

# Teaching Other People's Children: Literacy and Learning in a Bilingual Classroom

Cynthia Ballenger

—(1999) New York: Teachers College Press.

## Summary

What happens when a teacher does not share a cultural background with her students? In this thoroughly engaging account, one North American teacher describes her three years teaching Haitian children in an inner-city preschool. Using classroom research, Cynthia Ballenger explores how teachers who listen closely to children from other cultures can understand the approaches to literature that these children bring with them to school. Practitioners will identify with Ballenger, who struggles to find the academic strengths of children whose parents do not read them bedtime stories or otherwise prepare them for school in ways that are familiar to her. Focusing on three areas crucial to early childhood education (classroom behavior, concepts of print, and storybook reading), this book will challenge many widely held assumptions and cultural perspectives about the education of young children.

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