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James S. Chisholm
University of Louisville

Kathryn F. Whitmore
University of Louisville

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Original Publication Information

Chisholm, J. S., & Whitmore, K. F. (2016). Bodies in space/bodies in motion/bodies in character: Adolescents bear witness to Anne Frank. International Journal of Education & the Arts, 17(5). Retrieved from http://www.ijea.org/v17n5/

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International Journal of Education & the Arts

Editors

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http://www.ijea.org/ **ISSN: 1529-8094**

Volume 17 Number 5 **March 10, 2016**

Bodies in Space/Bodies in Motion/Bodies in Character: Adolescents Bear Witness to Anne Frank

James S. Chisholm
University of Louisville, USA

Kathryn F. Whitmore
University of Louisville, USA

Citation: Chisholm, J. S., & Whitmore, K. F. (2016). Bodies in space/bodies in motion/bodies in character: Adolescents bear witness to Anne Frank. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, *17*(5). Retrieved from http://www.ijea.org/v17n5/.

Abstract

Situated at the intersection of research on Holocaust education and embodied literacies this study examines how an arts-based instructional approach engaged middle school learners in developing empathetic perspectives on the Anne Frank narrative. We addressed the research question: What can adolescents who are using their bodies to gain empathy with Anne Frank teach us about embodied literacies? Digital images and video were used to generate a multimodal analytic method that combined focus group interviewing with the Semiotic Photo Response Protocol and Visual Discourse Analysis. Analyses of performance and visual arts texts illustrated how students layered their understandings as they recast meanings across sign systems. As students engaged their bodies in space, in motion, and in character, they learned about the socio-historical and emotional contexts in which Anne lived. These

findings suggest that arts-integrated and embodied learning opportunities may support students' sensemaking about complex narratives.

The Anne Frank narrative has long occupied a prominent place in English language arts (ELA) and social studies curriculums in the United States. Anne's life and writing deserve even greater attention today as the number of living Holocaust survivors dwindles and the last living testimonies cease to exist. Although a number of meaningful projects have sought to ensure that the voices of Holocaust survivors live on in perpetuity[1], the Anne Frank narrative is for many middle grades students the first and only exposure they have to the Holocaust (Magilow & Silverman, 2015). It is likely also the only personal Jewish narrative they encounter officially in the ELA curriculum. Therefore, the ways in which classroom instruction frames this powerful topic shapes how students connect personally with Anne's narrative and the questions and meanings they construct about the Holocaust.

We examined the use of an arts-based instructional framework to engage middle school learners in developing empathetic perspectives on the Anne Frank narrative. Taking on another's perspective to empathize is a 21st-century skill that can develop through relational literacy practices (Chisholm & Keller, 2014). Middle school students today encounter the harsh realities of life in their local and global communities. For example, students in this project used the arts to grapple with socio-political issues like rape culture, body image, and domestic violence. Students raised critical questions about the nature of such ethically and emotionally difficult topics in affective and cognitive ways. We conceptualized empathy as a relational literacy practice that places one's body and mind in the context of another, thereby affording the learner multiple perspectives on texts and the capacity to draw on those perspectives to act in the world.

We asked the research question: *What can adolescents who are using their bodies to gain empathy with Anne Frank teach us about embodied literacies?* In this article, we examine two examples of multimodal literacy learning that were part of an embodied approach to ELA and social studies instruction. Our parallel multimodal analysis made visible the ways in which students used their bodies in space, in motion, and in character to learn about Anne Frank. This work contributes to the pedagogical and methodological literature about arts-based literacy instruction by examining the multimodal processes and texts students used and constructed as part of learning about the Holocaust.

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[1] For example, the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation's Institute for Visual History and Education, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's *First Person* podcast series and *Echoes of Memory* writing workshops for survivors of the Holocaust.

Sociocultural and Multimodal Perspectives on Literacy and Learning

This study is grounded in the sociocultural notion that all learning is mediated, or brought about through cultural tools of various sorts (Kozulin, 2003; Wertsch, 2007) and that issues of identity, agency, and power shape in consequential ways how and to what ends learners engage in literacy tasks (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). Vygotsky (1982) identifies the concept of mediation as "the central fact about our psychology" (p. 166). From a sociocultural perspective, mediation—the process by which meaning is realized primarily although not exclusively through language—is consequential to learning (Kozulin, 1998). In other words, signs mediate thinking "externally" and meanings mediate thinking "internally" (Moll, 2014, p. 34).

Mediational means in instructional settings include not only tangible human and symbolic tools such as teachers, students, and texts, but also less obvious, and often overlooked tools such as images, bodies, and spatial relationships. In fact, Moll (2014) synthesizes Vygotskian theorists' work on mediation to categorize the concept according to five classes of mediators, two of which we pay particular attention to in this study: "*[s]emiotic mediation*: the use of symbol systems, such as language, writing, art, and mathematics [and] *[a]natomical mediation*: the use of the body, such as the hands and arms, which permit manipulation of the environment and representation of self in social life" (p. 31). We recognize the power of mediation for making distant historical, literary, and cultural content more concrete for youth. We consider the ways in which learners use art and language (semiotic mediation) and their bodies in space, in motion, and in character (anatomical mediation) to learn about Anne Frank.

For this study, we foreground the mediating affordances of diverse sign systems. Gestural, musical, sculptural, visual, and other modes are ways students make and transform meaning with others in addition to verbal communication. Multimodality, which is the combination of different modes, increases learners' access points to the curriculum (Albers, 2006), generates insights into texts and students' own lives (Berghoff, Egawa, Harste, & Hoonan, 2000; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005) and offers additional means for students to demonstrate understanding. In particular, we leverage for analytical purposes the semiotic concept of transmediation (Siegel, 1995; Suhor, 1984). Transmediation occurs when students interpret texts that originate in one sign system and recast that meaning into another sign system. In our study transmediation refers to variations on "the process of taking what one knows in language and representing it in art" (Harste, 2014, p. 88), and, vice versa, by putting words and verbal expression to visual images.

As Albers (2006) argues, "meaning is not located within any one mode, but in how the modes are interpreted in relation to each other" (p. 77). Transmediating understandings across

semiotic systems is shown to expand students' perspectives (Cowan & Albers, 2006) and extend the interpretive potential of texts (Zoss, 2009). "Simultaneously tapping the nonredundant potentials of talk and visual representation extends the generative and reflective power of transmediation" (Whitin, 2005, p. 392). The importance of this concept cannot be underestimated. In fact, literacy, according to some scholars, is reflected in a learner's ease with which he or she can transmediate (Cowan & Albers, 2006; Harste, 2000). The ability to mediate the actual world and the perceived world through multiple sign systems promotes the power of students' voices, and quite possibly the critical consciousness of our society, resulting in potentially more democratic interactions within and among cultures (Harste, 2000, 2014).

Review of Literature

We situate this study in two areas of the research literature—research on teaching and learning literature about the Holocaust and research on embodied literacies. Our study fits in the intersection of these areas to particularly attend to what students taught us about embodied literacies as they drew empathetic connections between their contemporary lives and the life of Anne Frank and grappled with incomprehensible content that can only be "worked through" and never "comprehended" (LaCapra, 1996; Simon et al., 2014).

Research on Teaching and Learning Literature about the Holocaust

Research on Holocaust education in K-12 ELA and social studies classrooms continues to emphasize the complexities and controversies surrounding the design, implementation, and evaluation—indeed the larger purpose—of instruction about this topic. Among the complexities and controversies that have arisen within educational studies of the Holocaust, scholars consider the unintended consequences of teachers' unexamined assumptions about the moralistic, didactic, and authoritative messages embedded in the study of texts with "disturbing pasts" (Juzwik, 2013; Schweber, 2004). Text selections that sensationalize and trivialize individuals' experiences during the Holocaust (Spector & Jones, 2007) and problematic ways of framing the historical facts of the Holocaust have led to student misconceptions and a tendency to produce gross generalizations that distance the persons and events of the Holocaust from contemporary life (Gray, 2010; Schmidt, 2009).

In reflecting on her experiences teaching a unit on Anne Frank as an early career English teacher, Juzwik (2013) identifies the tension that emerged as she sought to maintain her transactional literacy goals for her students while also attempting to "engage the detailed particularity of the Holocaust" (p. 291). Anne Frank's writing connects with many readers and such connections are often held up as "best practice" in ELA classrooms. However, an ethical treatment of Anne's diary, Juzwik argues, contextualizes Anne's writing using historical facts

about the Holocaust and approaches such texts with a rhetorical perspective, asking teachers and learners to "push beyond morally *didactic* positions toward the exploration of how moral complexities and ethical stances are implicated in the relationship between *word* and *world*" (p. 304). Such an approach to studying the Holocaust requires teachers and students to understand not only what the complexities and controversies are, but also to understand how and why they are complex and controversial.

In a critical case study of classroom instruction of "The Diary of Anne Frank" (Goodrich & Hackett, 1956), Spector and Jones (2007) investigated how secondary students construct meaning about the Holocaust through Holocaust literature units. The researchers point out some major shortcomings of the Goodrich and Hackett play, which, without supplementary instruction, the authors argue, can convey a distorted representation of Anne's life, her ideals, and the circumstances and horrors she endured. One 8th grade student in their study, for example, concluded that Anne would be happy to be at a concentration camp because she could be outside in nature, "frolicking" (Spector & Jones, 2007, p. 36).

When findings from Year 1 of their study indicated that students thought about Anne as hopeful and optimistic as a result of the way that the play and the students' textbook highlighted the relational aspects of Anne and framed personal narratives as profiles of "The Invincible Spirit," Spector co-developed a critical literacy unit with the teacher. It took less than 15 minutes of critical perspective taking and problem posing before students were complicating their background knowledge and the assumptions they brought with them to the study of Anne Frank and the Holocaust. The authors conclude that working through Holocaust meanings requires an awareness of and capacity to interrogate ideologies that undergird texts such as the Goodrich and Hackett play, as well as students' and teachers' own worldviews.

Who has the right to teach whom about this topic? How do teachers and/or parents approach the study of Holocaust texts for learners at different levels? How are non-Jewish allies disproportionately positioned as "rescuers" or "saviors" throughout Holocaust literature? And how is everyday Jewish life in Germany in the early 20th century backgrounded and to what effects? These questions comprise only a handful of the complex issues that Schmidt (2009) explores in her qualitative study of five middle grades teachers and 6 Jewish mothers as these two groups discussed the who, what, where, when, why, and how of Holocaust education. Findings reveal the very careful ways in which teachers confronted conflicts they had about shielding young learners from the atrocities of the Holocaust while also recognizing that Holocaust literature could provide important opportunities to engage students in discussions about tolerance and social justice. For example, Schmidt (2009) highlights the ways in which some Holocaust literature and classroom instruction capitalizes on "framed silences" (p. 250),

which create opportunities for readers and learners to reflect on what is happening in an image, a word, or a performance in order to promote questions.

The mothers in Schmidt's (2009) study raised a number of concerns that were not considered during the teachers' discussion group. Studying the Holocaust in a public school setting instead of at home or in a religious context was an objection raised immediately by the mothers' group. The mothers also argued that one of the children's books they reviewed represented a myth as historical fact and emphasized Christians as saviors and Jews as victims. In fact, they noted the relative silence of Jewish voices across the texts they encountered. Finally, one Jewish mother remarked that co-opting the Holocaust to teach concepts like respect and tolerance led to a historical and cultural distancing of the lives and events of the Holocaust. She commented: "It becomes very impersonal. Children should not only learn about Jews as victims. By knowing the Jews in Germany, it is important to say they were living in Germany, just as they are living in the U.S. today" (Schmidt, 2009, p. 255). Reinforcing the argument put forward by Spector and Jones (2007), attention to ideologies represented in texts and in educational contexts cannot be underemphasized when approaching teaching and learning about the Holocaust.

Unique to the instructional context where our study took place was a deliberate attention given to teaching and learning about the Holocaust with multimodal methods, and particularly drama and visual arts. We link these two areas of classroom-based research by considering the ways in which both the study of the atrocities of the Holocaust and the creative representation of meanings mediated through embodied texts create opportunities for students' empathetic responses.

Research on Embodied Literacies

Although limited attention has been paid to the relationship between literacy learning in traditional education contexts and the body (Woodcock, 2010), scholars are building a case for the integral mediational role that the body plays in understandings words and worlds. Branscombe and Schneider (2013) theorize the role of the body in generating understandings about the affordances of reflection in shaping ideological stances using tableau. Participants in their study used their bodies to take on different roles in the scenes they portrayed, and these changes resulted in corresponding changes in perspectives. As participants' perspectives shifted, they developed an empathetic stance toward others, others' perspectives, and others' bodies. "Ultimately," Branscombe and Schneider (2013) deduce, "changes in insight created changes in role and stance. Empathy is deeply rooted in the body experience" (p. 106). Thus, literacy practices and empathy implicate the body as an anatomical mediator.

Educators who advocate for the use of arts-based approaches to instruction demonstrate how anatomical mediation (i.e., using the body to mediate learning) can promote enduring learning opportunities for students and teachers alike (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010; Edmiston, 2014; Landay & Wootton, 2012; Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998). Additionally, researchers demonstrate the value of classrooms in which bodies are instrumental in engaging people in their learning processes (Woodcock, 2015) and composing and reflecting on meanings around texts (Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998). Woodcock (2015) notes that "emotion happens in the body" and that learning is more effective when bodies and emotions are engaged. Drama-based approaches to textual interpretations mobilize the body as a primary vehicle for meaning making for actors, which, in turn establishes itself as a sign to be interpreted by audience members who hear, see, feel, and read the bodies of their classmates to construct their own meanings.

Making one's ideas publicly available need not be confined to the linguistic sign system alone. In fact, for many students, other semiotic systems might provide the context for more robust public articulations of their private thinking. Edmiston (2014) suggests that dramatic performance "is essential…because without performance a person's ideas cannot be crystalized and shared with a group or carried into possible action" (p. 47). He argues that people learn and grow through their "*experience* in imagination" (p. 17). Since learning is not just acquiring information and committing it to memory, "Learners must *do* something with what they are finding out from teachers or peers, not merely listen or speak" (Edmiston, 2014, p. 201). And drama is a perfect tool for accomplishing that. Every time students step into any event they "frame" their actions with a particular perspective that shapes their authoring of understanding and exploring different ways of acting out possible outcomes. Such dramatic experience is important to student learning as it shapes embodied reflection and promotes enduring understandings.

The study of the Anne Frank narrative deserves such embodied, reflective, and critical treatment in classroom settings. To promote empathetic responses and develop historically grounded perspectives on the Holocaust, arts-integrated curricular approaches offer teachers and learners opportunities to stand outside of themselves in order to connect deeply with one girl's story. The data in the study we describe in this paper include students' reflections on their learning and the multimodal texts they produced. Our work contributes pedagogical and methodological insights we learned from observations of students' embodied literacy practices as they learned about Anne Frank and the Holocaust.

Participants and Context

Teachers and their students from four middle schools in a large city in the South in the United States participated in this study. First, teachers engaged in a two-day ArtsLiteracy workshop that provided them with the opportunity to learn drama-based strategies about Anne Frank and the Holocaust. The ArtsLiteracy project was founded by Eileen Landay and Kurt Wootton at Brown University. The Performance Cycle is a flexible, arts-based and drama-infused instructional framework for teaching and learning across content areas that includes six components: building community, entering text, comprehending text, creating text, rehearsing/revising text, and performing text. The framework is cyclical, not rigid or prescriptive, and is rooted in teachers' and learners' reflection.

On the second day of this workshop, teachers worked collaboratively with colleagues in their respective schools, as well as arts education experts and teaching artists to design units of study for implementation in the subsequent semester. ArtsLiteracy educators, teaching artists, and collaborators from our state's performing arts center all provided narrative feedback to teachers' unit plans. Teachers also convened as a collective group prior to the beginning of the semester to present their unit plans, introduce the essential questions that guided their planning, and highlight arts-based instructional strategies and culminating performances.

In this paper we focus on Ms. Melissa Rogers and the 35 adolescents (13-14 years-old) in her drama class at Williams Middle School, an arts magnet school with approximately 1300 students enrolled in Grades 6-8. (All teachers, students, and places have been given pseudonyms.) Ms. Rogers is an enthusiastic and seasoned teacher, a graduate of our institution's alternative certification program, and the drama teacher at Williams since 2008. Prior to teaching drama, "Missy," as her students call her, taught English language arts for five years at the same school. Ms. Rogers designed her students' Anne Frank unit around the essential question, "What is your humanity footprint?"

Methods

To visually emphasize the role of learners' bodies as they made meaning we selected a qualitative, arts-based research methodology that intentionally focused our attention on more than verbocentric data (Narey, 2009). We adopted and developed methods of collecting visual and verbal data that allowed us to value emotions in classrooms of learners and teachers, and to value literacy as multimodal, dynamic, and holistic in order to "deepen and make more complex our understanding" (Barone & Eisner, 2011, p. 3) of embodied literacies. Qualitative methods included individual and group interviews, classroom observations, and the collection of classroom artifacts. However, given that arts-based research recognizes that "matters of meaning are shaped—that is, enhanced and constrained—by the tools we use" (Barone &

Eisner, 2011, p. 1), we selected and developed multimodal research methods. The Semiotic Photo Response Protocol (SPRP) and Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA) pushed us to focus on visual, rather than verbal meaning making. These procedures are described in the Data Analysis section.

Data Sources

One researcher from a team of four (2 faculty, 2 doctoral students) visited each classroom a minimum of two times per week throughout an academic semester when the focus was on Anne Frank and the historical context of the Holocaust. During observations we used two video cameras; one recorded a running wide-angle view of the entire classroom scene and a second hand-held smart phone recorded shorter scenes at closer range. In addition, we photographed extensively. Following each classroom visit we completed an observation protocol (see Appendix A) that summarized the activities and recorded the observer's perspective on seven focus elements. We interviewed each teacher at the beginning and conclusion of the study, and documented students' background knowledge and questions about Anne Frank and the Holocaust, as well as their thinking about empathy, in open-ended questionnaires that requested short answers and a sketch, also at the beginning and end of the units. Finally, we scanned and returned students' relevant writing and drawing.

Two arts-rich examples from observations in Ms. Rogers' classroom "chose us" when we found ourselves returning to them repeatedly to contemplate embodied literacy. The first example is a dramatic performance created by a small group in response to an Anne Frank diary entry. The second example is the process and product of a student's visual artwork during an engagement called "Icons;" the art represented the concept of *scared*, and was subsequently responded to with a dramatic interpretation by a small group.

We found these images to be powerful and in some ways haunting. We expressed to each other that these examples "gave us goosebumps." In other words, we responded emotionally and felt in OUR bodies the learning that was represented in these images, and we knew they deserved more consideration. The examples helped us answer the question: What does it look like when learners place their bodies in the context of another's life? Additionally, these two examples illustrated some of the arts-based techniques that teachers used for instruction during the Anne Frank units.

Data Analysis

We gathered photographs, video recordings, and observation protocols following each classroom observation and met weekly to share our experiences in the four participating classrooms. We enlisted NVivo for data management and to generate initial patterns and

themes across our data sources. Our research question (What can adolescents who are using their bodies to gain empathy with Anne Frank teach us about embodied literacies?) provided a clear lens through which we could read our data. We characterized the various ways in which students used their bodies during arts-based instructional activities and paid close attention to the ways in which students used different semiotic systems to empathize.

To analyze the drama example, we engaged a group of students in a semi-structured focus group interview using a process called the Semiotic Photo Response Protocol (SPRP) (Whitmore, 2015). To begin, we presented the group with approximately 10 striking photographs of students engaged in arts learning experiences. We asked the students to consider how bodies in the images made meaning, how empathetic stances could be identified visually, and how students were thinking about Anne Frank's life and circumstances. In a first layer of analysis, the students looked as a group across the set of photographs. Next, individual students analyzed and discussed single photographs at a micro-image level, paying particular attention to proximity, movement, and gaze. See Appendix B for detailed information about SPRP procedures.

To analyze the visual arts example, we drew on methods of Visual Discourse Analysis (Albers, 2007) to further our thinking about embodied learning. The concepts of Effective Center of Attention, Orientation, Vector, Size, and Volume deepened our understanding of why we were drawn to the visual piece, Scared, and what it meant. Additional analysis of students' dramatization of and discussion about the piece illustrated the power of layering in semiotic mediation.

Our analyses revealed students using their bodies—in space, in motion, and in character—to enter and engage with the difficult ideas of the Holocaust. In the next sections we present these themes through two of the arts-rich curricular events that invited learners to transmediate meanings via oral and written language, drama, and visual arts.

A Dramatic Response to an Entry from Anne Frank's Diary

Figure 1. Allison, Lacey, Lillian, and Monica embody "Anne writing in her diary."

The three learners in Figure 1 were photographed during their live action dramatic response to an entry from Anne Frank's diary. Visible behind them is the cordel, a string "stretched between two posts in markets or town squares used to display *folhetos*, small inexpensive chapbooks containing long narrative poems and illustrations" (The ArtsLiteracy Project, n.d.). In Ms. Rogers' class, the cordel was a key piece of the Performance Cycle process. It was a clothesline strung from one end of the room to the other and it held texts of various types as

the cycle progressed. Early in the unit, students browsed and read visual, poetic, and expository texts pinned to the cordel with clothespins. Small groups selected pieces that spoke to them, then developed and rehearsed dramatic responses that they performed for their classmates. Ms. Rogers' instructions were open and flexible and the students could draw on any of their familiar drama techniques. Several groups pulled percussion instruments out of a closet to add a semiotic layer of sound to their interpretations. Figure 1 is a photograph of one group's performance.

Bodies in Space

As the scene in Figure 1 began, two girls entered the space: Lillian shaped her body into the peaked roof of the annex by touching her fingers above her head and Allison folded her body on the floor so her back became a table. Lillian directed her gaze downward toward the action. Out of the frame was a fourth learner, Monica, who read the excerpt aloud to narrate the three performers' actions. Soon Lacey entered the scene in her stocking feet. She stepped into a pair of boots, then knelt at the table and pantomimed writing in a coil notebook. At the conclusion of the scene, Lacey stood, stepped back out the boots and the students said, "Scene"—the ritual that indicated to the audience of their classmates and teacher that the performance was complete.

The photograph of the three ascending bodies from the floor to the roof froze the action and afforded multiple perspectives with regard to embodied meaning making. For example, we wondered what students thought about translating human bodies into inanimate objects. Ashley Shelton, a research assistant on the project, interviewed a focus group of students with the SPRP. Calvin's selection of this photograph for his individual analysis during the SPRP process prompted Ashley to ask, "What did you guys think about their group making people into inanimate objects?"

Zoe: Well, it's not really um different because we, as drama students, we have to figure out a way to use our bodies for, sometimes we have to figure out how to use our bodies [in] ways that we normally wouldn't think of.

Calvin: Especially when we don't have props, we'll do anything to make the show.

Ashley: What does that do for the scene, to have to use your bodies, you know, in different ways, so maybe you don't have, like you said, you don't have props to work with?

Calvin: It adds understanding for the audience; otherwise, they would have no idea what is going on.

Ashley: What do you think the table and the house added in that scene?

Calvin: Um, it showed that Anne is in a safe place, in a safer place than she would be otherwise, and it kind of showed like the comfort she had when she would write in her diary; she had the possessions she was used to around her at this point in time and she was in her little bubble telling what has been going on.

Calvin's insight during this conversation emphasized the semiotic potential of bodies in proximity to one another to convey meanings about spatial relationships. When Ashley probed Calvin to share his reading of the scene depicted by his classmates, he expressed the generative potential involved in transmediating understandings from the gestural sign system of the frozen image to the linguistic sign system of the discussion. Calvin's commentary that "Anne is in a safe place" provided a linguistic interpretation of the embodied consolation that Lillian and Allison created by framing with their bodies an intimate, comforting, and private space for "Anne."

Ashley also asked the four students who created the scene to reflect on their decisions to portray still and inanimate objects. These students highlighted the relationship between their bodies, particularly through gaze, and confirmed Calvin's interpretation that their proximity created a visual and embodied sense of safety.

Ashley: Yeah! A table, a house. If you notice, you were the only ones [who became inanimate objects]. Why was that important to you that your bodies played those roles?

Allison: Well, we just wanted to have a focus on Anne. And focus on her because that's what the whole thing was about.

Lacey: And also it was all part of her experience; the tiny house and having just a very limited space, I thought.

Lillian: And I wanted to be a part of her life. Like the house was a big thing and how she was in a very small space. Like a table to write the diary on. And then her thoughts, Monica (the narrator) was like her thoughts, like acting it out. So everybody had a part of Anne Frank's life.

Calvin's, Lacey's, and Lillian's comments all revealed how bodies in space informed their empathetic learning: Calvin felt the safety their bodies created, Lacey used her body to reflect Anne's actual circumstances in the annex, and Lillian reflected on how their bodies collectively desired to create Anne's context. These findings demonstrate the power of anatomical mediation (Moll, 2014) for students' embodied literacies learning.

Bodies in Motion

Perhaps the stillness of the two bodies as objects elevated the effect of movement when Anne, played by Lacey, entered the scene in socks, stepped into boots, and kneeled to pantomime writing in the diary. At the conclusion of the scene she stepped back out of the boots, peeled off her "Anne" nametag and literally and figuratively returned to herself. Several students expressed the value of moving their bodies into the text. One student said dramatizing helped her connect to the difficult Holocaust texts more than if they had "just read it." She said, "You have to actually like get into it and show like what you feel."

Allison's, Lacey's, Lillian's, and Monica's bodies created a visual and three-dimensional text (what Schmidt identifies as a "framed silence" in a written text [2009, p. 250]) that heightened the awareness afforded to the most minimal movements in the scene. Further, the scene charged audience members to consider their interpretations of the relationship between the linguistic narration and the gestural embodiment of the performance (Albers, 2006). As Edmiston (2014) notes, stepping into and out of an event frames learners' actions in particular ways that shape the message for the audience in consequential ways.

Bodies in Character

Even when students worked directly from Anne Frank excerpts, they often did not "become" Anne or other members of the group who lived in the annex. Many students portrayed soldiers or people who lived through the Holocaust but were not literally part of the Anne Frank story. Some played contemporary characters related to broader notions of empathy if not Anne Frank. All of these portrayals helped the students move toward their teacher's goal that they learn about their "humanity footprint."

Therefore we were especially curious about the students' thinking about Lacey becoming the character of Anne. Calvin and Zoe gave us the audience's perspective on Lacey's group's dramatic response. Calvin selected the photograph in Figure 1 for the SPRP:

> Calvin: … Lacey did the literal interpretation as she walked in the door, put on her shoes, put on her name tag and how it like provided an interesting storytelling. It's great because we can relate to Lacey… and like Lacey's portrayal of the character.…
>
> Ashley: You mentioned the nametag to me. Why is that important?
>
> Calvin: Uh, because I just thought it was really interesting when she took it off afterwards. "I was Anne, but I am not actually Anne. I just looked into her life, I explained her life."

Ashley: Yeah, you guys have been stepping into some big shoes to fill in this, haven't you? How does that make you feel? …

Zoe: I think it's easier as drama students because you get to step into other people's and pretend shoes like other people might not because the like understand you because like…. Or whatever act it out and continue to be…

Ashley: Yeah, when you step into their shoes what are you trying to do for your audience? What do you hope they get out of it?

Calvin: I think we are trying to give them that connection that we are trying to find at the same time because with empathizing you usually have to try to find a connection to your life and since none of us have actually experienced or seen the Holocaust, it's very difficult even when it comes to stepping into someone else's shoes. It's like trying to find a point where you can connect the dots but if we can get that down and since we are the kids acting on stage these kids in the audience can relate to us so we can help them find that connection.

Lillian, whose body became the annex in the scene, expressed the importance of bodies in character. She said,

> It's like when you listen to songs or something. The ones that you understand better or best are the ones that relate to you. So when you put, when you make it like, when you make the text seem like it's in first person, then it's like a way to understanding it better when you make it seem like it's related to you. Even if it's not related to you in any way, it still makes it seem more personal having to develop those thoughts in order to become the character.

Wilson (2003) values "performative gestures" like those created in this scene of Anne composing entries in the annex because they "show ideas, knowledge, and interpretation." She believes performative gesture is "both a mode of expression and a thinking action" (p. 377), especially when learners explain what they did and why. To promote empathetic responses to texts, as was Ms. Rogers' goal, Wilson suggests that tableau allows learners "to feel echoes of the emotions of characters through the poses they hold to evoke understandings of characters' perceptions" (p. 381). Thus, Wilson (2003) explains how students' bodies allowed them "to become the story" (Whitmore, 2015) as they empathized with Anne Frank.

An emotional approach that includes *students feeling learning in their bodies* is essential in order to bear witness to the people who survived and perished during the Holocaust and to their stories, which live on. "In short, we learn more effectively when we learn in an emotional, embodied manner" (Woodcock, 2010, p. 378).

A Visual Rendering of the Concept, Scared

We include in this section of the analysis three photographs that represent a sequence of opportunities for students to use their bodies to transmediate empathetic responses to Anne Frank. As a way to engage in the "entering text" phase of the ArtsLiteracy Performance Cycle, students discussed the concept of imagery and generated a list of words related to imagery in Anne Frank's diary. They wrote these on slips of paper and placed the papers in a bowl. Next, individual students selected one imagery word from the bowl to represent through an "icon." To create these visual representations, students were allowed to use only scissors, glue, and brown and black colored construction paper and Ms. Rogers encouraged students to work independently, with partners, or in small groups (see Figure 2). She provided the following directions: "You will be an artist with a drama twist… I want you to find a word and come up with a symbol that represents it. Remember, we're looking at our humanity footprint. If you're finished with one, do another one and hang it on the cordel."

Figure 2. Brittany and other students create visual arts representations for words that evoke imagery in Anne Frank.

Bodies in Space

Brittany chose the word Scared and took care to create the image in Figure 3 to express it. In it, a shape that is at once beautiful and disturbing overwhelms the space of the page. It appears to be a creature with tendrils that flow behind and around it, even extending beyond the frame of the paper. Much smaller, a body sits upright in a bed in the right bottom corner. The creature's spooky long arm, with several bony long fingers, reaches toward the child-like body.

Figure 3. Brittany's visual art response to the word "scared."

Albers (2014) argues that a visual text such as Brittany's visual art piece in Figure 3 provides a "structure of messages within which are embedded social conventions and/or perceptions, and which also present the discourse communities to which the visual text maker identifies" (p. 87). Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA) (Albers, 2007), which conceptualizes art as a language system, concerns itself not only with the composition of visual texts, but also with the ways in which the visual text shapes viewers' responses in embodied and emotional ways (Albers, 2014; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). VDA allowed us to systematically make sense of many elements of Brittany's image as related to bodies in space.

First, the creature is the *Effective Center of Attention* of the image, which "implies the importance of a particular object or objects within the composition, and the visual text

maker's intention for the viewer to notice this area of text immediately" (Albers, 2007, pp. 89-90). In addition, Scared has a left-to-right versus a top-to-bottom *Orientation*. From a VDA perspective, objects in the upper and lower left hand quadrants of texts that have a left-to-right orientation "take on qualities that are known or given. Objects in the upper and lower right hand quadrants take on new qualities or qualities imagined by the viewer" (Albers, 2007, p. 90). In Brittany's image, the creature sweeps from the left (the "real" and "given") to the right (the "new"). This sweeping and outreaching of the creature's hand over the top of a smaller, simple figure on a bed creates a *Vector* line from the top left of the frame (the "real" and "given") to the bottom right (the "new" or "imagined") of the frame. One can read the *Vector* transactionally in combination with the *Orientation* as emphasizing the real terror caused by the creature rather than its imagined existence. Finally, the *Size* and *Volume* of the object is meaningful in VDA because the amount of space an object occupies reflects its significance. In addition to filling a majority of the image, the creature's lowest tendril even spills off of the paper.

Taken together (and as yet without explanation from Brittany, the artist), these three elements provide explanation for the disturbing and dark nature of the image. As viewers, we know the artistic creature is significant and imposing and it stirs uncomfortable feelings in us. At the same time, the small, plain body in the lower right corner is unknown and less significant, leaving us to imagine its meaning. The upper left to lower right vector suggests doom and unsettles us. At the same time, however, the creature is somehow beautiful and engaging. Reflection from Brittany, discussed below, adds to these interpretations.

Bodies in Motion

Ms. Rogers invited small groups to choose a visual representation they did not create and dramatize it in front of the class. Amanda, Taylor, Kaeli and Sam chose to embody Brittany's visual representation with a literal interpretation of the image—a mother tucked a child into bed, a nightmare happened in which the child was chased in her dream by a ghost or monster, and the mother reappeared to comfort the child. A photo of the four students (Figure 4), taken just as the creature in the nightmare chased the child in the dream out of the scene to the right, reveals bodies in motion.

We still-framed as a photograph movement that was originally captured in digital video in order to consider students' bodies making meaning in the moment. Three of the bodies in the photograph are moving and therefore blurred. Taylor's hair, as she portrays the creature, flows out behind her as she runs, remarkably mirroring the tendrils of the creature image in the visual.

Figure 4. Students dramatize the concept and visual representation of Scared.

The curved and flowing lines of the tendrils in Brittany's visual representation, and mirrored by Taylor's hair in the photograph, mark "organic" and "natural" elements, as opposed to straight, hard lines which would reflect the "inorganic" (Albers, 2007, p. 88). Further, the lines flowing from the creature create an illusion of movement that learners picked up on during the dramatic interpretation of this image. Engagement increases when bodies move (Landay & Wootton, 2012), and in this movement we recognize students' comprehension of the text.

Bodies in Character

During the dramatic performance of Scared, Amanda, Taylor, Kaeli, and Sam used their bodies to become characters who enacted and transmediated the meanings of the linguistic and visual language of Scared. Amanda embodied a mother who knelt by a child in bed, reading from an imagined storybook that she created by holding her hands palms up and separated, suggesting a large book. She read, "And the prince and the princess lived happily ever after," gestured closing the book, and said, "Goodnight, Kaeli. Sweet dreams." Kaeli answered, "Goodnight, Mom."

Kaeli closed her eyes and from the right two characters charged into the space, one chasing the other around while yelling, "Kaeli, come back!" One of the characters shrieked. Kaeli screamed and sat straight up in bed as her mother dashed back to the scene calling,

> "Kaeli, are you okay?"
> "I had a really bad nightmare," Kaeli said. "It's okay," comforted Mom as she gave her a hug.
> "Scene."

Ms. Rogers asked the performing group to share their interpretations of the art piece, then the students in the audience tried to determine the word, and finally Brittany, the original visual artist shared her thought processes. Brittany put words to her image:

> So my piece was clearly a kid sitting on his bed and there's this huge ghost-like monster after him. And the ghost-like monster was supposed to represent things like depression, pain, suffering. My word was Scared and you're scared of those things.

With each additional step in this process, the students' conceptualizations of Scared and other words (e.g., Tenacious, Courage, Inspire, Decapitation, Loving, Encouraging, Hope) became more complex as the meanings were transmediated through verbal, visual, dramatic, and again verbal symbol systems. Landay and Wootton (2012) refer to this process as layering and suggest that revisiting a concept like Scared repeatedly deepens learning. Layering visual arts in meaning making was not easy for the students in Ms. Rogers' class who appeared to be quite comfortable with dramatic enactments. Alecia reflected, "I knew the words, I just didn't know how to put it on paper" and Ben puzzled, "What does this word actually mean and how [do I] represent it?" Jessica noted, "It's more powerful [without words]" highlighting the value of inviting students to layer multiple signs, particularly in addition to oral and written language, to stretch their thinking.

Our multiple readings of Scared consistently reflected the very real presence of the emotion that was encoded in the linguistic mode, transmediated into the visual mode (Figures 2 & 3) and then into the gestural mode (Figure 4) before returning to the linguistic mode when Ms. Rogers prompted a discussion. As Landay and Wootton (2012) note, "Improvisations in classrooms also bring words to life, lifting language off the one-dimensional page and reinvesting it with the three-dimensional features of voice, movement, gesture, and timing that are present in every human conversation" (p. 99).

Perspectives on Arts-Based, Embodied Literacy Instruction for Teachers and Researchers

Ms. Rogers invited her 8th-graders to be inspired to bear witness to Anne Frank's life in the future by empathizing with her narrative and reflecting on their humanity footprint through

drama- and arts-based tools. Students engaged their bodies in space, in motion, and in character to mediate their learning about the context in which Anne Frank lived and to empathize with her circumstances. Arts-integrated and embodied learning opportunities supported students' sensemaking about the Anne Frank narrative and multimodal responses led to layered and empathetic understandings about the Holocaust. Even though students recognized the impossibility of experiencing the emotions of those who, like Anne Frank, endured the horrors of the Holocaust, they recognized the seriousness of the subject matter and cared about doing justice to representations of Anne's story.

The generative potential of transmediation has been noted widely in the research literature on literacy instruction. However, less widely realized, is the power of theory practiced. Students who used their hands, imaginations, voices, and bodies to make meaning about the Anne Frank narrative taught us that arts-based, embodied instructional experiences enhance learning of a complex text. Accessing multiple semiotic systems has the potential, as McCormick (2011) says, "to enrich the language arts curriculum and move us beyond the perception that skillful use of language is elicited solely through the creation and interpretation of written texts" (p. 587). Embodied learning, in particular, allowed students to literally step into an imagined annex and momentarily occupy the shoes of Anne Frank.

These students' multimodal experiences and texts offer insights for researchers, as well. Expanding meaning making processes across semiotic systems and bodies requires a corresponding extension of the methodological tools used to analyze literacy learning in arts-integrated spaces. The Semiotic Photo Response Protocol and Visual Discourse Analysis are tools that heighten researchers' awareness of the non-verbal modes available in video, visual and photographic data. These tools made visible the ways in which students mediated their learning about Anne Frank, the Holocaust, and empathy by engaging their bodies in space, in motion, and in character.

Barone and Eisner (2011) believe that art "makes it possible for us to empathize with the experience of others" and that "empathetic participation [is] possible because [the arts] create forms that are evocative and compelling" (p. 3). Participation in the arts, they say, "remake the maker and the tools that the maker uses has a profound impact on who we become" (p. 5). The dialectical relationship in which emotions inhabit bodies and bodies inhabit emotions opened the instructional space for Ms. Rogers' students to interpret complex texts and make visceral, enduring connections to Anne Frank.

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About the Authors

James S. Chisholm is an assistant professor of English education in the Department of Middle and Secondary Education at the University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, USA. His research focuses on classroom discourse, multimodality, and issues of identity, power, and agency in middle and secondary English language arts classrooms. Dr. Chisholm's scholarly work has appeared in outlets such as *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *60th Yearbook of the Literacy Research Association*, *English Journal*, and *The ALAN Review.*

Kathryn F. Whitmore is the Director of the Early Childhood Research Center at the University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky, USA, where she holds the Ashland/Nystrand Chair in Early Childhood Education Research. Dr. Whitmore uses a critical sociocultural lens to conduct community-engaged scholarship about early language and literacy development and teaching, and the value of the arts for understanding language, culture and power in classrooms and communities. Her most recent book is (co-edited with Richard J. Meyer) *Reclaiming Early Childhood Literacies: Narratives of Hope, Power and Vision* (2017, Routledge). Additional publications are available in the *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, Language Arts*, and *Talking Points*. Dr. Whitmore is the current president of the Center for Expansion of Language and Thinking, an international nonprofit thought collective whose members believe in the principles of education for democracy with a focus on natural language learning and inquiry.

This project was funded by the Early Childhood Research Center at the University of Louisville and a grant from the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence to the Kentucky Center

for the Performing Arts.

We wish to thank Ms. Rogers and her students for participating in this project. Additionally, we thank our research assistants, Ashley L. Shelton and Irina V. McGrath.

Appendix A

Anne Frank Field Note Protocol

A. Data Overview
   1. Date:
   2. Time:
   3. Observer:
   4. Place:
   5. Brief Context:
   6. Anything of Special Note:

B. Abstract of Observation (a brief overview of this data set):

C. Analysis of Focus Elements (see grid below):

Teacher Language		% estimate			% estimate	
	Facilitative (Teacher talk guides student talk which leads; student questions drive inquiry; creates "thick air" when appropriate)	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Directive (Teacher talk dominates; I-R-E discourse pattern consistent)	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0
Notes:						
Role of the Text		% estimate			% estimate	
	Multimodal (dramatic performance, music, visual, and intertexts marked and used as valuable resources)	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Print Only (verbocentric privileging of written text)	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0
Notes:						
Risk Taking		% estimate			% estimate	
	Intellectual and socio-emotional risks are taken and validated by teacher and students. Broad participation during class activities is evident.	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Few risks are taken or when risks are taken they are not marked or validated by teacher or students. A few students dominate class conversations but	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0

				most students do not participate.		
Notes:						
Power and Agency		% estimate			% estimate	
	Students have interpretive authority. Students make assertions about text meanings and back up claims with evidence from texts and their experiences in the world.	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Teacher (or text author) has interpretive authority. Meaning lies within the four corners of the text. Teacher's meaning making is privileged.	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0
Notes:						
Physical Bodies and Movement		% estimate			% estimate	
	Embodying literacies: Body reveals engagement (shoulders lean toward action in the classroom, gaze directed at speaker, gestures provide backchannel for speaker, etc.).	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Not embodying literacies: Body language reveals disengagement (shoulders shrugged, gaze directed away from action in the classroom, facial expression incongruent with classroom activities, etc.).	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0
Notes:						
Empathy		% estimate			% estimate	
	Mirror: Students and teacher realize the enormity of Anne's circumstances through instructional activities that create emotional epiphanies or embodied demonstrations of empathy.	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Window: Students and teacher engage in instructional activities in order to look in on Anne's life and circumstances, understanding the circumstances surrounding her life, and appreciate the testament she left the world.	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0
Notes:						
Curricular Connections		% estimate			% estimate	

	Explicit, organic, and authentic connections to literacy concepts in the curriculum.	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0	Connections to literacy concepts are made as a matter of routine (e.g., posting learning objective)	100 90 80 70 60 50	40 30 20 10 0
Notes:						

Appendix B

Semiotic Photo Response Protocol procedures.

SPRP procedures: LEVEL I

Spread printed color photographs on a large table and look at them collectively.

Ask: What do you see here? How are learners' bodies making meaning? What are teachers' bodies doing?

Next, individuals select one or two photographs each that are particularly indicative of themes to understand more clearly, such as empathy, movement, and risk-taking.

Tape these photographs onto legal-size blank paper and draw and write on them to label what is evident at a micro-image level.

SPRP procedures: LEVEL II

Eyes. Notice the eyes of each person in the photo. Who or what are they looking at? Who is looking away? What are the expressions of the eyes communicating?

Hands. Where are the hands of key players positioned? What do gestures convey?

Posture. What meanings do bodies convey? Who leans toward others? Who leans away?

Positioning and proximity. How are bodies positioned in the space? Who is close to whom? Who is separated?

SPRP procedures: LEVEL III

Use the research questions or the emerging themes in a study to focus the next level of analysis.

SPRP procedures: LEVEL IV

Participants share their individual analyses with the group.

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