



**Bryan Ripley Crandall, Ph.D.**

Connecticut Writing Project, Fairfield University

@brcrandall

[bcrandall@fairfield.edu](mailto:bcrandall@fairfield.edu)



# A PROMPT



# CRANDALL, SO WHAT?



Louisville, Kentucky



Syracuse, New York



Bridgeport, Connecticut



- ♦Common Core State Standards places cross-disciplinary emphasis on writing (Calkins, Ehrenworth, & Lehman, 2012; Perry & Manery, 2011).
- ♦Participation in multiple communities requires more writing – and a greater sophistication of skills – for post secondary success (Graham & Perin, 2007; Kiuahara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009).
- ♦Teachers receive little formal training in composing processes (Coker & Lewis, 2008; Hillocks, 2005).
- ♦NAEP scores suggest that writing achievement for English language learners, students of color, and students with disabilities lags significantly behind that of monolingual, White, and nondisabled students (Applebee & Langer, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2002).



- Teachers in low-income schools are often mandated with scripted-curricula that emphasizes grammar, mechanics, and sentence structure (McCarthy & Mkhize, 2013)
- Since students of color and English language learners proportionately attend such schools, there is a strong likelihood they are receiving less writing instruction (Alston, 2012; McCarthy, 2008).
- Most teachers and students are caught in testing traps (Hillocks, 2002), even when research has provided best practices for teaching writing (e.g., Graham & MacArthur, 2013) and practitioners share effective instructional tools (e.g., Gallagher, 2011).
- Youth, like teachers, report that writing assignments in school are for testing purposes alone (e.g., Alonso, 2009; Fisher, 2007; Kinloch, 2010).



- There have been arguments that framing competences through testing, however, fails to account for out-of-school reading and writing practices that urban youth engage with (Haddix, 2009; Paris, 2010; Tatum, 2008).
- Adolescents are committed to improving written skills, especially when encouraged through inquiry and personal interests (Alvermann, 2010; Lenhart, Arafeh, Smith, & Macgill, 2008; Moje & Tysvaer, 2010; Mahiri, 2005).
- At a time when the United States is calling for more college and career readiness, especially in writing, writing curriculum is lacking, possibly placing students further behind (Langer & Applebee, 2014).

# Motto

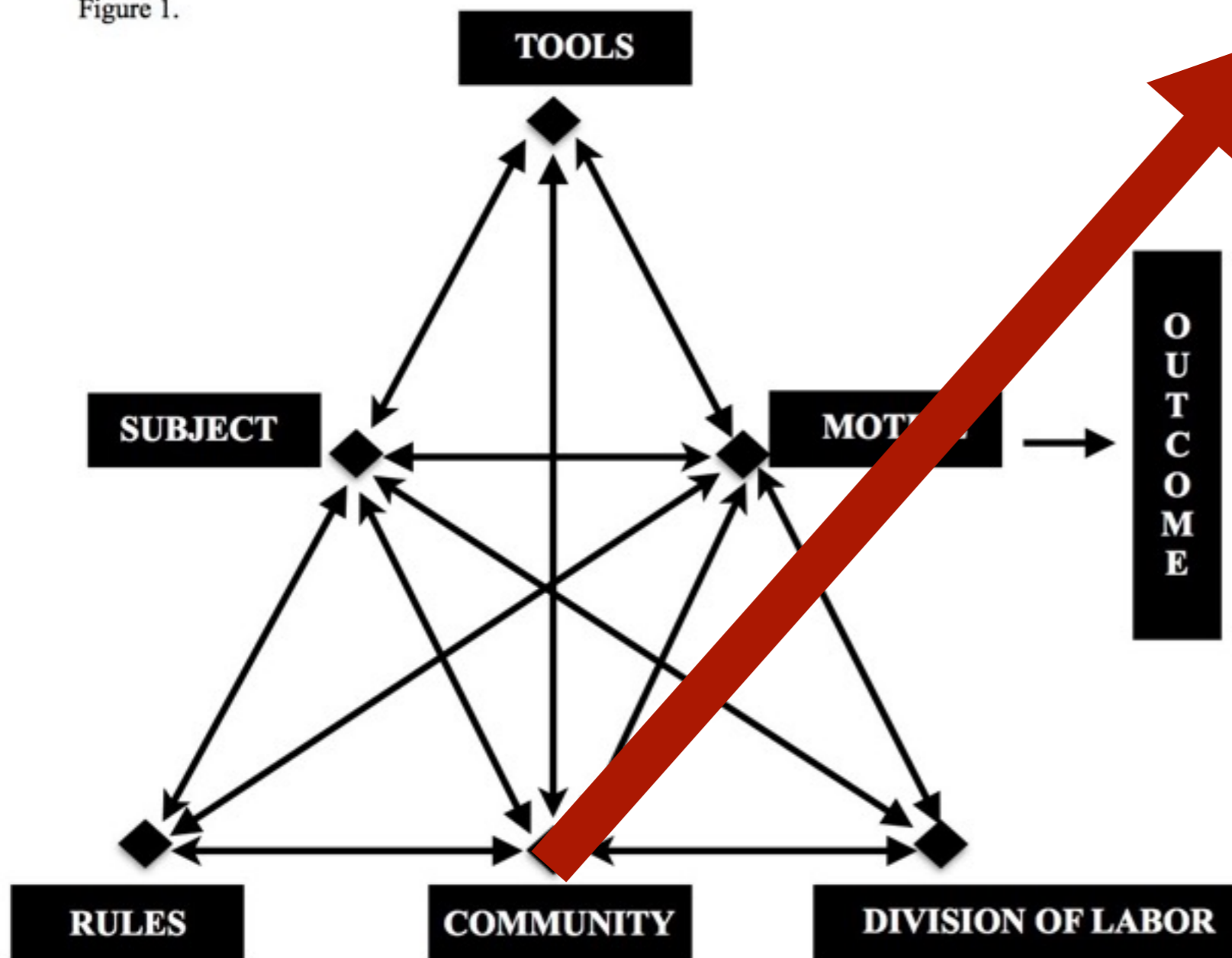


U gotta write  
for what's right  
& fight with all u'r might  
to insight incite,  
and to ignite  
a spotlight  
to put yourself  
in the limelight,  
outright & forthright...  
A'ight?

~ BRC

# ARGUMENT, OF SORTS (BUT WE JUST ATE!)

Figure 1.



I want to argue for community:

- a writer must belong to the tradition(s) of others,
- a writer must feel part of larger discourse(s),
- a writer must recognize how community and communication share the same prefix...we write 'with' other human beings

# ARGUMENT, OF SORTS (CONTINUED)

Figure 1.

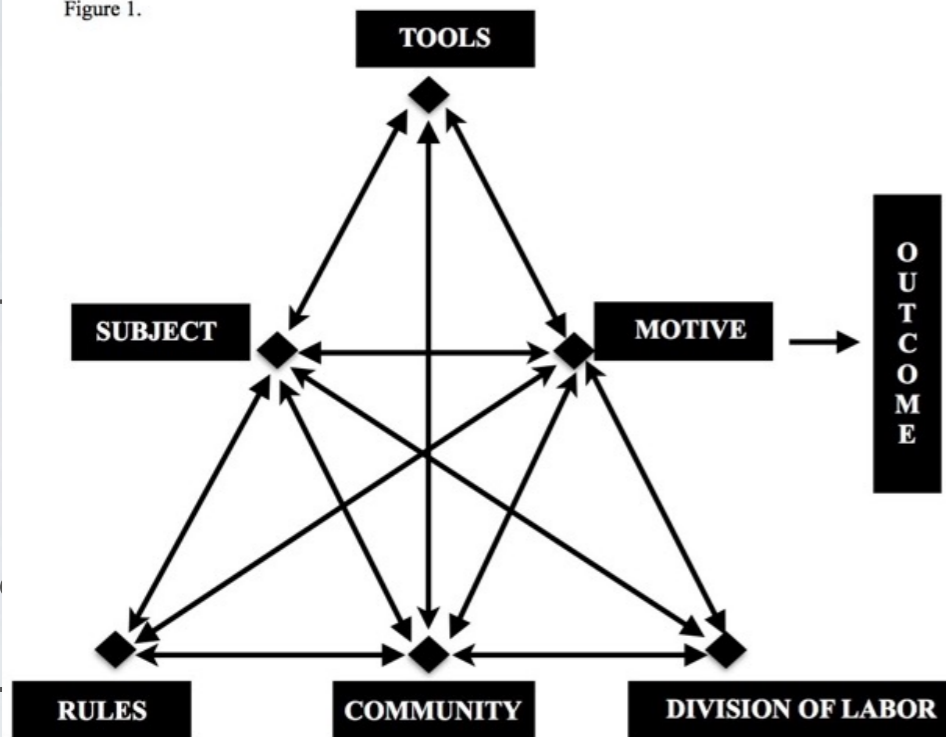


Figure 1.

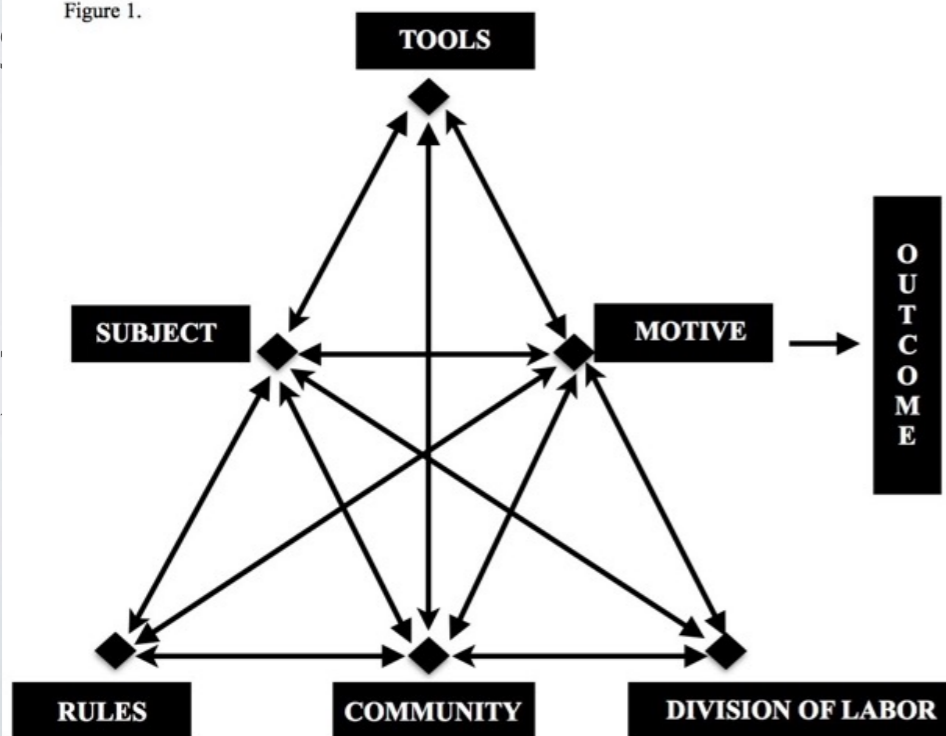


Figure 1.

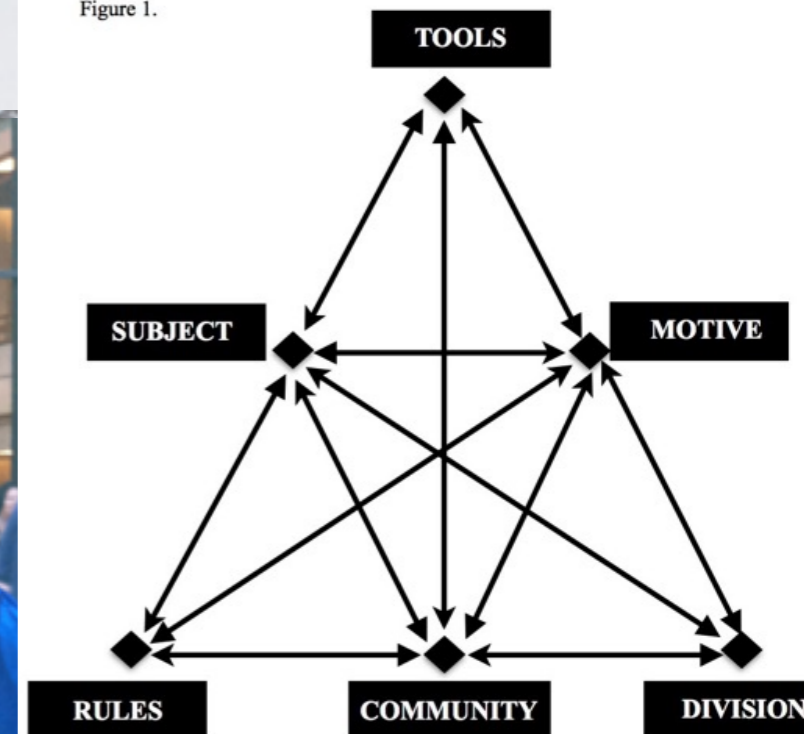
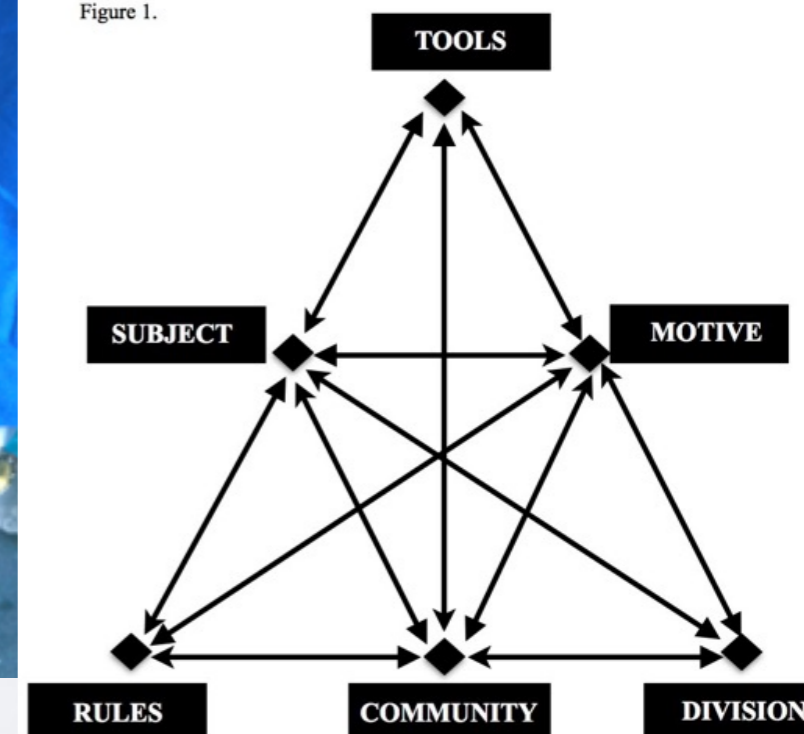


Figure 1.





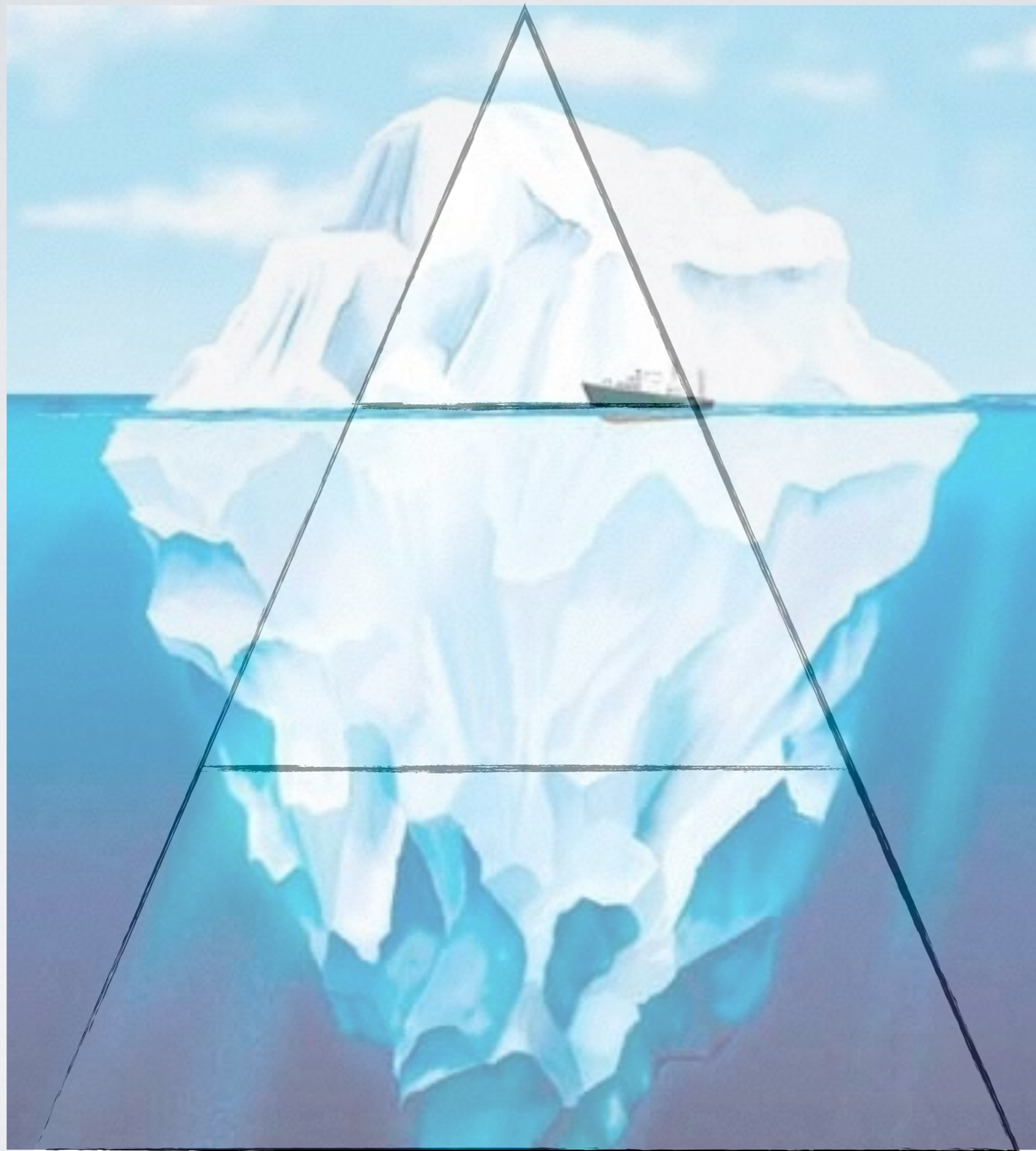
*UBUNTU, A BANTU WORD, IS A PHILOSOPHICAL  
WORLDVIEW BELIEVED TO HAVE ORIGINATED  
IN SOUTH AFRICA. IT TRANSLATES, "I AM WHAT I  
AM BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE TOGETHER"*

CARACCILOLO, D., & MUNGAI, A. M. (2009). IN THE SPIRIT OF UBUNTU: STORIES OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH. BOSTON: SENSE PUBLISHERS.

VENTER, E. (2004). THE NOTION OF UBUNTU AND COMMUNALISM IN AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL DISCOURSE. *STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION*, 23, 149-160.

SWANSON, D. M. (2007). UBUNTU: AN AFRICAN CONTRIBUTION TO (RE)SEARCH FOR/WITH A 'HUMBLE TOGETHERNESS'. *JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN EDUCATION*, 2(2), 53-67.

RISSMAN, N. (WRITER). (2008). I AM BECAUSE WE ARE. IN MADONNA & A. BECKER (PRODUCER). UNITED KINGDOM: SEMTEX FILMS.



**Iceberg Metaphor**



# Community Matters

## Ubuntu Matters



subject

Purpose

O  
u  
t  
c  
o  
m  
e  
s

Structural

rules

Cultural/

ions of labor

# EXHIBIT ONE:

## (BECAUSE OF THE LOUISVILLE WRITING PROJECT)

♦ **Victoria:** We don't have a drama club at our school.

♦ **Bry:** So?

♦ **Victoria:** We need one.

♦ **Bry:** I don't have time.

♦ **Victoria:** We'll take care of it...

♦ **Bryan:** Who?

♦ **Victoria:** The Students!

♦ **Bryan:** Fudge



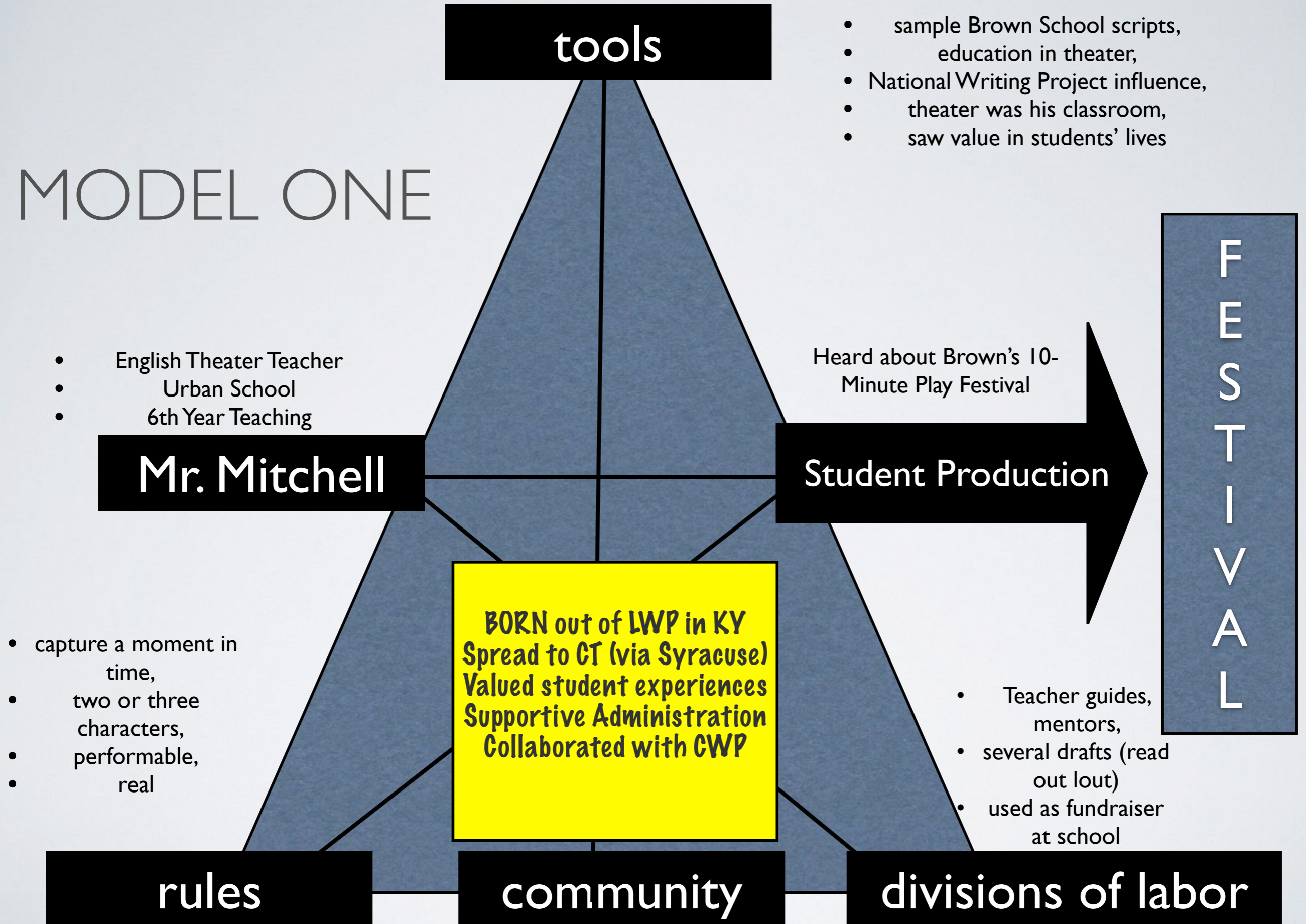
Crandall, B. R. (2009). Senior Boards: Multimedia presentations from year-long research and community-based projects. In A. Herrington, K. Hogsdon & C. Moran (Eds.), *Teaching the New Writing: Technology, Change, and Assessment* (pp. 107-123). New York: Teachers College Press.

# OUTCOME ONE



Shaun Mitchell, Central High School  
CWP-Fairfield, 2011  
Beard Teacher of the Year

# MODEL ONE

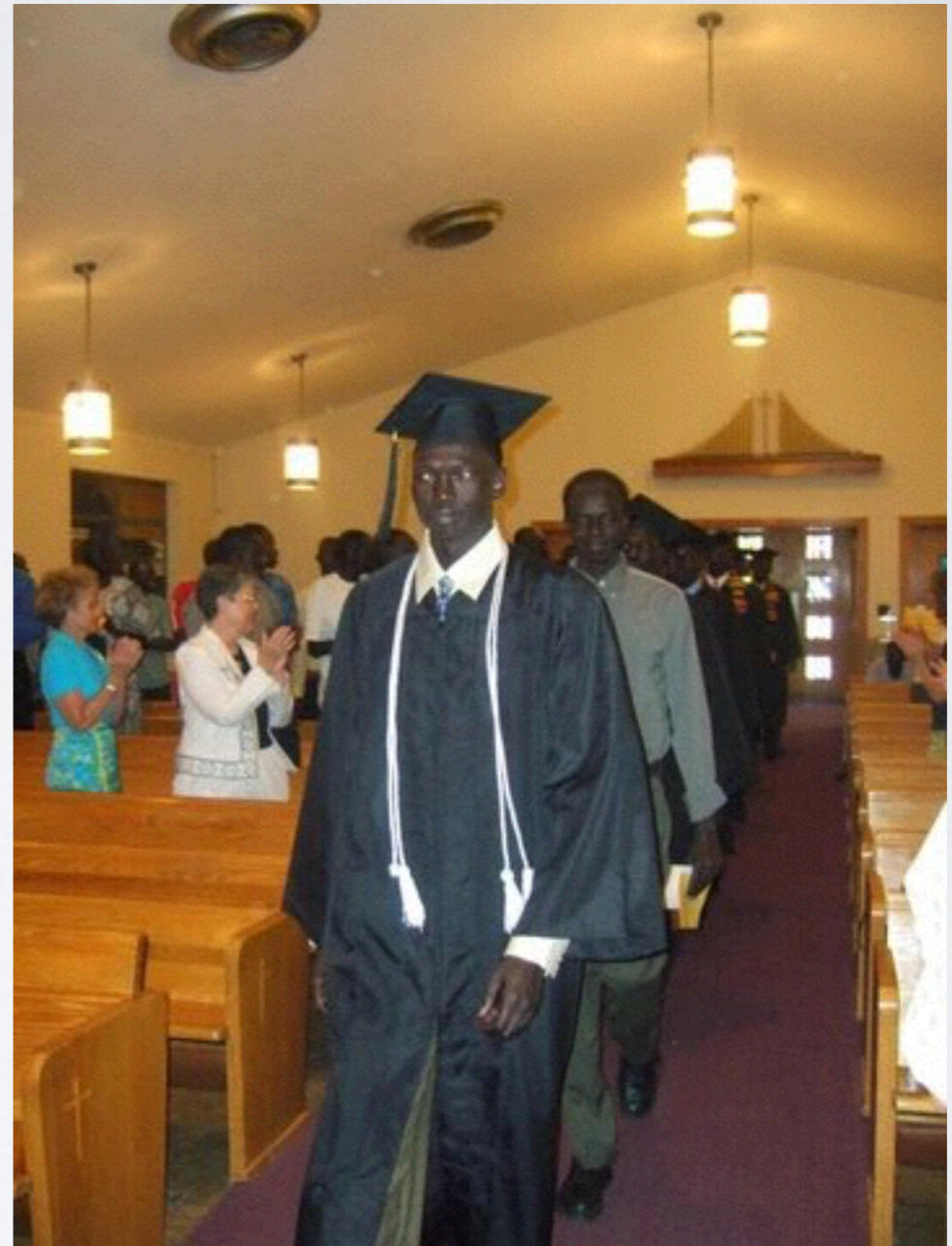


# EXHIBIT TWO:

## BECAUSE OF THE LOUISVILLE WRITING PROJECT

i.  
arriving, unread, unwhite and blue  
from a journey of sandy solitude,  
from travel, to unravel  
their own syncopation of history,  
blistered, calloused, yet alive...  
...their drive without wheels nor temperate tears,  
nor stolen years of boyish fears,  
driven forward, only trusting  
there's a reason to hope....

an irish kennally once said,  
i love  
to believe  
in hope  
and this dope repeats him,  
before I'm six feet under, dead,  
yet living alive on this page.



# STRANGER THAN FICTION

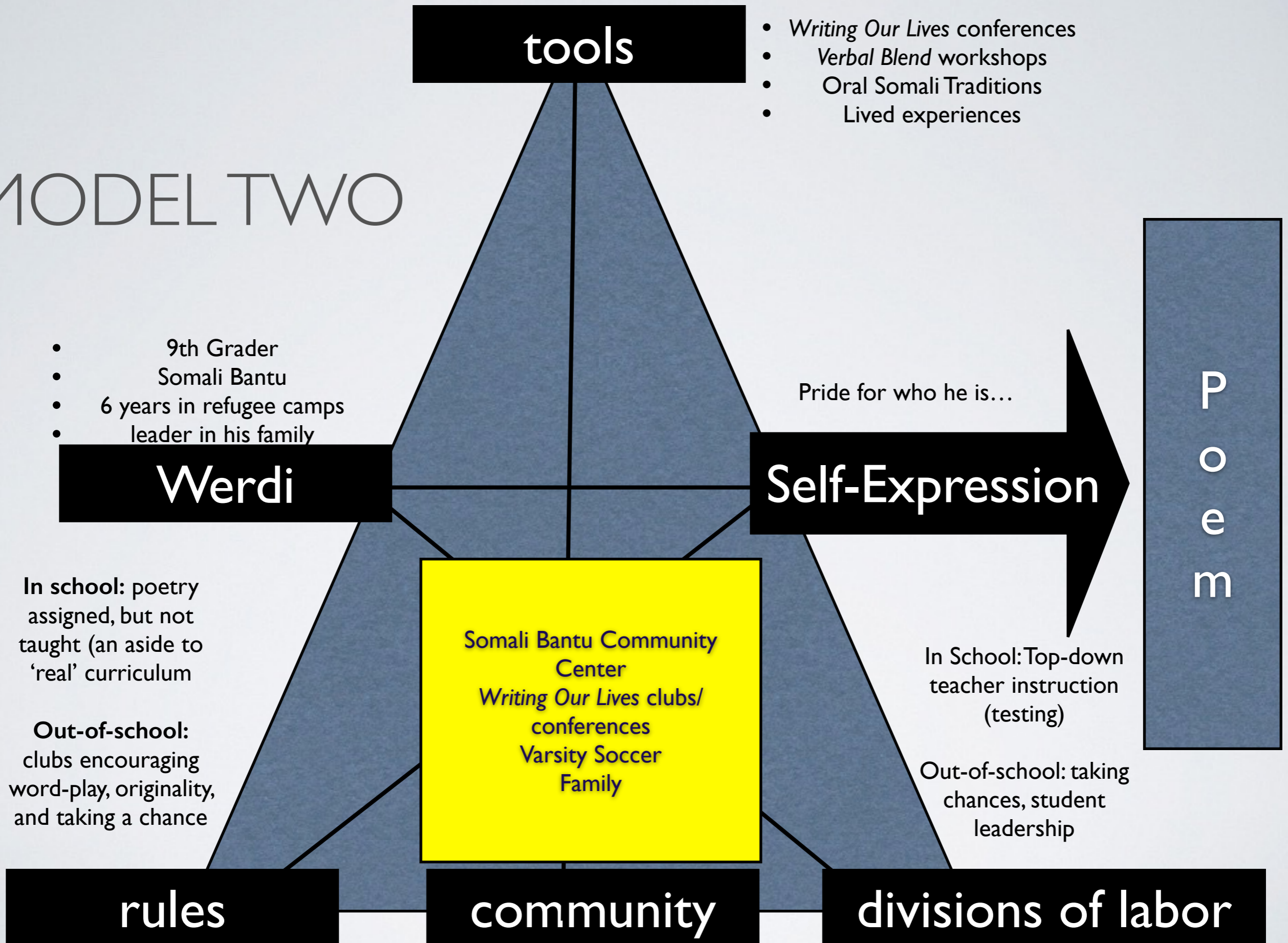


# OUTCOME TWO



Werdi Mugaya (Ali Aden)  
Somali Bantu  
Syracuse, New York

# MODEL TWO



# EXHIBIT THREE:

(BECAUSE OF THE LOUISVILLE WRITING PROJECT)



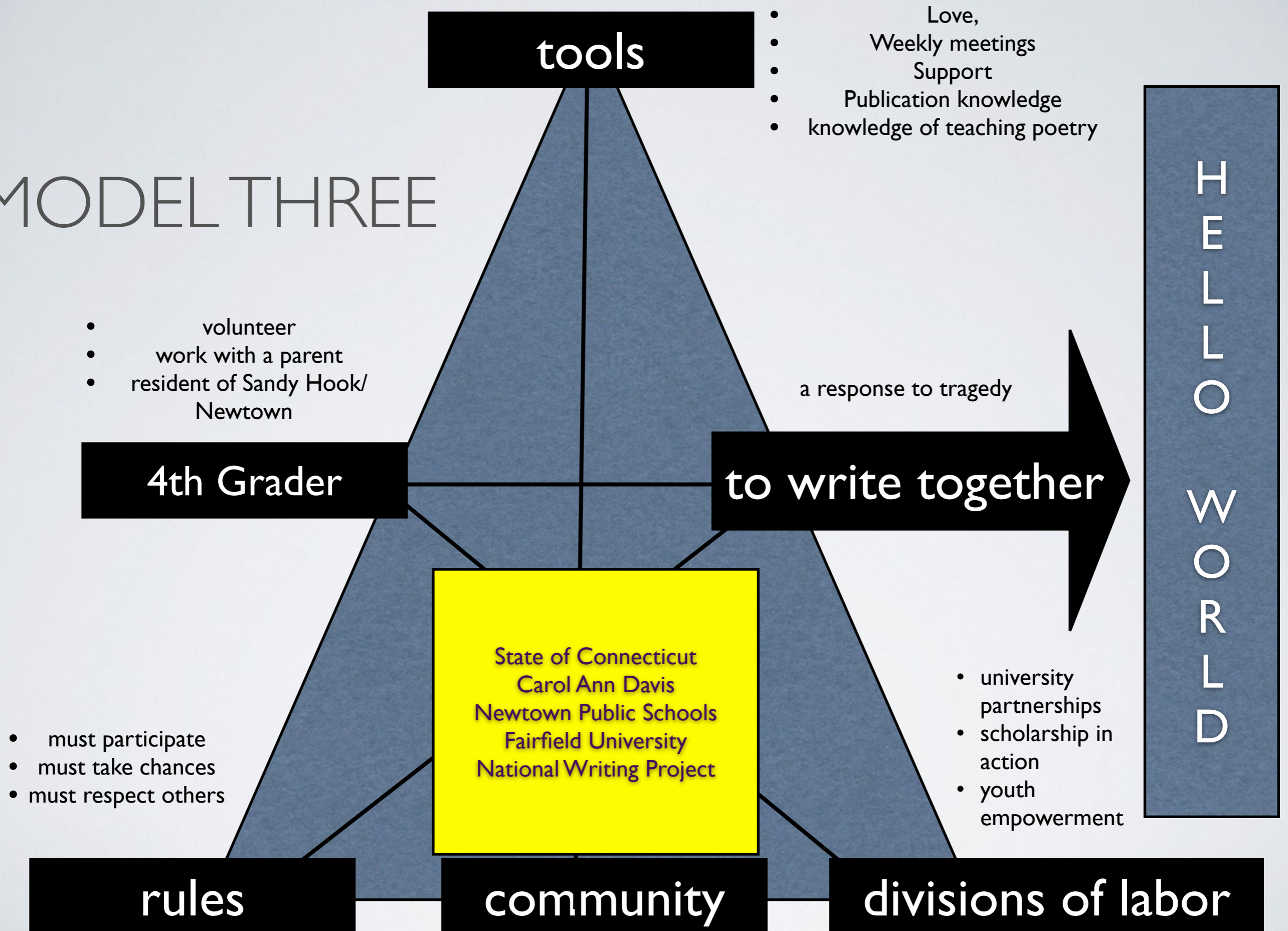
“Venglish”

Why Violence?

# OUTCOME THREE



# MODEL THREE



# EXHIBIT FOUR

“IMAGINE IF...”



tools

- *We Were Here* by Matt de la Pena
- dialogue on being human

MODEL

- urban
- rural
- suburban

400 H.S. Students

personal writing

Why are you here?

We  
To  
Are  
CT

- must respond to prompt, "Why are you here?"
- must publish digitally

CWP-Fairfield  
National Writing Project  
LRNG  
John Legend Show Me  
Campaign  
MacArthur Foundation  
Darien, Central, Bassick, Joel  
Barlow, Staples, and Global  
Studies High Schools

- university partnerships
- youth empowerment
- write beyond the tests

rules

community

divisions of labor

# A PRODUCT

I NEED A VOLUNTEER

## **Exposing Vulnerability**

By Andrea McGowan

**SampleTedX**

# UBUNTU

- I can be me because of who we are together
- In what ways can you emphasize community with your writers this year?
- What take aways, if any, do you have?





THANK YOU

@BRCrandall

[bcrandall@fairfield.edu](mailto:bcrandall@fairfield.edu)



Oh! the Places I've been because of  
the Bluegrass State!