Edge-ism #11

The Edge of Knowledge

Life is a traveling to the edge of knowledge, then a leap taken.

-- D. H. Lawrence

Let your teaching place be a wonderful opportunity to take you and your students to the edge of knowledge through the magical experiences you create together. Within the classroom exists every venue for creative expression and hope, excitement and achievement, bewilderment and awe and wonder, and feelings of boundlessness within those bounded spaces.

The classroom is the safest place in the universe for both the real and the imagined to co-exist in complete harmony, often seamlessly and to the confusion of unsuspecting strangers, while youngish eyes twinkle knowingly:

> "Once upon a time, uh-huh uh-huh, they was a mouse name Frederick, uh-huh uh-huh!" Swish-swish-hands on hips. Uh-huh

uh-huh, I told you so, uh-huh uh-huh,
Frederico!" (Paley, p. vii)

In Paley's (1997) chronicling of her last year in the classroom after more than 30 years of teaching, she shares the amazing insights of "Reeny, a five-year-old Black girl who leads her teacher and classmates through year-long deliberations of the characters in the stories of children's author, Leo Lionni. Paley marvels, "How does she *know* that the whole point of school is to find a common core of references without blurring our own special profiles" (p. viii)?

The depth of knowledge that children will gather, and the deeply *philosophical* understandings that will come to you in their words, originating from the experiences you provide will sometimes shock and delight you, at once, and will remind you of the remarkable capacity to learn that is within all of them. Journey with your students to the "edge of their knowledge" as you discover together that there really **is** no such place. But, enjoy the quest all the same.