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Vivian Paley is an excellent example of a reflective educator. From working at the John Dewey lab school to receiving the John Dewey Society's Outstanding Achievement Award, she is a true role model for educators. Paley exemplifies numerous means of teacher inquiry, but I believe Paley's most important way of teacher inquiry is through writing and reflecting.

After reading *The Girl with the Brown Crayon*, I noticed how much time Paley put into her work. Conversations in a kindergarten classroom pass by very quickly; they are soon forgotten and their meaning often goes unnoticed. Paley, however, recorded almost all interactions with her students, wrote down conversations, and reflected. After re-reading and analyzing the content, Paley found information and hidden significances that were overlooked or not heard. Teachers need to analyze what students are saying so they can then build on students' previous knowledge and experience and help construct connections. Teachers then can determine what worked well or what did not work at all. During Paley's final year teaching, she recorded the conversations and the daily routine of her kindergarteners. Through her recordings, she noticed the children in her classroom really connecting with the Leo Lionni book, *Fredrick*. Because of her thoughtful journaling and reflecting Paley was able to create an ongoing curriculum based on the author Leo Lionni that challenged and engaged her students. From *The Girl with the Brown Crayon*, Paley writes, "The Leo Lionni stories and the easy-tree stories work so well because the children come to school knowing how to think about such matters. We need only to give them the proper context in which to demonstrate and fine-tune their natural gifts." Paley reflected after every school day. She then was able to *fine-tune their natural gifts* by scaffolding and providing the appropriate material. Reeny, a student in Paley's class, demonstrated how Paley's way of inquiry truly benefitted her. Reeny lived her life revolving around Leo Lionni. "Reeny is a five-year-old black girl who falls in love with a mouse called Frederick and then makes us think about him and his creator as if everything that happens in school depends on our deliberations." Paley noticed the ways that Reeny fell in love with Lionni's characters and how she used Lionni's work as a basis for everything that goes on inside and outside of the classroom. Reeny asks, "How come every the whole time I be with one person for a long time they 'mind me of a Leo Lionni somebody?" This quote proves how Reeny would make a Lionni connection to every person she encounters. Using journaling and reflecting, Paley provided her kindergarteners with challenging material that pushed the unknown limitations.

Another validation of Paley's way of teacher inquiry is through her essays and interviews. After reading *Must Teachers Also Be Writers?*, it is clear to see how passionate Paley was to journaling. "My habit of drawing invisible lines between the children's images is, I think, the best thing I do as a teacher." Paley demonstrates the importance of writing and reflecting, so she can best figure out each student and form connections. In this essay, Paley writes about how she finds herself within her journaling. While she is figuring out her students' fantasies and explanations, she too is figuring out her own. If teachers know their teaching styles and can determine what works and what does not work well in the classroom, they can better support each student. As an early childhood educator myself, I could not agree more. It is imperative to

reflect on yourself and what you are saying throughout the school day. When recording and writing down what goes on in the room, teachers would be able to notice so much more. "Only as we write down our thoughts and observations *may* we question and argue with ourselves about the things we do and say. Note: question and argue with ourselves." This quote from *Must Teachers Also Be Writers?* directly relates to why writing and reflecting is such an important way of teacher inquiry. We must question ourselves as educators so we can figure out what is best for our classroom. How would we ever grow as educators if we did not question what we say throughout the day and find new ways of communicating with our students?

Vivian Paley demonstrated many features of teacher inquiry throughout her career as an educator. After reading many of her essays and listening to her interviews, I believe Paley's most important way of inquiry is through writing and reflecting. "Never will we fully discover the essential issues for each child or for ourselves, but what we do, as we write, is continually demonstrate the process of searching for solutions as we ask ourselves the questions no one else will ask." As an educator, I will forever be an ongoing writer.