

MAKING PEACE:
A CREATIVE THESIS PROJECT

by

Margaret R. Clark

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Chiara Bacigalupa, Ph.D., Chair

Johanna Filp-Hanke, Ph.D.

Jynx Lopez, M.A.

Date

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Margaret Clark
1126 Old Crocker Inn Road
Cloverdale, CA 95425

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this project was to create a book for children, titled “Making Peace”, which gives children the language of peacemaking, possible definitions of what peace means, and examples of how to make peace in their own world. This book includes an appendix written specifically for parents and teachers. The appendix describes ways to integrate peace education methods and activities in to the classroom curriculum and learning environment. Along with the writing and illustration of an original children’s book, I seek to answer the following research questions; what are the common elements of children’s picture books whose main theme is peace? How do children react to these types of stories? How do children talk about and define peace? How can teachers incorporate the philosophy of peace education into their classrooms? And lastly, how do children react to my own children’s book about peace?

Procedure:

During the process of creating this children’s book, I have investigated published children’s literature and read a selection of these books, along with a draft of my own book, to a group of 4-5 year-old children. I have also conducted class discussions and art activities with this group of students. I have researched the philosophy of peace education and cooperative learning, as well as social and literary theories. With this research, I have created a list of common elements that are used in children’s literature which are aimed at promoting prosocial behavior, specifically peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping skills. This information has helped establish a theoretical framework for my book, “Making Peace”.

Findings:

Based on class discussions and art activities, I have discovered that young children can be categorized into three different groups or types of peacemakers, what I have named; the *naturalist*, the *meditator*, and the *humanist*. The naturalist is the student who describes peace as a connection or caring for the earth and it’s plants and animals. The meditator is the student who defines peace as an individual desire to find quiet, calm, and silence. The humanist is a category of students who believe peace is about taking care of one’s family and friends. These three categories, along with a list of common literary and visual elements found in

children's literature, are what make up the framework for my own children's book about peace.

Conclusions:

A final draft of my children's book, titled "Making Peace" can be found in Appendix D of this paper. Along with a story for children, the book contains a guide for parents and teachers on how to incorporate peace education into their homes and classrooms. The book was organized according to the three categories of peacemakers that I discovered in my research with children and incorporates visual and literary strategies that have been found to be successful in children's literature.

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Date: _____

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Chapter I An Introduction

For the past four years as a teacher in a Montessori preschool classroom, I have investigated, developed and implemented curriculum to promote positive prosocial skills in the classroom. This curriculum has included art, language, and literacy activities that were aimed at providing tools for the children to proactively work to create an emotionally safe and inclusive environment for one another and, in turn, create peace in their world. The most successful component in teaching peace to my students has been with children's literature and subsequent literary discussions and activities. Storybooks, such as Todd Parr's (2004) *The Peace Book* and Jane Baskwill's (2003) *If Peace Is...* have each generated thoughtful discourse among the students about the meaning of peace and how to create it in one's own life. These reading experiences have highlighted the important roles that I (the teacher and reader), the student (the meaning-maker) and the text of the literature, all play in helping further promote social growth in the lives of my students.

Purpose and Description of the Project

The main purpose of this creative thesis project was to create a book for children, titled *Making Peace*, which gives them the language of peacemaking, possible definitions of what peace means, and examples of how to make peace in their own world. The book provides examples of prosocial behavior, such as sharing, helping, caring, and other ways to proactively make peace, establish friendships, and show kindness, all of which are key components in the development of their social abilities. This book will also include an appendix written specifically for parents and teachers. The appendix describes ways to integrate peace education methods and activities in to the classroom curriculum and

learning environment. Along with the writing and illustrating an original children's book, I seek to answer the following research questions; what are the common elements of children's picture books whose main theme is peace? How do children react to these types of stories? How do children talk about and define peace? How can teachers incorporate the philosophy of peace education into their classrooms? And lastly, how do children react to my own children's book about peace?

During the process of creating this children's book, I have investigated published children's literature and read a selection of these books, along with a draft of my own book, to a group of 4-5 year-old children. I have also conducted class discussions and art activities with this group of students. In my review of literature, I have researched the philosophy of peace education and cooperative learning, as well as social and literary theories. With this research, I have created a list of common elements that are used in children's literature which are aimed at promoting prosocial behavior, specifically peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping skills. This information has helped establish a theoretical framework for my book, titled *Making Peace*.

Making Peace explores the many different concepts, definitions and methods of peacemaking. This children's book aims to be developmentally appropriate for young children, which means that it uses visual and linguistic elements that are appropriate for a preschool classroom. The text of the book is in poetic verse with simple line-drawing illustrations. The appendix of the book is a guide for teachers and parents and offers different ways to incorporate peace education into their classes and homes. It is my hope that this book will provide both adults and children the tools to learn about and think about the very general concept of peace, and offer them my own view of peace as a

proactive, rather than reactive, process that is attainable, sustainable, and necessary for our future.

The significance of this project comes at a moment in our educational history when we are in need of a model curriculum that incorporates peace education and conflict resolution and helps foster young children's social and moral development. This need has been highlighted by both governmental and educational agencies in their calls for the promotion and support of peace education.

A Call for Peace

In 1998, the United Nations declared the first decade of the 21st century the *International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World*. The UN called upon member nations, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, schools, artists and media outlets to “actively support the Decade for the benefit of every child of the world.” The National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Association for Childhood Education International have both called specifically on early childhood educators to promote conflict resolution, identifying an “increasing need for high-quality peace education for children” (Walker, Myers-Bowman, & Myers-Walls, 2008, p. 379).

These calls come at a time when violence and conflict perpetrated by young people in America has become a growing threat to civil society. Schools across the country face a rise in dropouts, physical violence, gun violence and gang-related activity. Many young Americans are the victims of emotional and physical abuse, poverty and neglect. According to West and Sabol (2009), the number of adults under the age of 30 that end up in prison has risen 13% from 1999 to 2006. As many as one third of them will

be re-incarcerated within two to three years of their release. All too often their crimes are violent. In 2004, 52% of inmates were convicted of violent offenses, up from 47% in 1995 (West & Sabol, 2009). Physical conflict and weapon ownership among high school-age children is also on the rise. As we ponder the potential causes of these trends, and explore possible solutions, we must look closely at our conception of both conflict and of peace.

All humans experience some level of both conflict and peace in our everyday lives. On a personal level, we experience conflict in our interpersonal relationships that may arise from struggles among different personalities, expectations, needs and wants, and we work to resolve those conflicts to maintain a peaceful personal existence. On a societal level, we face conflict and violence among cultures and communities and attempt to work towards resolutions and treaties for a peaceful communal existence. In theory, peace may be defined two ways: the absence or prevention of violent acts is a *negative peace*; while the promotion of prosocial acts is a *positive peace*. The latter includes common standards and goals for justice, humans living in balance with nature, and citizens participating in government (Harris & Morrison, 2003).

Peace Education

As both local and global conflict increases, the need for both positive and negative peace strategies continues to present itself. One strategy is to teach peace in the classroom. According to Harris and Morrison (2003), peace education is both a philosophy and a process. The philosophy of peace education teaches an understanding and compassion for life through nonviolence. The process of peace education exposes students to tools to create and maintain a safe and sustainable world. Peace education

teaches important skills such as listening, reflecting, problem solving, cooperating and solving conflicts.

Peace education has three core components: peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. Peacekeeping teaches violence prevention to maintain safe school environments. Peacemaking uses conflict resolution instruction to give students the tools to constructively manage their own conflicts. Peacebuilding promotes the definition of a *positive peace* - a proactive avoidance of violence through exposure to curriculum, materials, and methods which promote ways to create peace in the world, rather than define peace in a negative context, as simply the absence of war. Peacekeeping and peacemaking programs have both grown in popularity in schools, while peacebuilding has lagged behind. Peace theorists have argued that “the goal of education should not be just to stop the violence, but also to create in children's minds a desire to learn how nonviolence can provide a basis for a just and sustainable future” (Harris & Morrison, 2003, p.11). One way to incorporate peacebuilding tactics into the classroom is with children’s literature.

Children’s Literature as a Teaching Tool

While there are multiple methods for fostering social development in the classroom, three specific teaching approaches all promote using children’s literature as a tool for teaching prosocial values. Character education, moral education, and peace education all agree that children’s literature is a viable and practical method to help foster social and moral development for young children (Edgington, 2002; O’Sullivan, 2004; Clare & Gallimore, 1996; Stomfay-Stitz & Wheeler, 2006). Edgington (2002) describes the multiple ways that teachers can use literature in character education to help teach

young children these values, including book read-alouds followed by group discussions and reflections about the reasoning, justification and reactions to stories and characters that explore values such as “compassion, courage, courtesy, fairness, honesty, kindness, loyalty, perseverance, respect, and responsibility” (p. 113). Edgington (2002) sees these methods as a more authentic and meaningful experience for the students compared with a rigid, ready-made approach to teaching character – such as the “simplistic ‘trait-of-the-week’ strategy” (p. 115). Clare and Gallimore (1996) found that children’s literature was also an important component in the moral education curriculum. In their study, Clare and Gallimore (1996) found that the moral dilemmas in children’s literature were catalysts for productive classroom discussion and writing activities. By balancing instruction and allowing for authentic and reflective student participation, the teacher had created zones of proximal development for the students in the areas of both reading comprehension and moral development (Clare & Gallimore, 1996). In the peace education curriculum, Stomfay-Stitz and Wheeler (2006) recommend using children’s literature in the classroom to address and discuss issues of violence, including bullying. Stomfay-Stitz and Wheeler (2006) believe that early childhood is an appropriate time for addressing such issues of bullying in the classroom and that signs of violence should be discussed early in a student’s schooling experience.

While these approaches all cite children’s literature as an important resource in teaching children prosocial skills, there has also been a recent undervaluing of children’s literature and the role that it plays in the social development of children. Cooper (2007) outlines two factors in this trend; the first is the field’s growing focus on teaching academics, what Cooper describes as “an era where *how* young children learn to read –

not the *what* or *why*” drives a literacy-based instruction (p. 316). This method focuses on specific literacy skills, such as letter sounds and names, vocabulary and comprehension, while ignoring the historical role that literature has played in teaching children important prosocial tools. Cooper (2007) also points out that many teacher education programs do not require courses on children’s literature. As a result, teachers are reading children books to teach them literacy skills, but ignoring the potential learning opportunities for teaching social skills as well.

Making Peace: A Creative Thesis Project

As this research has shown, violence in our schools and our communities is a growing threat to our children and their education. Agencies from around the globe have called for the promotion of a high-quality and sustainable curriculum that fosters peace education. This curriculum must incorporate all aspects of teaching peace; violence prevention (peacekeeping), conflict resolution (peacemaking), and proactive methods for non-violence (peacebuilding). These methods require skills such as communicating, sharing, caring, and giving. One way to teach these skills is with children’s literature.

For this research study, I would like to use children’s literature as a tool to bring peace education into the classroom. I would like to join in the process of creating a curriculum for teachers and parents to help foster young children’s social and moral development. And I would like to create my own children’s book that could provide children and adults with ways to make peace with their world, with their family and friends, and with themselves.

Chapter II A Review of Literature

The purpose of this project is to create an original children's book about peace. This book will serve as a tool for teachers and parents alike to discuss the meaning and methods for creating a sustainable peace in both their lives and their world. This book will offer examples of prosocial behavior including sharing, helping, caring, and ways to proactively make peace, build friendships and show kindness. A critical element in promoting these skills to children is the adult who teaches and models them for the child. The project is designed to answer the following questions; (1) What are the common elements of children's picture books whose main theme is peace? (2) How do children react to these types of stories? (3) How do children talk about and define peace? (4) How can teachers incorporate the philosophy of peace education into their classrooms? and lastly, (5) How do children react to my own picture book about peace?

This review of literature aims to provide the theoretical foundation and inspiration for the creation of a children's book about peace. My research is guided by a theoretical framework of moral development based on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan, as well as Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading. In an effort to answer my fourth research question (how can teachers incorporate peace education into the classroom), I have also reviewed literature that explores the role of the teacher and potential curriculum materials and activities that could be conducted in the early childhood classroom which focus on promoting peacebuilding skills.

Moral Development in Early Childhood

The study of children's social and moral development is historically set in stage theory through the work of Erikson, Freud, Piaget, and Kohlberg (Cooper, 2007). Cooper

(2007) describes how these theories are traditionally applied to child development – where a child moves from one stage to another, and that the progression relies on accomplishment of the previous stage. Recent research has critiqued the methodologies and biases of the research behind these theories. One such critique is the research of Carol Gilligan (1982) who has outlined the gender bias in the moral development research of Lawrence Kohlberg (1981). Gilligan (1982) describes the type of morality in Kohlberg’s research as a “male” morality that involves an individual’s ability to separate oneself from situations in order to determine the most just rules, rights, judgments, and values. Gilligan’s (1982) research focuses on a “female” perspective of morality, which is fixed in the empathy, compassion and care for others, what she calls the ethics of care. This “female” perspective focuses on the connections made between people and their responsibility for one another, in contrast with the “male” focus of separation and justice (Kazemek, 1986). Gilligan argues that these two perspectives do not contradict one another, but are complementary and when used together, create a framework for moral development which incorporates both knowledge and feelings (Kazemek, 1986).

When working with children’s literature in the classroom, some researchers recommend using Kohlberg’s framework for identifying the moral development of the story characters, while others recommend using Gilligan’s framework to discuss relationships and the ideas of care and compassion (Dana & Lynch-Brown, 1991). For the purpose of their study with teaching gifted children, Dana and Lynch-Brown (1991) used a framework that includes the work of both Kohlberg and Gilligan, as developed by Scott (1987). This framework combines care, responsibility, and justice in one framework.

| Table 2.1: A Framework for Moral Development | | |
|--|--|--|
| | KOHLBERG: Morality of Justice | GILLIGAN: Morality of Care and Responsibility |
| MORAL FOCUS | <i>Justice</i> | <i>Care and Responsibility</i> |
| COMPONENTS OF MORALITY | <i>Individual Rights</i> <i>Fairness</i> <i>Reciprocity</i> <i>Respect</i> <i>Rules/Legality</i> | <i>Relationships</i> <i>Responsibilities</i> <i>Care</i> <i>Harmony</i> <i>Compassion</i> <i>Selfishness/Self-Sacrifice</i> |
| BASE OF MORAL DILEMMAS AND DECISIONS | <i>Principles</i> | <i>Relationships</i> |
| COGNITIVES PROCESSES FOR RESOLVING DILEMMAS AND DECISIONS | <i>Deductive Thinking</i> | <i>Inductive Thinking</i> |

Adapted by Dana & Lynch-Brown (1991) from Scott (1987), p. 263.

For the purpose of my research on children's literature and the creation of my own children's picture book, I will incorporate this combined theoretical framework, which encompasses the work of both Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan. This model provides a framework for the analysis of children's literature as well as decoding the type of moral reasoning that my students will use in their definitions, discussions, and artwork about the meaning of peace.

Transactional Theory of Reading

The second guiding theoretical approach of this research study addresses children's reading experiences and the development of their literary understanding. Reading aloud to children has shown to have many benefits, both in literacy skills and literary understanding (Sipe, 2000). They include development of vocabulary, listening comprehension, and conventions of print as well as a love of books, secure attachments with caregivers, and a beginning understanding of story structure and narrative (Sipe, 2000).

Over the past 25 years there has been a shift in the approaches to understanding how children experience literature (Sipe, 2000). The shift has moved from a text-based reading theory (with single meaning content) to theories based on the experience, culture, and transaction of the reader with the text, leading to multiple meanings of text (Sipe, 2000). The latter is what makes up Louise Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional theory of reading. In this theory, the reader transacts with a text and assumes a stance, which in turn shapes his or her response (Rosenblatt, 1978). Because the transaction incorporates the many different cultural and psychosocial experiences of the reader, the stance of the transaction can vary greatly along a continuum. Rosenblatt (1978) describes the *efferent* stance of the reader; when the reader looks for specific information from a text or analyzes its formal properties. The *aesthetic* stance lies at the other end of the continuum, where the reader engages in a personal, "lived-through" experience of the text (Rosenblatt, 1978).

Rosenblatt's transactional theory means that as readers experience text during reading, they each bring their own meaning to the text, that each meaning may be different from those of other children, and that these meanings are constructed, rather than found (Cooper, 2007). Teachers play a very important role in this transaction, as they are often the ones to choose the text that a child experiences in the classroom, especially during the read aloud sessions in early childhood classrooms. Using Rosenblatt's aesthetic stance as an aim for teacher's book selection, Connell (2008) reminds teachers that connecting children's literature to student interests may aid in the students' understanding but that personal growth is only possible for the students when they experience texts that

- (1) emphasize an organic connection with readers' prior beliefs and experiences,
- (2) stimulate feelings and connect with emotional drives, (3) stimulate imagination in response to a wide range of literary works. (p. 115)

Cooper (2007) reinforces this notion, reminding teachers to acknowledge the importance of a student's emotional reaction to the text of a book and remember that both the student and the text both play important roles in the experience of reading the book. Too often the books available to the children have been chosen, displayed or read aloud by an adult, which limits the child's power to accept or reject a text (Cooper, 2007). Therefore, teachers must pay particular attention to their own role as curators and how our culture and assumptions about children and childhood are reflected in the books on the classroom shelf (Cooper, 2007). Cooper reminds us that;

the best books for young children, those that deserve classroom time, resources, and, most precious of all, the children's attention, should meet one simple criterion – the experience of them must allow the child *to practice some aspect of his or her potential self*. (p. 318)

Response-Centered Curriculum

Galda and Cullinan (2002) promote Rosenblatt's transactional theory in the classroom by outlining the goals of a response-centered curriculum. These goals are created to help readers "develop a deeper understanding of and a greater appreciation for books" (p. 315). Galda and Cullinan (2002) recognize that reading and responding to books is both "highly individualistic" and also "intensely social" (p. 313) and therefore we must allow for student response in both ways – in group settings and individual activities. Discussing books in a group allows children to learn from their peers, hear new language and concepts, and listen to new perspectives as they hear their teacher and peers respond to the text. When children experience books in a positive, social setting, they develop positive feelings about books and confidence about their own abilities to understand and experience text (Galda & Cullinan, 2002). To help children develop into "responsive readers", teachers can develop a curriculum framework founded on their students' responses, what Galda and Cullinan call the response-centered curriculum (2002, p. 313).

The main goals of a response-centered curriculum are to encourage students to read and actively respond to the text, learn language and its use in the text, and to give students opportunities to learn both about themselves and their world through literature (Galda & Cullinan, 2002). An end goal for a response-centered curriculum is to develop in the readers a "lasting love of reading" (Galda & Cullinan, 2002, p. 316). To achieve this end goal, teachers can give students the time and space to choose their own reading material, respond to them in multiple ways through reading, writing, drawing, dramatizing, and work with their peers throughout this process. Teachers can create

classroom environments that are rich with language and literacy, and bring literacy into all areas of learning. And lastly, teachers can make reading fun. When teachers are responding to literacy with their own joy, then they are modeling the end goal of a lasting love of reading (Galda & Cullinan, 2002).

The Role of Teachers in Peace Education

The role of the teacher in promoting social and emotional growth goes beyond choosing literature for the classroom. The teacher plays a critical part in peace education and providing a caring classroom. Research has shown that by modeling, communicating and using cooperative learning opportunities in the classroom, teachers are able to promote prosocial behaviors (Crawford, 2005; Deiro, 2003; Morris, Taylor & Wilson, 2000; Weissbourd, 2003).

The role of the teacher is a key component to establishing a peaceful classroom in the early childhood setting (Deiro, 2003; Morris, Taylor & Wilson, 2000; Weissbourd, 2003). Crawford (2005) describes the early childhood teacher as a model of respect, care, and empathy, attending to a daily routine and classroom rules that the children themselves have helped develop. It is important for teachers to express authentic fairness, patience, generosity, empathy, persistence, consistency and idealism (Weissbourd, 2003). A teacher must both model these characteristics but also express them in their relationships and communication with their students. The student-teacher relationship can be a “profound moral challenge” for teachers because of the influence she has over the child (Weissbourd, 2003, p. 7). However, this challenge can be helpful to both parties when schools create a system of support and mentorship for teachers.

Deiro (2003) also refers to this powerful relationship between teacher and student, with what she calls the “influential relationship” (p. 60). A successful teacher-student relationship is one that has planned growth and a conclusive ending, with the teacher acting both ethically and respectfully, using a considerate tone of voice and disciplining with respect. When Deiro asked students what characteristics a ‘caring’ teacher had, they described a teacher who offers continual respect and acknowledges a student’s reciprocal rights. This respect involves careful listening and sincere consideration on the part of the teacher.

Deiro’s (2003) concept of modeling respect is also what drives Crawford’s (2005) understanding of the communication element of peace education. Teachers who show both respect and empathy to their students, open up a line of communication, leading to fewer misunderstandings and conflicts within this relationship (Crawford, 2005). Open forums in the classroom (both teacher and student-led) allow for expressing feelings and conflicts while also promoting confidence and comfort (Crawford, 2005).

Walker, Myers-Bowman, and Myers-Walls (2008) offer early childhood educators specific suggestions in how to communicate with their students. Walker et al. define this relationship in terms of “symbolic interactionism” and describe how the simple everyday interactions between teacher and student can promote concepts of peace (p. 379). Walker et al. (2008) suggest that teachers ask their students what they believe the word ‘peace’ means and from there, a greater understanding between teacher and student can develop. Walker et al. recommend that teachers build and promote a ‘vocabulary of peace’ in the classroom and use this language when recognizing and valuing peacemaking behaviors shown by the children.

Crawford (2005) encourages a pedagogical structure in the classroom that promotes a sense of cooperation, communication and negotiation. This structure is implemented through group activities and projects that work toward common goals and build concepts of cooperation. This method is what Johnson and Johnson (2005) define as “cooperative learning” – small groups of students working together on a project (p. 285). Johnson and Johnson (2005) define three types of cooperative learning: formal (a group working to complete specific tasks over a set time), informal (an ad hoc gathering of students for a short period of time discussing a common topic) and cooperative base groups (long-term, more permanent groups which aid each member in their own individual development). Johnson and Johnson (2005) emphasize the concept of developing a “consensual peace” in both the classroom and society – a peace which is not imposed but rather stems from a mutual agreement and harmonious relationship between the members (p. 282).

Montessori and the Peace Education Curriculum

The idea of a “consensual peace” is also evident in the peace education curriculum of the Montessori Method. Developed in Rome, Italy in 1907 by Maria Montessori, the Montessori Method is an approach to education that pays particular attention to peace education and incorporates materials, teaching methods, and philosophy specifically aimed at teaching peace to young children.

In a study by Duckworth (2006), Maria Montessori’s philosophy and curriculum on peace education is critically examined through the profiles of five international Montessori schools in the United States, India and Thailand. The curriculum of these five schools develop skills for peaceful conflict resolution using methods such as the peace

table, a section of the classroom established as a place where students can discuss and resolve their conflicts (Duckworth, 2006, p. 46). The grace and courtesy lessons teach young children language and manners used in society to resolve differences (Duckworth, 2006). As children grow, they learn how to use I-statements and develop group problem-solving skills in order to express their own feelings and collaborate with others to find solutions (Duckworth, 2006).

Duckworth (2006) found that the peace education curriculums of these schools were also focused on issues outside of their own culture. The curriculums were aimed at developing an “international mindedness” by looking at the fundamental and cultural needs of cultures and peoples outside of their own (Duckworth, 2006, p. 44). The students participated in international holidays and festivals, learned other languages, and wrote papers about their own ideas of peace (Duckworth, 2006).

The peace education curriculum in Montessori classrooms has a number of methods for developing skills and language to resolve conflicts but is criticized for limiting creativity in students. Duckworth (2006) noted that some believe the actual materials in the classroom are too limiting for the imagination of the child, but Duckworth (2006) ultimately agreed with Montessori that the child must have a secure basis for critical thinking in order for creativity to thrive.

Classroom Activities in Peace Education

One way to foster creativity in students is to offer them opportunities to express themselves through the visual arts. Research based on teaching peace using the visual arts highlights three types of classroom activities that teachers can guide to help provide authentic learning experiences for students (1) individual art projects (2) group-based art

projects and (3) critical discussions using the language of peace education to examine well-known works of art.

Individual Art Activities and Peace Education

The first step in incorporating peace education into the classroom is to ask children to define peace (Walker, Myers-Bowman, & Myers-Walls, 2008). Teachers ask: What is war? What is peace? Can you make peace? These questions can be answered through artwork, poetry or writing. The Montessori philosophy believes in building the development of independence and confidence in the child (Duckworth, 2006). Independent art projects designed and created by the child can meet both of these goals. Once children have created individual depictions of peace or peacemaking, they can share the work with their peers and initiate group discussions about each other's interpretations. In the discussion, the teacher uses peacemaking vocabulary by acknowledging and labeling prosocial notions (Walker et al., 2008). This vocabulary includes 'tolerance', 'conflict', 'solution' and 'forgiveness', among others (Walker et al., 2008, p. 380). By hearing this language, a child is able to make connections between these concepts and their everyday social interactions (Walker et al., 2008).

Group Art Activities and Peace Education

Once students have completed their individual interpretations of peace, they can come together to create group works of art. Johnson and Johnson (2005) define cooperative learning as 'the instructional use of small groups so students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning' (p. 285). This approach includes five elements: (1) positive interdependence (one student is linked to the group and may not succeed without it), (2) individual student accountability for his or her work, (3)

opportunities for students to assist and encourage one another, (4) small groups skills such as decision-making and trust-building, and (5) group discussions about their achievements (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). The benefits of cooperative learning include a cognitive understanding of cooperation between a group of students, deeper emotional relationships among group members, and the ability to promote others and talk candidly about relationships. (Johnson & Johnson, 2005).

In her role as art educator at a summer camp, Colman (2006) led a group of Israeli and Palestinian teenagers to create a public mural about peace and human rights. Colman (2006) noted the importance of (1) maintaining individual identity in the group project to develop ownership and (2) helping students recognize that public art can educate those who experience it. Johnson and Johnson (2005) outline a six-step process for negotiating solutions to problems and a four-step process for successful peer mediation that is instructive to teachers. As with the individual art project, a group art project can also highlight the vocabulary of peace and the prosocial skills that members of a group express toward one another (Walker et al., 2008).

Critical Analysis of Artwork

In a group setting, students examine artwork within a context of peace that Colman (2006) believed might lead to a reflection of personal attitudes about conflict resolution and multiculturalism. In discussions, students continue to use their growing vocabulary of peace and their skills for negotiating with peers and mediating conflicts. Discussions about art can teach students about different cultures as much as the Montessori method for examining the common needs of people around the world.

Additional research has helped establish a connection between a child's concept of peace and their social-cognitive development. Hakvoort (1996) conducted a longitudinal study, which reviewed research previously done in the field of peace education and presents information about the development of young Dutch children, their concepts of peace and war, and strategies to attain peace. This study focused specifically on the concept of peace, unlike earlier research which primarily focused on the concept of war. Hakvoort (1996) conducted his study based on two perspectives of the child's development; (1) the psychological and (2) the social-cognitive. He referenced Jean Piaget's call for an "education for peace" that will only be possible if "a global perspective is endorsed by parents and teachers" (p. 3). This global perspective includes an awareness and understanding of different cultures, along with a "new attitude of reciprocity to free ourselves from our initial egocentrism" (Hakvoort, 1996, p. 3). Hakvoort (1996) used Robert Selman's five levels of social-cognitive development (a child's ability of take perspectives) to identify the social development of the children in his study based on their understanding of peace.

In this review of literature, I have outlined the work of three theorists; Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, and Louise Rosenblatt. I have also described research findings on how to bring literacy, peace education, and art into the classroom to create a response-centered curriculum that fosters cooperative learning and social development. This review of literature helped me in two areas of this creative thesis project; (1) in the creation of a theoretical foundation for a children's book about peace, and (2) in the design of a qualitative research method to help further understand children's reactions to literature about peace.

Chapter III Methodology

The development of this thesis project begins with my own inspiration and dedication to create, write, and illustrate a children's book about peace. While writing this book, I explored both my own reactions and transactions with children's picture books that address the theme of peace. I also investigated how a group of young children react to these types of stories and in turn, how they discuss and define the concept of peace. And lastly, I read my own children's picture book to the group.

The main purpose of creating this book is to provide children a piece of literature that gives them the language of peacemaking, possible conceptions of what peace means, and examples of how to make peace in their own world – all components that might add to the development of their social abilities. I also hope to create a book that parents, teachers, and caretakers can use to help them discuss the importance of peacemaking with their children.

The Idea for a Children's Book: Peacemakers in My Classroom

The true beginning of this project began five years ago, when I was introduced to the work of Maria Montessori and her method for teaching young children. I quickly realized that her philosophy of learning how to care for oneself, one's environment, and humankind as a whole, rang true to my innate educational philosophy and one that I wanted to learn more about. I became a trained Montessori teacher and quickly began to develop peace education curriculum for the classroom.

This curriculum included exposing the students to artwork, stories, poetry, and historical figures all associated with the three components of peace education; peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping. Part of this curriculum included asking

the students their own beliefs and conceptions of what peace meant and how to make it. The children drew pictures and recited to teachers what they had drawn. Over the past two years, while completing my masters program at Sonoma State University, I have conducted action research in my classroom and have drawn conclusions about what my particular students, ages 3 to 6 in a small town in Northern California, believe peace means and how they can make it. I found that each student belonged to one of three types of peacemakers; what I call the *naturalist*, the *humanist*, or the *meditator*. The *naturalist* was the child who made peace with their natural world; caring for and having an awareness of the earth, the plants and the animals. The *humanist* was the child who made peace with the people close to them; their friends and family. The *meditator* was the child who made peace with themselves – finding inner solace with silence, stillness, and calm bodies.

These themes of peacemaking that arose from my classroom research have led to many more questions; can we be more than one type of peacemaker? Do we continue on in this path of peacemaking our whole lives? What can we do to foster these peacemaking definitions in one another? And what role does literature play in helping define the meaning of peace for children?

While a longitudinal study is needed to determine if my students will continue on in their pathways of peacemaking, my action research in the classroom has inspired and encouraged me to turn my exploration of peace inward and ask what my own definition of peace is. How can I make peace? One way is to share the beliefs and insights of my students, and I have used their main themes of peacemaking as a foundation for this children's book about peace.

Creating a Children's Book

Using both my experience in the classroom and my review of literature as a theoretical framework, I designed three types of research that would help further develop a foundation for my children's book. In *Part One: Children's Literature*, I have analyzed published children's picture books that explore the meaning of peace. In *Part Two: Story Circles and Activities*, I have conducted group read-alouds and art activities with a group of young children. And in *Part Three: Reading a draft of "Making Peace"*, I have read aloud my own children's book to the same group of children, collected and analyzed their reactions and discussion.

Description of Part One: Children's Literature

For the first part of my research, I collected and analyzed published children's literature and created a list of commonalities that recur throughout the stories. The purpose of this analysis was to answer my first research question; what are the common elements of children's picture books whose main theme is "peace"? My goal was to create a framework of literary and visual characteristics that could help me during the creative process of writing and illustrating my own children's book about peace.

The collection of picture books that I analyzed focused on stories that explored the definition of peace including the language of peacemaking and prosocial skills (such as sharing, helping, and caring). I chose these picture books for a few reasons; the main theme of the book explored the meaning of peace, the title of the book mentioned peace, or the book addressed the idea of peace in a positive context—highlighting the process and interactions involved in promoting peaceful acts and thoughts. The collection was also informed by my own experience as a preschool teacher, using books that I had

chosen for my classroom, had been suggested by colleagues, or books that I had wanted to explore as potential additions to my curriculum. The books are listed in Table 3.1

| Table 3.1: A collection of children's books about peace |
|--|
| The Peace Book by Todd Parr |
| If Peace Is... by Jane Baskwill |
| Can You Say Peace? by Karen Katz |
| Peace At Last by Jill Murphy |
| When I Grow Up, I Will Win the Nobel Peace Prize by Isabel Pin |

Analysis Technique

The method I used to analyze this collection of children's literature is based on the suggestions made by two researchers, Horning (1997) and Vandergrift (1999). Horning (1997) describes the three areas that make a great picture book; "1) outstanding text; 2) excellent illustrations; and 3) successful integration of the two" (p. 90). Horning (1997) analyzes these three areas by examining the multiple components of both text and illustration. These components of the text include; structure, patterned language (rhythm, rhyme, repetition, questions), predictability, and pace. The components of the illustrations include; visual elements (line, shape, texture, color, and value), composition (dominance, balance, contrast, gradation, alternation, variation, harmony, unity), and lastly, the media (drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, photography) (Horning, 1997). Vandergrift (1999) suggests that readers initially conduct a "first reading" and take note of their first reactions to the picture book. The reader should then begin to carefully analyze the book by reading and focusing on certain literary and visual elements (Vandergrift, 1999). The elements to examine include; the text, the illustrations, what the books sounds like read aloud, the text breaks, the illustrator's choices, the colors of the pictures, and the page layout (Vandergrift, 1999). The reader then can conclude the

analysis with a final reading of the book, noting any new or different reactions to the book.

By combining the elements listed by both Vandergrift (1999) and Horning (1997), I have created a framework to analyze my collection of picture books. The analysis of each book appears in Appendix C of this paper and the results are discussed in Chapter 4. After I analyzed each book, I compiled a list of common themes that I found in each of these books and characteristics that I found to be successful as a reader and a teacher. This list is found in the results section of the paper.

Qualitative Research in the Classroom

For the remaining parts of this research study, I conducted qualitative research in a classroom with a group of young children. I designed my study based on the goals I had set for this section of research, which were to answer my research questions about children's reactions to book read-alouds. How do children react to a collection of picture books about peace? How do children talk about and define peace? And lastly, how do children react to my own picture book about peace?

I chose to conduct qualitative research in the classroom, rather than quantitative, based on some of the major assumptions that are made about qualitative research and the type of data that I hoped to collect. Creswell (1994) outlines assumptions about the "qualitative researcher", that he or she is 1) concerned with the *process* (compared with the outcome), 2) interested in *meaning* and how people make meaning, and is 3) the *primary instrument* for both the data collection and discussion (p. 145). Creswell (1994) assumes that qualitative research involves fieldwork, is descriptive in words and pictures, and that the process is an inductive one, building theory from data. For my research, I had

hoped to glean an understanding of how children react to books (a process) and how they understand the meaning of the word peace (the meaning). As the teacher leading the read-alouds, class discussions, and coordinating the art activity, I was also the main instrument for both the data collection and analysis. The research involved fieldwork in a school and I collected data in the form of both words and pictures – through discussion, photography, and drawings. An important aspect to my research was flexibility – I wanted to be able to adjust and alter my discussions, questions and activities based on the students' interests and curiosities. With these adjustments, I was better able to understand their responses to the literature and understanding of what peace means. The adjustments are discussed in the results section of this study.

Setting and Participants

The setting of this research was in a private Montessori preschool set in a small town in Northern California. The school serves 60 families from throughout the region and is open from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. I worked with a group of six children, three girls and three boys, all 4-5 years of age. All of the student names that appear in this thesis are pseudonyms. The group represents a range of different cultural and economic backgrounds. The cultures represented in this group include first generation parents from Sweden, Ecuador, Australia, and the United States.

I chose this school as the site for my fieldwork because I had been a teacher at the school for the previous four years and was familiar with the director/owner, the team of teachers, and many of the students and families. I had taught all of the six children during the 2009-2010 school year and was familiar with their family backgrounds, their development and personalities, and how they worked with their peers. I have also

remained in touch with many of them during my weekly visits to read-aloud stories to the whole afternoon class. I felt very comfortable with the setting, the participants and the group of teachers that worked with the children. I felt that this connection was an important one to have, as I used the teachers' knowledge of the students to help choose the activities for the research and assess my data collection. As the principal investigator, I recognize the researcher bias I may have with both the setting and the participants. To overcome this bias, I engaged in what Johnson and Christensen (2004) call "reflexivity" – the process of self-reflection and awareness of certain biases in order to control these biases (p. 249). I did this by maintaining a personal journal about the experience. In these reflections, I addressed my own feelings and reactions to the activities and results that I was finding, maintaining an awareness of the role that I was playing as researcher.

My classroom research began with the group after I had gained approval for human subjects research from the Sonoma State University Institutional Review Board on October 10, 2010 and had collected signed consent forms from the both the school director/owner and all of the students' parents. My group of six students met with me on three Monday afternoons, from 1:00pm until 2:00pm during October and November of 2010. The group came to me after having had their lunch and playing outside for one hour. We met in an empty classroom, which was used primarily for a morning-only preschool class. Our group usually sat in a circle on the floor during the read-alouds and we started off each afternoon with a short sharing time – the students sharing any news they had with me. I wanted to create an emotionally comfortable group experience where the students felt confident in speaking up and sharing their ideas.

The following is a description of the read-alouds and activities that I conducted with the students.

Description of Part Two: Story Circles and Art Activities

Before I began reading to the group, we played “See, Think, Wonder” – a game that involves looking at the cover illustration and the students take turns stating what they see in the illustrations, what they think and finally, what they wonder about the picture. Anderson and Richards (2003) recommend the “STW” strategy as a way to help emergent readers increase their visual literacy, focus on the details of illustrations, stimulate imagination and curiosity, and make predictions about stories. Since I have used this strategy with the students before, they have experience with it and are used to the practice of examining the illustrations in picture books.

As I read the books, I encouraged all of the students to ask questions and share observations about the book. With such a small group, I was able to make sure that everyone participated and was able to share their thoughts about the book, and only if they wanted to. When I reached a page in the books that had a challenging or interesting word or picture, I would model asking my own questions or sharing my own observations.

When I finished reading the story, I would ask the students if they had any questions or things that they wanted to talk about in the story. If this did not spark a discussion, I would then ask the students what they thought the story was about.

Depending on how long the discussion and the students’ focus lasted, we would move to a table to work on art projects. I designed the art projects to be voluntary and open-ended, allowing the students as much time as they needed to finish. All of the

projects were drawing with markers on white paper and I asked the students if they would draw something about the book. The students were always allowed to draw as many pictures as they wanted and could draw for as long as they wanted.

Description of Part Three: Reading a Draft of “Making Peace”

The final component to my research was to read a rough draft of my book to the group of students. I told the students that this was a book that I had created about what I think peace means. I read my book aloud using the same strategies that I had used with the previous books – playing “See, Think, Wonder” with the cover illustration, then begin reading allowing for questions and comments, and ending with a discussion about themes and meaning of the book.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection methods for this research included (1) audiotapes of read-alouds, class discussions, and conversations during art activities, (2) student-generated artifacts (individual drawings) (3) observational data (notes written during the classroom activities), (4) discussions with director/owner of the school reflecting on the results and activities, and (5) a personal journal describing my reactions and ideas about the research and comparisons and connections to potential results and theory.

After the students completed the drawing activity, I asked each of them to tell me what their picture was about and wrote their descriptions on the back of each drawing. Once I had collected all of the artwork, I photographed each drawing with a digital camera and returned the artwork to the students to bring home. Shortly after each classroom session, I re-read my classroom notes and personal journal, and transcribed the audiotapes of the read-alouds and discussions.

As I reviewed the data from these sessions, I looked for recurring themes and patterns in both the students' speech and artwork. I compared these findings with the results of my action research project (Clark, 2008) which found that the students' definition of peace could be categorized into three distinct concepts of peace, what I called the humanist, the meditator, and the naturalist. The results and a discussion of the findings are found in Chapter 4.

When designing my data collection and analysis strategies, I wanted to create a plan that ensured both validity and reliability in my research techniques. Johnson and Christensen (2004) outline the many ways that qualitative research can maximize validity, including but not limited to; extended fieldwork, triangulation, participant feedback, peer review, external audit, and reflexivity (p. 250). My main strategy to achieve validity was through triangulation of the data. By collecting five different sources of data during the classroom activities, I was able to examine multiple sources that could help highlight common themes and responses that might have been missed by one source alone. This type of strategy is what Eisner (1998) calls "structural corroboration", when the researcher looks for recurring events, themes, behaviors that are characteristic of the setting and participants (p. 110). Along with triangulation, I also participated in peer review during the discussions with my advisor and the teachers at the school. During these discussions, I outlined my activities, reasons for activities, the results of the activities and what common themes I found to be recurring. And as mentioned earlier, I also participated in reflexivity – the process of increasing self-awareness and self-reflection by myself, the researcher, on my potential biases and familiarity with both the setting and the participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

Chapter IV Results and Discussion

The following is a presentation of findings from my research analyzing children's literature and documenting children's responses to such literature. These findings have helped create a framework for a children's book of my own, titled "Making Peace" and answer the questions that I set out to explore in this chapter; (1) What are the common elements of children's picture books whose main theme is peace? (2) How do children react to these types of stories? (3) How do children talk about and define peace? And lastly, (4) how do children react to my own picture book about peace?

Results of Part One: Children's Literature

My analysis of children's literature helped answer my first research question about the common elements of children's literature about peace. I compiled the many answers to this question into four lists; common literary elements, common visual elements, elements that I found to be successful strategies for a picture book, and ones that were unsuccessful. These lists helped establish a framework of visual and literary strategies that helped in creating a children's book of my own.

Literary Elements in Children's Books

The first and most prevalent literary element in the five picture books was the use of simplistic syntax and grammar. Most of the books were set up with one sentence per page and maintained a consistent and straightforward sentence structure throughout the book. Each of the sentences gave a definition for peace or described how to make peace in one's world. The language was both repetitive and patterned. Each sentence defined a slightly different definition of what peace means while using the same sentence structure for each one. The language had a quick pace and rhythm, moving the reader along to the

next page and making it easy to read aloud. The page breaks were very predictable, occurring after each sentence. The stories were non-narrative and most used a rhyming or a poetic form.

There was very little fantasy or magic in these picture books. The text was based in reality and described ways to make peace on our earth. The diction of the picture books combined simple easy-to-understand vocabulary with more challenging words that young children might not understand such as, “justice”, “tolerance”, and “culture”. These kinds of words, like “peace,” are very open-ended with many meanings and definitions. The authors chose to use general language to define a very general topic.

Visual Elements in Children’s Books

The visual elements of the picture books’ illustrations included bright, bold, primary colors with little gradation. The pictures emphasized both color and shape – showing circles, triangles, and squares. The page layout of each book remained consistent throughout the books, often with full-page illustrations and the print remaining in the same position on the page. The most common medium used in this collection was paint.

As mentioned before, the language of the text was very general, while the illustrations were more descriptive and detailed. The illustrations often showed multicultural representations of people and their environments. There were variations in race (through skin and hair color) as well as culture (with clothing, housing, transportation). From my experience as a reader and teacher, books that combine detailed and descriptive illustrations with the open-ended and generalized language can confuse the reader. When read to young children, who often think very literally, the illustrations offer a narrow depiction of a general term, which may lead to the reader believing that

the words represent only that image, rather than an all-encompassing definition of the word. I believe this is one of the great challenges for authors and illustrators when writing about such topics as peace, love, kindness or even war, violence, or injustice.

Successful Strategies

When reading these books, there were particular elements that I found very successful. The books that made simple statements about peace helped me define the multiple ways to make peace, in contrast with a negative context of peace as the absence of war or violence. The books that combined simple, understandable language with a few challenging words offered many teachable moments for teachers and parents. I enjoyed the books whose language flowed very naturally, as if listening to someone describe their own feelings about peace or read a poem about peace. I think that the books that made clear, predictable connections between the text and the illustrations were more intriguing for me as a reader, especially when compared with those that didn't (as seen in Pin's (2006) *When I Grow Up, I Will Win the Nobel Peace Prize* and Baskwill and Carter's (2003) *If Peace Is...*). The illustrations with minimal subjects and simple design were often more visually interesting and appealing to me than the illustrations that were packed with content and symbolism.

Unsuccessful Strategies

Some of the unsuccessful strategies used in the books were stories that focused on negative definitions and illustrations of peace. This negativity was found throughout much of *When I Grow Up, I Will Win the Nobel Peace* which used words like injustice, greed, and anger when defining acts of peace. I believe that a focus on these negative conceptions of peace is what makes the idea of peace even harder for children to

understand or imagine. I also think that when addressing a topic such as “peace”, it doesn’t help to include elements of fantasy or magic. In my experience, children can be quite adept at identifying the impossible, such as pointing out the talking animals, monsters and fairies in a story. When stories include fantasy with concepts of peace, it might place the idea of peace into the realm of fantasy for children. For me, it makes peace seem unreal and almost silly.

The visual and literary elements of this collection of books, along with the strategies used, help direct me, as an author and illustrator, to the questions that one must answer when creating a children’s book. These choices are all important when thinking about a successful reading experience for young children. To further develop my understanding of these choices, I conducted story circles and art activities with a small group of children.

Results from Part Two: Story Circles and Art Activities

For the first story circle, I read Parr’s (2004) *The Peace Book* and asked the children for their own definitions of peace. I repeated this method for the second and third story circles, when I read *If Peace Is...* by Baskwill and Carter (2003) and *Can You Say Peace?* by Katz (2006). During the read-alouds, the children responded in three ways; (1) they referenced their knowledge, experiences, and memories in reaction to the illustrations, (2) they described the human characters in the book and how they were different from themselves, and (3) they pointed out the unrealistic or impossible elements of the illustrations or text. During the discussions after the read-alouds, the children offered their own definitions for peace.

Referencing Their Knowledge

The students demonstrated their ability to access their previous knowledge and memories by responding to the text with references to their own lives. When looking at an illustration of a garden, four-year-old Holly said, “I have a garden like that at my house”. When viewing a scene of children playing in the snow, four-year-old John said, “I like snow because you can make snowballs.” “And a snowman!” added Holly. When the text of the book described peace as “learning a different language,” John started to count aloud in Spanish. When reading Katz’s (2006) *Can You Say Peace?* the students continued this trend, declaring, “I have a red dress” and “I have been to a city, my grandma lives in San Francisco”. The children also referenced their experiences at school. One page of Baskwill and Carter’s (2003) *If Peace Is...* reads “if peace is a bell, I will ring it.” Jane replied, “we have a bell at school that the teacher rings when it is time to come inside.”

By connecting their previous knowledge and memories with the text, the students were demonstrating not only their ability to make these connections but were also processing the new information from the picture books. Vygotsky (1978) suggested that higher levels of thinking and processing are occurring when children make connections between new ideas or concepts and the knowledge and memories of the past. By encouraging these types of spontaneous responses, I was able to create zones of proximal development for these students. By scaffolding the discussion with developmentally appropriate questions and language, I was able to assist them in their processing of these new concepts. I would do this by asking the child to reflect on their memories or experiences that they had described. Often this involved asking about their emotions and

re-using the vocabulary of the text. For example when John and Holly began talking about playing in the snow, I asked them “how did it feel to build a snowman?” “Who did you build the snowman with?” And “was it fun to build a snowman?” Since many of the memories that they described were happy ones with friends and family, I reflected on those emotions using words from the text, “was it peaceful to play in the snow?” and “were you playing peacefully with your little brother?” Towards the end of the project, often the children would practice using this language on their own. During one discussion, the group talked about what “kindness” meant. John told us “being kind is like being peaceful to someone.” The students were beginning to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts and connecting them with similar ideas.

Identifying Differences

The students’ responses also focused on the human characters in the books by describing each one and comparing them with both the other characters and themselves. When looking at the cover of Parr’s (2004) *The Peace Book*, the students described the characters’ hair, hats, and accessories (jewelry, bows, etc.). At one point, four-year-old Thomas said that the people on the cover “look like people who aren’t in our town.” “Where do they live?” I asked him. “They live in a different earth,” he said. “They look different than us,” said Jane. When I asked them how they were different, the students repeated their comments about the hair and hats (one pointing to a drawing of a man wearing a turban).

These types of observations demonstrate the students’ growing visual literacy skills. By focusing on the details of the pictures, they are picking up cues and developing hypotheses about the narrative or characters. From working with this group of children

during the previous school year, I know that they have experience looking at photographs, magazines, and books that show different peoples and cultures from around the world and talking about what they see in the pictures and comparing the cultures with experiences from their own life. The focus of these discussions is usually around what Maria Montessori called the fundamental needs of humankind; clothing, food, shelter, transportation, and defense. When this group of students made these observations, they were practicing this process of learning about cultural difference.

Real and Not Real

The students also responded to the realism of the illustrations. Often they would remark on how something isn't real or possible. When looking at the illustrations they described how caterpillars don't wear shoes, how sheep don't wear clothes and that people can't fly. They would laugh at the pictures that had these kind of drawings, saying things like 'that is too silly!' while giggling, seeming to enjoy the fact that something wasn't real or possible as well as telling me that they recognized this fact.

When the children were responding in this way, they were proudly demonstrating their knowledge of the world and their ability to understand what is possible or impossible. From my experience, this type of reflection begins during the preschool years and becomes more pronounced with the more exposure to storytelling or reading. The children are developing their awareness and understanding of the world and making sure to share their new knowledge with their teachers and parents.

Definitions of Peace

When we had finished reading the books, we had a short discussion about what the books were about and how each one connected to peace. At times the children

believed the books were about prosocial acts, such as “sharing things”, “taking care of each other”, or “playing with your friends”. And most often, the children simply believed that the books were about “peace”.

During the first discussion after reading Parr’s (2004) *The Peace Book*, I gave my own example of what peace means to me (“Peace means taking care of your friends and your family”). We then went around the circle and the students could share their own thoughts. I quickly realized that I might have made a mistake by offering my own example of what peace means. The first four students in the group defined peace in a very similar way to how I had described it:

Jane: Peace is when someone is nice and is your best friend
 Matt: Peace means when somebody gets to be my friend
 John: Peace is when Matt plays with me
 Rachel: Peace is taking care of my friends

It was not until the last two students shared their thoughts that I heard slightly different ideas about what peace means:

Thomas: Peace is taking care of our gardens
 Holly: Peace means that we hold hands when we go through town

Rather than ask more questions, I thought it might be best to go right into the art project so that they could respond to the book and the concept of peace in a different way, on an individual basis using an artistic medium.

The art projects did offer very different responses to the question “what is peace?” The students artwork can be categorized into three different groups or types of peacemakers, what I have named; the *naturalist*, the *meditator*, and the *humanist*. I developed the concept of these three categories of peacemakers during my action research project in the Fall of 2008 when I was developing a peace education curriculum

for my preschool classroom (Clark, 2008). The following outlines how each student demonstrated characteristics of these categories.

The Naturalist

The naturalist is the student who describes peace as a connection or caring for the earth and its plants and animals. In this study, only one student, four-year-old Holly, emerged as a naturalist through both her drawings and comments. She drew flowers, butterflies, and rainbows. When I asked her about her drawings, she would include herself as a role player in the scene she had drawn.



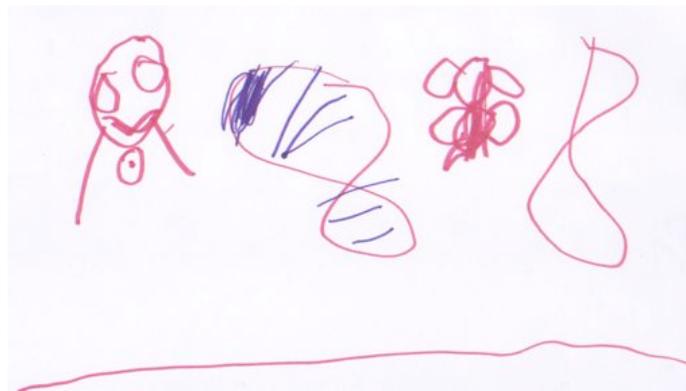
Holly (4 years): Peace is planting flowers and touching a butterfly



Holly (4 years): Peace is seeing a rainbow

The Meditator

The meditator is the student who defines peace as an individual desire to find quiet, calm, and silence. In this study, four-year-old Jane emerged as a meditator. In her pictures, she drew a picture of “being alone and playing by yourself” (see below). In the discussions, Jane talked about “being quiet” and “having a calm body.”



Jane: Peace is being alone and playing by yourself.

The Humanist

The *humanist* is a category of students who believe peace is about taking care of one's family and friends. This group is focused on sharing, caring, and loving the people in one's life. Four of the six students in this study demonstrated the characteristics of a humanist. Four-year-old Matt defined peace as “being nice to my friends” and “when somebody gets to be my friend.”



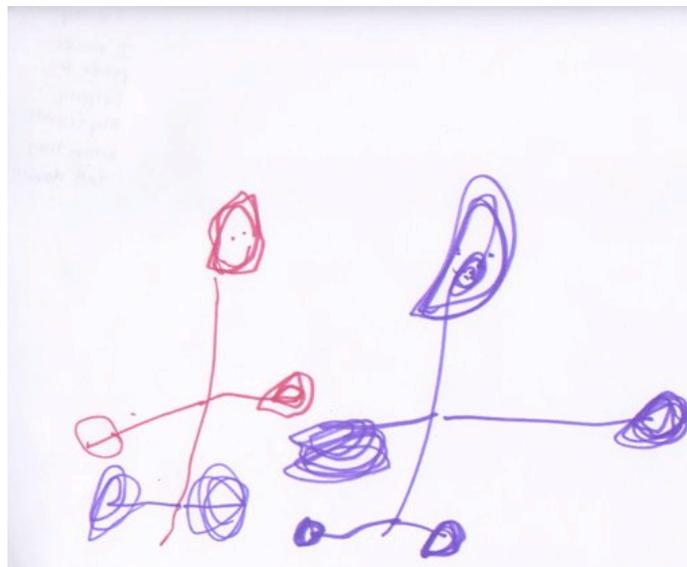
Matt: I make peace by being nice to my friends.

During our first discussion about what peace means, four-year-old Thomas said that peace “is taking care of our gardens.” After this response, I imagined that he might continue to demonstrate the characteristics of a naturalist. However, once he began drawing, he quickly showed that he is a humanist, defining peace as “making friends” (see below). Throughout the following read-alouds and discussions, Thomas continued to focus on the relationships between the story characters and the act of sharing.



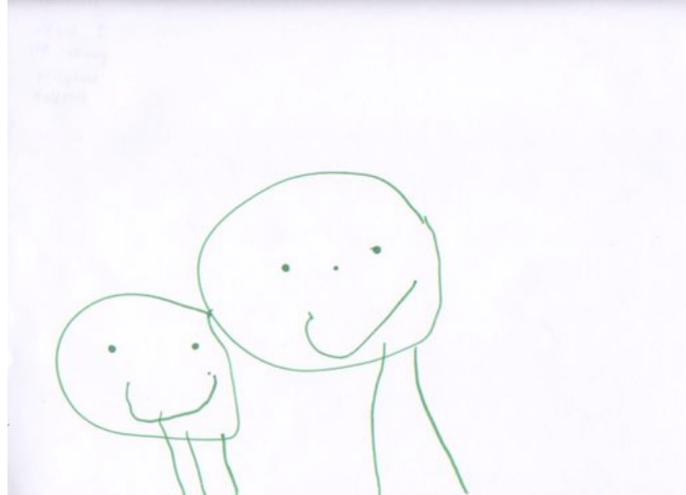
Thomas: Making peace is making friends.

Four-year-old Rachel also demonstrated similar elements of the humanist, describing peace as “helping my friends when they fall down” (see below). Rachel talked about the care-taking element of making peace, such as taking care of her friends and pointing out the children or babies in a book and describing what the babies looked like or were doing. Rachel is an older sister of two siblings and often talks about taking care of her younger brother and sister.



Rachel: I make peace by helping my friends when they fall down.

Another older sibling in the group, four year-old John, demonstrated similar characteristics as Rachel. He believed that peace was “playing with your friends” and when drawing a picture of peace, he talked about helping his mom take care of his younger brother.



John: I make peace by helping Ryan (his younger brother).

Discussion of Findings

In Clark (2008), I discovered that when asked what peace means to them, my students gave consistently similar definitions over a two-month period. These definitions did not alter or switch categories despite the very different representations of peace that I presented to them using books, poetry, and art (Clark, 2008). The discussion and drawings from this research study show similar results. With the exception of the first discussion (when I had given my own definition of what peace means), the students gave similar responses and made artwork consistent with their previous work in each peacemaker category. Once a child had defined peace as a naturalist, a meditator, or an humanist, they tended to continue defining peace in that way.

That a child's concept of peace remains constant throughout the research study, despite exposure to different images and ideas of peace, is important to our understanding of the social development of a child. As with Hakvoort's (1996) study, research that examines a child's concept of peace allows us to understand that child's psychological and social-cognitive development. Looking at the patterns of the humanist category, we see that students think of peace within Kohlberg's and Gilligan's second stage; the

Conventional level of moral reasoning (Dana & Lynch-Brown, 1991). The students are defining the concept of peace according to the rules of humankind and acting to care for others. This attention and care for others demonstrates that the students are beyond the first level of *Preconventional* level of reasoning where one focuses on the individual rights and acts to avoid punishment. I would argue that this true for both the naturalist and mediator categories as well. The naturalist acts to care for the natural world, including the plants and animals. I would argue that the mediator, although his or her reasoning is focused on the self, might possibly be reasoning at an even higher level, recognizing that finding peace within oneself is an important step in helping others.

Examining the students' work in the humanist group shows them thinking of peace within Selman's first stage of Social-Informational Role Taking by expressing their understanding in 'static, situation-related terms' (Hakvoort, 1996, p. 4). However, those in the naturalist group have a concept for peace that exists outside their own viewpoint. I think that further study (including interviews with students, similar to that done by Hakvoort (1996) is needed to determine whether children are working on a higher level of social-cognitive development, such as Stage 2, the Self-Reflective Role Taking level.

In order to understand the significance of a child's concept of peace, a longitudinal study would be needed to determine its effect on emerging traits such as: personality type, occupation selection, political beliefs or the level of education they attain. At the very least, a larger sample set, a longer period of study, and fewer variables might tell us more about how children identify with concepts of peace.

Results from Part Three: Reading a Draft of Making Peace

When I read a draft of my book, *Making Peace* to the same group of students I was hoping to discover not only how they would react to a book about peace but also what elements they would focus on when listening to and looking at my book. Based on their careful observations and comments during the previous read-alouds, I believed that the students' reactions and responses would help me revise both the text and the illustrations of *Making Peace*. The revised draft of *Making Peace* can be found in Appendix D.

During the read-aloud of *Making Peace*, the children's reactions were similar to those from earlier story circles; they referenced and described their knowledge and memories when they were looking at the illustrations, they focused on the faces of the characters in the book, and their definitions of peace remained consistent with their earlier work.

The students shared their own stories and ideas when I read through the first draft of *Making Peace*. They talked about planting their own gardens (from page five), eating apples and tomatoes (from page three), and discussed what kind of fruit grows on a tree, "apples, oranges, lemons" compared with fruit that grows on a vine "grapes, strawberries, tomatoes", which occurred during our discussion of page six. When looking at page ten, Rachel said, "he is sleeping." "Why do you think he is sleeping?" I asked. "Because it's nighttime," John replied. "How do you know it's nighttime?" I asked. "Because it's nighttime and it's blue", he replied. "Well, but blue is the color of the sky and black is the color of the night", Thomas explained. Collectively, the students used their knowledge to explain why they believed a character was or wasn't sleeping.

The students paid particular attention to the faces of the characters that I had drawn and described to me what facial features were present or missing. On almost every page of the book, both John and Matt pointed out that the noses were missing on the faces. The students also talked about the eyes and mouth; describing open eyes and closed eyes, the happy mouth or the sleeping mouth.

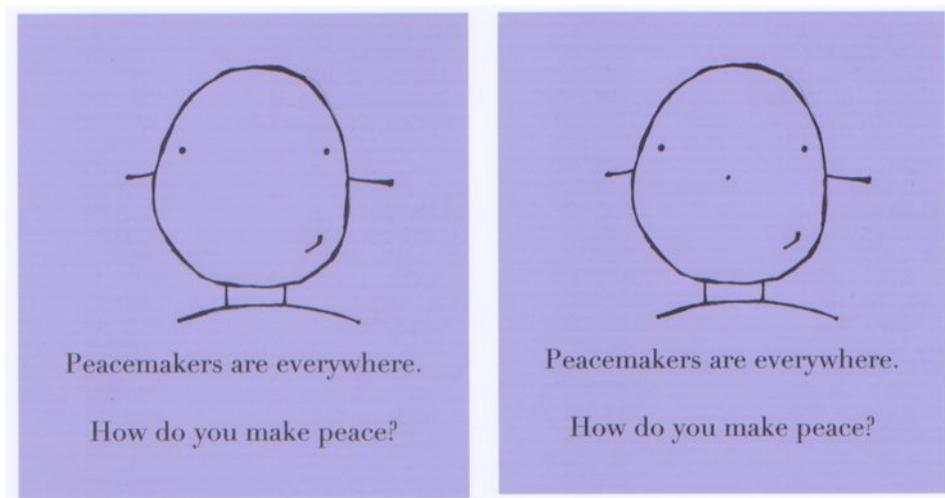
The students' discussion also focused on whether the circle that made up the character was a head or a body. "He is missing a neck," said Holly, while John pointed out that "he has no body". Thomas disagreed with them both and said, "Yes, he does have a body, it's right there (pointing to the circle) where his mouth and eyes are." This disagreement confirms studies outlined by Gardner (1980) that have proven that while some children believe that the "tadpole" figure drawing done by children is made up of a head, others see it as the body and there is no clear reason why this difference exists.

After we read the book, I asked the children what they believed the book was about. Immediately, Rachel, Jane and John all said "peace." Thomas told me that he thought the book was about "sharing things" which goes along with his tendency toward the humanist category. Matt told me it is about "peace...and that little guy and also a big guy," which also goes along with the humanist group. Holly, who has previously demonstrated thoughts from the naturalist category, told me that the book was about "the little guy planting flowers" remaining consistent with her earlier beliefs. Based on their earlier reactions and responses during the study, the students remained consistent in expressing characteristics of each peacemaker category.

Revisions for a Second Draft

Based on some of the observations made by the students and my own responses to their questions and comments, I decided to make a few revisions to the illustrations of *Making Peace*. The following is a description of those changes.

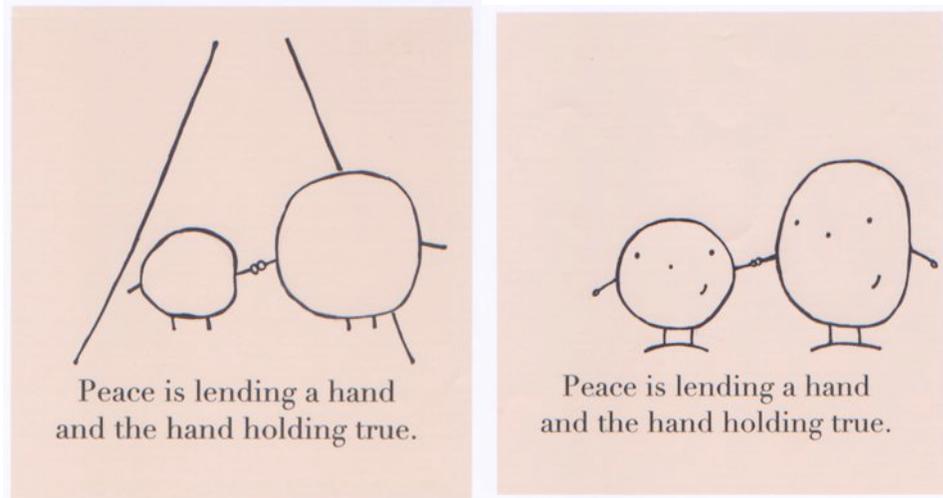
The first change that I made to the illustrations was to add noses to all of the characters. When I was reading the book, four out of the six children made remarks about the character's missing noses. Matt said, "I don't know why they are missing their noses." Although the characters don't have any ears, hair, or clothes, the children remained focused on the fact that they didn't have noses. When I looked back at the children's drawings, I noticed that almost every drawing of a person done included eyes, mouths, and noses. To make my drawings consistent with their own, I decided to add the noses to each character.



Page 13: Before and After

The second major change that I made to was to make all of the characters face mostly forward on the page. On page one, I had drawn two characters that were walking together down a road, facing away from the page. When the children saw this picture,

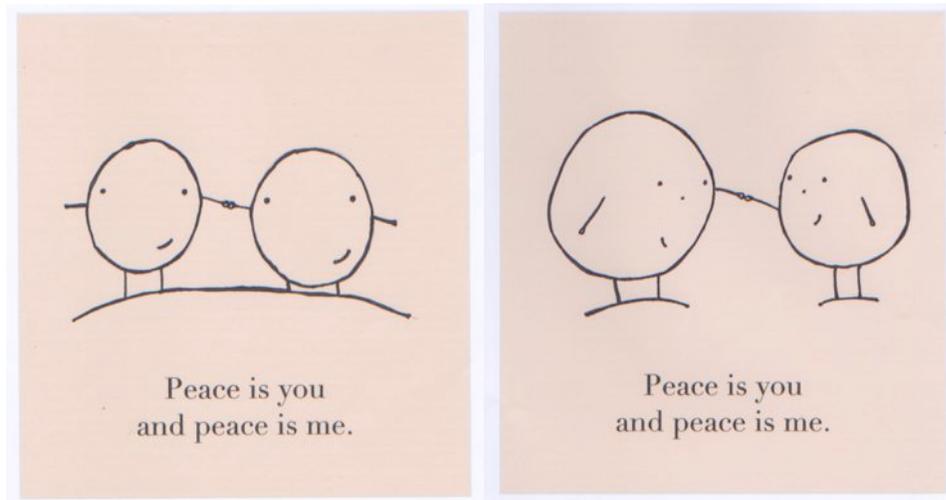
they immediately described the characters as missing facial features and incomplete, “you forgot the noses, the eyes and the mouths!” One child also seemed confused about the perspective used in the road, thinking that the two characters were on a “rocket ship.” I decided to alter this illustration to eliminate confusion about missing facial features and perspective.



Page 1: Before and After

I also made some other adjustments to the characters, including adding rounded hands to each arm. During the read-aloud, Rachel observed that some of the figures had hands (when they were waving, holding hands, sharing an apple or picking a fruit), but they didn't have hands on their “outside arms”. Thomas asked me “why did you forget the hands?” My reasoning for this was to emphasize the action of hand holding, or caring, or sharing. However, after hearing the students' reactions, I decided that my tactic was inconsistent and that each arm should have a hand. Another adjustment I made was to the small pieces of land that each character was standing on. I realized when I was reading the book to the children, that some of them thought that this piece of land was actually the character's feet, while others believed it was a “mountain”, “lump”, or “hill”. These

observations became confusing when we looked at page twelve, showing two characters standing on one line. Rachel said, “they have one feet...put together” with a confused look on her face. To eliminate this confusion, I decided to make each character have his or her own line, remaining consistent with the rest of the illustrations.



Page 12: Before and After

Most of the focus and suggestions made by the students involved the illustrations of the book. When I asked the students about the language or the meaning of the words that I had chosen, they nodded their heads or repeated a version of what was written, offering little criticism or suggestion for changes. This lack of suggestions for revisions may be because their own conceptions of peace aligned with at least some of those in the book.

Overall it was an exciting experience to read my own book to this group of children. I think their observations were very thoughtful and they made some important points about the consistency and realism of the illustrations. I believe that reading a draft of one's own book to the implied reader may be a very important step in the creation of any kind of book. Reading a book with an author or illustrator might also be a helpful

experience for children as well. It offers them a chance to ask questions about certain visual and literary choices made in the book.

Personal Inspiration for a Children's book

While my framework for a children's book has been informed by my analysis and research, I believe that it is also important to find inspiration in my past as a reader of picture books. I have been a fan of picture books since I learned how to read them, having collected and studied them from a very young age. My favorite authors and illustrators include Shel Silverstein, Maurice Sendak, Eric Carle, Tom DePaola, Beatrix Potter, and Roger Hargreaves (the *Mr. Men* and *Little Miss* series). I gained a new perspective and respect for picture books when I began teaching young children. I began looking for picture books that could assist me in teaching – giving my students an opportunity to both enjoy and learn from reading experiences. Authors that I found helpful in the classroom include Dr. Suess, Suzy Lee, Robert McCloskey, Eric Hill (the *Spot* series), and Don Freeman (*Corduroy*).

When I began the process of writing and drawing my book, I realized that it was important to outline my conceptual ideas – both visually and linguistically. I knew that I wanted to introduce a character that found ways to define peace in his world. I decided that instead of choosing one gender or race for this character – that instead I wanted to remove many of the cultural and gender identifiers; the skin color, hair style, even the clothes that the character wore. I began thinking about the type of human figures that the students in my class draw, similar to what Howard Gardner (1980) calls “tadpole” figures – a circle that represents the head and/or body of the figure with a face (usually eyes and mouth) with arms and legs coming directly out of the circle (p. 61). Gardner believes that

this is a child's first experimentation with representational drawing and that the figure represents a prototype of a human, rather than a specific person (1980). I liked the idea of providing children with a character in my book that could represent anyone in the world – from any culture or place or gender. And by doing so, I hope to create a greater connection between the reader and this character and allow the reader to believe that this figure might even represent themselves, or their friends and family.

For the layout of my book, I wanted to introduce simplistic syntax matched with illustrations using line drawings and an easy-to-read font. I wanted to keep the page layout consistent throughout the book. I knew that I didn't want to introduce fantasy or magic into the book, such as talking animals or fictitious characters (monsters, fairies, etc). I wanted the story to be based in a reality that is similar to the world that my readers live in. I wanted to use vocabulary and concepts that would be easy for the reader (of any age) to understand, such as on page three, "peace is sharing with you and you sharing with me" and on page four "peace is caring for you and you caring for me". I also wanted to introduce ideas that might challenge the reader, such as "Peace is finding quiet and the quiet nurturing us" (page nine) and "Peace is being alone and learning who you are" (page eleven). The outline of my book followed the types of peacemakers that I discovered during my earlier studies on peace education curriculum in the classroom, what I have characterized as the *humanist*, *naturalist*, and the *meditator* (Clark, 2008). The text of *Making Peace* can be found in Appendix A and my revised draft can be found in Appendix D of this paper.

Peace Building: An Appendix to Making Peace

The final piece of this project was to collect what I had learned from my review of literature and my research with students and to create a guide for parents and teachers. This guide is the final page of *Making Peace* and is designed to offer adults ideas and activities that may incorporate the philosophy of peacebuilding into their homes or classrooms. This guide would answer my final research question: How can teachers incorporate the philosophy of peace education into their classrooms?

I decided to name this section “*Peace Building: Incorporate peace education into your home and classroom*” and I divided it into five sections. The five sections are: *Ask of Peace*, *Make Peace*, *Act for Peace*, *Celebrate Peace*, and *Offer Peace*. Each section outlines ideas about how to talk about peace with children and describes one or more activities to do with them. *Ask of Peace* offers ways to talk about peace with young children including discussion topics, peace sharing circles, and peace picture walks. In this section, adults are encouraged to ask children: what does peace mean to you? and how do you make peace? A peace sharing circle is a time dedicated to children talking about something that they felt, saw or thought that was peaceful. *Make Peace* is a section that describes the three categories of peacemakers, the humanist, the meditator, and the naturalist. This section suggests that adults can dedicate art projects such as drawings, paintings and group murals to the subject of peace. In *Act for Peace*, I have listed ways to incorporate peace education into children’s dramatic play, such as peace plays, peace concerts and peace role play. In *Celebrate Peace* I list a few international celebrations and projects that students can participate in to connect with other students around the world who are also studying peace. These include the UN International Day of Peace,

Earth Day celebrations, and Pinwheels for Peace. The last section of the guide is called *Offer Peace* where I offer suggestions for the classroom curriculum and environment. These suggestions include creating a library of peace books, support materials, and creating spaces for meditation and peacemaking. The text of this guide is found in Appendix B and in the draft of *Making Peace* in Appendix D.

I created these sections based on my experience in the classroom and my review of the literature on peace education. These sections are not meant to be the specific details of activities but rather an inspiration for teachers and parents – a starting point to help them brainstorm new ideas to promote children’s social and moral development. I hope to inspire parents to bring more of the philosophy of peace education into the classroom and show them that it isn’t a difficult task to take on. I also want to encourage teachers to carefully examine both the classroom materials and the physical environment when incorporating this philosophy. By creating safe, beautiful, and cooperative learning environments, we are providing our students with many opportunities to make peace in their own lives. These opportunities should foster every kind of peacemaker – the one caring for her friends, caring for the plants and animals, and caring for oneself.

Chapter V Conclusion

The main goal for this creative thesis project was to write and illustrate a children's book called *Making Peace* that explored the many ways to make peace in one's world. I designed a literature analysis and qualitative research study that would help create a framework for my book and also answer the following research questions; What are the common elements of children's picture books whose main theme is "peace"? How do children react to these types of stories? How do children talk about and define peace? How can teachers incorporate the philosophy of peace education into their classrooms? And lastly, how do children react to my own picture book about peace?

To help answer these questions I reviewed literature based on social and moral development theory, literary theory, and peace education curriculum for the early childhood classroom. I analyzed a collection of children's literature about peace, finding common literary and visual elements that might be helpful to include in my own story about peace. I also led story circles and art activities with a small group of students, documenting and analyzing their reactions to the picture books, as well as a draft of my own book.

My research findings were compared with my earlier studies on children's understanding of peace and incorporated into a conceptual framework for my book. I found that children often related to one of three possible understandings of peace, what I have called the *humanist*, the *meditator*, and the *naturalist*. The humanist is the child who believes peace is taking care of and cooperating with friends and family. The meditator is one who finds peace in themselves, being still, calm, and quiet. And the naturalist believes that peace means taking care of one's earth and all of the plants and animals on

the earth. I have organized my children's book, *Making Peace* according to these three concepts.

Future Research

I believe that more research is needed to fully understand how children make sense of the very general topic of peace. Further research would include a longitudinal study, which might follow students through their childhood, documenting their responses to and experiences with a peace education curriculum. This research might include more opportunities for the students' responses, including drama, music, movement and more discussions – all key components to a response-centered curriculum. Other future research extensions might include examining how and what the children are learning from literature that addresses topics of peace and war and how that affects their social relationships and moral development. This research might include children from communities that have not been previously exposed to peace education or who have experienced some kind of violence during their lives.

Questions that still remain for me as the researcher include exploring issues of 'types' of peacemakers – can we be more than one type (humanist, naturalist, mediator) and if not, do we continue existing as this one type our whole lives? I am also intrigued by what other methods and tools parents, teachers, community and government leaders can use to help foster peacemaking strategies in children.

Development as a Children's Book Author and Peace Educator

In the near future, I hope to finalize a draft of my picture book and begin sending it to publishing houses throughout the United States. I plan on self-publishing a small number of copies for promotional purposes and to share with friends, family and my

group of students. I also hope to develop a website and marketing plan that will serve as both a site for my book but also a resource for parents and teachers with tips on how to incorporate peace education into young children's lives both at home and at school.

Conclusion

As a peace educator, I hope to help young children develop both socially and morally. I hope to create tools to foster their positive and prosocial instincts and help them learn constructive methods to make peace in a much too violent world. As I develop these tools, I also hope to continue to learn more about the students that I teach and the world that they are growing up in. Developmental psychologist Bonnie Litowitz (1993) reminds us that by "reexamining what we are asking the learner to do must also include who we are asking the learner to become" (p. 191). In today's world and with that state of our current economic and political climate, I ask these young children to become peacemakers; with their families, their friends, their natural world, and themselves.

APPENDICES

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Appendix A
Text of “Making Peace”

Making Peace
By Maggie Clark

(Section 1: Humanist Definitions)

Page 1: Peace is lending a hand, and the hand holding true.
Page 2: Peace is loving you and you loving me.
Page 3: Peace is sharing with you and you sharing with me.
Page 4: Peace is caring for you and you caring for me.

(Section 2: Naturalist Definitions)

Page 5: Peace is caring for the earth and the earth caring for us.
Page 6: Peace is planting a tree, and the tree giving fruit.
Page 7: Peace is catching rain, and the rain helping life grow.
Page 8: Peace is collecting sun and the sun giving life.

(Sections 3: Meditator Definitions)

Page 9: Peace is finding quiet and the quiet nurturing us.
Page 10: Peace is calming your body and your body calming you.
Page 11: Peace is being alone and learning who you are.
Page 12: Peace is being together and finding those you love.

(Section 4: Conclusion)

Page 13: Peace is you and peace is me.

Page 14: Peacemakers are everywhere.
How do you make peace?

Notes in italics mark the sections of the book but will not appear in the text of the book.

Appendix B
Text of “Peace Building”

Peace Building: Incorporate peace education into your home and classroom

Ask of Peace

- Ask and Discuss Peace with Children:
What does peace mean to you? How do you make peace?
- Have a Peace Sharing Circle:
Share something you felt, saw, or thought that was peaceful
- Take Peace Picture Walks:
Using your favorite peace books and magazines, examine how other peoples and cultures make peace.

Make Peace

- Talk about the many different kind of peacemakers in the world:
 - The Humanist: One who makes peace with others. One who commits acts of kindness towards friends, family and community. One who shares, cares, and loves all peoples of the world.
 - The Meditator: One who makes peace with themselves. One who finds calm, quiet, and balance in their own life.
 - The Naturalist: One who makes peace with the natural world. One who waters the garden, plants a tree, and takes care of the animals.
- Make Peace Art: Dedicate drawings, paintings, and group murals to the subject of peace.

Act for Peace

- Perform Peace Plays: Using picture books or create your own classroom peace tale.
- Put on Peace Concerts: Dance to music and sing peace songs.
- Peace Role Play: Imagine conflicts and role play the many different ways to make peace in the classroom.

Celebrate Peace

- Make Pinwheels for Peace to celebrate UN International Day of Peace Celebration
<http://www.pinwheelsforpeace.com>
- Celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day with nature walks and tree planting ceremonies.
- Make peace penpals with children from another country.

Offer Peace

- **Build a Peace Library:** Create a classroom library of children's literature about themes around peace, conflict resolution, social learning, feelings, and emotions.
- **Collect Peace Materials:** Include support materials with books: flannel boards, feltboard stories, puppets, posters and bulletin board designs.
- **Make a Peace Table:** A table dedicated to conflict resolution where children can go to resolve their conflicts with peaceful communication.
- **Create a Meditation Table:** A safe, quiet and private place for one child to meditate.
- **Build an Outdoor Peace Place:** In a garden or under a tree, establish a place where children can go to celebrate peace in their own way.

Appendix C
Children's Book Analyses

Book Analysis #1

Title: The Peace Book

Author/Illustrator: Todd Parr

Publisher: Little, Brown and Company, New York, NY, 2004

Medium: Painting; prints of acrylic on canvas

1. *First-time reading:* This picture book explores the multiple definitions of peace. Each page has big, bright bold colored drawings and offers one definition of what peace means. It is a fun and sometimes silly book that reads quickly and seems like the perfect addition to a peace education library. I think kids would like this!

2. *Reading the text:* The text is made up of a list of definitions of what the author believes "peace is." The language is repetitive, stating a new definition with each page. The definitions cover topics such as

- human relations and interactions ("making new friends, saying sorry when you hurt someone, helping your neighbor, thinking about someone you love, giving shoes to someone who needs them, sharing a meal, offering a hug to a friend, everyone having a home, having enough pizza in the world for everyone, keeping someone warm, new babies being born)
- cultural activities (listening to different kinds of music, reading all different kinds of books, wearing different clothes, learning another language)
- taking care of nature (keeping the water blue for all the fish, planting a tree, watching it snow, keeping the streets clean, growing a garden,
- quiet, still activities (taking a nap)

And the story ends with a very open-ended definition of peace; "peace is being free."

3. *Reading the illustrations:* The pictures are bright and bold with all of the colors of the rainbow. Animals and people are both represented in the illustrations:

- Humans: The people are drawn wearing all different types and colors of clothing including dresses, pants, kaftans, hats, turbans, etc. They have many different accessories - glasses, earrings, haircuts, different colored shoes, etc.
- Animals: The animals are often treated as the main subjects in the illustrations, trading off with the people in the pictures. They also take on human characteristics – wearing clothes and showing facial expressions.

The illustrations don't completely express the pictures and are very general – there are simple pictures of happy scenes – the garden, the town, the snow falling, a library. Without the text, it would be hard to understand the author's meaning and would portray a more general story about the activities of humans. Some of the illustrations verge on the silly and absurd showing a centipede wearing shoes and a sheep wearing a sweater. I wonder if the illustrator meant to make the messages light-hearted for the young reader, to balance out the heavier tone.

4. *Reading aloud:* The language that the author uses is repetitive and somewhat poetic. It is very easy to read aloud to the class and offers many opportunities to pause and ask questions. The repetition of the word “peace” emphasizes its importance and demonstrates how general the concept of peace is.

5. *Reading the text breaks:* The text outline of the book is one sentence per page, so the text breaks are easy to navigate and neither slow down nor speed up the pace of the book. Some of the sentences are longer than the others but this does not seem to alter the experience of reading the book.

6. *Examining the illustrator's choices:* The illustrator's choices in the content and characters used in the pictures seem fairly disconnected and do not follow a narrative or plotline. I like that the characters are the central focus of almost every page, making it easier for the young child to focus and examine what is being depicted. The perspective is straight-on, like a snapshot of the characters and objects. Parr draws like a child – I like this! Perhaps this might make it easier for the child to connect with?

7. *Reading the colors:* The illustrator uses vibrant colors – primary and secondary colors, solid, with black line drawings. There is no variation in the hues, saturations, or tones in the colors, just solid blocks of color. Each of the humans is portrayed with different skin, hair and clothing colors. I think Parr's use of bright bold colors makes for a fun reading experience, but emphasizes that this is, indeed a children's book in its simplicity

8. *Reading the page layout:* The illustrations are large and take up most of the page, with the text written on the top header of the page. This is the same throughout the whole story, aligning with the repetitive language that the author uses. The type font is a simple handwritten font.

9. *Final Reading:* Since I first began using this book two years ago, I've always thought of this as part of the 'canon' of peace education books for children. Its simple language, colors, and style offers many opportunities to expand upon a theme – whether it is exploring the meaning of peace, methods for drawing, painting, and coloring, and even introducing the idea of difference in personal clothing. Todd Parr also writes other books that address simple themes such as families, emotions, feelings – all topics that are commonly addressed in the early childhood classroom.

Book Analysis #2

Title: If Peace is...

Author: Jane Baskwill

Illustrator: Stephanie Carter

Publisher: Mondo Publishing, New York, 2003

Medium: Painting/Digital Illustration

1. *First Reading:* This book reads fairly quickly it's poetic text is a fast-paced and flows from one page to the next with rhymes. The message is based on hypotheticals – “if peace is...” something, rather than definitive messages of what peace is. Perhaps this type of message might be harder for younger children to understand? The illustrations are packed with content and lots of symbolism.

2. *Reading the text:* This text can stand alone, perhaps it might even serve a stronger message read just as a poem with no images, read at a steady and even pace. The rhyming made me want to turn the pages quickly, eager to hear the next line, rather than ponder the message of the illustration. The language and mood is light-hearted but also slightly improbable – wondering what one might do if peace was a bell, a book, a song....

3. *Reading the illustrations:* The images are packed full of imagery and symbolism, though they are often a bit scattered and slightly confusing. On page five, there are two hands with pictures of the sun and a tree and a bird on the hands, with a background of water, waves, and fishes – this type of image is very confusing – I can imagine a child wondering why the hands are so large, why they have tattoos on them, why the fish seem to be floating above the water. The illustrations are more like collage and design than one single narrative or message

4. *Reading aloud:* The language is a poem, set in rhyme with a quick rhythm. The text is very easy to read aloud, almost too quick in its pace. Each page has one sentence that begins with “if peace is...” and goes on to describe playful messages that don't directly

address a positive or negative concept of peace but rather emphasize it's very general meaning ("if peace is a hand, I'll hold on so tight"). I think the author seemed to stretch the idea a little too far at times, moving beyond a simple message of peace meant for children. However, about half way through the book (page twelve), the repetition stops and she writes "but peace is more than all of these things..." and goes on to describe peace as a process for humans to work on. I almost wish that the book had begun with that message from the beginning.

5. Reading the text breaks: The text breaks follow the pattern of the rhyme, which move the reader to turn the page. The second half of the book has longer lines than the first and is more descriptive about the process of peace. I think the overall effect of the text breaks and rhythm works well for the book and it's message.

6. Examining the illustrator's choices: There are human subjects for each illustration – representing all genders, skin colors, hair lengths wearing bright coloring clothing. While the humans have differences in coloring, they all have the same shape eyes, nose, lips and circles for cheeks. All of the pictures are set outdoors in nature – with birds, water, trees, sunshine, and images of a green and blue globe. There are also symbols throughout the book – such as hearts, stars, birds, flags, and flowers. There are no repeating characters throughout the book.

7. Reading the colors: The humans are dressed in bright colors – with lots of oranges and reds, while the backgrounds have a lot of blues, greens, and browns in the depictions of nature. The colors are bold but have variations in their hue as well – going from light to dark.

8. *Reading the page layout:* For the first half of the book, there are single images per page with white borders, while the second half of the book (which has longer sentences) has images that take over both pages and have no borders – as if to make the message bigger, louder, more important than the smaller images. The first half also has individual activities – one character reading a book, or watering a garden, while the second half introduce multiple characters, interacting with one another and doing things together.

9. *Final Reading:* After a close examination of this book, I am more aware of the overall arc of the book – from a simple poetic song (almost like a nursery rhyme) to a greater message (in both text and illustration) in the latter half of the book. I have read this book many times to my students and have never noticed this shift in delivery – while I think it is an interesting method, perhaps it could have been a more deliberate shift in page layout, text, and illustration than the subtle one that the author and illustrator have chosen.

Book Analysis #3

Title: Can You Say Peace?

Author/Illustrator: Karen Katz

Publisher: Henry Holt and Company, New York, 2006

Medium: Painting

1. First Reading: This book is a celebration of languages, children, and the UN International Day of Peace. The book goes through the many different ways of saying the word peace from around the world – India, America, Japan, Australia, Mexico, Iran, Russia, China, France, Ghana, Bolivia. It introduces characters from each country, with their names, and how they pronounce “peace” in their language. Although the illustrations are drawn images, I think this book offers many opportunities to highlight the differences among the children – a truly multicultural text.

2. Reading the text: I don’t believe that the text of this book could stand alone – it is too simple – basically a list of statements and translations. The outline of the story begins with the introduction of the International Day of Peace, then leads to listing ways to say the word “peace” in different languages, and finally a last page celebrating the similarities of children and families and their desire of peace in their communities. There are no main characters, only single children from each country.

3. Reading the illustrations: The illustrator notes on the back flap that she is interested in folk art. In this book, she mimics a painterly folk style. She chooses different skin colors, genders shapes and sizes of the children’s heads and facial features – emphasizing that all people are different. While the faces are painted in bold, solid colors with no change in hues, the children’s clothes and the backgrounds are made up of many different prints and patterns, allowing the focus to remain on the child’s face while creating a beautiful background.

4. *Reading aloud:* Because the text repeats itself in a pattern (“(name of child) lives in - (country). (name of child) says (translation for ‘peace’)”), it creates a nice rhythm to the whole book, making it easy to read aloud. When I have read this aloud to children, they often chose to repeat the word for peace, and often become giggly at the different sounds they are saying - which makes the experience a fun one for them.

5. *Reading the text breaks:* The pattern of the book sets up simple text breaks on the page – and create a nice rhythm to the story – moving you along the story at an even pace. This seems to be a common element in children’s books, perhaps for purposes of reading aloud.

6. *Examining the illustrator's choices:* Like the pattern created by the language, the illustrations also follow a pattern. On the right hand page is the ‘portrait’ of the child that is highlighted and is the central focus of the page. The left hand page shows the child in their natural environment – with friends or family, doing a playful activity (riding a bike, building a snowman, having a picnic), which is usually set outside. The left hand page is almost like an “I spy” game where one can look to find the character that is highlighted on the next page. I think the only thing I would change is the order of the pictures (switch the left hand page with the right hand page) so the character could be introduced and then shown playing – allowing the reader to spend more time with the playful scene in nature. However, her choice to emphasize the child’s face does offer the opportunity to talk to children about the differences in children’s appearances. I also noticed that the author places some children in cities (America and France) while placing others in the country (Ghana and Iran).

7. *Reading the colors:* The illustrator uses bright, bold, often primary or secondary colors. The faces of the children are solid, while the clothes, hair, and backgrounds have patterns. The author seems to have used a particular palette of color for the different countries/cultures represented in the story – which seem reminiscent of the kind of folk art from that culture, which perhaps was originally inspired by the landscape. For example, the page on Russia has darker blues and purples with the white of the snow, while India has oranges and yellows and pinks, and Mexico has bold greens, yellows and reds.

8. *Reading the page layout:* Each page has a very similar layout, with a landscape painting filling the left hand pages with the text on the top left corner and a portrait of a child on the right hand page with the text in the center bottom of the page. This pattern stays consistent as the book lists each country. The exception to this pattern of the is the very beginning and the very end of the book – introducing all of the children and recollecting on the similarities between the children. In these pages, the pictures cover both pages (rather than single pictures per page), they have no border (rather than a bright solid border of the middle section), and the background is a solid color, rather than prints or nature scenes. I think the author wanted to emphasize the similarities among the children, focusing on the group of them, rather than their settings.

9. *Final Reading:* After carefully analyzing all of the components of this book, I recognized both the linguistic and visual choices that the author/illustrator made and appreciated these choices. On first reading, it was very simple and child-like but I think there are some choices in the colors, page layout and illustrations that make this a fun reading experience.

Book Analysis #4

Title: Peace at Last

Author/Illustrator: Jill Murphy

Publisher: Penguin, Putnam, Inc. New York, 1980

Medium: Drawing

1. First Reading: This is the first ‘peace’ book that I have analyzed that tells a story – about Mr. Bear and his long attempt at finding a quiet place to sleep in the Bear family house. The repetitive nature and patterns of the story make it easy to read – I can imagine this is a nice bedtime story. Although the title of the book uses the word peace – it is only mentioned once when Mr. Bear has finally found quiet back in his bed at the end of the night but only to be quickly woken by the alarm clock and his family. The idea of ‘peace’ in this book means quiet, calm, stillness for the individual compared with the idea of caring for others and our world.

2. Reading the text: The text of this book is quite simple and is written in a repetitive style. The beginning of the story introduces the characters and the storyline – a bear family going to bed. Then the text begins a pattern: something disturbing Mr. Bear’s sleep (Mrs. Bear snoring, Baby Bear playing, a clock ticking and the refrigerator humming), followed by the sound of the disturbance (SNORE, NYAOWW, TICK-TOCK, etc), followed by Mr. Bear declaring that he “can’t stand this” and moving to another part of the house. The text pattern is reminiscent of Goldilocks searching for the perfect chair, porridge and bed. From my experience, children enjoy this sort of text – which allows them to predict and demonstrate their understanding of the pattern.

3. Reading the illustrations: The illustrations in the story match the warm, simple, repetitive language of text. The warmth of the illustrations come from the glowing lights in the pictures – from lamps and the moon, shining down on the characters in a warm

orange/yellow light. The characters in the book are cartoon bears that can walk and talk like humans, living as a family in a house and doing human-like activities such as playing, snoring, and going to bed. I particularly enjoy the use of illustrations to help move along the storyline – the black and white images on the left hand pages which show Mr. Bear on the move – and the colored images on the right hand pages which show his sleep disturbed. I believe that these black and white line drawings do well at connecting the text with the illustrations.

4. Reading aloud: This is an easy book to read aloud and listen to. The repetitive nature of the text and illustrations make it a pleasurable experience and reminiscent of well-known fairy tales and fables, with its rhythm and beat.

5. Reading the text breaks: The text breaks follow the pattern established by the text – breaking immediately after Mr. Bear realizes that he has to find another place to sleep. These natural breaks encourage one to turn the page with ease and fit comfortably in the story as a whole.

6. Examining the illustrator's choices: I enjoyed looking at the details and the different choices that the illustrator chose in depicting the Bear family and their home. I think the details make the bears more human-like and accessible to young readers, such as the clothes and newspapers that have been strewn on to the floor, the toys near the children, the wallpaper and furniture of the spaces – all of which add to the details of the space.

7. Reading the colors: The colored illustrations have bright colors on every page, however the nighttime scenes are slightly shadowed. These scenes are made warmer by glowing lights, lamps, and the moon. The daytime scenes are much brighter and not shadowed, emphasizing the 'awake' time for the Bear family, especially Mr. Bear. The

colors are bold primary colors which highlight the happiness of the family, even when the main character can't find a place to sleep – he never gets angry but is still smiling at the end of the story.

8. Reading the page layout: The page layout remains the same throughout the book – with the left hand page with black text on white page with black line drawings (hinting at illustrations on the right hand – used to connect text to the picture) and the right-hand page with framed colored illustrations. The exception to this pattern are two pages that have a black background with white text (first when everyone goes to sleep, except Mr. Bear, and then when Mr. Bear goes outside into the garden to try to find a quiet place to sleep) which remind the reader that it is nighttime and a time for sleeping.

9. Final reading: On the fifth reading of this story, I thought about the similarities between the story and that of Goldilocks and Bears – and then not until the tenth reading, did I see on the very last page, the copy of a Goldilocks book on Mr. Bear's bed! This proves once again, how much one can miss in the first few readings of a picture book. I am intrigued by Murphy's emphasis on the word 'peace' in the title and the definition of peace as a state of calm, quiet, and stillness for her main character – I think a nice description and story about the meditative way of creating or finding peace.

Book Analysis #5

Title: When I Grow Up, I Will Win the Nobel Peace Prize

Author/Illustrator: Isabel Pin

Translated from German by Nancy Seitz

Publisher: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York, 2006

Medium: Drawing/Watercolor

- 1. First Reading:* This book is about a boy who wants to grow up to win the Nobel peace prize and outlines how one must act in order to do that. These acts are given in very general terms – such as “loving thy neighbor, creating peace among people, saving animals from cruelty, share with the poor and unfortunate, protect the environment, give aid to those who need it, not tolerate injustice or greed, and be brave in difficult situations”. However, the illustrations that are matched with this text depict scenes where this boy is seeing and doing the exact opposite of what is described in the text. With it’s general terms, dark and somewhat haunting illustrations, I am wondering what age this picture book might be appropriate for? It seems slightly inappropriate for young children.
- 2. Reading the text:* The text of this book describes in open-ended ways how to make peace in the world and the characteristics of a nobel peace prize winner. The poetic narrative describes ways to make peace by caring for the people in your community and your natural world. The text also describes actions that one must take against bad things in their world – such as injustice, greed, and cruelty. The text also refers to other, mature ideas and characteristics of humanity such as people who are ‘unfortunate’ or who need ‘aid’ – language that may be confusing for young children who are still learning what these words mean. The short, simple one sentence per page style in the book at first appeared appropriate for young children, but each sentence offers complex ideas and meanings.

3. *Reading the illustrations:* The illustrations of this book are simple line drawings and water color paintings. The cartoon characters have very expressive faces – and while the text refers to positive concepts and meaning (for the most part) – the faces are sad, angry, scared, and aggressive. I was surprised when I first looked through this book – the cover and title led me to believe that the images would be upbeat, modern, simplistic paintings of positive messages of peace. But as I read, I quickly realized that it was quite the opposite.

4. *Reading aloud:* I think reading the text aloud is probably the best thing about reading this book – the short simple sentences read like a smooth, rhythmic poem, easy and pleasurable to hear. I can imagine writing the text separately and reading it for enjoyment, separate of the illustrations. Reading the book while examining the illustrations has a different effect – almost confusing in it's sarcasm and irony - the text is on the left hand page, usually blank with small added illustrations (a tree, a dog, an extension from the right hand page), while the right hand page is a full page illustration of the boy who sees the opposite of what the text describes (for example, one page says “I will be brave in difficult situations” showing the boy hiding from an angry shopkeeper who has just had a soccer ball kicked through his window).

5. *Reading the text breaks:* The text breaks are simple and straightforward – like the other books I have read thus far, the text breaks at the end of each sentence – with one sentence per page. These breaks make it easy to read aloud and encourage the reader to continue on to the next page (after one has examined the illustration).

6. *Examining the illustrator's choices:* The illustrator's choices might be the most difficult task of this book analysis and the more that I look at the illustrations, the more

confused I am. The illustrations – while interesting in shape and color, are definitely quite dark and haunting. The spaces created are very open, sparse, and often empty. The characters are emoting sad, angry, and hostile expressions. The end of the story does lead to a bright and positive image of the boy receiving the Nobel Prize from the Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela – but up until this point, there has been no peaceful act made by the boy. The last image – with text saying “there is so much to do. I ought to get started right away” leads us to believe that the boy will begin to do all of these things. The one point that I do think the illustrator demonstrates well – is that all children have opportunities to make peace in their world. The illustrations show potential opportunities for children – playing at home or in the park, at school, or even at the market – where they can make choices that are more peaceful than what is shown in the pictures. This is a book about what we might not do, shouldn’t do – perhaps offering children the opportunity, when reading to think about what better act the boy could do.

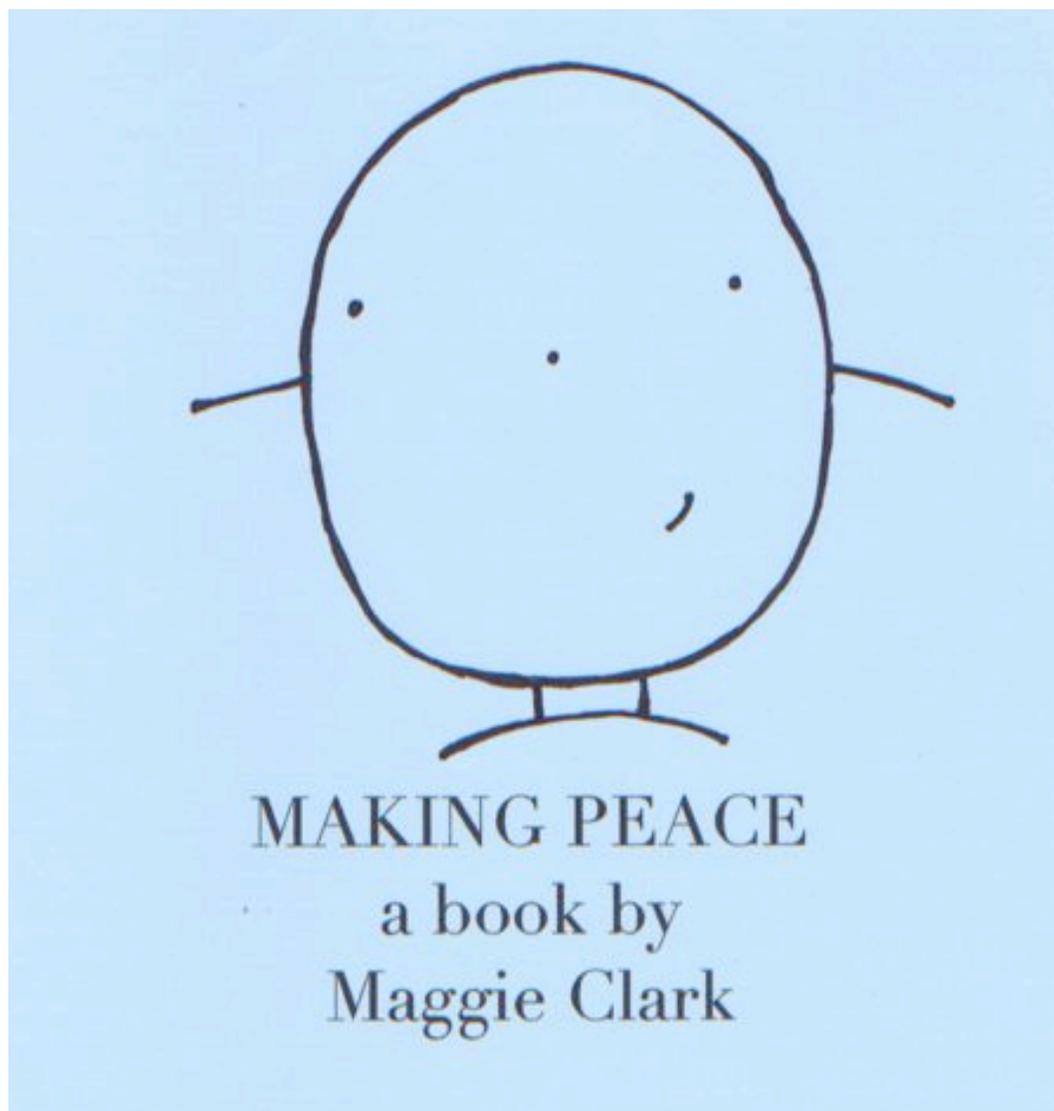
7. Reading the colors: The colors of the story are muted, with big sections of dark browns, blues, and grays on certain pages. The colors chosen for the characters are often wearing bright colors of clothing but at times, even their skin color is somewhat gray. The one page that does have bright yellows, oranges and reds is the page of the boy winning the Nobel Prize, at the end. The colors on this page (which imagines a bright and optimistic vision) are so completely different from the rest of the illustrations that it emphasizes how dreary those images are.

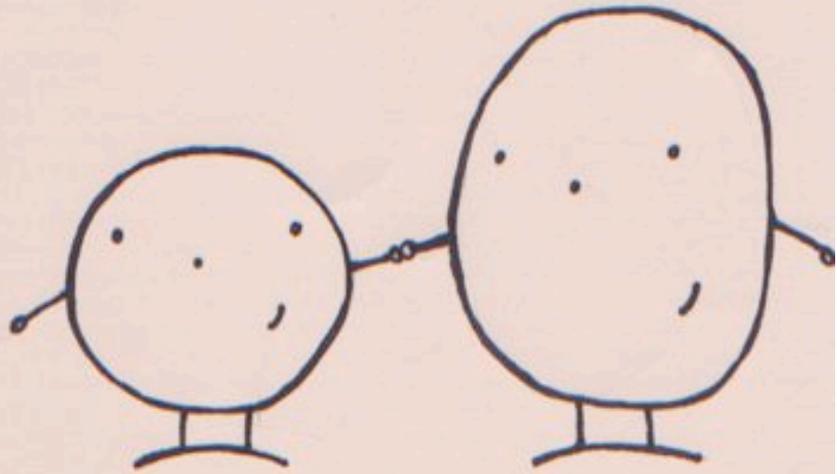
8. Reading the page layout: As mentioned before, the page layout remains the same throughout the whole book – with text on an almost blank page to the left and a full page illustration on the right. The text is always on the bottom of the left page. I thought it was

fun and a bit silly the way that the illustrator included small little additions to the left hand blank page – I think this was done to help the text interact with the illustration. These small details also reminded me to examine the smaller details within the bigger full-page images as well.

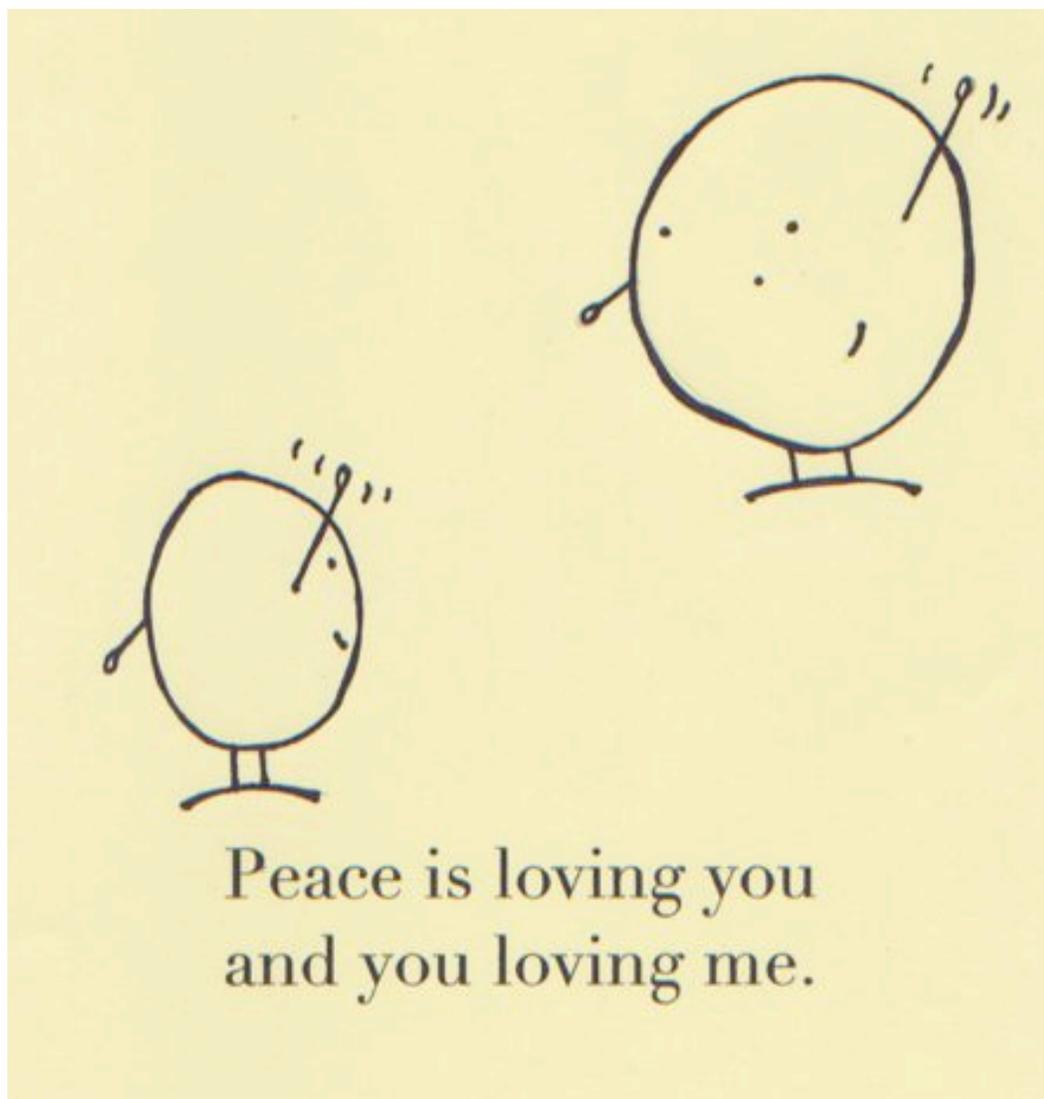
9. Final reading: This book reminds me of Ian Harris' theory of peace education and how too often, teachers define peace in a negative light – by describing what peace isn't, rather than what it is. I think this book is a perfect example of this negative concept of peace – by showing greed, anger, fighting, injustice, and intolerance in it's illustrations, it is trying to define words with positive, uplifting messages and meanings. I think the juxtaposition of the text and illustrations do a disservice to the book in its entirety and I would be hesitant to read this to young children.

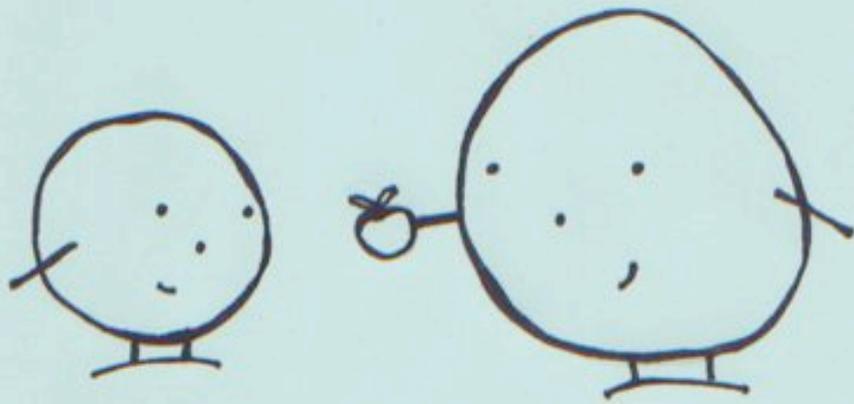
Appendix D
Draft of "Making Peace"



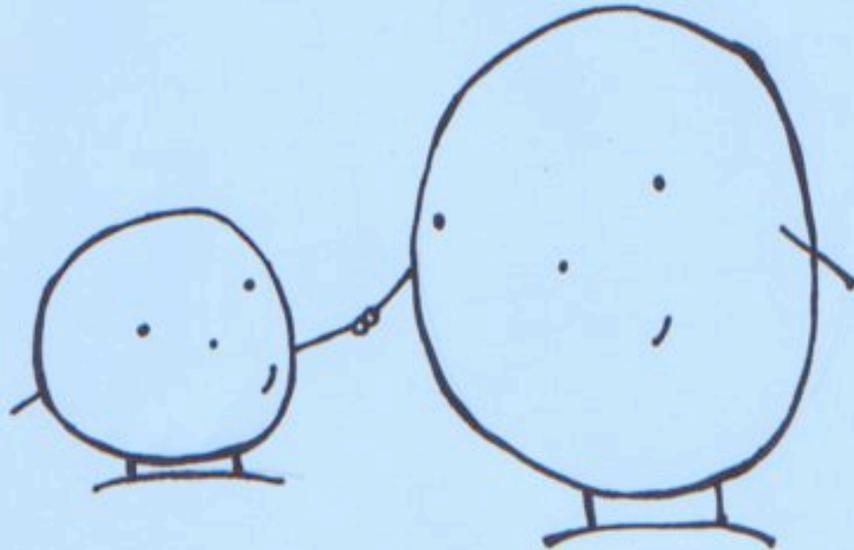


Peace is lending a hand
and the hand holding true.

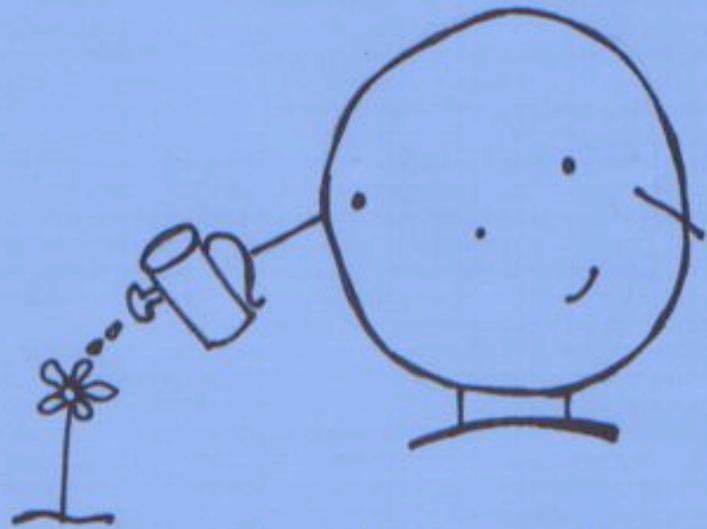




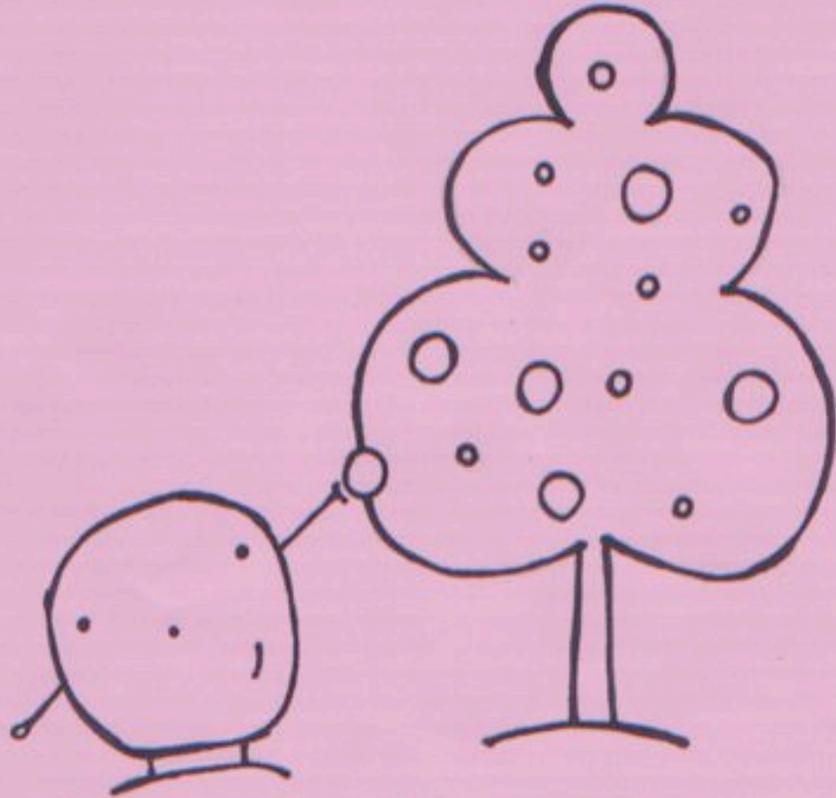
Peace is sharing with you
and you sharing with me.



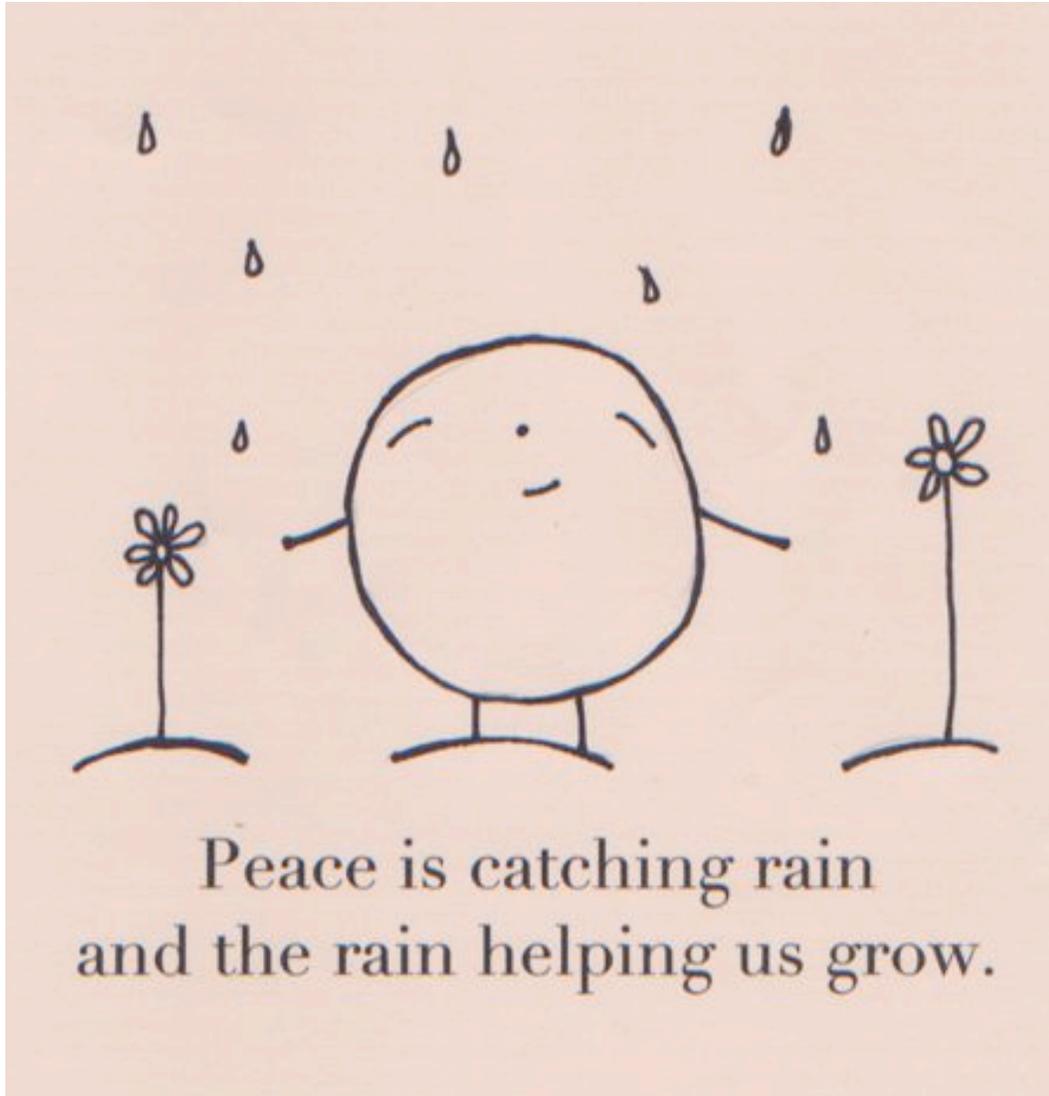
Peace is caring for you
and you caring for me.

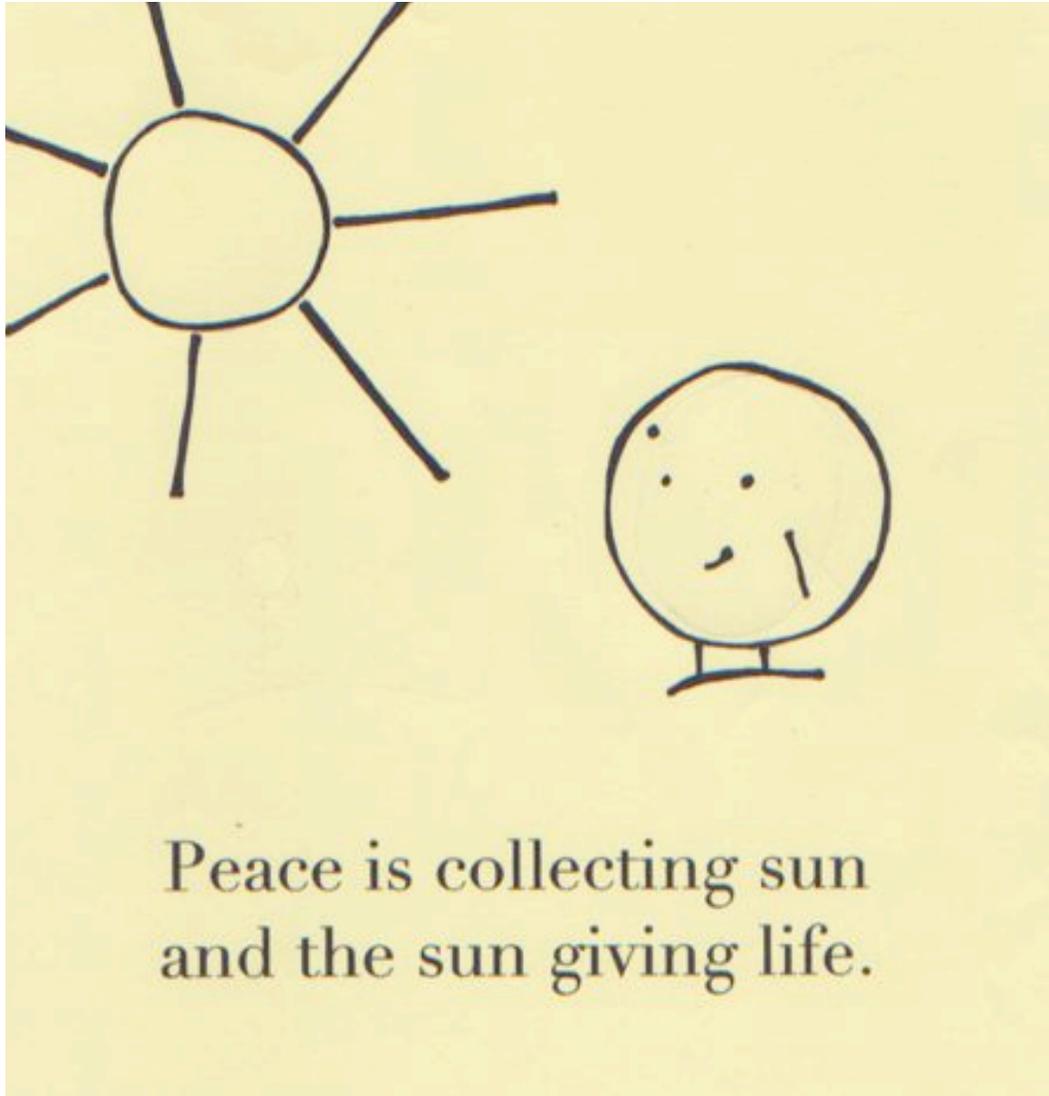


Peace is caring for the earth
and the earth caring for us.

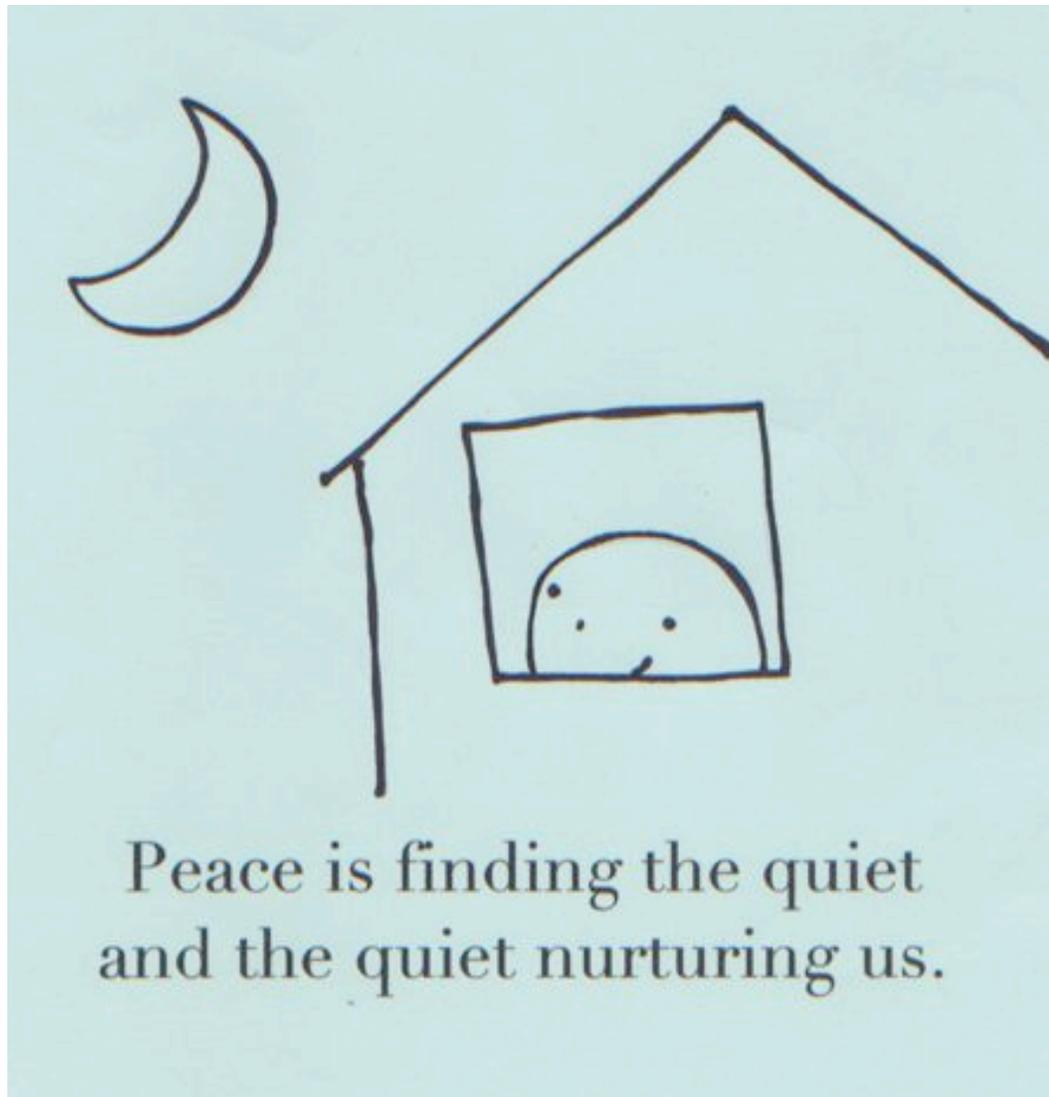


Peace is planting a tree
and the tree giving fruit.

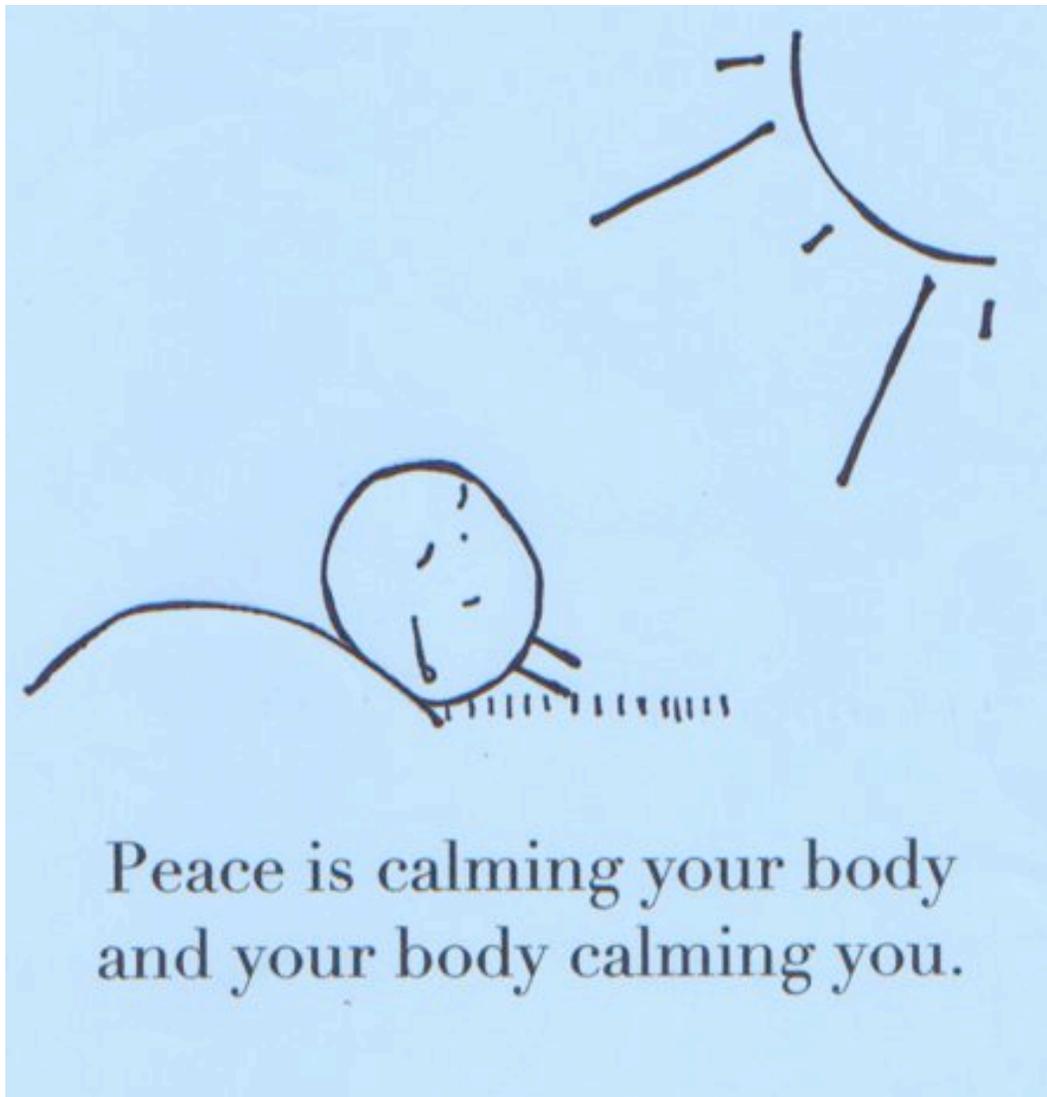




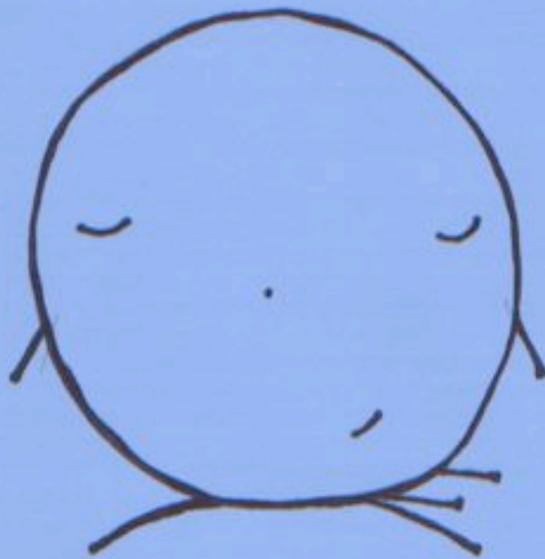
Peace is collecting sun
and the sun giving life.



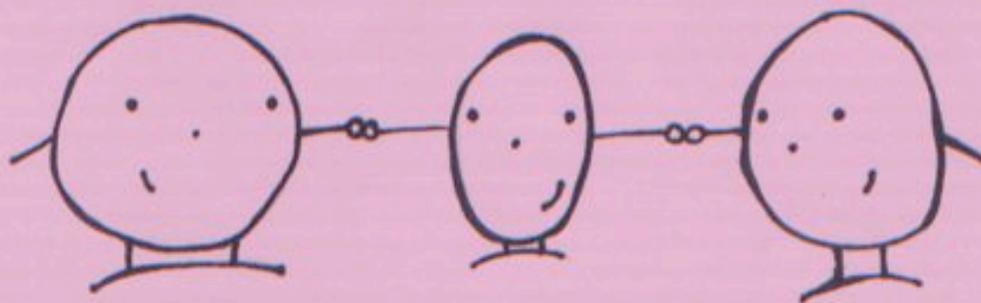
Peace is finding the quiet
and the quiet nurturing us.



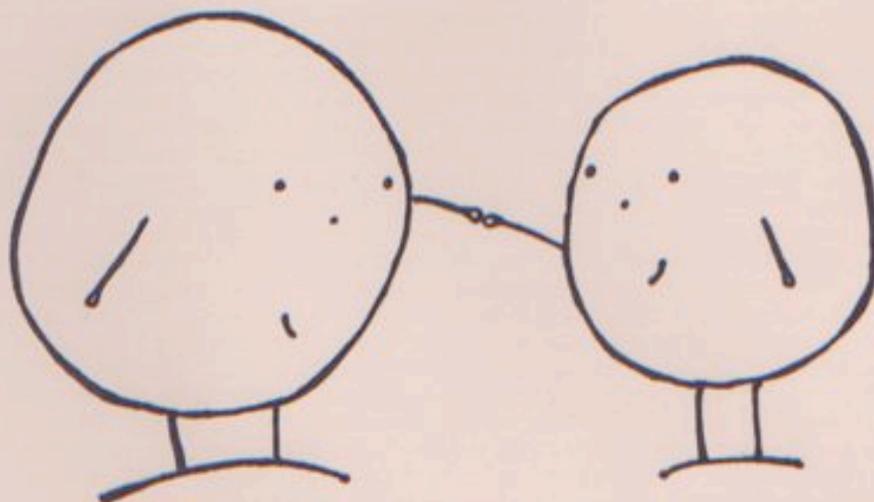
Peace is calming your body
and your body calming you.



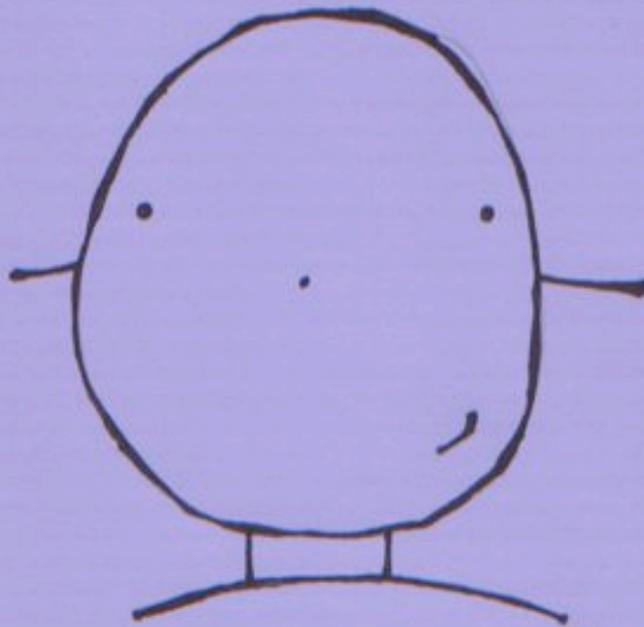
Peace is being alone
and finding who you are.



Peace is being together
and finding those you love.



Peace is you
and peace is me.



Peacemakers are everywhere.

How do you make peace?

PEACE BUILDING
Incorporate peace education
into your home and classroom

Ask of Peace

- **Ask and Discuss Peace with Children:**
What does peace mean to you?
How do you make peace?
- **Have a Peace Sharing Circle:**
Share something you felt, saw, or thought
that was peaceful.
- **Take Peace Picture Walks:**
Using your favorite peace books and magazines,
examine how other peoples and cultures make peace.

Make Peace

- **Talk about the many different kind of peacemakers in the world:**
 - **The Humanist:** One who makes peace with others. One who commits acts of kindness towards friends, family and community. One who shares, cares, and loves all the peoples of the world.
 - **The Meditator:** One who makes peace with themselves. One who finds calm, quiet, and balance in their own life.
 - **The Naturalist:** One who makes peace with the natural world. One who waters the garden, plants a tree, and takes care of the animals.
- **Make Peace Art:** Dedicate drawings, paintings, and group murals to the subject of peace.

Act for Peace

- **Perform Peace Plays:**

Using picture books or create your own classroom peace tale.

- **Put on Peace Concerts:**

Dance to music and sing peace songs.

- **Peace Role Play:** Imagine conflicts and role play the many different ways to make peace in the classroom.

Celebrate Peace

- **Make Pinwheels for Peace to celebrate UN International Day of Peace Celebration**
<http://www.pinwheelsforpeace.com>

- **Celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day with nature walks and tree planting ceremonies.**

- **Make peace penpals with children from another country**

Offer Peace

- **Build a Peace Library:**

Create a classroom library of children's literature about themes around peace, conflict resolution, social learning, feelings, and emotions.

- **Collect Peace Materials:**

Include support materials with books: flannel boards, feltboard stories, puppets, posters and bulletin board designs.

- **Make a Peace Table:**

A table dedicated to conflict resolution where children can go to resolve their conflicts with peaceful communication.

- **Create a Meditation Table:**

A safe, quiet and private place for one child to meditate.

- **Build an Outdoor Peace Place:**

In a garden or under a tree, establish a place where children can go to celebrate peace in their own way.