children break
the code. This view moved in and
out of prominence throughout the
latter half of the twentieth century
and then vaulted into a position of
major importance when the second
Bush administration came into office
in 2000.
• The second perspective focuses on
text-meaning practices and the de-
velopment of a reader who under-
stands how to use textual and
personal resources to produce a
meaningful reading. This view was
introduced during the 1970s and
80s, when psycholinguistics and
schema-theoretical notions of
reading emphasized reader–text
connections.
• The third view focuses on language
in use and what reading can accom-
plish, pragmatically, in the real
world. This view evolved from socio-
linguistic and socio-semiotic theory
during the late 1980s and early 90s.
• Finally, the fourth perspective ad-
dresses critical practices. This view
suggests that reading should be seen
as a non-neutral form of cultural
practice. According to this view,
texts position readers in specific
ways, and readers therefore need to
be able to understand how they are
being positioned.

Questions such as “Whose story is
this?” “Who benefits from this
story?” and “Whose voices are not
being heard?” invite readers to in-
terrogate the systems of meaning
that operate both consciously and
unconsciously in texts, as well as in
mainstream culture, to privilege
some and marginalize others. Thus,
a critical literacy approach includes
a focus on social justice and the role
that each of us plays in challenging
or helping to perpetuate the injus-
tices we identify in our world. In
this sense, critically literate individ-
uals are capable of taking social
action to fight oppression and
transform their communities
and realities.
The gap between the instruction that
many children receive and the need
for greater cultural understanding is
unfortunate given the fact that our
society is becoming increasingly di-
that the world's most serious prob-
lems do not exist because people
cannot read. These problems, he
maintains, exist because people from
different cultures, races, and reli-
gions have not been able to work to-
gether to address multinational
issues like global warming, the AIDS
epidemic, poverty, racism, sexism,
and war. Banks recommends that
schools take on the role of helping

Children who experience a critical
approach to literacy learn to “read between
the lines.”
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children “use knowledge to take action that will make the world a just place in which to live and work” (p. 18). To prepare literate individuals for the 21st century, we need to do more than teach them how to decode and comprehend texts. What is needed now is a critical understanding of language as a cultural resource that can be used to challenge or maintain systems of domination (Janks, 2000).

What kind of teaching can help young children to develop this type of critical competence? Kim used story time as a way to begin opening up spaces for building critical literacy awareness in her classroom. Since she was participating in a funded research project, she kept a journal and noted how the use of these books in her classroom appeared to be affecting her students.

**Evolving Attitudes and Skills**

**Awareness of Social Issues: Asking New Questions**

One of the first patterns Kim noticed was an increase in the children’s awareness of social issues. After reading The Lady in the Box, she wrote an entry entitled “Critical Literacy Impact May at First Appear Minimal, But Don’t Let Looks Deceive You into Thinking Nothing Has Happened.” This entry related the experiences of her students in participating in a schoolwide project to collect canned goods.

Our school had been collecting food items for the local food pantry since just before Thanksgiving. Unfortunately the emphasis was to collect more than the other schools in our district so we could retain our title of being the most responsive to the needs of others. We had reminders each morning and right before going home for the day. There was even a contest set up to see which class could bring in the most items. My children had been bringing in items since that first day, and would often mention they thought we would win. When they made these statements, I countered with comments that had to do with how many people we were able to help with these items. But it just didn’t seem to get through to the children.

Most of what they brought came in during that first week. We had collected 90 items and the children were telling me their parents said they couldn’t bring anything else. Then I read the book The Lady in the Box. The very next day, the children came in loaded down with more items. No one made a comment about winning, but instead they talked of how the food items could help others. What really amazed me was that it had taken fifteen days to collect 90 items, but in just three days, we went on to collect a total of 205 items. What was even more impressive to me was the change in the children’s attitudes. Instead of looking to win, they were now focused on helping others. (Journal, 12–02)

In addition to expressing a desire to help homeless people like the ones in the books Kim had shared with them, the children also began to ask questions about why these people were homeless in the first place. They noted that the characters in both books used to have homes but in each case, something happened to change this situation. Dorrie (The Lady in the Box) lost her home when she lost her job, and the boy in the airport (Fly Away Home) lost his home when his mother died. Many of the children were surprised and upset to learn that people could lose their homes for something that “wasn’t their fault.” Some made connections to times in their own lives when someone lost a job or a working family member died or moved away. One child argued that people need to have homes while they’re looking for new or better jobs and another asked why other people didn’t help them find homes. Phrases like “it’s not fair” and “how
are people supposed to live?” came up many times during the discussions of these books.

Getting Along with Others

Kim also noted that her students seemed to be getting along with each other better than other groups she had taught in the past. After reading Freedom Summer (Wiles, 2001), she made the following entry in her journal:

One thing, which may at first glance seem insignificant, is how well my students get along with each other. This is my seventh year teaching and always by February, they are griping at each other over trivial issues. It may be an attempt to police the room and make sure I notice that someone has broken a rule or it may be a disagreement between friends. (The past two years have been almost unbearable by February.) Whatever it is, it disrupts the harmony and distracts us from the business at hand. This year has been different from any other year that I have experienced. While other teachers complained about the nitpicking behavior going on in their rooms, I had to sit in silence because I was not experiencing this with my students. When I mentioned that we haven’t had these kinds of problems, they looked at me like I was trying to cover something up.

I didn’t totally realize the significance until our school counselor came into our room to talk about choices we make when handling disagreements that children have with each other. When she asked for examples from my children, they looked at her and waited with raised eyebrows. She waited and then prompted them for examples. “What do you do if you lose your pencil and you need it to do your work?” Their response, “Ask a neighbor to borrow one.” She did not get the response that she expected and went on to explain how children have minor disagreements.

My children looked from her to me, and back again. That was when it struck me how different the atmosphere in my room was this year. My students bend over backwards to help each other and to help me. It was unfathomable to them to consider disagreements when they really didn’t have any to consider. My question then was, can the use of social issue books in a classroom create an environment of acceptance and good will? I have examined this from every angle I can think of and can come to no other conclusion. Other than the inclusion of these books on a regular basis, I can think of no other changes I have made since last year that might explain my children’s behavior. (Journal, 02–03)

Freedom Summer tells the story of how some white people in one southern town decided to fill up their public swimming pool with tar rather than allow black people to swim there after segregation became illegal. Kim reported that her children were “visibly shocked” when they realized what was going on with the pool being filled in. They brought up the issue of fairness several times and repeatedly asked why some people thought they were better than others. They were angry that these people refused to share the pool and were amazed that they would rather close it down for good than let black people swim there. Kim noted that the children engaged in numerous conversations about race after she read this book, and many concluded that it was “mean” to treat people unfairly because of race. Kim hypothesized that books like Freedom Summer opened a space for her children to “figure out where someone else is coming from” and encouraged them to “look for solutions that were fair instead of getting involved in useless power struggles.” (Interview, 03–04).

Quality of Children’s Writing

By February, Kim noticed changes in the quality of her children’s writing when they were responding to books in the critical text set. At this point she read So Far from the Sea (Bunting, 1996), a story that recounts one Japanese American family’s experiences with the horrors of internment camps during the second World War. Her journal entry documents her observations:

One of the things I have been really surprised about when I use critical literacy books with my children is how they respond to them. They write more than usual if I ask them to write when they respond. (Journal, 02–03)

While Kim did not collect samples to show the quality of her students’ writing for a non-critical book, much can be inferred from the samples she collected after reading critical books. What becomes immediately obvious is the amount of text generated by these first graders. And the extensive writing was not done by a handful of students, but by all of them. A representative example is the set of papers that Kim collected after reading Fly Away Home (Bunting, 1991). She invited the children to write down any questions they would like to ask the boy who lived in the airport and to say what they would do to help if they could do anything. The children generated numerous questions.
and most of them filled the entire side of the paper. They also did not skimp on words in describing what they would do to help. One child who was identified by Kim as a typically reluctant writer generated three thoughtful questions and ended by saying: “I would let them live with me if he was cold I would let him cuvr up in my worm bed and win he is tird he can sleep in my bed.” When responding to a book that he thought was important, this child was clearly willing to write.

**Quality of Children’s Art**

Kim noticed a similar type of energy with the children’s artistic endeavors when they were responding to books in the critical text set. She made the following observations about the drawings that were generated in response to *So Far from the Sea* (Bunting, 1998).

What was quite apparent with this activity was the amount of effort they put into their drawings. Usually, they are just drawing to get an assignment done and quickly slap any old thing down. Not with these drawings. My room was completely silent while they worked. They waited patiently to have a chance to look more closely at the book, and their drawings were phenomenal. They added details in a way that I never see in any of their other work. I observed a number of children drawing, and then erasing and drawing again, sometimes several times until they got it the way they wanted. When I took their drawings to meet with the Peace Collaboration group, they were surprised at the quality of the drawings and asked if they always produced work like this. I had to reply that this was an exception. Occasionally one or two children will take their time and create a detailed drawing, but never the whole class as it was with this set of drawings. Is it because they take their work seriously since they are dealing with topics and issues that seem adult to them? (Journal, 02–03)

Figure 1 shows four children’s responses to *So Far from the Sea* (Bunting, 1998), a book about the internment of Japanese-American citizens during World War II. The children’s attentiveness to re-creating details like the high fences, barbed wire, and guns documents Kim’s observation that they put considerable time and effort into these drawings. Kim also noted that the conversations about this book were ongoing for many weeks and served as a scaffold for pushing the children’s thinking and for giving them a platform to share their thoughts. She recalled that when children wanted to make a point about another unfair situation, they frequently made references to the Japanese internment camp and how armed soldiers had come to take a little boy in a Cub Scout uniform from his home. They criticized the actions of the soldiers and empathized with the innocent child who had not done anything to deserve this treatment. In this case, art was a useful sign system for helping to develop the children’s critical awareness.

**Seeing a Bigger Picture: Intertextual Connections and Multiple Perspectives**

Kim observed that book discussions in her class were beginning to be characterized by the inclusion of intertextual connections and references to multiple perspectives. Children were bringing up other titles and other authors to help them situate every new book she shared. In April, she addressed this topic in her journal.

*Today, we read* The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson. *As I showed the children the book, one of them mentioned that the same author wrote Visiting Day, the book we read about a child visiting her father in prison. They immediately settled down and gave me their full attention.*

More intertextual connections followed as Kim began to read this book aloud.

“That summer the fence that stretched through our town seemed bigger. We lived in a yellow house on one side of it. White people lived on the other. And Mama said, ‘Don’t climb over that fence when you play.’ She said it wasn’t safe.”

Kim noted that the children immediately seized on the words “it wasn’t safe.” She wondered if this related directly to their exposure to other books addressing race relations issues. Even on the first page, they had already identified the threat as white people. One child made a connection to Rosa Parks, the woman who was told to give her seat on the bus to a white man (Miller, 1998). Others brought up the books *Martin’s Big Words* (Rappaport, 2001) and *Freedom Summer* (Wiles, 2001) (Journal, 04–03).

Other books that Kim shared with her children seemed to invite conversations about multiple perspec-
Figure 1. Children’s artistic responses to *So Far from the Sea*.
tives and how individuals might see the same events differently. *Stars in the Darkness* (Joosse, 2002) relates what happens to a family when the older brother gets involved in a gang. The story shows how three characters (the mother, the older brother, and the younger brother) see the situation from their own unique perspectives. Kim discussed the idea of multiple perspectives with her children and then invited them to draw each character and write what that person was thinking about during the story. Figure 2 shows one child’s example and suggests that he was able to sort out the different views of the characters. He reported that Mama was thinking about Richard’s gang activities, little brother was thinking the same thing (and crying, according to the picture), and Richard was thinking that he didn’t want anyone to know what he was doing.

Kim also shared a note from the author with her children. This note, which comes at the end of the book, explains what gangs offer to kids like Richard—a sense of belonging, a feeling of security, and sometimes even basic necessities like food and clothing. She reported that the children discussed this note at length and that several made a connection between poverty and the attraction of gangs. One child hypothesized that Richard probably wouldn’t have been in a gang in the first place if his family had enough money to buy “important stuff like food, clothes, and toys.” Although this child did not interrogate the underlying societal structures that produce and maintain poverty, his comment suggests that he was beginning to understand how poverty positions people and limits their choices.

As the school year drew to a close, Kim reflected on what had transpired in her classroom after sharing a number of the critical picture books with her children.

In my wildest dreams, I would never have thought my students would have come so far in just one school year. At the beginning of the year, they simply saw a book as being for their enjoyment, like a Disney experience. They now look critically at texts, looking for clues into the meaning the author intended. They have examined books for hidden assumptions and have looked at how the readers are being positioned through these texts. (Journal, 04–03)

An example of this type of critical analysis occurred as the children studied an illustration in *The Other Side* (Woodson, 2001) that shows...
the main characters (a black girl and a white girl) with their mothers as they passed by each other in town. One child pointed out how the two girls and their mothers were all wearing the same kind of clothing (shiny black shoes, white gloves, and “fancy dresses”). Another child surmised that the author [illustrator] probably did this on purpose to make people see how similar they were. “If she wanted us to think that they were really different, she wouldn’t have done that.” Other examples from the same book focused on the author’s [illustrator’s] purpose in making the young black girl look “strong and powerful” in the picture after the rain stopped and in making the white girl look “sad and lonely” as she sat on the fence at the beginning of the book.

Kim also considered the role these books were playing in acquainting her rural children with issues of diversity that often seemed invisible in their monocultural setting.

Without exposure to race, how would my children ever get past the differences to see what is similar? And in a small, white town, they might be adults before they know someone who is black. By that time, after going so long, it will be hard to tear down the fences of mistrust of someone who looks different. How much more important it becomes in a rural

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**Figure 3. Children’s multiple perspectives to *Feathers and Fools.***

- **a.** One reported, “The swans were mean on the outside [and] they were going to fight.”
- **b.** But turning the paper over reveals that this child was aware of another perspective as well: “The swans were scared in the inside [and] they didn’t know what to do.”
- **c.** Another child observed, “They think they are tough on the outside,”
- **d.** “but they aren’t. They’re scared.”
area like this to expose the children to other groups. (Journal, 04–03)

Kim’s observations stress the importance of encouraging children to interrogate what they see as commonplace or “normal.” In an all-white community, it can become “normal” to assume that people of color are somehow “different” and maybe even “dangerous.” An example of this dominant discourse was shared by a student teacher who was momentarily stunned when a child in her classroom stated during a literature discussion that “All black people carry guns and kill people.” When the student teacher suggested that this might be a stereotype and not true, the child responded adamantly that it was true because his parents told him so (Leland & Harste, 2003).

**Possibilities for Taking Action**

The Other Side is a picture book that turns the tables and challenges the dominant discourse. Suddenly it’s the black people who are in danger and the white people who are the dangerous ones. What is significant here is how quickly Kim’s children picked up on this perspective. Several examples of their writing make this point. One child wrote, “They thought that the white people would kill the black people. They can’t sit on the fence.” Two other children wrote, “They don’t want their children to go on the other side because the white people might kill the black people” and “One’s mom didn’t want her to go over the fence because she said ‘There’s danger.’ The danger was on the other side. The white people were the danger.” It would have been more predictable to find children growing up in a homogeneous white community reflecting the stereotypical view that African Americans are to be feared. The Other Side offered these children the perspective that black people sometimes live in fear of dangerous white people.

It is also important to note that the children responded to this story by generating ideas for improving the situation between the neighbors. One student wrote, “They could play together if the fence got knocked down,” and another predicted that they would all become friends once that happens: “When they knock the fence down, the black and white people can play together and their moms can meet each other and they can give their phone number and they will have a lot of fun.” Clearly Kim’s children to see the world through a different lens. It allowed them to look at race issues through the eyes of an African American child and to consider the role that white people have played in keeping the two races apart and on unequal footing. Their idea of knocking the fence down and playing together demonstrates that they were paying attention to their own personal and cultural resources and thinking about how to take social action to make the world a better place for all children. It can be argued that this stance was not achieved after hearing one story or discussing one instance of marginalization. Kim engaged her first graders in critical conversations about important social issues for the better part of a school year. She herself disrupted commonplace teaching norms by enlarging the literacy curriculum of her first grade to the point where it included more than decoding and comprehension. The addition of books that addressed difficult social issues added a new dimension that had not been in her classroom previously and is not often found in work with young children.

In reality, Kim had challenged two traditional views that tend to be the dominant discourse in both schools and the larger culture. First, she challenged the view that literacy is mainly a question of decoding and comprehension. The addition of books that addressed difficult social issues added a new dimension that had not been in her classroom previously and is not often found in work with young children.

Second, Kim challenged what many teachers and parents perceive as common sense regarding appropriate subject matter for story time with young children. This view positions children as needing protection from complexity and unpleasant topics. As a result, the common sense approach leads teachers and parents to choose stories that have simple plot lines and “happily ever after” endings that tie up all loose ends. The thinking is that these stories

**Many children are deeply concerned about these difficult issues when they walk into our classrooms.**
Research on Critical Literacy with Young Children


- This study focuses on a critical literacy project in which a complex set of literate practices taught the grade 2/3 children about power and the possibilities for local civic action. The study discusses how children’s writing can be a key element in developing “critical literacies” in elementary settings and how such classroom writing can mediate emotions, intellectual and academic learning, social practice, and political activism.


- This study provides a rich description of what happened when third-grade children moved from personal to social narratives in writing workshop. Students shared cultural resources as they took on the identities, dilemmas, and obstacles of self and others; used writing as a means for constructing and analyzing shared social worlds; and created stories as tools for social action in their school lives.


- Vasquez engaged in teacher research to explore how multiple literacies are constructed through a range of practices, looking at what happens when critical literacy generates learning opportunities to explore problems associated with inequitable social practices and issues of difference and diversity. Data analysis revealed that in her junior kindergarten, literacy was seen as social transformation where issues were acted upon to effect change and to negotiate and sustain curriculum, as well as to generate possible curricular engagements. In addition, children began raising issues of equity and social justice in their homes.

—Karen Smith

are appropriate for children because they do not introduce multifaceted issues that might be too abstract for them to understand. This view of children’s capacity to understand difficult issues has been challenged by researchers like Corsaro (1997) and Dyson (1993) who suggest that children often use play activities to address complex issues that concern them. While we might wish that children did not have to deal with issues like racism, poverty, and war, the fact of the matter is that many children are deeply concerned about these difficult issues when they walk into our classrooms. Ignoring what they need help to understand and deal with is not productive or humane.

**A HAPPY ENDING?**

Since the dominant national discourse on literacy acquisition appears to be bogged down in the first two resources identified by Luke and Freebody (1997), it is hard to imagine a happy ending for this piece. But maybe that is to be expected, given the fact that happy endings typically do not occur in either the books in the critical literacy text set or in life in general. As Kim wrote in her journal:

*These children do not all have tidy happy endings in their lives. Using critical texts opens their eyes and my own to social issues. This helps to create understanding and provides connections for kids whose lives do not fit what they think is normal—such as the family of four with both parents and a dog in the backyard. (Journal, 03–03)*

Even so, there is still something hopeful that emerges from this text—the validation that individual teachers can still make a difference. And like Kim, they might get motivated to begin stepping out of their own instructional boxes. For while many classroom reading programs are now micro-managed to the point of becoming scripts that teachers are asked to “stand and deliver,” the time-honored institution of story time leaves a tiny chink in the armor. Books that are read to children can also be discussed with them. The topics

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of these books can be revisited  

through writing and art. Kim’s  

story shows how teachers can take  

small steps as they begin to intro-  

duce children to new perspectives.  

Without causing too much of a  

ruckus, critical literacy can start  

seeping into the culture of a class-  

room. Children and teachers alike  

can question the assumptions that  

drive what goes on in their class-  

room. Children and teachers alike  

can develop as critically literate beings  

who are going to keep trying to  

make the world a better place.

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