

## Announcement of the theme for the 2022 NCTE Conference

Excerpt from the Closing Session of the 2021 Convention of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Speaker: María E. Fránquiz, 2022 NCTE Convention Program Chair

### Transcript

1

00:00:08.429 --> 00:00:13.740

So i'm a bit nervous but absolutely thrilled to share the theme for the

2

00:00:15.330 --> 00:00:24.060

NCTE annual conference in Anaheim California. In doing so, I'd like to begin with a poem.

3

00:00:27.060 --> 00:00:33.930

"Out of the darkness of one moment grows the light of another moment.

4

00:00:34.950 --> 00:00:43.230

Perhaps in some distant time if not in the next moment. Love the darkness."

5

00:00:46.200 --> 00:01:08.610

In the 1970s, Sister Mary Corita Kent embedded this poem in a serigraph that was titled "Out of the darkness," part of a serigraph series that was titled "Moment." The words reflect her inspirational voice and other serigraph in the "Moment" series is titled "Live the moment light."

6

00:01:09.750 --> 00:01:16.620

Sister Corita was a social justice advocate, artist educator, designer and poet.

7

00:01:17.760 --> 00:01:26.370

In more than 800 vibrant serigraphs, she shared her concerns about poverty racism and war.

8

00:01:27.450 --> 00:01:38.640

Her work embedded messages of hope, peace and social justice and drew international attention. I was honored to be a student in her class.

9

00:01:40.410 --> 00:01:49.650

If you do not know about her life and work, please look her up Corita Kent. In fact, yesterday I found out about this new.

10

00:01:50.160 --> 00:02:00.420

children's book on her life "Make Meatballs Sing: the life and art of Corita Kent" written by Matthew Burgess and illustrated by Kara Kramer.

11

00:02:01.080 --> 00:02:14.190

It is one of the 2022 Orbis Pictus recommended books. The beautiful biography was made in close collaboration with the Corita Center and includes reproductions of her work.

12

00:02:14.910 --> 00:02:29.010

Now children will learn that she saw sacredness in the ordinary. That she coined the word Plork because play and work was her approach to art.

13

00:02:29.940 --> 00:02:35.010

Children will also learn she was an unstoppable force for social justice.

14

00:02:35.940 --> 00:02:58.140

becoming one of the most innovative silkscreen artists, of the 1960s and 70s her stunning prints often had messages of solidarity with civil rights and environmental movements. She was a peacemaker and demanded the end to unjust wars, particularly in Southeast Asia.

15

00:02:59.370 --> 00:03:17.160

She often spoke of love, of hope, and light and the pursuit of love, and hope, and light by carefully and intentionally choosing each word and each color in her serigraphs.

16

00:03:18.540 --> 00:03:18.840

For the 2022

17

00:03:20.190 --> 00:03:28.560

NCTE annual convention in Anaheim, I would like to explore the theme of **light** with you.

18

00:03:30.570 --> 00:03:31.500

The theme

19

00:03:32.850 --> 00:03:47.460

“Sueños: Pursuing the light” offers us a moment that speaks of the possibility of bringing what Amanda just said a few minutes ago, bringing people closer together.

20

00:03:48.840 --> 00:04:02.730

As literacy and language arts teachers, teacher educators and researchers of our own and other people's lives we can continue growing out of the dark moment of a global pandemic that continues.

21

00:04:03.660 --> 00:04:28.680

As a new moment grows, we can share the ways our individual and collective pursuit of light assisted and continues to assist us in imagining a new story with bright spots and possible new sueños, new dreams for ourselves for our students and our communities.

22

00:04:31.650 --> 00:04:37.260

Dreams that are pursuing the love and light that is necessary for healing.

23

00:04:38.880 --> 00:04:53.340

In the words of Mrs. Michelle Obama there's always somebody waiting to take your hand. She said, they may not be your teacher, but there is someone at the school or the Community.

24

00:04:54.090 --> 00:05:06.000

She said, students, need to be open to that possibility and I understand that possibility as maintaining hope and love in the pursuit of light.

25

00:05:07.110 --> 00:05:28.530

For the 2022 annual Convention, I invite you to think of ways that we can pursue and bring light to each other, to our profession, and our organization. For me light and the pursuit of life brings to mind the faros or lighthouses of Puerto Rico, the island where I was born.

26

00:05:29.580 --> 00:05:42.600

The lights we carry with and to each other or the lighthouse that looks beyond the island suggests that each person, place, and space of light reaches beyond itself.

27

00:05:43.980 --> 00:06:00.660

As one of our NCTE leaders communicated to me and in full disclosure, it was Emily Kirkpatrick who said to me, as we were discussing the theme "lighthouses serve as beacons from which we can look out to gather."

28

00:06:01.800 --> 00:06:12.930

This image of pursuing the light together offers a context, with the possibility of igniting futures, while still honoring our own dreams.

29

00:06:13.830 --> 00:06:33.240

As a lover and teacher of children's literature I'm a fan of *golden line*, just like Valerie Kinloch when she lifts some for a found poem. So have you seen the latest picture book by Yuyi Morales "Bright star" in English and "Luceros" in Spanish.

30

00:06:35.610 --> 00:06:58.170

This book has many golden lines and can be used to teach comfortable and uncomfortable topics through two languages. In the story, a young fawn explores a border landscape, with a gentle voice encouraging her along the way.

31

00:06:59.370 --> 00:07:17.550

From the very beginning, the fawn is loved and invited to look, listen, search, breathe, find safety. And when afraid to let the world know that she feels hurt.

32

00:07:19.500 --> 00:07:24.510

One beautiful line stands out because it passed from mother to deer.

33

00:07:25.560 --> 00:07:28.290

From mother deer to fawn child.

34

00:07:29.490 --> 00:07:33.030

From border community to border children.

35

00:07:34.560 --> 00:07:35.670

And it reads.

36

00:07:36.870 --> 00:07:49.170

“No matter where you are, you are a bright star inside our hearts.” “Dondequiera que estés, eres un lucero en nuestros corazones.” .

37

00:07:51.180 --> 00:08:01.320

For me, this line and bodies, the belief of light within each person, child or adult. It is repeated in different forms in the story.

38

00:08:01.680 --> 00:08:14.280

The message offers protection to children because it presents the possibility of a caring person or Community somewhere. This line radiates hope and love.

39

00:08:14.790 --> 00:08:32.460

I think that line also ties nicely with the lighthouse logo that incorporates our theme for the 2022 Convention. With the moon, and the stars brightly shining and the constellation beyond the lighthouses of our different parts of the world.

40

00:08:33.630 --> 00:08:48.600

So I invite you, your colleagues, and your students to compose proposals for the 2022 NCTE conference in Anaheim considering questions. Questions like the following:

41

00:08:49.950 --> 00:08:54.270

How can we as teachers and learners be a light for each other?

42

00:08:55.830 --> 00:09:01.650

What are the strategies that keep you, us in the pursuit of the light?

43

00:09:03.180 --> 00:09:08.520

How can writers shine a light on common, as well as difficult topics?

44

00:09:10.110 --> 00:09:18.300

In the social networks afforded by technology, what bright practices can expand our thinking writing and doing?

45

00:09:20.010 --> 00:09:26.370

How can schools become luceros or bright stars in their communities?

46

00:09:27.960 --> 00:09:34.020

How can NCTE sustain itself as a beacon of light locally, nationally and internationally.

47

00:09:35.550 --> 00:09:39.990

So these are some of the questions that are included in the call for proposals for the.

48

00:09:41.520 --> 00:09:45.270

NCTE convention in Anaheim California.

49

00:09:47.220 --> 00:10:07.530

At our Convention, let us share the love and the light that shines individually and collectively within us as a community of light pursuers we can ignite new sueños with potential to transform ourselves our students our communities and our organization.

50

00:10:09.330 --> 00:10:18.480

In closing I'd like to share a different poem this one is by Elizabeth Alexander. She described a connection between love and light at the 2009

51

00:10:20.370 --> 00:10:32.040

inauguration of President Barack Obama. In the second part of her poem which was called "praise song for the day" Alexander wrote:

52

00:10:33.480 --> 00:10:38.580

"say it plain that many have died for this day.

53

00:10:40.140 --> 00:10:43.200

sing the names of the dead who brought us here.

54

00:10:44.670 --> 00:11:00.390

Who laid the train tracks

raised the bridges, picked the cotton and the lettuce, built brick by brick the glittering edifices  
they would then keep clean and work inside of.

55

00:11:01.530 --> 00:11:13.500

Praise song for struggle

praise song for the day, praise song for every hand lettered sign  
the figuring it out at kitchen tables.

56

00:11:14.910 --> 00:11:17.820

Some live by love thy neighbor as thyself.

57

00:11:18.960 --> 00:11:21.990

Others by first do no harm.

58

00:11:23.010 --> 00:11:25.800

Or take no more than you need.

59

00:11:27.120 --> 00:11:30.390

What if the mightiest word is love?

60

00:11:31.800 --> 00:11:41.220

Love beyond marital, filial, national  
Love that casts a widening pool of light.

61

00:11:42.330 --> 00:11:45.660

Love with no need to preempt grievance.

62

00:11:47.430 --> 00:12:05.400

In today's sharp sparkle this winter air  
anything can be made  
any sentence began on the brink, on the rim, on the cusp  
praise song for walking forward in that light."

63

00:12:07.320 --> 00:12:23.790

Because repetition sometimes has power for the reader as we noted in the children's book "Bright star/ Lucero," I lifted two lines from this part of the poem by Elizabeth Alexander to leave with you today. Those lines are.

64

00:12:24.870 --> 00:12:34.380

"Love beyond marital, filial, national love that casts a wider pool of light.

65

00:12:35.610 --> 00:12:40.260

Praise song for walking forward in that light."

66

00:12:42.450 --> 00:12:53.280

Thank you, and I hope you encourage your friends, colleagues and students to take up the call for proposals to the 2022 NCTE annual conference.