

# Voices from the Storm

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**Levee Break**



# Twin Span Bridge



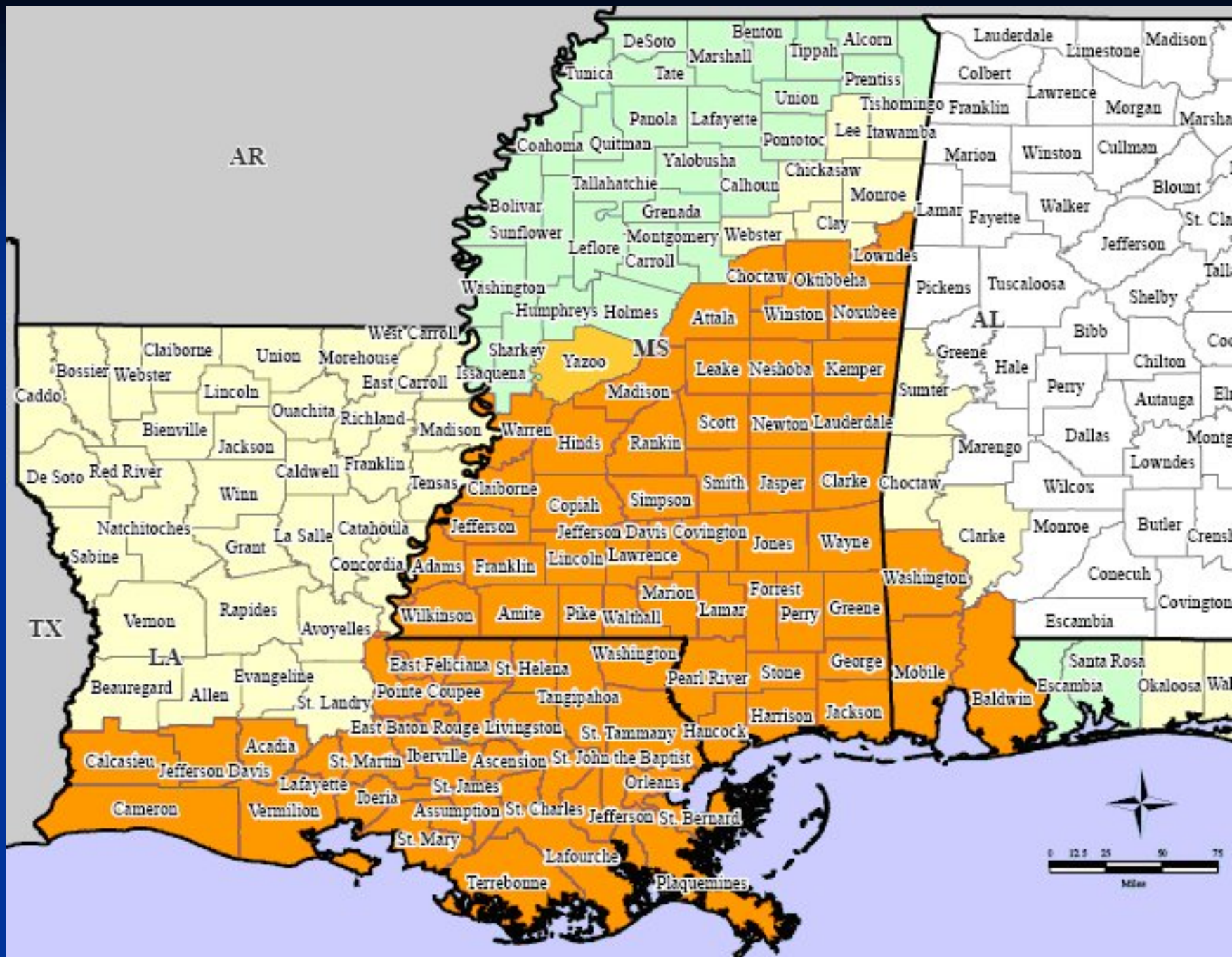


# Police & Volunteers Helping Rescue



# Water Damage







## Summer Service Project

Sponsored by

The Institute for Global Education and Service Learning

The purpose of this service learning project was to educate the community on the impact of a natural disaster and to engage school-age young people in responding to community needs as a result of natural disaster through problem solving and service learning. Educators and students engaged in activities that promoted academic achievement and improved community relationships as well as added to the body of research knowledge related to natural disasters.

# Goals

- To support academic achievement and problem solving through integrated units of instruction on natural disasters.
- To develop an awareness of community service in elementary children to meet genuine community needs
- To increase community awareness of hurricane dangers and disaster relief
- To provide resources promoting community needs awareness and disaster relief for educators.

# Three Elements of the Project

- Community service involving elementary special education students and university candidates  
*Dr. Ellen Ratcliff and  
Ms. Kimberly Davis*
- Units of instruction prepared by classroom teachers with presentations to the public  
*Dr. Elizabeth Partridge*
- Providing enrichment & literacy activities for children displaced by the storm and recording students' oral histories about life since Katrina.  
*Dr. Cheryl Edwards*

# Thinking About the Disaster and Visiting the Area

Dr. Ellen Ratcliff, Assistant Professor  
Department of Teaching and Learning

Ms. Kimberly Davis, Instructor  
Department of Teaching and Learning  
Southeastern Louisiana University

# Summer Enhancement Program

- Undergraduate special education teacher candidates enrolled in an assessment and methods practica.
- Children ages 6 to 13 enrolled for a four-week program.
  - Children were taught in inclusive settings.
- Candidates taught language arts and math.

# Victims of Katrina

- Candidates and children wanted to help others who were victims of the storm.
- Class discussions were held.
  - Children expressed sorrow for other children who became ill or hurt from the storm.
  - Children relayed to candidates their boredom after the storm passed.
- The idea of developing storm care packages came from candidates and children.









# Who Needs Help?

- Children who are sick and/or disabled from the storm.
- What about children in hospitals?
- Let's go to New Orleans!!



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# Instructional Units

Dr. Elizabeth Partridge, Professor  
Department of Teaching and Learning  
Southeastern Louisiana University

An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. The terrain is a mix of light tan and brownish-yellow. A prominent feature is a large, roughly circular depression in the center, which appears to be a natural well or a crater. The depression has a darker, more textured interior and is surrounded by a distinct, slightly raised ring of darker earth. The surrounding area is relatively flat with some subtle variations in color and texture, suggesting different soil types or vegetation. The overall lighting is bright, creating high contrast between the different shades of the landscape.

# Natural Disaster Units

# Unit Development

Summer 2006

Graduate students develop units on natural disasters for grades 1-5 and special education K-

2

# Unit Titles

Special Education K-2 – Weather

1<sup>st</sup> Grade – Hurricanes

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – Hurricane Katrina

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade – Hurricane Warnings

4<sup>th</sup> Grade – Horrible Hurricanes

Natural Disasters: Hurricanes

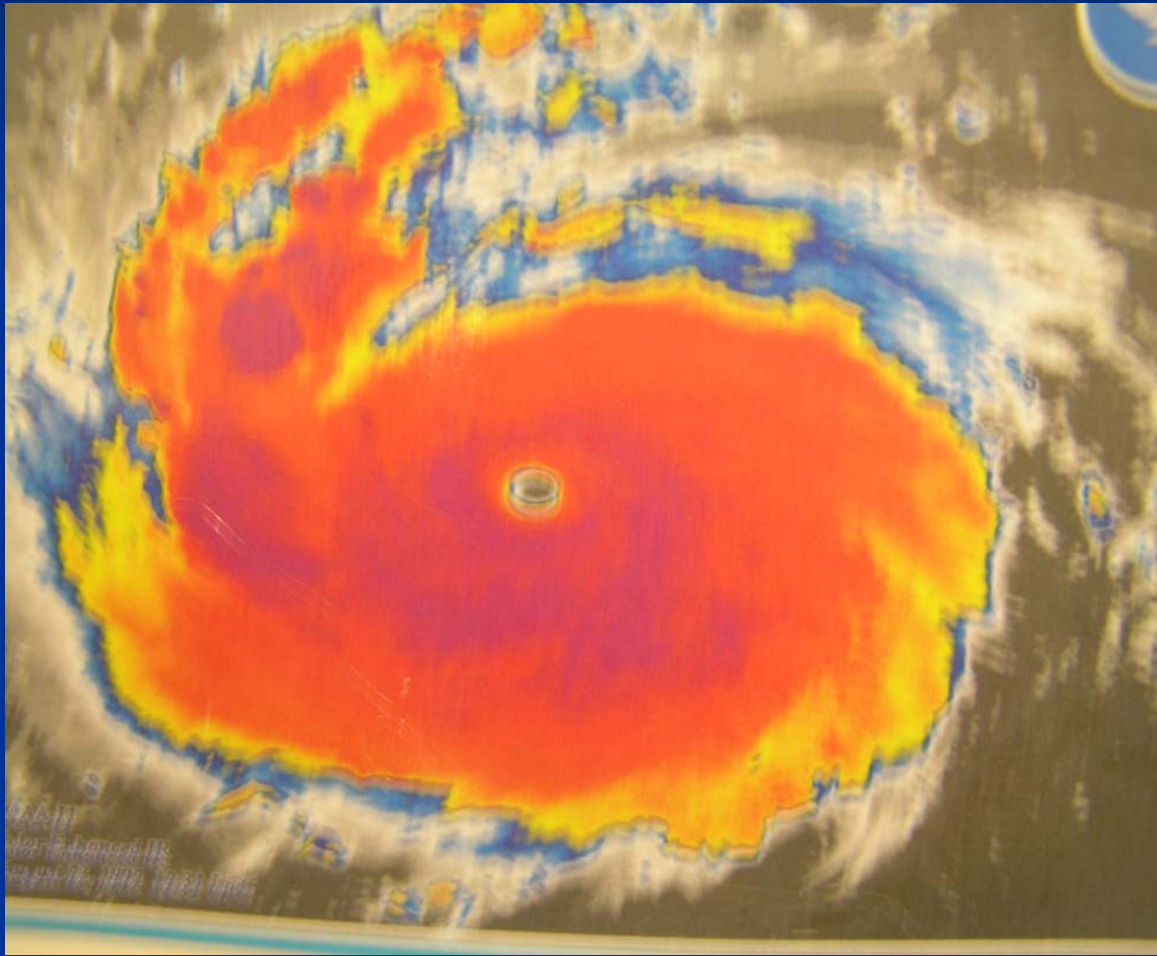
5<sup>th</sup> Grade – Shelter from the Storm

# Teaching the Units

Fall 2006

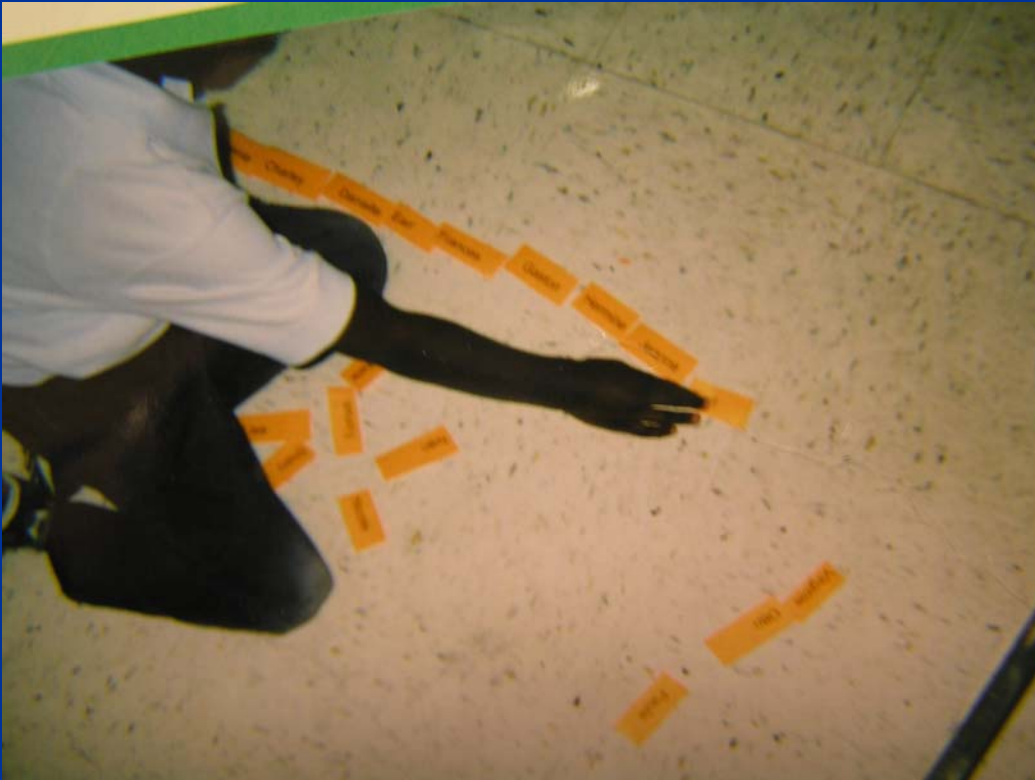
Participants teach units to their students on six grade levels in four states.

# Hurricane Katrina



# Integrating Reading Skills

Alphabetizing  
Hurricane Names



# Integrating Science Skills

Comparing good  
and bad weather

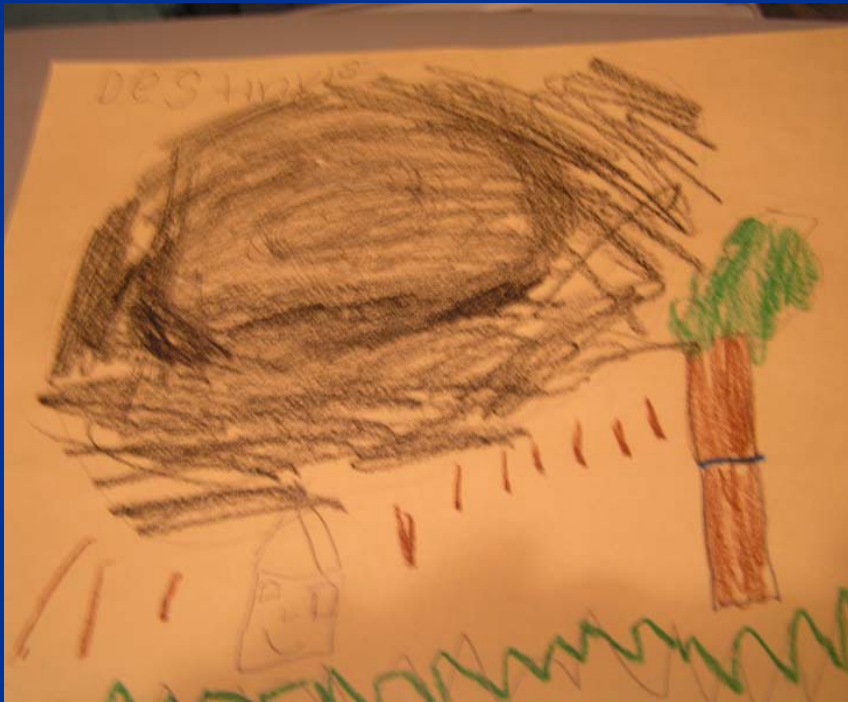




# Integrating Art



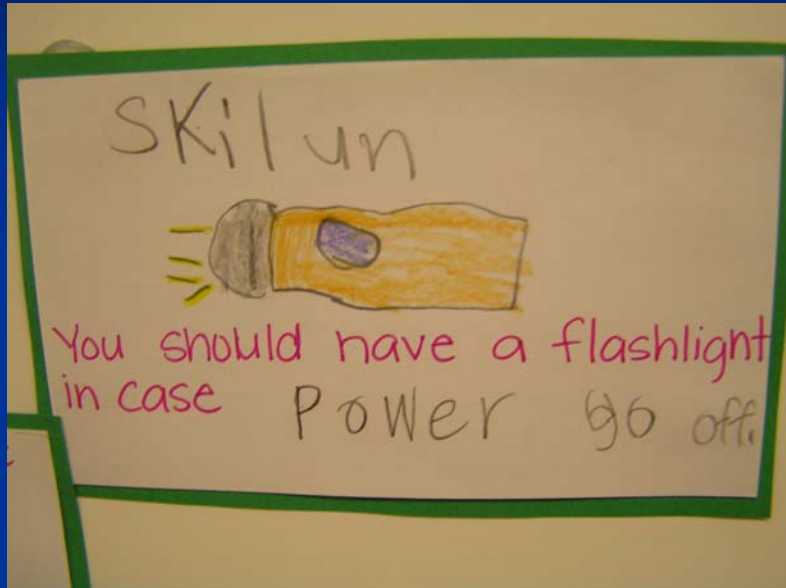
# Portraying Katrina



# Social Studies: Hurricane Procedures



# Hurricane Necessities



# Language Arts



# Presenting to the Community

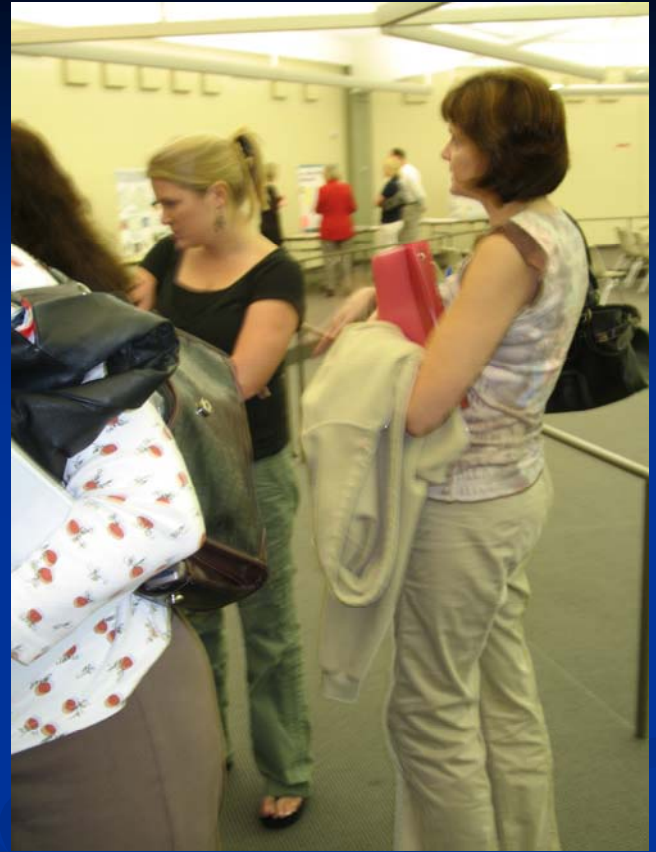
Fall 2006

Teachers presented their units and student accomplishments to other teachers and community members.











For further information on the Disaster  
Units please visit:

[http://www.selu.edu/acad\\_research/depts/teach\\_lrn/index.html](http://www.selu.edu/acad_research/depts/teach_lrn/index.html)

# Voices from the Disaster

Dr. Cheryl Edwards, Assistant Professor  
Department of Teaching and Learning  
Southeastern Louisiana University

*The Little Engine that Could* story

teaches the value of believing

that a goal can be accomplished and that people

(or train engines and circus characters) can help

each other. The project included enrichment and

literacy activities to foster these ideas.



C. Edwards



# Activities



The students created & decorated pillows made of *Little Engine* fabric, and a picture frame in which their digital photos were placed.

# *Little Engine Skit & Story*



# The Daily Star

December 5, 2006

## **Katrina kids hear positive messages at Eastside**

By Aimee Yee

Seven-year-old Asia Brooks is a second-grader from New Orleans who really likes her new school. Brooks, a Hurricane Katrina evacuee, attends Hammond Eastside Primary School....Brooks gathered with the other 20 kids in the hallway at her new school... with several student teacher candidates from Southeastern. The kids listened to student teacher candidate Kellie O'Brien sing "High Hopes." She told them the message of the song was that the ant was told he couldn't move the rubber tree because he was just a little ant, but that didn't stop him, she said.

"So how did he move the tree," she asked the class.

"He kept having high hopes until he just picked it up," said student Willie Robinson.

"That's right, and you have to remember to have high hopes, too," O'Brien said, before teaching the kids a few words of sign language and beginning the song again. After the kids giggled and played along until they could sign the song, it was time to return to two other projects they had started working on earlier in the week.



# High Hopes

## The teacher candidates

1. presented an original play that featured the experiences of a new student at a school and the teacher reading the book;
2. taught the children to *sing* and *sign* “High Hopes.”



# *The Little Engine that Could*

Through the oral histories, we wanted to learn how the children were adjusting to their new homes, school, and community. Even if the relocation is temporary, it is likely that they will spend two or three years in this community.



# Oral History ~ Ethics of Practice

- The teacher candidates and I decided that it was not appropriate for us to ask the children questions about their Katrina experiences. We were cognizant of the children's innocence and vulnerability.
- A letter was sent to parents and guardians asking for permission to interview their children. Even though the school has permission forms on file, we believed that these special circumstances necessitated this additional step.
- Even so, the interviews provided a glimpse into the lives of children from their point of view.\*

\* Mechling, (1987) "Oral Evidence and the History of American Children's Lives," *Journal of American History*. Vol. 74, No. 2 (Sept., 1987), pp. 579-586.

In the song “High Hopes,” the ant believes he can move a rubber tree plant -- because he has high hopes. The children shared something they have done that is hard.

- Willie decided to try to ride his big sister’s bike. “I knew how to ride; I didn’t know how to stop...I almost had a wreck!”
- For Phyllis, homework is hard, especially a whole bunch of math. She does her homework at home, sitting at a table. Nobody makes her do it, she said.



# It might be hard, but I have high hopes...



- Dante always wanted to win first place in track. “I finally got it—won first place in track.”
- For Angela, working on a school project, a model city, was hard. She added that it feels good to work hard at something.

- It’s hard, Dante said, to pull up something out of the ground...like a plant or a rock.



*The Little Engine that Could*, when the circus train broke down, the clown asks for help from engines that come along the tracks. The children told about a time they asked for help and a time they helped.

- Lauren: I ask somebody to “help with finding my hair rag.” If she can’t find it, her grandma will buy a new one. She does a lot to help her grandma at home: cleans house, washes clothes, and cleans her room—under the bed and the closet. They won’t get a Christmas tree, she said, unless the living room is clean.



- When Willie was at his other grandma’s, he didn’t know his way around. He was walking across the grass and fell in a water hole. He asked his uncle to help him up.



- Phyllis said, “I was staying with my auntie and I asked my cousin for something and she said no—but I did that to her, [it was] payback....Auntie helped me—helped me put canned drinks—like Sprite—in the refrigerator.”





- Dante asked a friend in his class for help with his work. “We was building a thermometer,” he said. Dante was proud of helping his dad. “Yes, I helped my dad with the truck...got under it to see if the oil was leaking.”
- Angela related a family story. In Dallas, their truck broke down—ran out of gas. When they stopped at a gas station, her dad called someone “who came all the way over there—to almost the big bridge....And people, over there, heard my dad; people helped my dad.”
- Rakeem asks his mom when he needs help with anything. The thing he remembered learning to do that was hard was tying his shoes.
- Robert asks for help to carry something that is heavy.

# I think I can...





- All of the first, second, and third grade students at Hammond Eastside Primary received a copy of the book.

