



# Teaching in Themes: An Approach to Schoolwide Learning, Creating Community, and Differentiating Instruction (Practitioner Inquiry)

By Deborah Meier, Matthew Knoester, Katherine Clunis D'Andrea

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How do teachers and schools create meaningful learning experiences for students with diverse skills, abilities, and cultures? How can teachers authentically assess the learning of their students and build on their strengths and interests in ways that enrich the larger community? How can schools be turned into places where everyone is learning from each other? These are the big questions that guide the work of teachers at the well-known Mission Hill School in Boston and that are addressed in this book. *Teaching in Themes* will help schools incorporate a whole-school, theme-based curriculum that engages students across grade levels K-8. The authors provide detailed descriptions of four thematic units: What's Baking? Learning Together about Bread and Bakeries, The Impact of Nature and Play, The Struggle for Justice: U.S. History Through the Eyes of African-Americans, and Astronomical Inquiries. Readers will see how teachers and students design "emergent inquiries" within the themes and create artwork, music, presentations, and a variety of hands-on learning experiences that support differentiated instruction across the curriculum.

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### **About the Author**

**Deborah Meier** is a world-renowned educator, author, and public advocate for education. She is currently a senior scholar in the faculty of the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University. **Matthew Knoester** is an assistant professor of education at the University of Evansville. **Katherine Clunis D'Andrea** is a teacher at the Mission Hill School in Boston and an adjunct professor of education at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

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