

29 February 20

To: ECSTEM Audience

Fr: Ann Lewin-Benham

Re: "The Turtle and Coco: A Story of Friendship and Rights"

I Believe . . .

Children are competent, compassionate, and collaborative.

Each child's strengths are different.

Particularly from 0 – 8 every child's developmental path is different.

Classrooms must have a great variety of "attracters" that are aesthetic and well-organized.

From the "attracters", each child chooses what interests her or him.

We, teachers, must be astute observers and listeners to take note of and foster each child's interests.

The children who most need our attention are those who cannot "settle into" concentrated activity.

Activities must involve or invite movement.

A day should not be interrupted by a "schedule" other than greeting/morning meeting, singing/story, lunch, and nap. Rather children should have long uninterrupted periods of time to do what interests them.

Implications for Practice

The materials in the classroom are the curriculum.

Formulaic lesson plans or worksheets are not used.

Teaching takes place one-on-one or one-to-small-group based on what you see as children's interests.

Meaning-FULL Conversation takes place daily with the full class, and one-to-one, and in small groups.

My Motive

My son

Personally, I have fought formulaic curricula, pre-planned lessons, days driven by the clock, and goals that are set by the demands of high-stakes testing. As you can imagine, I have spent a lifetime tilting windmills.

Today's Presentation

Is one of dozens of PPTS with the kinds of stories you will see today.

I chose this one because, nationally, we are struggling with how to treat one another. The story you will see is a story of "rights": the **right** of each individual in every species to be treated with respect.

And, it is a story of "responsibilities": *our responsibility – we, humans* – whose social drive is as strong as our instinctual drive – **to see that all species thrive**.

You will watch 3- to 6-year-old children learn about the rights of another creature and assume responsibility for the well-being of that creature.

So, as Fared would say, "Let's get started."

