As it turned out, there were multiple ironies in the very idea of New London. Now one billion people speak that difficult and messy little language, English, spoken four centuries ago by only about a million or so people in the vicinity of London, old London. The story of the language, and the story of the last few centuries, including its many injustices, is the story of many new Londons. This issue—how the language meets with cultural and linguistic diversity—was one of our main concerns. Then there was the irony of the postcard serenity of this particular New London, the affluent, post-industrial village which produces little more than its idyllic eighteenth-century postcard image. This, in a world where the fundamental mission of educators is to improve every child’s educational opportunities—a world which, much of the time, is far from idyllic.

Multimodality vs. Multiliteracies? Introduction. Accounts of multimodality and multiliteracies emphasize the many ways and contexts in which people experience communication and come to develop understandings. Multimodality and multiliteracies may be newly-coined words, apparently new theories, but they do not explicitly describe new phenomena. For instance, the everyday experiences of every individual are multimodal: we see, we hear, we touch, we smell, and we taste. Introduction: Multiliteracies: The beginnings of an idea. Jan 2000. 3-8. The process has shown that the development of a viable metalanguage for teaching and assessing multimodal texts is highly problematic and is in need of further empirical study. This cultural work is constrained by the current assessment requirements for English in England and needs to be considered against discussions of what definition of English and literacy we need in the 21st century.