



# HomeschoolNYC Newsletter

## *Celebrating Child-led Learning*

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November, 2013

I am constantly impressed by the power of the word, especially when the words come from the heart. In my folktales class children are creating their own myths; in my playwriting class they are writing haunting monologues, and in my literature and essay class they are responding to the ideas in words, and to the potential danger or misunderstanding of a single word. Universal themes resound in stories that are retold throughout the ages: from fables to Shakespeare, to the stories of our own lives. I hope the reviews and thoughts in this issue bring you back to your own stories, and that you will share them with the ones you love.



*[Laurie Block Spigel](#)*

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### **Stories from the Heart**

**Review of Pay Attention to  
the Children**

**Meet Sydney Gurewitz  
Clemens**

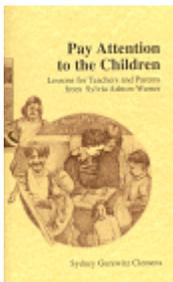
**Books On Child-Led  
Learning**

**Story Activities in NYC**

**Make a Heart Map**

**Quote by Ben Okri**

*[Pay Attention to the Children,](#)*  
*by Sydney Gurewitz Clemens*  
Review by Laurie Block Spigel



In *Pay Attention to the Children*, Sydney Gurewitz Clemens's careful analysis of Ashton-Warner's life and work, I found details and practical applications that are missing in *Teacher*.

The work of Sylvia Ashton-Warner has influenced my life. My mother spoke to her students about this great woman in such a way that, as a young girl, I imagined her as an anthropologist who enlightened the world, and not as a teacher of children in a classroom. When I became a homeschooling parent...[READ MORE...](#)

A rare opportunity to meet  
early childhood educator  
Sydney Gurewitz Clemens



Sydney Gurewitz Clemens will be passing through the NYC area on December 29<sup>th</sup>. Join a small group of participants for a talk on early childhood education with Ms. Clemens. You can download her latest book, [Seeing Young Children with New Eyes](#), for free. [E-mail Laurie](#) to reserve a space at this special talk, which will be tailored to the group.

### Event Details

Meeting with Sydney Gurewitz Clemens

Date: Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013

Time: 11 am - 1 pm

Location: Wyndham Garden Hotel, Newark Airport,  
550 Rte. 1, South Newark, NY 07114

Fee: \$25.00/person

RSVP to Laurie at [Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com](mailto:Laurie@HomeschoolNYC.com)

## Books on Child-led Learning

### On Creating a Child-Centered Environment

[Here are three more reviews](#) of books that offer inspiration and ideas for teaching children of all ages.

### The Path of the Teacher is the Path of the Open Heart

Read about Sylvia Ashton Warner and her book, [Teacher](#).

## Story Activities in NYC



Storytelling is the most ancient of leisure activities, designed for the whole family. Even today timeless classes such as Aesop's Fables, Grimm's Fairytales, and the works of Hans Christian Andersen delight both young and old. Children's author and story time events are free at many bookstores. Storytelling events in museums often include history, art, costume, and theater. All summer long there is free storytelling in Central Park at the Hans Christian Andersen statue, and marionette shows at the Swedish Cottage.

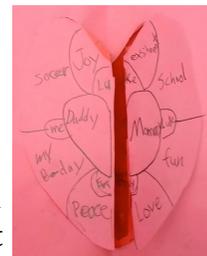
Here is an extensive [list of year-round story events](#) at stores and museums all over NYC, followed by some suggestions of activities you can do at home to deepen your connection with any story.

## Make a Heart Map

What things are hidden in your heart? What things lie deep inside?

I asked my students to make heart maps. Some of them drew in the ventricles and surrounded the heart with lines to represent the ribs, placing their beloved ideas afloat within the body. Others made layers ... [READ MORE](#)

... for [instructions to make a heart map](#) and links to more images of heart maps.



## Quote by Ben Okri

"Stories can conquer fear, you know.  
They can make the heart bigger."

~ Ben Okri (1959 - ), Nigerian poet and author

### Education Uncensored

Here's what people are saying about Laurie's book:

"You made me laugh, you made me cry, and you inspired me. I can literally hear your voice, and love your storytelling and your wisdom and just the whole package. I'm stimulated and filled with ideas for my own teaching."

~ Dr. Bonnie Shulman, professor of mathematics, Bates College

"I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciated meeting you and reading your book. It is terrific, and for me, the best part was its New York perspective. I know no other book available to homeschoolers that so overtly references an urban perspective."

~ David Albert, author of *And the Skylark Sings with Me* and other books

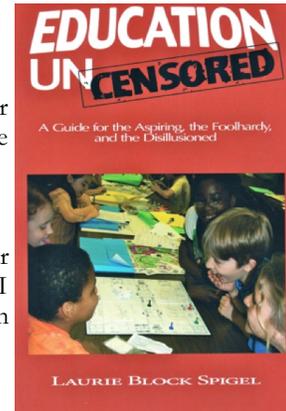
"Laurie's evolution as a teacher and life-long involvement in the world of education has given her a profound understanding of the problems that plague today's schools. This book offers an insightful look at how an increasingly standardized system is robbing our children of their individuality and passion for learning. Additionally, it provides innovative how-to curriculums for anyone involved or interested in educating children."

~ Ellen Labiner, homeschooling parent and special educator

[Read excerpts here.](#)

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