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Vivian Paley is a teacher researcher who had a unique way of teaching students through storytelling. Her most important contribution to the teaching and learning of children was her dedication to journaling and recording the conversations had in her classroom. There was not a discussion had between students that Paley would not analyze and think about. Paley's inquiry is unique in that she not only examines conversations for the benefit of the children but she is also learning along with her students. Her journaling helps her improve her own craft. In a paper titled *Must Teachers Also Be Writers?* she recalls a conversation that two students once had stating "the tangled webs of interconnections would quickly fade were I not also in the habit of writing down what [the students] and I say before the dialogues are forgotten and their meaning obscured." She believes that her ability to draw invisible lines between images and conversations between the children is one of the best things she does as a teacher. When the conversations end and the students go home, Paley is able to sit and examine her notes from the day. She thinks about why conversations happened and what goals she might have for the next day. The more Paley is able to listen and record the student's stories and explanations, the easier it becomes to bring out her own ideas. These written records and conversations not only serve to guide the teaching but they serve to guide Paley in her own thinking and understanding of the world.

In *The Girl with the Brown Crayon* Paley tells the story of one of her years teaching kindergarten that includes a girl named Reeny. Along similar lines to journaling and recording, Paley has a way of allowing storytelling and conversations dictate the direction of the school year. In her year with Reeny, Paley creates a curriculum solely on the books written by Leo Lionni. Her class was intrigued about the lives of the characters within his books and Paley supported this by creating an environment where the children could continue their inquiry about the subject. "Could I have imagined such a curriculum were it not for Reeny's fixation on Frederick and my equally ardent identification with Tico." Reeny relates to the story of Frederick because she believes that this mouse seems to be just like her. In reality, Paley does not seem to agree in the little girl's assumption. Frederick is a field mouse who stubbornly refuses to help his friends while Reeny is "as curious about her friends as she is about herself." This does not stop Paley from encouraging and nurturing the child's interest in Frederick. Paley has a way of thinking critically about all the conversations and happenings within her classroom between students and herself. The children want a classroom filled with stories of characters from Leo Lionni and Paley wants a classroom filled with inventing new worlds as they learn to know each other's dreams. "To invent is to come alive. Even more than the unexamined classroom, I resist the uninvented classroom." Her role in the classroom boils down to not getting in the way of children's creativity and ingenuity. She is a facilitator. She provides the classroom with the tools necessary to explore and create. Paley analyzes children at play and fosters a learning environment based on student interest.

Throughout her work, Paley talks about the endless questions that come from her inquiry in the classroom. “Every encounter is full of questions; there is much that exist beneath the surface.” Because Paley did not have a pre planned idea of what the classroom and vision for her students would be before the start of the year, it allowed her to focus on the ideas built by the students. She states that the road to discovery lies waiting to be mapped out in each of her journal entries. In *The Girl with the Brown Crayon*, questions and thinking help Paley facilitate a school year that allows student to tell stories to shape their lives. Each year is different than the last. When Reeny and the rest of her class ask if she will keep the Leo Lionni posters on the walls for the next classroom, they are met with a puzzling explanation. Leo Lionni was this year. The year before was a journey through Chicago and different nature scenes. And the new children will want to paint their own posters in the following year. This is what Vivian Paley values most. Children are capable of shaping their own lives. Through play and storytelling, a child’s exploration and inquiry are endless.