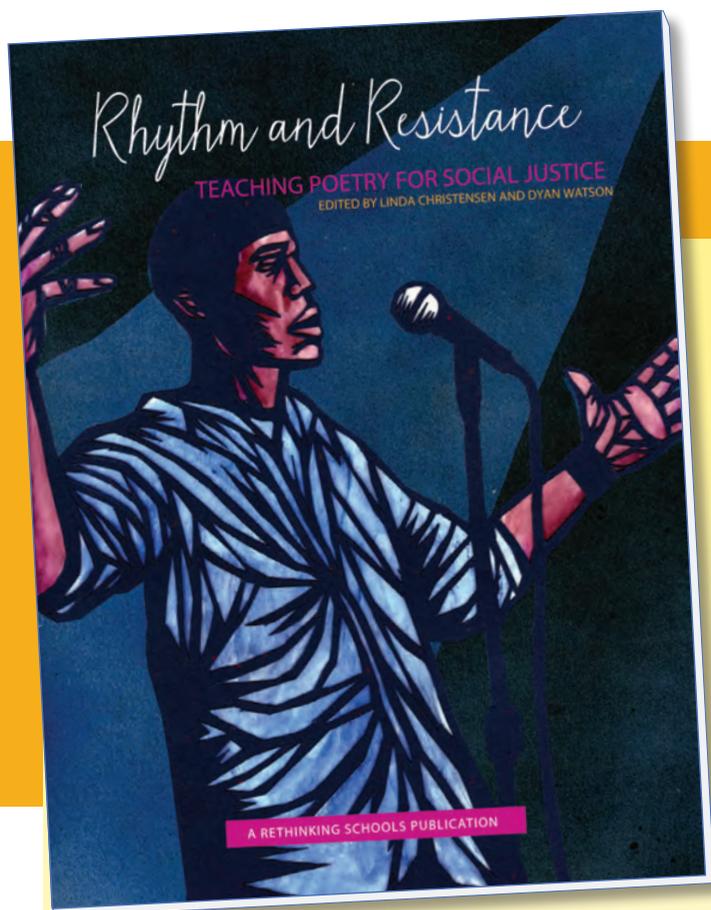


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Rhythm and Resistance

Teaching Poetry for Social Justice

Edited by Linda Christensen & Dyan Watson



Rhythm and Resistance offers practical lessons about how to teach poetry to build community, understand literature and history, talk back to injustice, and construct stronger literacy skills across content areas—from elementary school to graduate school. *Rhythm and Resistance* reclaims poetry as a necessary part of a larger vision of what it means to teach for justice.

April 2015 • Paperback • 272 pages
ISBN: 978-0-942961-61-4

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“The power of poetry has never been so eloquently revealed as in this collection of writing from poets both famous and unknown. Add to this the stirring words of Linda Christensen and Dyan Watson and we have a book that will move teachers and their students to speak their truths and to know that their words, their thoughts, and their lives matter.” SONIA NIETO, Professor Emerita, Language, Literacy, and Culture, University of Massachusetts Amherst

“There are far too few books written on teaching by people who have actually earned the right to write about teaching. *Rhythm and Resistance* is just such a book, striking a powerful balance between theory and practice...in ways that will profoundly impact the day-to-day work of countless teachers.”

JEFF DUNCAN-ANDRADE Associate Professor of Raza Studies and Education, San Francisco State University

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Rhythm and Resistance Teaching Poetry for Social Justice

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Chapter 1: Roots

The lessons in this chapter demonstrate how to create community in the classroom as students share their lives, cultures, and family traditions. To become a community, students must feel significant and cared about, and that happens with the genuine sharing of our lives.

Chapter 2: Celebrations

Educators should help students critique injustice, but we must also lift up and celebrate what is right and beautiful about students' lives, communities, and the world. Through praise poems, odes, and celebrations, students learn to re-see and appreciate the gifts of their daily lives.

Chapter 3: Poetry for the People

By writing persona poetry, we nurture students' capacity to imagine the effects of historical and literary events on ourselves and other human beings, especially those who have been silenced or marginalized in the mainstream curriculum.

Chapter 4: Standing Up in Troubled Times

Students can learn to see themselves as truth-tellers and change-makers who use poetry to remember tragedies and call attention to policies and actions that harm society's most vulnerable, to make the invisible visible.

Chapter 5: Turning Pain into Power

Writing poetry teaches students to use words instead of fists or drugs or other self-destructive behavior. Through poetry, students can mourn their losses, expel their terror, tell their stories, and sing their joys.

Chapter 6: The Craft of Poetry

Students need explicit lessons on the craft of poetry, which encourage them to pay attention to how writers approach topics and apply poetic tools—how to use strong verbs, lists, repeating lines, figurative language, and line breaks.

“At a time when teachers feel under attack from policymakers searching for ways to raise student achievement and ensure school safety, the authors of *Rhythm and Resistance* show us how easily both objectives can be pursued if we simply open up opportunities for students to write about their lives and share their stories with each other. This powerful and practical collection of essays shows educators how to engage and empower their students through strategies that inspire them to develop a love of learning. Teachers who can do that will experience the joy and power of teaching even during these trying times in education.”

PEDRO NOGUERA, Peter L. Agnew
Professor of Education, Executive Director, Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, New York University

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