Connie Briggs, Editor-in-Chief

One of the many contributions that Marie Clay has made to literacy education worldwide is a professional learning model for teachers that values professional knowledge, decision making, collaborative problem solving, and a real-world theory to practice connection. Training as a Reading Recovery professional changes a person’s understandings about literacy teaching and learning that has permanent and far-reaching implications for their professional lives. I can attest that my training year in Reading Recovery provided a seismic shift in my view of literacy processing that continues to influence not only my continued learning, but the learning of every student and teacher that I will ever teach.

In like fashion, the knowledge that teachers and teacher leaders trained in Reading Recovery gain from their training is useful not only in their Reading Recovery work with children and teachers, but also in their work as classroom teachers and leaders of professional development outside of Reading Recovery contexts in their schools and districts.

In this issue, Diane DeFord illustrates how her extensive knowledge and understanding of Reading Recovery theory, principles, and practice continues to influence her work with classroom teachers in the university setting and her work with Reading Recovery professionals in ongoing professional learning settings. DeFord shares how providing key experiences can help teachers more clearly understand how to analyze observation data, construct tentative hypotheses, and plan appropriate contingent instruction.

Two articles on teaching have the potential to not only help individuals reflect on their own practice, but might also serve as frameworks for collective professional learning opportunities. Mary Fried’s article, Activating Teaching: Using Running Records to Inform Teaching Decisions, provides a way for teachers to engage in deeper, more-thoughtful levels of running record analysis in order to be more reflective about teaching patterns that may hinder or accelerate student learning. In the second teaching article, Lori Fitzgerald provides insights into how to teach for and support students’ efforts to confirm problem-solving attempts with confidence and independence. Both of these articles can help us understand the critical roles of sensitive observation and reflection that is required of Reading Recovery professionals in order to successfully teach for accelerative learning gains.

Two additional articles are internationally focused and share how the impact of Reading Recovery professional learning can serve as an agent of change. In Reading Recovery: A High Return on Investment for Cost-Conscious and Student Achievement Oriented Education Systems, Lyn Sharratt and her co-authors identify a set of key factors contributing to whole-system reform that has been successful in school districts in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. In each of these contexts, Reading Recovery was central to systems reform. And in light of the i3 scale up that is currently taking place in the United States, I think readers will be interested in reading Gay Su Pinnell’s thoughtful review of the book Reading Recovery and Every Child a Reader that documents the story of how Reading Recovery was implemented as a scale-up initiative throughout Great Britain.

A special feature of this issue is Susan O’Leary’s beautifully written tribute to Marie Clay. Susan represented the United States as a keynote speaker at the International Reading Recovery Institute in Sydney in July where she delivered this thoughtful and heartfelt tribute to an international audience. Take time to read this article as poetry, and savor the language as well as the visual images that the language will evoke.

This issue of The Journal of Reading Recovery offers readers many opportunities to reflect on the power of Reading Recovery as an agent of change in teaching; as an agent of change within schools, districts, and countries. The power of change can never be underestimated. Teachers who are trained in Reading Recovery continually change and develop their knowledge in collaboration with their colleagues and change the lives of children by using their knowledge to teach for effective processing and independence in daily Reading Recovery lessons and in classrooms. They also share their knowledge with other teachers through professional learning opportunities, all of which will in turn impact and change the professional lives of other teachers, who will in turn change the lives of other children and teachers . . . truly professional learning that is transformative and generative!