



# A Child Went Forth: Reflective Teaching with Young Readers and Writers

*Janine Chappell Carr*

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Grades K - 5

"I am convinced. Children love to learn, regardless of their circumstances." So says the author of this inspirational new book. But when those circumstances include large classrooms of multiethnic, multilingual children from low socioeconomic backgrounds—not to mention the difficulties of controversial state curriculum frameworks and restricted budgets—how can a teacher effectively nurture that inherent love of learning? This was the dilemma Janine Chappell Carr confronted teaching language arts to first and second graders in southern California. The solutions she discovered may surprise you.

Utilizing a blend of meaningful and interesting reading material, early writing practice, speaking, and explicit instruction, Carr disproves the media's insistence that American schools are typically ill-equipped to teach children from low-income neighborhoods. She describes her methods in great and practical detail—everything from getting the classroom ready for a new school year, to developing strategies for shared reading, to establishing a "writing studio." Samples of student work, plus narratives of how bilingual and English-only students rise to new challenges, offer vivid illustrations of Carr's methods in action. Assessment practices for closely monitoring students' progress are outlined, as well as novel ways to implement and maintain diagnostic and student-kept literacy portfolios.

As a practical text, *A Child Went Forth* presents a thorough and realistic portrayal of life in an equitable classroom. As an inspirational one, it celebrates the voices of young learners and presents a wonderful model for success.

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