

engagement, collaborative learning and shared power. The focus in his interactive classroom is on the students and what they are doing. He explains specific activities for creative, descriptive and narrative writing. He also devotes one chapter to literature and two to specific uses for the computer.

Jeffrey Golub is currently as assistant professor of English Education at the University of South Florida. Previously he spent twenty years teaching English, speech communication and writing at junior and senior high schools in Seattle, Washington. Clearly, he has practiced what he preaches. His book is clearly written and practical for both the beginning teacher and the veteran who is struggling to shift the balance of classroom power.

My only wish for this volume is that it would have addressed interactive approaches to teaching literature as thoroughly as it did writing. The process approach for writing instruction has been covered in many other publications, but it seems to me that instruction in literature and interaction with text is still an area ripe for suggestions. Teachers need specific ideas for developing student responses to literature that are personal and creative. Golub provides a few suggestions which center on poetry, but very little for use with longer texts. He addresses techniques for encouraging participation in discussion, but does not describe activities that might better engage students whose learning styles or intelligences are not primarily verbal.

Shifting the balance of power in the American classroom is a difficult transition. However, if we truly believe that students learn best when actively engaged, that they need to construct their own understandings of text, and that they can collaborate effectively,

then we need to allow for more interaction in classrooms at all levels of education. Jeffrey Golub has provided a starting point for doing so.

Nancy Healy teaches in a multi-age classroom in the Anoka-Hennepin School District. In addition to her teaching duties, she conducts seminars on interactive classroom procedures for the Society of Developmental Education.

Coming of Age Across Cultures

Reviews of Going Where I'm Coming From: Memoirs of American Youth. Ed. Anne Mezer. New York: Persea Books, 1995. 166 pages. Hard and paper. \$15.95 and \$6.95. Into the Widening World: International Coming of Age Stories. Ed. John Loughery. New York: Persea Books, 1995. 268 pages. Paper. \$11.95.

Earlier this year when Persea Books published two new collections by editors whose previous anthologies are similar in content, it seemed reasonable to review their new works together. After reading Going Where I'm Coming From by Anne Mezer and Into the Widening World by John Loughery, I realize that there are many more differences than there are similarities between these 1995 publications.

Like at least four other anthologies published by Persea Books in the last five years, Going Where I'm Coming From is a collection of multicultural stories from the United States. Into the Widening World includes selections not only from North America, but also from South America and the Caribbean, Europe Russia, Africa and the Middle East, and Asia and the South Pacific. As in their previous anthologies, America Street (1993) by Mazer and First Sightings

(1993) by Loughery, in their new publications both editors focus on childhood and youth and what it means to grow up as part of a particular cultural group. Each book begins with a short introduction in which the editor explains his/her purpose in putting the book together and the connections between the selections, and each includes brief biographical sketches of the writers included.

After stating these obvious likenesses between the two books, I will consider their differences individually. Going Where I'm Coming From adds to a growing body of literature with a multicultural perspective meant for the younger reader. Unlike America Street, a book of short stories (reviewed by Vicki Olson in MEJ 25.1), Going Where I'm Coming From is a collection of memoirs and essays. This will certainly make the book more accessible to those young adult readers who dislike fiction and want to read only "true" stories and those who find the figurative language of a modern short story difficult to interpret.

Three of the fourteen selections tell what it is like to immigrate to the United States as a young person from Mexico, India, and Puerto Rico; four other selections explore the experiences of first-generation Americans from Czechoslovakia, Poland, Japan, and Mexico; and the other seven address cultural issues beyond immigration of Sioux, Hawaiians, Arabs, Chinese, and African Americans. In her introduction Mazer writes, "To find out who they are and where they're going, the writers of this collection have looked back to where they've come from." Young adults may recognize some of the writers included, such as Graham Salisbury, Gary Soto, and Hisaye Yamamoto, and will enjoy making the acquaintance of others, perhaps Helen

Epstein, Ved Mehta, or Susan Power.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the anthology for me was the focus on language, a tenuous thread that wove through and connected many of the selections in the book. Luis J. Rodriguez explores the results of obvious language problems, such as children who cannot speak English and are put in class with retarded children or in the back of the room, building blocks, until the teacher can "figure out how to get you more involved." Willie Ruff tells about his fascination with sign language as well as his intrigue with music and the spoken language of his world which to him sounded like music. Thylas Moss stopped talking in school in the fourth grade, but "still wrote words, and so did not lose" herself. Judith Ortiz Cofer said that in third grade she "instinctively understood that language is the only weapon a child has against the absolute power of adults," so she "quickly built up my arsenal of words by becoming an insatiable reader of books." This early recognition of the importance of language might be at least partially responsible for each of them becoming a writer. It could also spark the interest of student writers as they write their memoirs.

Into the Widening World is a more difficult book to read. A number of the cultures represented in the stories are foreign to the average reader, and the different cultural ways of perceiving reality makes these stories confusing, if not incomprehensible. In "Barbaru, the Family" by B. Wongar, the narrator, an Australian Aboriginal child, struggles to make sense of her mother's disappearance by explaining, "She has not died or run away but has changed into a crocodile." In other stories the symbols of the culture are meaningless to someone not acquainted with the culture. In Tatayana Tolstaya's "Date

with a Bird," the Siren bird hovering over Petya's grandfather is the bird of death. An overweight young girl realizes her wishes of eating all the pastries she desires and flying, floating overhead, thanks to the help of Uncle Gonzalo in Jorge Edward's "Weight-Reducing Diet."

Some of the stories are much easier to relate to because of the universality of the emotions, situations, or themes or humor. One of the most delightful stories, "Borders" by Thomas King, concerns a Blackfoot woman and her son from Canada stranded between Canada and the U.S. They are not allowed to cross either border until she identifies herself as Canadian or American in addition to Blackfoot. Other stories broaden the reader's insights into cultural customs and their impact on young people. "Mr. Tang's Girls" by Shirley Geok-Lin Lim focuses on polygamous marriages as well as arranged marriages for young girls, often with older men, and the emotional and financial effects of these marriages on the women.

Although the American Library Association lists the book as an adult book recommended for young adults, the difficulty of the selections as well as the subject matter of some of the selections does not make this a book suitable for most high school classrooms. Individual stories could be selected to emphasize the commonalities and differences among young people. Adolescent girls of any country can identify with the obese African girl waiting for the train with father in Zoe Wicomb's "When the Train Comes."

This anthology could easily be used in a college course focused on world literature. While it does not attempt to represent all of world literature, it contains 26 stories from 22 countries. There is a balance between

established and lesser known authors and even the translated stories are well written. The book does achieve the author's purpose: to acquaint the reader with literature beyond the American and British writers commonly known and studied. The content should help students to become more aware of the universality of the search for identity in the transition from childhood to adulthood despite cultural differences.

Whether you choose to read Into the Widening World from cover to cover or to read individual stories, the book is a good choice for anyone interested in the world in which we live. Now that readers, including teachers, are beginning to have some options among the books of multicultural literature that are available for use in and out of the classroom, perhaps more books will be published to provide greater choices among writings with a global perspective. Into the Widening World and Going Where I'm Coming From are excellent additions to the multicultural list.

• Jean Drummer, CSJ is professor of education at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, MN. She is Program Director for the Master of Arts in Education: Moving Students from Risk to Resiliency, and served two terms as Executive Secretary of MCTE.

Teachers Thinking, Teachers Knowing

Review of Teachers Thinking, Teachers Knowing: Reflections on Literacy and Language Education. Ed. Timothy Shanahan. Urbana, IL: NCTE and NCRE, 1994. 203 pages. Paper. \$18.95 (members).

Sometimes I have wanted for more or better or any words at all to aid