

Strand One: Unit Three Self Directed Activity

1. Read McGinley & Keane's 2022 paper: Traveller students being and relating to an/'other': identity, belonging, and inter-ethnic peer relationships in a highly diverse post-primary school. Access this link:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/03323315.2022.2090412?needAccess=true>
 2. Read the below poem by Elizabeth Connors taken from a Turn To Teaching Open Day in Maynooth University in 2023.
 3. Compare the two and write 300 words in your journal.
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The Traveller Speaks: A poem by Elizabeth Connors

We will stand up unashamed
You discriminate, you bring hate
You made us the ghost
At the back of the room
Feeling alone just wanting to go home.

We wanted to belong, feel part of it
We won't be here for long they say
Sure, they will be married at fifteen.
Going to school you had a rule
Strip us bare ripe the bows
Tame our hair, scrub our bodies bare,
We knew it was wrong same old song
Nothing could be done,
You were scrubbing the Traveller out of us.
But we stood up unashamed.

We are the topic for discussion
Scum of the Earth, Dropouts,
Dirty Knackers looking for payouts
Ditzy tinkers you want us out.

You were created not on purpose, but for a purpose

We are not acceptable,

We are exceptional.

Don't forget this is our nation too

Together we stand for our rights in this land.

We are not weak, we are unique.

We have talents galore; you shove us to the floor.

Looking at others making their mark

I questioned was I done?

I took my pencil from my pocket

I made my mark, a line twenty feet long, on the wall, in the hall

In tiny letters I wrote my name

Being noticed was my aim, but you give me shame

But I stood up unashamed

Playing in the play ground we felt it

But we were children we didn't really get it

We stand up unashamed.

We are teachers, even when in canteens, in the work place we hear what you say.

Your hatred your slander it echoes all the way.

We stand up unashamed.

We are teachers

We are singers

We are writers and poets

We are tinsmith makers

Beady pockets makers

Flower crafters

Musicians, wagon wheel markers,

Tarmacadam layers

Paving the way, that's our way.

We are loud, we are proud, we stand out from the crowd.

Where is your compassion for the child you pretend to teach?

A little time and effort to a child, they would feel they are alive and worthwhile

Never being invited to parties

You had one rule

Don't bring them home that wouldn't be cool

On this journey called life

WE don't need this strife

You don't know us yet you define us

We won't let you kill our dreams

We will be the light that shines bright

Elizabeth Connors is a poet, writer and educator teaching poetry and creative writing classes to adult learners. Elizabeth was part of the Travellers, Teachers & T(h)inkers collective that worked together to share stories that formed the accompanying poster. Elizabeth then drew from those story-telling sessions and created the poem *The Traveller Speaks*. In 2019 Elizabeth published her book of poems titled *Life's Journey – Never Ends*. In an effort to connect with Traveller students in schools Elizabeth offered her book of poems to schools. Unfortunately no schools took up Elizabeth's offer. If you would like copies of Elizabeth's book for your school or college or education centre please contact turntoteaching@mu.ie and we will help to arrange it

Turn to Teaching aims to promote diversity in the teaching profession through a series of social-justice orientated widening participation initiatives. To learn more about the Turn to Teaching Programme in the Department of Adult and Community Education in Maynooth University click this [link](#).

