

TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH, BY, AND FROM FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Teaching Works Seminar
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PREPARING INTERNS TO PURSUE PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES:

- An Overview
 - Why do we work as we do?
 - What are the embedded assumptions?
 - What are we trying to assess and via what tools?
 - What TE pedagogies have we employed?

WHY DO WE WORK AS WE DO?

- The demographic imperative
- Direct and indirect effects of productive home-school-community relations

WHAT ARE THE EMBEDDED ASSUMPTIONS?

- Families are diverse and interns must be mindful of and responsive to this diversity
- Communities are constructed in terms of place and social group membership and interns must be attentive to both constructions
- ALL families and communities have a wealth of knowledge and resources that might be leveraged for instruction
- Teachers must actively work to build (rather than passively receive) relationships with families and communities
- Traditional teaching practice often contradicts the aforementioned assumptions

APPRENTICESHIP-BY-OBSERVATION...

- By the time we meet our interns they have:
 - “intuitive and imitative rather than explicit and analytical” interpretations of what constitutes effective home-school-community relations
 - interpretations “based on individual personalities [and socially structured and culturally embedded experiences] rather than pedagogical principles”

(Lortie, *Schoolteacher*, p. 62)

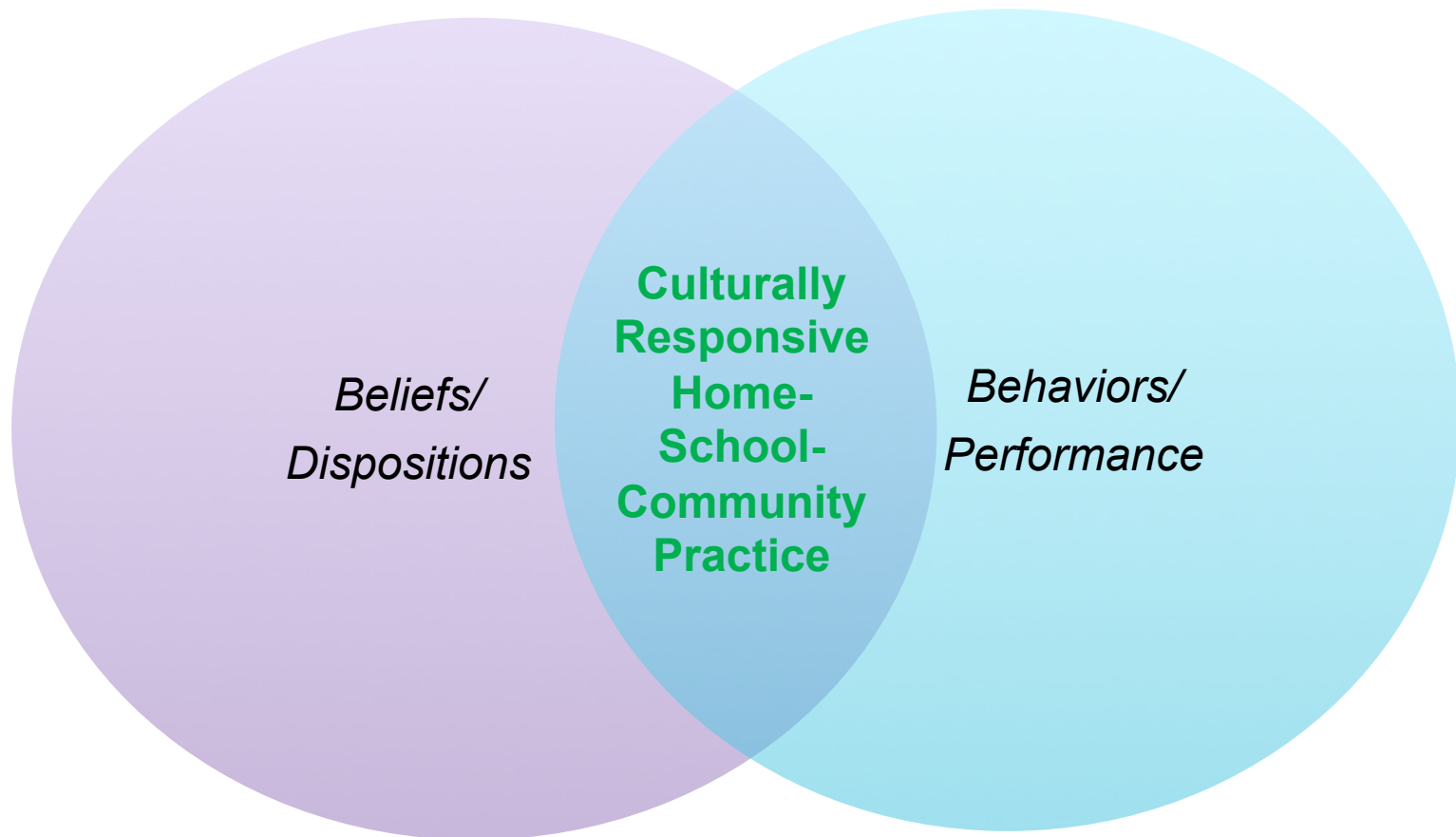
FOR THEM...

- “What constituted good teaching then constitutes good teaching now.”

OR

- What constituted good teaching for them, their families, and their communities constitutes good teaching for the students, families, and communities they will encounter in their future practice

WORKING AT THE INTERSECTION OF “THINKING” AND “DOING”



PREPARATION GOALS

- “THINKING” GOAL: To problematize deficit thinking and activate asset-filled considerations
- “DOING” GOAL: To analyze and practice elements of culturally responsive home-school-community relations via developmentally appropriate instructional activities

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ASSESS AND VIA WHAT TOOLS?

ASSESSING “THINKING”

- Need to assess interns developing skill to:
 - reflect upon their own biases
 - actively interpret and account for how status and institutionalized inequities influence:
 - their own identities and experiences
 - the identities and experiences of their students and their students’ families
 - their consequent efforts to cultivate relationships with families and communities
 - view ALL families and communities as resource-rich or asset- filled (and problematize deficit thinking)

ASSESSING “THINKING”: TOOLS & EVIDENCE

TOOLS	EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPING SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case Studies• Community Mapping• Community Investigations	Recognizes and identifies constraints on opportunities that are a function of institutionalized inequities rather than cultural dispositions and individual propensities
	Recognizes and identifies privileges and affordances that are a function of institutionalized inequities rather than cultural dispositions and individual propensities
	<p><i>In the face of perspectives or behaviors on the part of students and families that are “received” as troubling, surprising, or perplexing...</i></p> <p>Actively wonders about alternative explanations and/or seeks additional information to appropriately situate or complicate these behaviors and perspectives such that the intern is better positioned to approach these families and communities with respect, sensitivity, and generosity.</p>

ASSESSING “THINKING”: TOOLS & EVIDENCE

TOOLS	EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPING SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Case Studies• Community Mapping• Community Investigations	Invokes language or discourse that situates or characterizes underserved families and communities as resource-rich or asset-filled rather than deficient
	Avoids stereotypical, pejorative, or hegemonic characterizations of families
	Recognizes and identifies non-traditional or non-conventional indices of knowledge and opportunities for learning in a family or a community
	Emphasizes what additional or alternative work the teacher could be doing rather than what work the families and communities could be doing to facilitate student learning

ASSESSING “DOING”

- Need to assess interns' developing skill to:
 - persuasively invite engagement on the part of families
 - establish rapport with families in face to face communications
 - actively cultivate via multiple mechanisms knowledge about students, families, and communities
 - invoke this knowledge in the planning of instruction and routines
 - invoke this knowledge in the enactment of instruction and routines

ASSESSING “DOING”: TOOLS & EVIDENCE

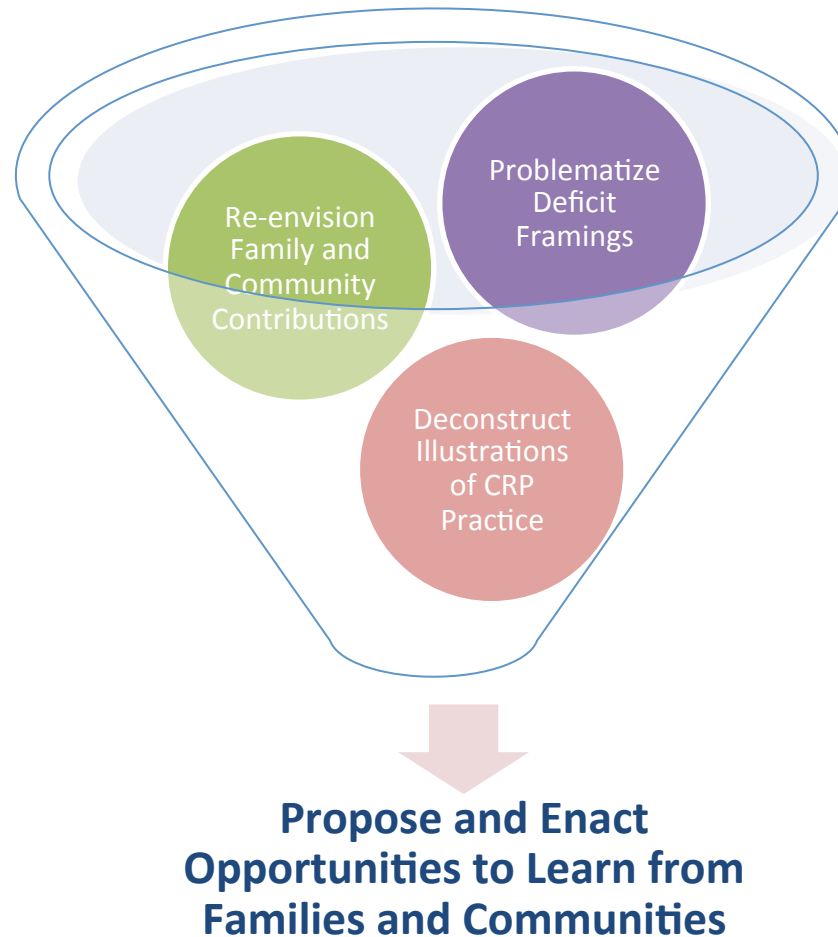
TOOLS	EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPING SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Parent Survey & Interview •Mock P-T Conference •Family Communication Collection 	<p>Actively and precisely evaluates the affordances of different forms of communication and information gathering</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Family Communication Collection •Mock P-T Conference •CRP Proposal for S-T Semester •Family Centered Educational Experience 	<p>Uses inclusive language (language that avoids bias or stigmatization and accounts for diverse backgrounds and identities)</p>
	<p>Uses accessible language (avoids jargon and relies on a reasonable number of words per sentence)</p>
	<p>Makes “small talk” and/or shares information about self to facilitate family member’s comfort and engagement with interaction</p>
	<p>Asks questions or facilitates activities that elicits information or sharing about the child, family, or community</p>

ASSESSING “DOING”: TOOLS & EVIDENCE

TOOLS	EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPING SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Caregiver Panel•Community Investigation	Seeks and/or identifies allies and key informants who are knowledgeable of student population and/or community context
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Community Mapping•Community Investigation	Offers expansive and non-conventional interpretations of the extant knowledge in families and schools
Deconstructing and Mapping CRP Practice Against Axes of “Directionality” and “Border Crossing”	Purposely selects from among a range of instructional approaches in order to activate particular “border crossing” or “directional” features
CRP Proposal for S-T Semester	Conceives of and proposes varied and increasingly robust mechanisms by which this knowledge can be invoked in instructional practice

WHAT TEACHER EDUCATION PEDAGOGIES SUPPORT INTERNS' DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PRACTICE ?

TE PEDAGOGIES FOR DEVELOPING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PRACTICE



A TOOL FOR PROBLEMATIZING DEFICIT FRAMINGS

- Jim Colbert

- AFFORDANCES

- Primes the deficit orientations our interns are likely exposed to and prompts analysis of how these orientations impact teaching and learning
- **We ASK:** “What choices are the teachers in these cases making and why?” and “How do their choices affect children’s opportunities to learn?”

THE CASE OF “JIM COLBERT”

- Jim Colbert Colbert wonders to himself, while passing what he sees as “dreary, run-down, and often abandoned buildings that were now occupied by drug dealers, addicts, and the homeless” how “some of the kids in my class call these buildings ‘home.’” In trying to explain what he sees as a disjoint between Carlos’ above-average mathematics and reading comprehension skills and his below-average spelling and phonics skills on the other, Colbert concludes: “his family may be part of the problem. His parents are in their fifties; Carlos was a ‘change-of-life’ baby. They don’t speak English and don’t intend to learn.”

THE CASE OF “JIM COLBERT”

- Contrasting Analyses
 - Carlos’ family is not a support system. They do not work with him at home to help his academics and they are uninterested in learning English to even try and help him. (Ingrid)
 - “If I were in Jim’s position, I would attempt to better integrate Carlos’ home life into school. I would learn what kind of texts Carlos enjoyed in Spanish then ask him to talk and write about them in English. I would sit with Carlos as he did homework to identify specific gaps in his understanding and address those. I would talk, if possible, with Carlos’s sister about how she believes Carlos could be set-up best for success and ask for her help at home. Finally, I would pursue scholarly resources on the topic for insight and advice.” (Leigh Ann)

TOOLS FOR RE-ENVISIONING FAMILY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACADEMIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Caregiver Panel
- Parent Survey and Interview Assignment
- AFFORDANCES:
 - Makes visible the diversity and knowledge of families and primes considerations of how to communicate with and learn from diverse families in the interest of supporting student learning
 - **We ASK:** “How does the instrument for gathering information, and the context in which it is used, affect what we learn?”

Themes from Caregiver Panel: “Three insights”

<p>“Don’t make assumptions” – “Families are unique.” “Don’t assign family members roles that you have assumed.” “Try to refer to parents by name and not role.” “use language that doesn’t carry judgment”</p>	<p>“parents don’t think it is a compliment when their kids are treated better because of their affluence.” “Hold all students to the same high academic standards regardless of cultural differences.”</p>
<p>“ask open ended questions” “Design forms inclusively.” “Ask parents how we as teachers can support the students – open-ended.” “Reach out.” “Know the difference between prying and being aware.” Early conferences in the year</p>	<p>“I garnered insight into how people might feel subtly unwelcome despite an outwardly welcoming group dynamic (booster club)” “How often parents feel lost or left out in the school setting for being different or not “normal.”</p>
<p>“Ask what you can do to help children explain if there are any major changes happening.”</p>	<p>“It isn’t all about academics all the time; parents are concerned about all aspects of their child’s development in the classroom”</p>
<p>Proactively gather information about families “Active ongoing communication”</p>	<p>“Treat the parent as a resource, they are the experts on their own children.”</p>
<p>“I gained more insight into the immigrant experience.”</p>	<p>“It is vital to be honest, to invite the parents to be a team.” “Teachers need to take charge and open the door to parents first.”</p>
<p>“Misunderstandings can create conversation and be helpful.”</p>	<p>“It is okay to say something negative about students.” “Be very specific with strengths, weaknesses, things you notice.”</p>
<p>“I never realized how large racial identity not only plays a role in the child’s life but the parent’s as well.”</p>	<p>“Parents are open to discussing their home life and culture and how it can help teachers help their children.”</p>
<p>The difference between treating equally and treating fairly</p>	<p>“Please always try to get to know the different cultures within your classroom.”</p>

PARENT SURVEY AND INTERVIEW

“Leah”

As I looked back at the parent inventory, I was struck that one response to a question was the word “nothing.” I never thought of a parent having “nothing” to say about a specific topic, in this case, Ben’s weekly routines. Yet when I pressed this issue to Mrs. Kim during our interview, she was extremely detailed and thorough while describing her and Ben’s weekly routines. She mentioned that this year was the first year Ben would not be attending Korean school – a school he has been a member of for the last three years. Mr. and Mrs. Kim originally enrolled Ben and his sister because they wanted them to have exposure to “people who look the same as them,” as well as to obtain a greater understanding of where their family came from. However, recently, Mr. and Mrs. Kim have felt that the Korean school was too difficult for their children considering that the school is comprised mostly of first generation Korean children and Ben and his sister are second-generation children. This difference among generations causes a discrepancy between the fluency and knowledge of the Korean language and culture, thus causing the Kim’s to withdraw from the school. I find it interesting that on a piece of paper I would have never gained this type of knowledge; yet now following my interview, I have a greater understanding of Nick’s cultural background and thus could apply these characteristics into either a read-aloud or lesson plan to stimulate his academic achievement.

TOOLS FOR RE-ENVISIONING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACADEMIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Community Mapping
- Community Investigation

■ AFFORDANCES

- Create opportunities to identify non-traditional resources communities offer that can be tapped for teaching and learning.
- **We ASK:** “What sociopolitical forces are in play that impact the resources available in this community?”

COMMUNITY MAPPING

“Anissa”:

One implication that we thought about would be to connect their knowledge with the bus system, to something they are struggling with in the classroom - reading analog clocks. Since the students are unfamiliar with how to read analog clocks, which we know because they have to ask us all the time what time it is and how long until specials, lunch, or recess. If we taught how an analog clock works in the context of bus schedules, the only new information for the students would be about the clocks. The students might also be excited to see an application outside of school.

COMMUNITY MAPPING

“Renna”

I saw the importance of evaluating my own cultural biases, stereotypes, and preconceived notions about my students and the circumstances they live in. As part of our exploration, we drove through some of the neighborhoods where our students live. A teacher at Park Elementary told us that a good number of them come from a specific trailer park called Clover Lane. When I used to think of trailer parks, I thought of poverty—of gloomy places with rundown buildings, unkempt yards, and an unsafe feeling. I felt sympathy for the students that had to live there, and I expected my heart to break for them. This trip, however, showed me that I was very wrong and ignorant. This trailer park was nicer than some neighborhoods I have seen. The roads were paved and labeled with street signs, many yards were decorated with beautiful gardens and lined with children’s toys, and the mood was anything but gloomy. Had I not seen this place firsthand, I would have acted off my false assumptions. Not all trailer parks are what I thought. Similarly, not all minority students enter school at a disadvantage; some have more resources available to them than White students. My personal experiences and background have shaped my ideas of what the rest of the world is like, and this is only natural. However, this cultural lens is often misguided and misleading. This experience showed me that it is important for me to constantly step back and evaluate my beliefs, for only then can I give all students the fair and empowering treatment they deserve.

TOOLS FOR DECONSTRUCTING CRP PRACTICE

- Illustrations and Modeling of Practice
- AFFORDANCES:
 - Interns explore what other teachers have done to harness community and family resources.
- **We ASK:** “In what ways do these teachers’ practices span the axes of directionality and boundary crossing?”

TOOL: MAPPING CRP PRACTICE AGAINST AXES OF “DIRECTIONALITY” AND “BORDER CROSSING”

- **Axis of Directionality**
 - designates direction of teaching and learning between teacher/school and home/community
- **Axis of Border Crossing**
 - designates the extent to which a teacher crosses the boundaries that typically divide the school from the home/community
- **Framing Questions**
 - Who is learning?
 - Where is learning taking place?
 - What is being learned and for what purpose?

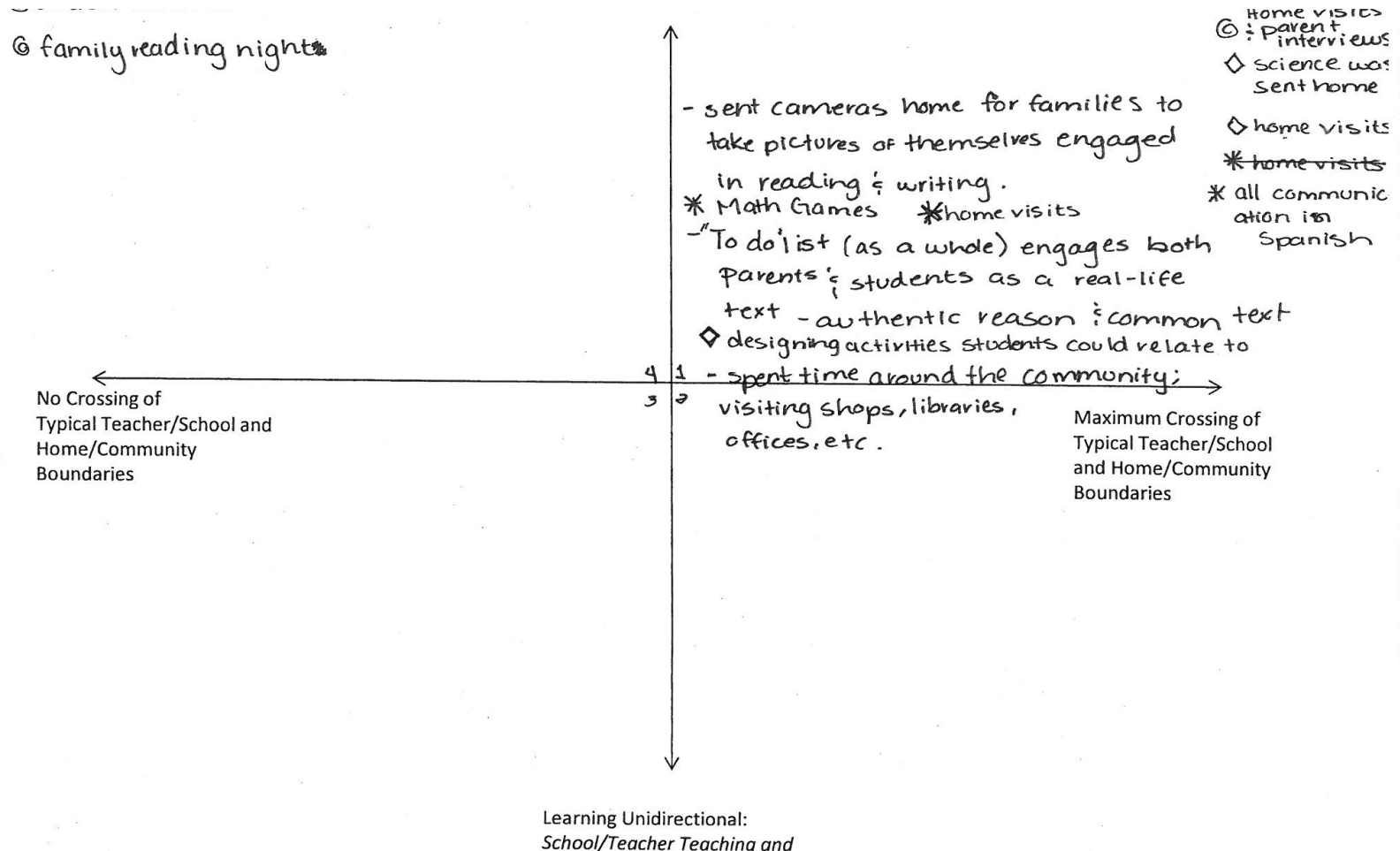
Learning Bidirectional:
*The Teacher/School is also Actively
Learning from Students, Families,
and Community Members Learning*

No Crossing of
Typical Teacher/School
and Home/Community
Boundaries

Maximum Crossing of
Typical Teacher/School
and Home/Community
Boundaries

Learning Unidirectional:
*School/Teacher Teaching and
Students, Families, and
Community Members
Learning*

EXAMINE ILLUSTRATIONS OF MODEL PRACTICE:



TOOL: CRP PROPOSAL FOR S-T SEMESTER

- AFFORDANCES:

- Interns design content area instruction that integrates opportunities to learn from families and communities.

- **We ASK**, “In what ways can a teacher design rigorous content area instruction that builds upon family and community resources?”

Meriah's Proposal: Linking Content Area Instruction to Community Resources

My questions about literacy in the home were most stimulated by the Auerbach reading that confronted teachers' assumptions about "literacy impoverished" homes. Throughout this reading, I found myself recognizing how little I knew about literacy in my students' homes and how that lack of knowledge was setting me up to make unfair assumptions about my families. The Auerbach reading's emphasis on the wide-range of contexts and audiences in authentic literacy experiences, paired with the Purcell-Gates piece on "Real-Life Literacy," pushed me to recognize that I needed to find ways to get to know my families' literacy practices so I could be responsive to them in my teaching.

Meriah's Proposal: Linking a Vision to Unit Development

SWBAT use descriptive language to describe memories, settings, and emotions related to their own lives.

SWBAT collect and arrange relevant and meaningful artifacts to represent their lives to a specific audience.

SWBAT choose and appropriately describe specific aspects of their communities to inform a specific audience including detailed descriptions of their families, traditions, surroundings, values, and hobbies.

A PARTICIPATORY EVENT – FAMILY POETRY NIGHT

You are formally invited to....

Poetry Night

Over the past two weeks your student has been studying and writing various forms of poetry. To culminate this unit, all students have written an original “I am From” poem and created a complimentary work of art that they would like to share with you!

Attached to this invitation you will find an “I am From” poem template. Since your student is now an expert on using descriptive language in poetry, have them teach you how to write your own “I am From” or a family “We are From” poem! There will be an open mic time at Poetry Night to share your poems with other families.

“I Am From” Poem Template

I am from _____ (an everyday item in your home)
from _____ and _____ (products or everyday items in your home) I am from the
_____ (description of your home)
_____ (a detail about your home – a smell, taste, or feel) I am from the _____ (plant, flower, natural item)
The _____ (plant or tree near your home) whose long gone limbs I remember as if they were my own.
I’m from _____ and _____ (a family tradition and family trait) from _____ and _____ (family members)
I’m from _____ and _____ (family habits)
and from _____ (family habit)
I’m from _____ and _____ (things you were told as a child)
and _____ (a song or saying you learned as a child) I’m from _____ (a family tradition)
I’m from _____ (place of birth) and _____ (family ancestry, nationality or place)
_____ and _____ (family foods)

NEXT STEPS

- Structure more robust practice opportunities
- Enact interactions in full with test families
- Continued development of assessments