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Artistic Expressions About Community-Based Literacy

Caitlin Hall, Diane Lewis, and Christopher Schrock

Every two years, SIL-UND offers a "Literacy Megacourse" focused on development of community-based literacy programs. At one point in the Megacourse, students are asked to express themselves in a creative fashion about what they have been learning. We offer three such expressions here, from students in the 2017 summer session. – Joan Baart, editor

Caitlin Hall



Come in

Diane Lewis

Come in, come in, but be careful where you step.

My mind may be wide open, but my heart is safely kept,

Inside my people and my beliefs,
Inside the language that I speak,
Inside myself, in what I know,
Inside the places I call home.

Meet me here, meet me here, but be quiet so you hear,
That what I know does matter, and my voice is loud and clear:
Through my art, through my speech,
Through my song and what I teach,
Through my stories and my time,
Through the things that I call mine.

Show me how, show me how, to stand taller than I am,
But don't neglect the fact that I am able and I can.
In my world, in my dreams,
When the dawn of stranger things,
Steps over my world's horizon,
Let my people find our strength.

Let me help, let me help; better yet, help Me to do
These things that make my people great,
To go, to build, to learn, to create,
To read, to write, to bend, to break,
To try, to stand, to fail, to make,
And maybe, you'll learn, too.

MLE

Christopher Schrock

Let me tell you about that Multi Lingual Education.
It gives the adults and the kids a really good foundation.
If they ain't a learning first in that mother tongue,
then they won't be knowing nothing when school is done!
You have to get those students thinking, not just learning by rote.
All that memorization stuff is kind of a joke.
When it comes time to shine they won't be knowing a thing.
'Cuz they couldn't understand what you were saying.
This here ain't no outsider kind of a program,
get the whole community involved, have a hoedown.
Show them how to make up that curriculum,
Do some big books, primers, a little line drawing.
Find you a few teachers train those people up quick,
Show them how, make them practice so it all will stick.

Your going to need some supervisors, a coordinator,
don't forget the secretary better sooner than later.
Of course you need to document everything that your doing.
So when you come back later you can evaluate the program.
Its also going to help you to have friends in high places,
language policy red tape is something everyone faces.
Community cooperation is what you really want to see,
but its not something that you will always get easily.
Many times they have to see the benefits their getting,
Which will always take some time so don't let that be upsetting.
You can say this is hard its going to cost too much money,
well you're right it can be so hard thats its not even funny.
But its not about convenience for the people in charge,

its the good for years to come of the whole country at large.
So just listen for a little more you'll hear the conclusion,

I want to make sure and clear the air of confusion.
This whole MLE endeavor is going to look really scary,
but there's some steps you can follow so you won't have to worry.
There's this organization with the name of SIL,
go on over to their website they lay it out very well.
There's a page of videos about MLE,
but don't be deceived when they make it sound easy.
What you should see and learn is that it can and should be done,
and who will be the winner? Well, everyone.