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## How To Build Critical Literacy Communities

Critical literacy is the ability to read texts in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships.

Human relations are at the heart of schooling,  
Cummins, 2001.

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# Problem Posing

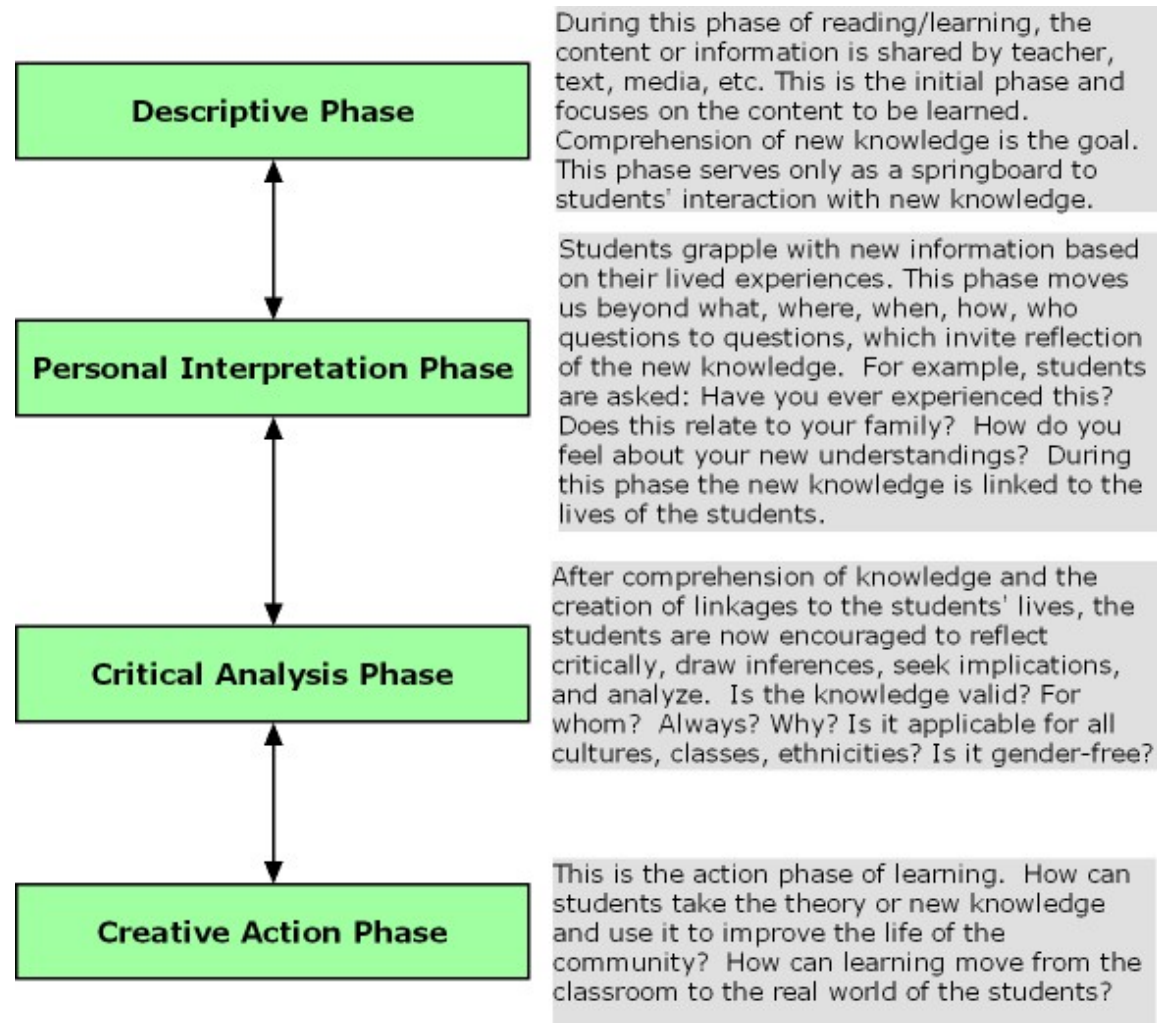
- To name
- To reflect critically
- To act

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## How To Do It

- *To name:* Form small groups and ask each person to name (state) a problem in her school site. After each has named a problem (or contradiction, or conundrum, or sticky situation, or mess), the small group builds consensus and chooses one problem to name.
- *To reflect critically:* Each small group reflects critically and searches for various approaches to improve the situation.
- *To act:* The small group lists their recommended action to be taken.

## Alma Flor Ada Four Phases



Alma Flor Ada & Campoy, (2003). Cited in Wink & Wink, 2004, p. 164.

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## Dawn Does Critical Pedagogy

*“All the toys are old, broken, and dirty,” she said as she burst through the door. Dawn had just returned from her first day of teaching bilingual kindergarten in a district that had never had a bilingual program, although the majority of their students historically came from migrant families who spoke Spanish.*

*“The last teacher left boxes and boxes for my kindergarten students. It’s just junk. I snuck out to the garbage and threw it away. There were even teaching materials from the 1950s,” she groaned.*

*Dawn was born in 1968. I know—she is my daughter.*

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## We commit to do the following:

- Get more books for my classes.
- Bring in people to read to my class.
- Allowing choice for my students reading.
- To bring more family members into my classroom.
- On my birthday and family members birthdays, I will donate books to the local library.
- Take time for reading.
- Bring in scientists to my science classes.
- Clean out my boxes of old comic books and bring them in for the students to read (see Note 10).
- Donate money to the local library.
- Share my own books with the students in my classes.
- Create fund raising activities.
- Develop an award system in my class to encourage reading.
- Make reading fun in my class.
- Work with the parents of my students on all of the bureaucratic forms they need to know how to complete.
- Provide information for families about what they can do at home with their children to improve their literacy levels.
- Discuss library issues with the staff in my school site
- Educate myself more about literacy.

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## Socratic Dialogue

### Corri Does Socratic Dialogue or Ethical Dialectic Method

1. Focus on the concept
2. Lists 4-8 ethical questions
3. The position paper
4. Set the safe environment
5. Ethics discussion: thesis, antithesis, synthesis
6. Final presentation, plus families





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## *The Mess*

- Find a mess.
- Learn more about it.
- What could be some alternative approaches?
- Action plan and evaluation.
- Write a commitment statement.
- Name a new mess.

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# Cyberspace File folders



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# Authentic, Real Writing

- Student Authored/Published Documents
  - Generative words by Freire
  - Electronic Penpals by Freinet
  - Journaling
  - Letter to the Editor
  - Big Books
    - BIG BOOKS with Students  
<http://www.joanwink.com/newsletter/2002/news0902-bb2.php>
    - One Way of Making BIG BOOKS  
<http://www.joanwink.com/newsletter/2002/news0902-bbmake.php>
    - One Way To Bind BIG BOOKS  
<http://www.joanwink.com/newsletter/2002/news0902-bbbind.php>
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## Oral Histories

1. The archive: Where will it be maintained?
2. Choose a date for presenting to community.
3. The interviews, the storytelling, the place become a part of the process.
4. Organize the whole into 3-4 subprojects.
5. Create a checklist for each interview.
6. Create the interview and practice in class before going to the public.
7. Plan the celebration; how will it be shared?

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<http://www.montanaheritageproject.org/index.php/michaelumphrey>

Place-centered writing.

Nonfiction: *The Power of Community-Centered Education: Teaching as a Craft of Place*

Michael Umphrey of Polson MT sharing on EC Ning

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# Global Learning Networks

Your assignment:

Write a proposal for how you will create a global learning network.

Choose your idea from those samples listed at The Basics.

The overview of your proposal must include: (a) how families will be included as partners in the project with the students in your classroom; (b) 10 interview questions which students in your class will ask of families; (c) a plan for what type of partner publication the families and students in your class will use; and (d) a plan for sharing these family publications.

**Follow this format for a total of 3 to 5 typed pages:**

**Proposal:** Tell exactly what you are proposing to do. Use clear descriptive sentences. (200 words)

**Timeline:** How long will this project take in your classroom? (one paragraph)

**Describe:**

*The teacher's role:* (from beginning to end of project)

The 10 questions, which the teacher shares with the students.

*The students' role:* What do they do with families? How do they collect answers to questions? When do they return answers to classroom? (from beginning to end of project)

*The families' role:* (from beginning to end of project)

**Publishing the stories:** Will stories be on paper? Will stories be published electronically? Tell exactly how you will have the students write the stories in preparation for the publication. How are families included in the publication process?

**Celebration of Authors:** How will the community share and celebrate all of the new authors and their publications?

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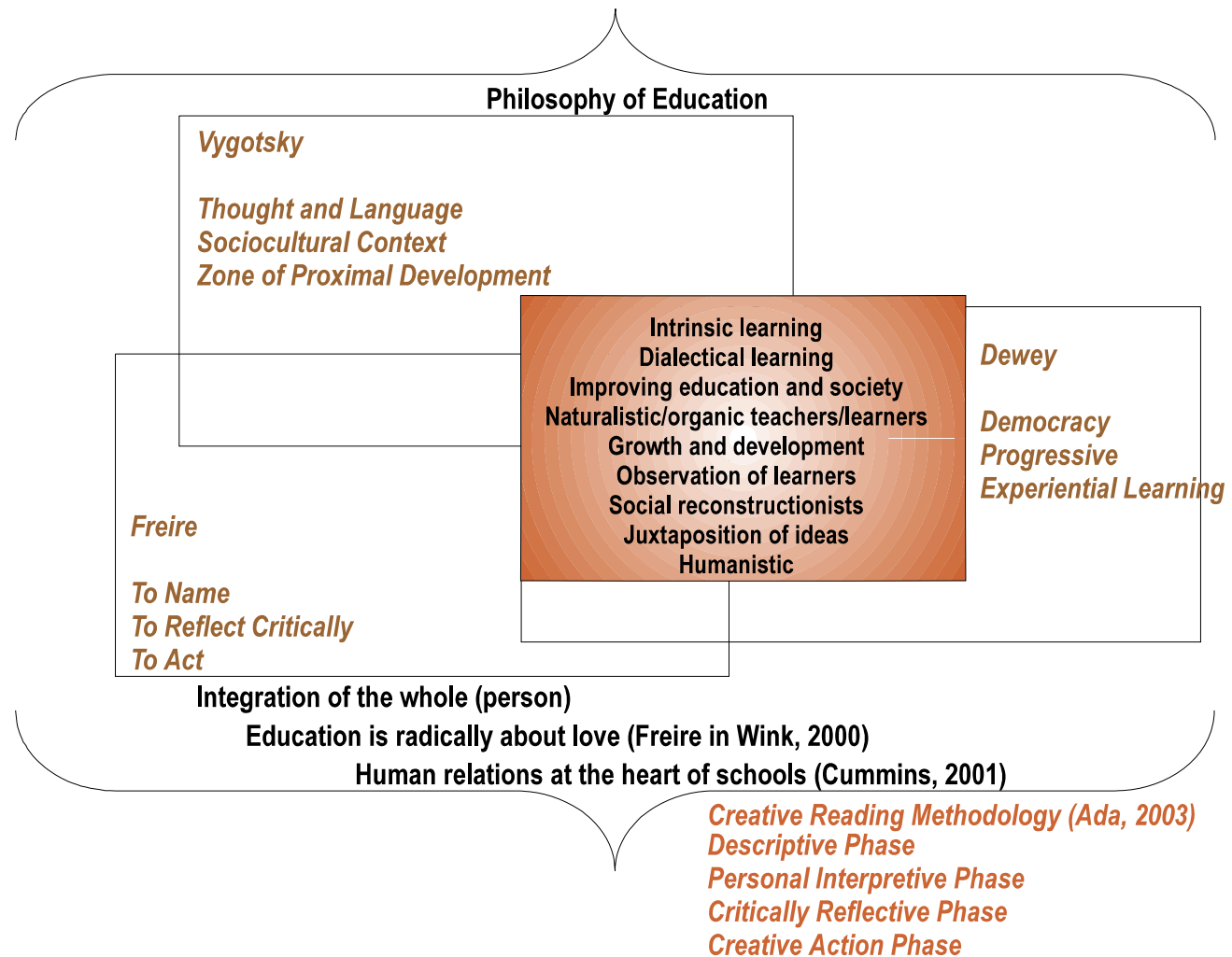
De Orilla a Orilla, <http://www.orillas.org/welcomee.html> (An example of global learning networks.)

What Is Orillas? <http://www.orillas.org/abte.html>

Sample projects <http://www.orillas.org/pastgpe.html>

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# Joan and Le: Philosophy



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***The most effective revolutions all  
take place the same way—  
one person at a time.***

**Paulo Freire, 1993, Pasadena Hilton  
Hotel, CA**

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