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March–April 2005 Issue

### INSIGHTS

Shortly after World War One, a program called “Good English Makes Good Americans” swept the nation’s schools. According to Robert MacNeil and William Cran, “children earned points for snitching to teachers on the language errors of their classmates” and students were encouraged to take such xenophobic oaths as: “I love my country’s language. I promise: 1. That I will not dishonor my country’s speech by leaving off the last syllable of words. 2. That I will say a good American ‘yes’ and ‘no’ in place of...a foreign ‘ya,’ or ‘yeh’ and ‘nope.’”

We could spend our pages decrying such discriminatory methods, but we would rather celebrate the innovative work that American teachers and educational nonprofits have done in the field of bilingual education in recent years. This issue of the magazine focuses in particular on Poetry Inside Out, a San Francisco-based initiative that teaches the art of literary translation as a means of affirming and nurturing the incredible resources of bilingual children. The accompanying articles, by Mark Statman and Amanda Leigh Lichtenstein, offer innovative exercises that lend themselves to both monolingual and bilingual classrooms.

—Christina Davis & Christopher Edgar

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