

# From the Editors

This tribute issue honors Dr. Marie M. Clay by sharing both her writings and the reflections of international colleagues who share heartfelt expressions of respect and gratitude. They write of their respect for her eminent scholarship and their gratitude for her friendship and mentoring. In essence, Marie's life is a model of greatness and grace, and we are therefore reminded of the lovely description of remarkable individuals presented in the poem, "The Truly Great," written by Stephen Spender. He closes with this stanza:

*Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields,  
See how these names are feted by the waving grass  
And by the streamers of white clouds  
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.  
The names of those who in their lives fought for life,  
Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.  
Born of the sun, they travelled a short while toward the sun  
And left the vivid air signed with their honour.*

Marie left an indelible signature of honor on our world. As the articles in this journal confirm, hers was a brilliant career—an intricate tapestry woven of the impeccable scholarship and research she conducted over many years, the revolutionary and sustained change that she created, and the wisdom and leadership that she offered so graciously.

To capture the essence of Marie's work and commitment, we present a range of research discussions, including several articles, such as those published in New Zealand, which are difficult to secure. We were committed to including Marie's descriptions of why she chose to "sail in a new direction," how she navigated new territory, what she learned, and what questions linger. Her descriptions and story are very valuable as they reveal her complex thinking, her many important questions, and her ability to transcend disciplines expertly and effectively. Her articles also reveal a deep commitment to international understanding and international efforts. The depth and breadth of her knowledge and thinking are very evident in her writing and help us appreciate her remarkable scholarship.

As we considered the range of materials collected for this issue, we discovered that the observations of our many contributors suggested an organizational framework for the content. We therefore present sections to highlight Marie's contributions as a visionary educator, eminent scholar, and honored mentor, colleague, and friend. We address sustaining Marie's legacy and the international implementations of Reading Recovery in the final section.

In several instances, it seemed natural to pair the reflections of a given contributor with a specific piece authored by Marie. In other instances, placement of a contribution was arbitrary as each author conveys sincere respect for Marie, the researcher, the educator, the person.

Compiling this journal issue has been a special privilege for us, an opportunity to celebrate the ways Marie enriched our lives and the lives of many educators and children around the world. May it help you review, remember, and share the life, accomplishments, and contributions of Dr. Marie M. Clay, a truly great individual and honored citizen of the world.

# an overview

Throughout this issue are articles you will want to read, and reread many times again—gaining new insight and inspiration both from Marie’s own words and from the remembrances of many who were privileged to have worked with her.

Section One focuses on Marie as a visionary educator. To use Clay’s metaphors, “sailing into the unknown, into nameless waters, along uncharted routes,” is the visionary’s plan of action; a plan she details in her speech upon accepting the National Reading Conference Distinguished Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004. Marie further explains her personal view of history and of Reading Recovery history in a 1997 article on international perspectives. Ann Ballantyne looks at how it all started with Marie’s doctoral research project, and Billie Askew encapsulates Marie’s monthly messages as president of the International Reading Association from 1992–93.

The depth and breadth of Marie’s research challenges all who aspire to follow in the path of great scholars. Section Two features reprints of five of Marie’s most-cited articles. Courtney Cazden reflects on her collaboration with Marie in the article on Vygotsky. Carol Lyons revisits her journey in research related to struggling readers as an introduction to Marie’s “Learning to be Learning Disabled” article—the invitation for the future of Marie’s latest writing, *Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals*. Peter Johnston challenges us to follow Marie’s lead of following the child’s lead and continuing to explore new understandings in child development. Finally, Marie’s respect for and interest in literacy learning across languages is evidenced in the Concepts About Print article and in personal stories of translations into Irish and Greek.

Section Three focuses on Marie as an honored mentor, colleague, and friend. Physical limits restrict the contributors to only a handful from Marie’s vast network of colleagues around the world. A 2006 profile by Gay Su Pinnell and Irene Fountas documents Marie’s lifelong journey—demonstrating that the world can be different. Billie Askew, Diane DeFord, Stuart McNaughton, Linda Gambrell, Bridie Raban, Kenneth Wilson, and Constance Barsky also provide personal glimpses into their travels with Marie Clay.

Charting the future of Reading Recovery is explored in Section Four. The International Reading Recovery Trainers Organization and the Marie Clay Literacy Trust are charged with sustaining the legacy. In her wisdom, Marie Clay established procedures and structures to guarantee Reading Recovery would continue to be implemented as designed. This section also explores the origin and evolution of Reading Recovery as it spread from New Zealand to global implementations and the continuing work of translations into several foreign languages—paving the way for the legacy to continue.

— Mary Anne Doyle, Salli Forbes, Eva Konstantellou, Anne Simpson,  
and Marsha Studebaker

