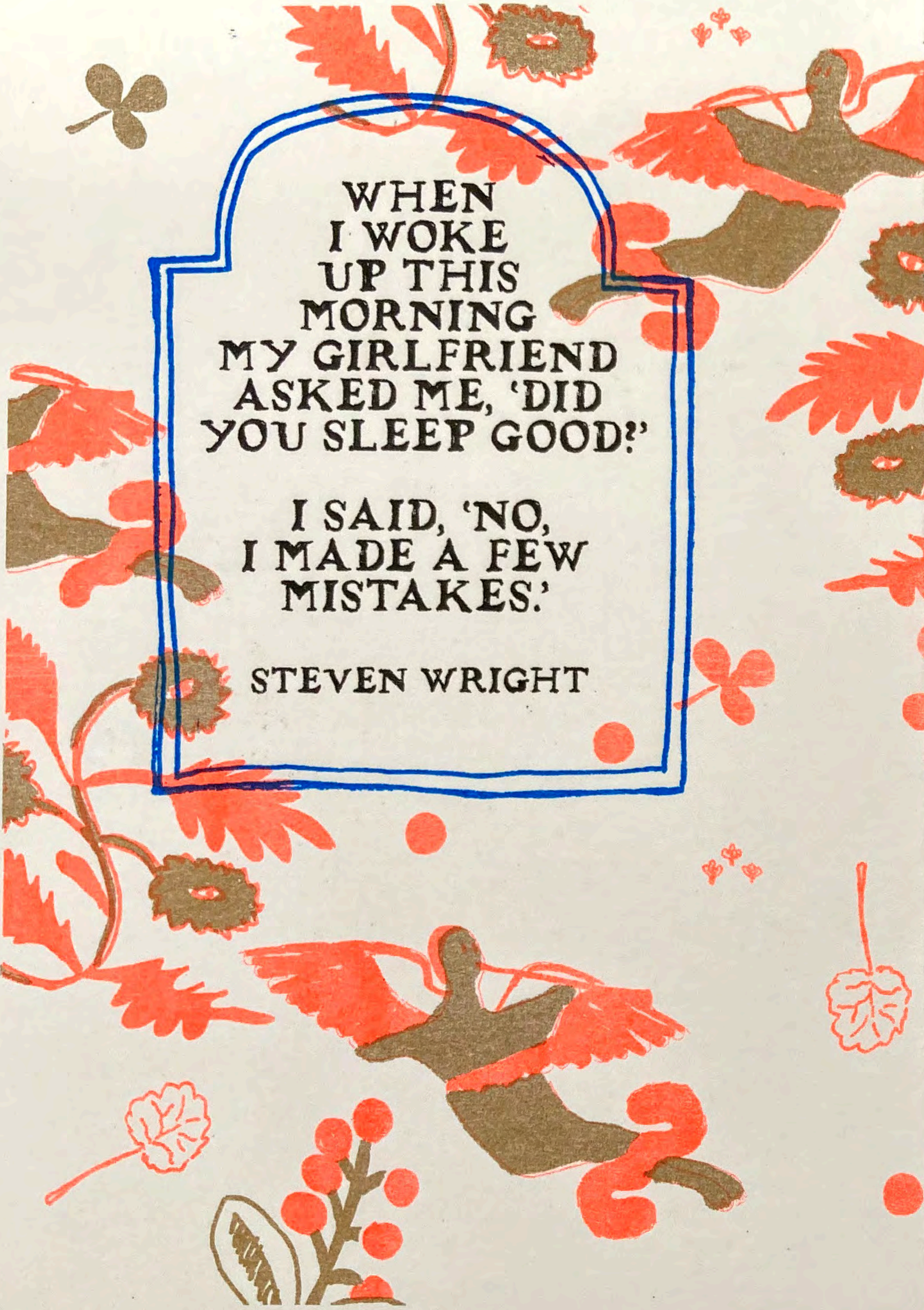


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WHEN
I WOKE
UP THIS
MORNING
MY GIRLFRIEND
ASKED ME, 'DID
YOU SLEEP GOOD?'

I SAID, 'NO,
I MADE A FEW
MISTAKES.'

STEVEN WRIGHT



THEORY FIRST

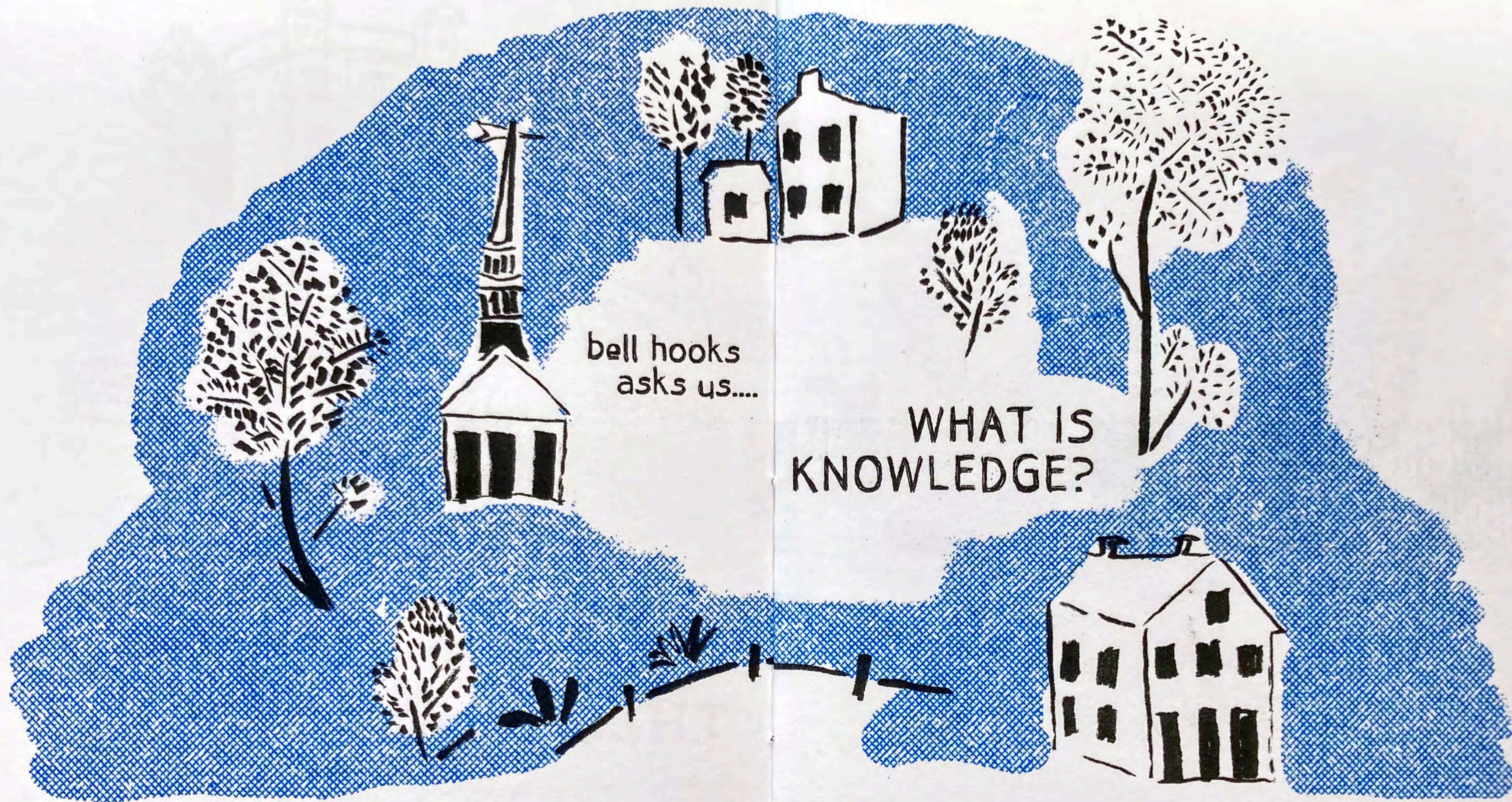
Why do I learn from my students when I teach? Is that okay? Am I really teaching properly? These are the worries that started me down the path of participatory education.

It seems unavoidable that the teacher is at the head of the class, is the person to whom students look up to find a path to success, but my own teaching experience has shown me that the nature of the student/teacher relationship is inherently recipro-

cal, whether we realize it or not. Whether we like it or not!

- Check out the writings of **PAOLO FREIRE**. Do you know what he means by the "banking system" of education?

- Read **BELL HOOKS!** Her work spans poetry, race, feminism and education.



Once we have a start to understand how humans learn from one another (hint: I'm suggesting it's a collaborative process!) we can begin to question what we learn about and what that means.

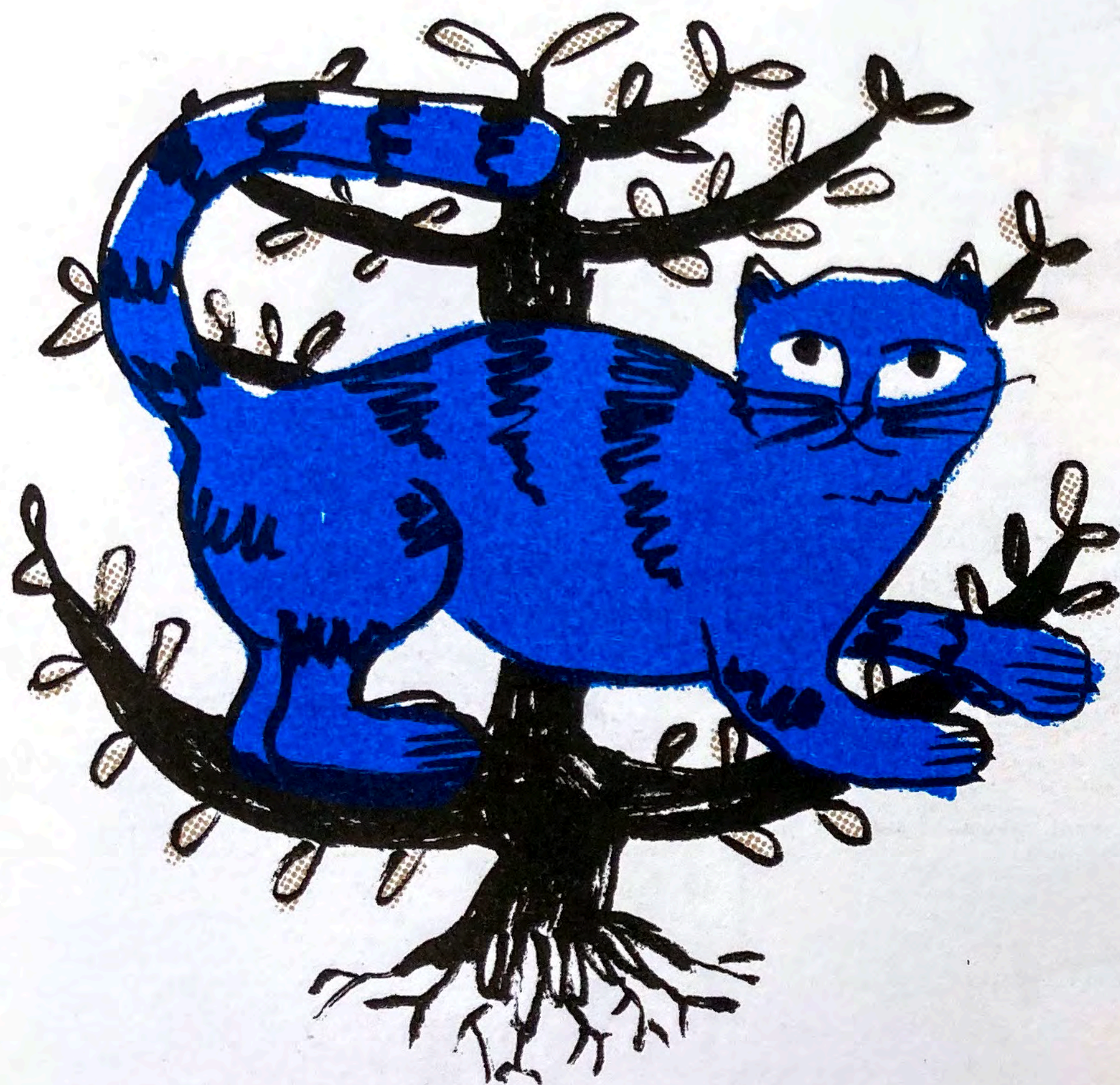
For example, how do we decide what "counts"

as knowledge? Is it just what the teacher says is valuable? I suspect most of us are used to being told what is important and meaningful knowledge...and sometimes we have run up against this, right? There is sometimes that student that doesn't agree with the teacher (maybe it's you?).

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

and that is where we can start to see the cracks. Also, does knowledge stand still? How does it move and change over time and between people? Do you think this is directly related to the relationship of teachers and students?

The topic here, in my mind, divides into two streams, the teacher point of view and the students point of view. Which do you want to think about as we go forward? Maybe we can try to hold both in our minds at the same time....it might be interesting!



EVERY TEACHER
IS TEACHING

IS CREATIVE CONCENTRATION CONTAGIOUS?

The next two scholars, writers, artists I would suggest are Lynda Barry & Eleanor Duckworth.

LYNDA BARRY is a cartoonist and artist that began teaching and really questioned how the connection between her and her students worked as she went. She has written two books that explore her teaching, *Syllabus & What It Is*. She talks about the idea of community and how knowledge passes between teacher and students. She asks if creative concentration is contagious! Can students catch it from teachers whether anyone wants to or not? Conversely can teachers catch it from students?

I say YES! What about you?

ELEANOR DUCKWORTH, is an educator and psychologist who wrote an amazing book called *The Having of Wonderful Ideas*. It's really an education book for teaching small children, but she talks about the having of wonderful ideas. She says:

"The having of wonderful ideas, which I consider the essence of intellectual development, would depend [instead] to an overwhelming extent on the occasions for having them" (p13)

Duckworth continues, "The way to move a person's thoughts and feelings is not by trying to excise them and replace them with other thoughts and feelings. Rather, it is to try and understand the person's thoughts and feelings and work from there." (p116)

WOW!

This finally started my thinking to move away from the why to the how. How can we create occasions for students to have wonderful ideas?

SOMEONE TO LOVE
SOMETHING

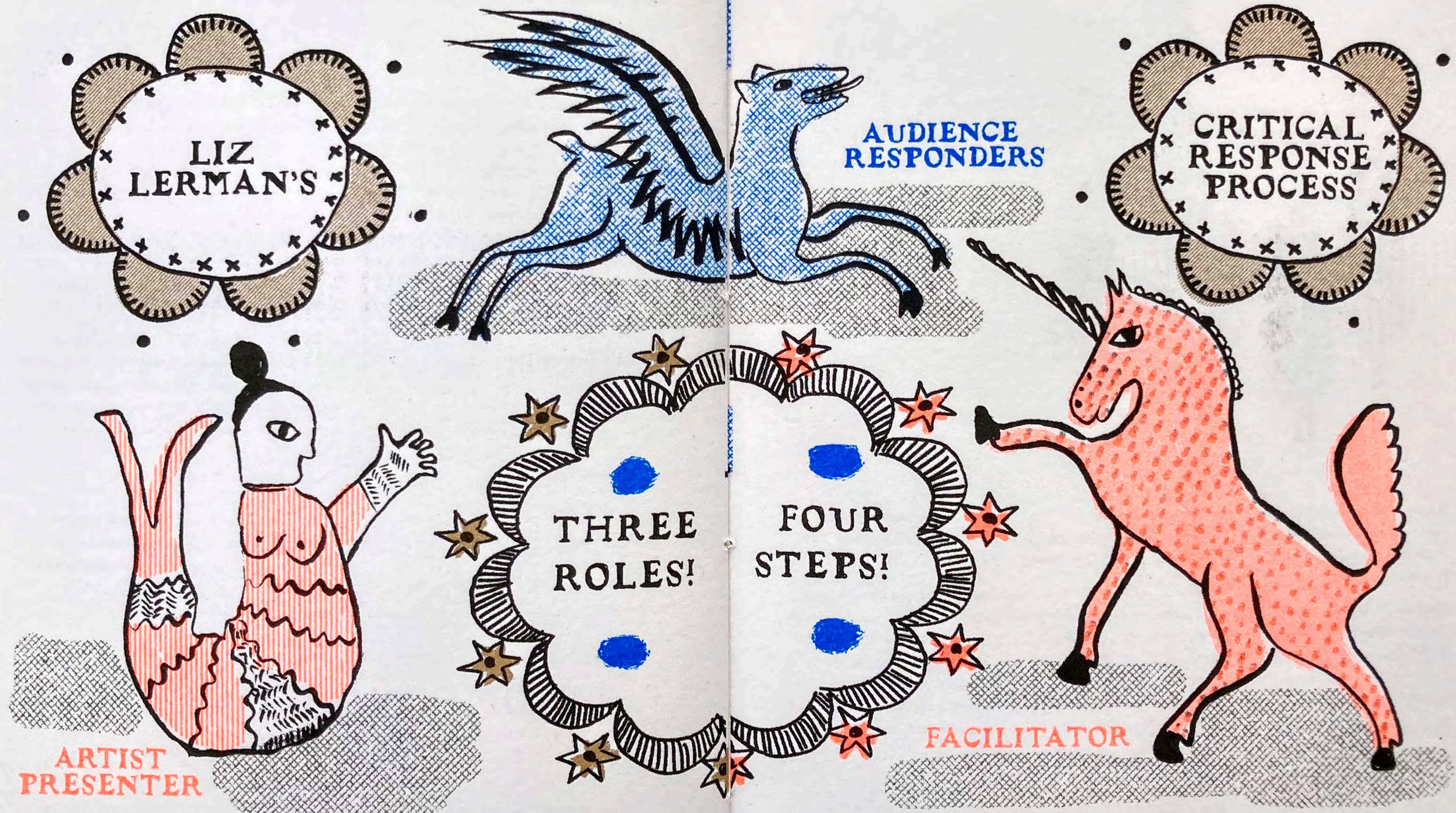
NOW WHAT?

What to do in a classroom then? Create collaboration! The possibility of working together between teachers and students is the Venn diagram of where learning and education might

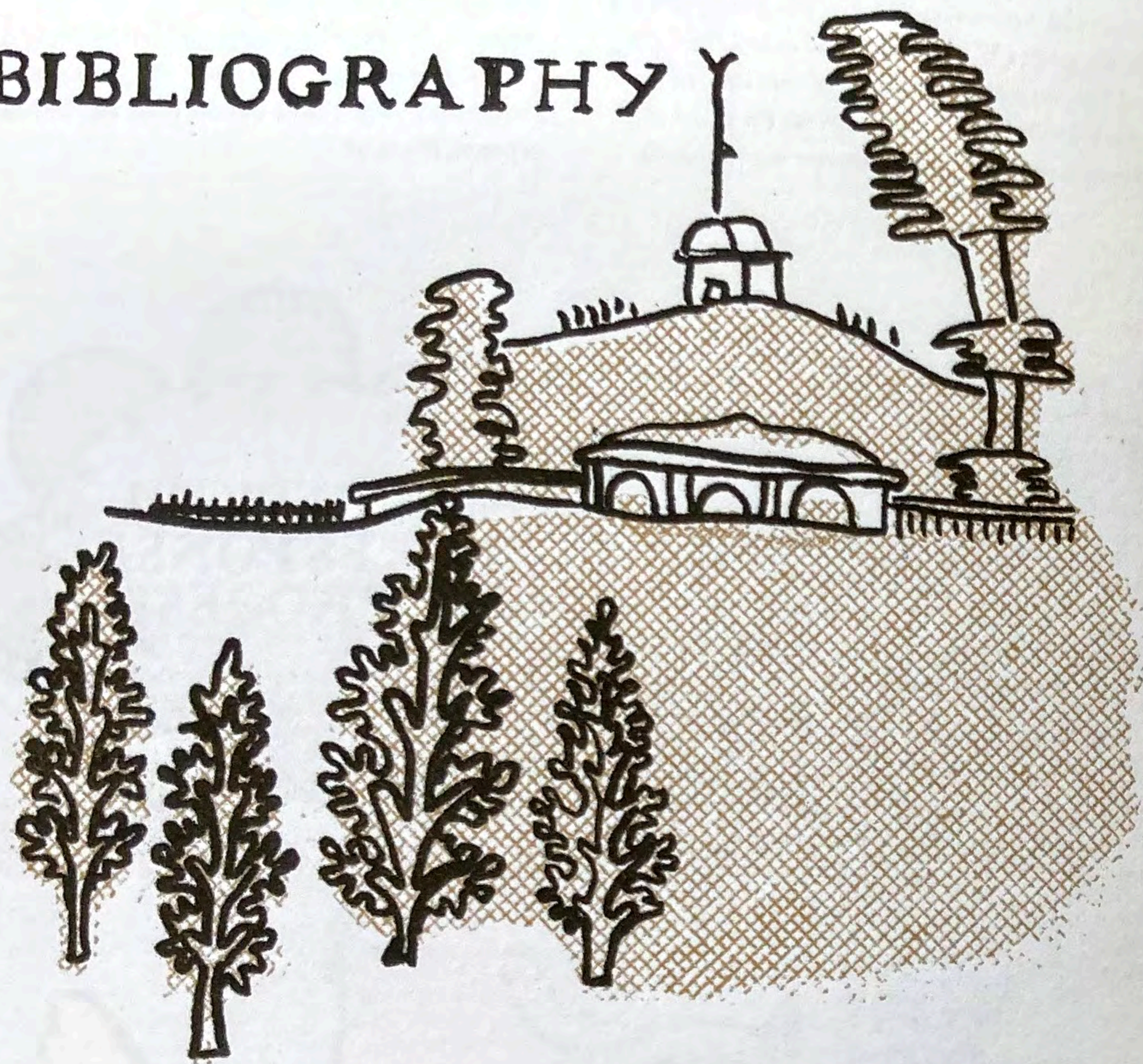
really begin to happen. The trick then is for BOTH teachers and students to come to the classroom ready to bring and share, to learn from each other. It takes practice, though. It can be easy to forget how much we've been trained to follow the leader.

The last thing I would like to offer for further study and support is a critique process developed by the artist **LIZ LERMAN** and called the Critical Response Process, which is a critique method that is geared towards supporting the artist in their journey. This is a technique and a system

that can create a collaborative and supportive atmosphere is the critique process in any creative endeavor. It was developed by and for dancers and choreographers, but it really works for any creative practice. Check out the book for the full process. It's easy!



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