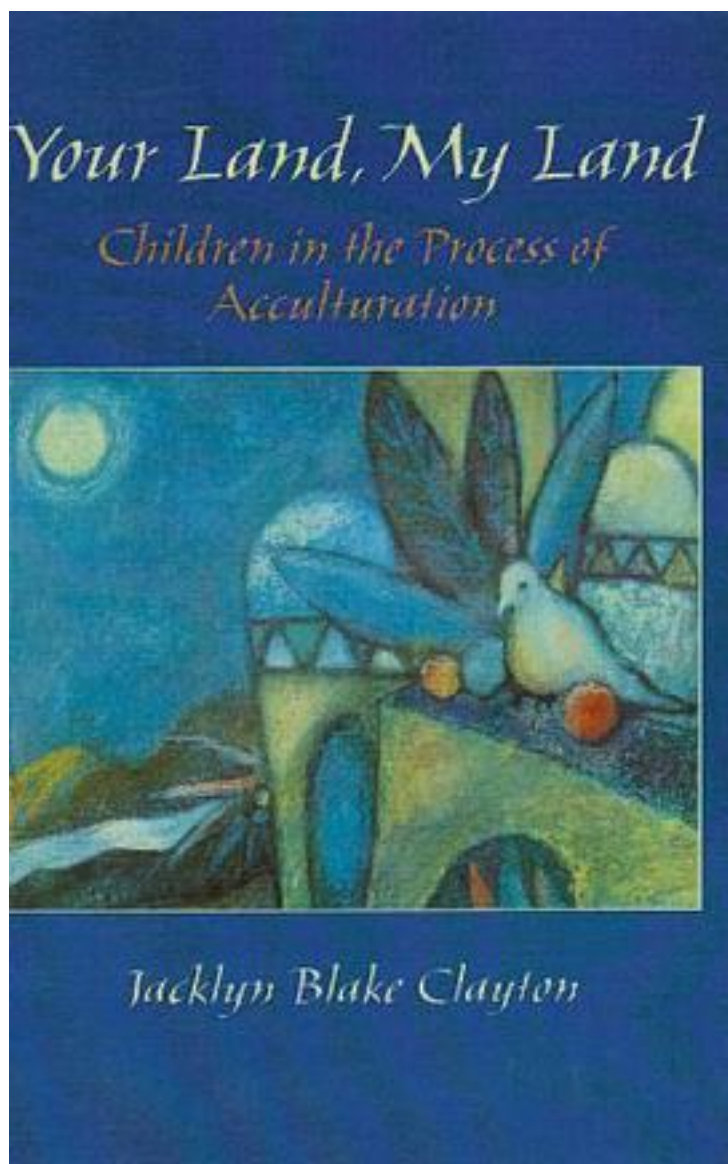


# Your Land, My Land



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Mainstream teachers face particular challenges when newly arrived ESL students enter their classrooms. Some of these challenges stem from linguistic barriers, but others are cultural issues so endemic that neither the teacher nor the student is fully aware of their impact. "Your Land, My Land" is the story of four children's acculturation into elementary school, as seen by the author, the teachers, the parents, and the children themselves. Clayton focuses on two primary questions: Is there some kind of underlying pattern of acculturation that the four students share? What is the role of the school and the classroom teacher in the process? Aged nine through eleven, Erik, Carina, Yevgeny, and Raina were all newly arrived and attending three different schools. Their exposure to English was non-existent to minimal. With the help of translators, Clayton was able to reach these students and get their perspectives on what was happening to them, which she documents here. Even though the focus is on the children, their teachers and parents also participated. These teachers shared their strategies, hopes, victories, and frustrations along with assumptions that weren't always clear even to them. They saw these students as eventual assets to their classrooms, but often felt stymied in their efforts to help them. The parents, despite having to learn new ways themselves, also offered insight. All of those involved took part in ongoing interviews and maintained journals to reflect on the children's progress. "Your Land, My Land" is a valuable resource for any teacher or administrator with minimal- or non-English speaking students. It will shed new light on the cultural adjustment these students must make and on theoretical and practical ways you can reach across cultures to understand the values of your students and yourself.

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