

(RE)IMAGINING POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUTH IN SCHOOLS:
A RHIZOMATIC EXPLORATION OF YOUTH'S AFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENTS
WITH LITERACY

by

Kelly Carter Johnston

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Marjorie Siegel
Professor María Paula Ghiso

Approved by the Committee on the Degree of Doctor of Education

Date February 14, 2018

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education
Teachers College, Columbia University

2018

ABSTRACT

(RE)IMAGINING POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUTH IN SCHOOLS:
A RHIZOMATIC EXPLORATION OF YOUTH'S AFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENTS
WITH LITERACY

Kelly Carter Johnston

The purpose of this post-qualitative study was to examine the rhizomatic functioning of youth's engagements with literacy in a 7th grade English Language Arts classroom. I argued normed expectations of students' engagement with literacy in schools imposes hegemonic control over students' literacy learning, thus devaluing students' in-the-moment, affective engagement. Rhizomatic theory was used to explore the ways students aligned to or veered from expected literacy norms as conceptualized through schooled literacy.

The study took place during one academic semester between January-June in a New York City public middle school in Harlem. Data was produced through observations, exchanges (informal and formal interviews; verbal and written conversations), artifacts, and a researcher journal. A rhizomatic analysis was conducted

to first identify the ideal expectation for literacy learning in the classroom as established through national, state, and local entities and then to follow deviations, or lines of flight, from these expected norms. Particular attention was paid to networked assemblages of participants (human and non-human) and the affective intensities, or desires that produce changes to an event or interaction, produced through these networks. The analysis was extended to consider these assemblages and affective intensities in light of the normed expectations for literacy learning, thus moving the rhizomatic analysis to what might become possible by examining difference.

Findings are presented through the lines of flight and affective intensities that were produced through students' engagements with literacy learning. These included forms of play, spontaneous peer-to-peer assistance, visceral response, and enacted agency. I discuss these intensities as unsanctioned engagement and explore how sanctioning such engagement provides more equitable opportunities for students to actively interact and achieve success as literacy learners. I argue such engagement is inherent to who youth are and who they are becoming. Because of this, how educators and researchers understand literacy learning and one's engagement with literacy is extremely important for youth's experiences and success in schooling. I conclude with implications for practice and research that work to actively transform conceptions of literacy instruction, theory, and research.

© Copyright Kelly Carter Johnston 2018

All Rights Reserved

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Like the productive networks and intensities I discuss throughout my dissertation, so has this project been produced. Enormous thanks to:

Ms. T, her students, and her school. Thank you for welcoming me into your school and classroom, allowing me to become a part of your lives, and teaching me more about literacy pedagogy than you'll ever know. Ms. T, thank you for openly sharing about your background, experiences, and curricular decisions. Most importantly, thank you for being an incredibly purposeful, thoughtful, and insightful teacher who deeply cares for students and their learning.

Marjorie Siegel, my dissertation sponsor, mentor, and teacher. Thank you for your guidance, expertise, and wisdom throughout this process. Thank you for encouraging me to take risks, challenging my work in ways that advanced it in unexpected ways, and supporting my own rhizomatic process.

María Paula Ghiso, my advisor and dissertation committee member. Thank you for engaging with me in thought-provoking conversations throughout my time at Teachers College and guiding my participation on your research team. These experiences undoubtedly played into the thinking, processing, and writing that produced this dissertation.

Thomas Hatch and Bob Fecho, professors and dissertation committee members. I truly appreciate your thoughtful feedback on this work. Your insight and experiences are invaluable.

Jodene Morrell, professor and friend. Thank you for teaching me more about what it means to research alongside teachers in schools. Thank you for the opportunities to work alongside you, ask questions, and participate in such meaningful work.

The many scholars whose work I draw from and used to think through my own research – thank you for your contribution to the field and to the lives you have impacted through your work.

The many educators with whom I am have worked over the years, especially those at Baylor University, Texas State University, Hyde Park, Simon, and ACF. I learned a great deal from you. To Minda Lopez and Sharon O’Neal at Texas State, thank you for encouraging me to pursue doctoral work and productively challenging my ongoing inquiries. Thanks to all of you for being a part of my own ‘becoming’ process as an educator.

My original study group: Kelly Z, Crystal, Lydia, and Julie. I am so thankful our doctoral journeys intersected in many ways. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives and for the many laughs along the way.

Chris, Claire, Daniel, and Cohort. Thank you for the many conversations and peer reviews that helped to move this work forward. I hope I was able to contribute to your work as well.

Elizabeth Morphis, professor, colleague, and friend. Thank you for the many conversations and texts regarding all things doctoral degree, teaching, curriculum, dissertation, children, and everything in between! I am grateful for our friendship and look forward to continued work together.

Life-long friends (you know who you are) who encouraged me along the way. Even when you had no idea what I was researching or writing about, you offered support and enthusiasm. Thank you!

Mom and Dad. I cannot thank you enough for the life-long support you have given, and most recently, the many hours of care for my children and all this entails! I could not have finished this work without you. Thank you for always being supportive of my goals and dreams.

Lily, John Ryan, and Baby 3, for being innocent, passive sounding boards for my work! You have likely heard significantly more about literacy theory and pedagogy in your first few years of life than one could imagine, and I am so thankful you have been a part of it all.

And John, for your endless and unwavering support. Thank you for believing in me. Thank you for adventuring with me, through this journey and the many more to come. Thank you for being a part of this work, whether you realized it or not, and for finally reading those last few chapters (I knew you would get around to it)! I love you.

KCJ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I – INTRODUCTION	1
Tracing Back to the Roots: Background to the Problem	4
The Territorialization of Schooling	5
Implications for Literacy Research and Pedagogy in Schools.....	7
Statement of the Problem.....	11
Theoretical Framework.....	14
The Rationale for Rhizomatics	14
Rhizomatics.....	16
Rhizomatic lines.....	20
Rhizomal logic: Disruption through desiring encounters	24
Reconstructing youth through a rhizomatic lens	26
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions.....	28
Significance of the Study	30
 Chapter II – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	 32
Sociocultural Understandings of Youth and Literacy.....	33
Connections to Schooled Literacy	38
Rereading with a Rhizomatic Lens	42
Literacy Research from a Rhizomatic Perspective	49
Affectively Charged Encounters.....	50
Assemblages: Networks of Encounters	56
Lines of Flight: Exploring Possibilities through Deterritorialization	60
Conclusion	68
 Chapter III – METHODOLOGY	 71
Researcher Positionality.....	74
Study Design.....	77
Selection of Site	79
Assemblages	80
Data Collection and Production Methods.....	81
Observations	82
Exchanges	85
Artifacts.....	87
Researcher journal	87
Rhizomatic Analysis	88
Rhizomatic Implications for Validity	93
Limitations to Consider.....	95
Conclusion	96

Chapter IV – ESTABLISHING THE TRACING	98
Entering in the Middle of Things.....	101
Elements of the Tracing.....	114
The Lay of the Land: Routines and Instructional Norms	114
Do now.....	117
Objective and announcements	118
Mini-lesson: Smart Board instructions and notes.....	119
Initiate-Response-Evaluate (IRE).....	121
Student-centered work time	123
Implicit Tracing Elements.....	124
Participant expectations	124
Management.....	125
Highlights.....	126
I'll wait.....	128
Warnings.....	129
Spatial adjustments	130
Countdowns and calls	131
Grades	132
Test Prep	133
Significance of Test Prep on Race and Social Justice in the Classroom	135
Remembering Research Positionality.....	148
The Tracing, Relations of Power, and Further Exploration.....	149
 Chapter V – MAPPING ASSEMBLAGES: FOLLOWING LINES OF FLIGHT AND AFFECTIVE INTENSITIES	151
Mapping Assemblages.....	152
Lines of Flight: Indeterminate States of Potential	157
Playful Eruptions	158
Passing the Baton.....	165
Multimodal Evocations.....	171
Phone Check – “I’m Writing a Book”	175
Putting the Tracing Back on the Map	183
 Chapter VI – POSSIBILITIES: WHAT IS (ALWAYS) BECOMING POSSIBLE	187
What Possibilities Do Lines of Flight Produce?.....	188
Implications: Practice, Research, and Policy	196
Implications for Practice.....	199
Implications for Research: Rootedness Research	202
Rootedness Research Framework.....	203
Implications for Educational Policy.....	205
Limitations of the Study.....	206
Always Becoming: Not So Final Thoughts	208
 REFERENCES	209

Appendices

Appendix A: Student Informed Consent.....	222
Appendix B: Student’s Rights	224
Appendix C: Teacher Informed Consent	226
Appendix D: Teacher’s Rights.....	228

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1	Types of Rhizomal Lines	23
2	Summary of Data Collection Methods	86
3	Lines of Flight with their Corresponding Assemblages and Affective Intensities	156

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

1	Example of a rhizome	17
2	Sociocultural and rhizomatic comparison.....	42
3	Origins of classroom elements that produced the tracing.....	100
4	Entryway of classroom	104
5	Map of the classroom.....	115
6	Example of a table group composed of desks.....	116
7	Class bookshelf	117
8	Smart Board screen with the daily Do Now displayed	118
9	Front white board with daily objective and agenda sections	119
10	Example of anchor charts on the front white board.....	121
11	Example of grading for the Do Now.....	133
12	Objective and agenda during the test prep unit.....	145
13	Test prep short response strategies	146
14	Example of test prep response for both reading and writing	147
15	Example of the Do Now during the Test Prep Unit.....	147
16	Maya Angelou text.....	178
17	Bobbie’s phone	178
18	Assemblage of Bobbie’s literacy engagement.....	180
19	Multiple stakeholders vital to a rootedness approach in local schools	198

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Increased attention is being given toward the interconnectivity between things or happenings in society (i.e. people, places, ideas, and objects), highlighting the networked nature of everyday occurrences as opposed to understanding them as isolated events. The proliferation of the Internet and our increasingly networked global society is a prime example. Events, or encounters, are never isolated and inevitably produce effects that lead to other encounters.

All encounters (whether with people, things, objects, or ideas) consist of forces (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007) that produce real-time effects. Likewise, encounters with people, ideas, and objects propelled the direction, formation, and development of this dissertation. Some of these encounters were planned, some were unexpected, and in a way, these encounters are timeless. For instance, the effects produced through my encounter with, or experience with, a piece of literature has everything to do with other encounters from my past (e.g. schooling experiences, teaching experiences, faith and worldview, other literature I have read, conversations I have had with others) as well as my encounters with things in that moment (e.g. my geographical location, my mood, my responses, the people around me).

These effects have led to this particular moment, signified through this dissertation, in which I aimed to explore how youth in one New York City public middle school engaged with literacy through encounters and affective intensities. I recognize that many encounters have produced the effects that have led to this dissertation. For example, my own experiences as a literacy teacher with middle school youth consisted of innumerable encounters and effects that are not only a part of me but played a role in producing this dissertation.

More specifically, I was an interventionist, focusing on reading,¹ with students identified as struggling or Tiers 2 and 3 (in accordance with Response to Intervention), in Texas, in both a high socioeconomic, private school as well as a low socioeconomic, Title 1, public school, during the post-No Child Left Behind (NCLB) era. These descriptors cannot be fully understood in and of themselves. For example, NCLB is not the first educational movement to impose a stronghold over public education (as I will later discuss); rather, to name one of many effects, it exacerbated dominant approaches to teaching and learning (e.g. literacy) that serve to impose control over many students rather than produce change in a more just direction. For instance, policies continue to emphasize results of standardized assessments, which directly influences what teaching and learning counts in schools.

Though literacy is proclaimed as a tool of empowerment (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), the ways in which it is taken up in schools, through curriculum, instruction, and assessment,

¹ I recognize ‘reading’ is not uniformly defined and in some ways a problematic term. In this sense, I am referring to reading in accordance with dominant school conceptions that conceptualize reading as a set of developmentally acquired skills.

is often disempowering and an injustice, especially for students whose literacy development is not aligned with the dominant norm or expectation. It is this contention that I ultimately hoped to address through this dissertation.

These spaces, times, people, and conceptions of literacy intersect to produce ongoing, intensified effects that fuel my desire for expanding possibilities for youth in schools. Ultimately, through this dissertation I aimed to think differently about what might be possible for how we think about and understand youth's engagement with literacy in schools. To do so, I took up theory and research based on Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the rhizome, which I expand on in further sections. Their work encouraged me to move in new directions, and in some ways, to let new directions move me. While this felt a bit risky, being a relatively new theory for much of the literacy field, and at times even formidable (try doing a quick read of Deleuze and Guattari and you will see what I mean), I considered this wandering into new territory worthwhile for exploring possibilities for youth in schools.

Taking up some of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas, which are presented in Chapter I, largely begins with opening up to a change in philosophy from valuing reality based on normalized structures that are deemed as socially dominant to valuing differences that stray from the norm and the ways in which these differences can lead to social change. For my dissertation, this meant a change in mindset (a change many scholars and researchers seek) for how youth are often valued (or not) in schools. This is especially important for youth who have traditionally been ostracized, marginalized, and ignored, such as youth of color and/or low socioeconomic status as well as those marked as different through ability, gender, sexuality, or culture, disabilities, particularly because of

the long-lasting implications resulting from their encounters in school. This dissertation aimed to contribute ways of thinking about what could become possible for youth in schools through a challenge to dominant thinking that underpins the current logic of schooling, particularly through literacy. As will be discussed in the final chapter, this dissertation produces new contributions to both literacy research and practice, keeping in mind how the injustices many youth encounter in schools might be subverted to allow for new ways of understanding and thinking about youth's engagement with literacy in schools.

Tracing Back to the Roots:

Background to the Problem

Acknowledging the roots of formal schooling in the United States is essential for understanding the genesis of both the current educational climate and the complex context within which this study takes place. To fully conceptualize the issues that guided this study, it is essential to understand the history leading to it (Foucault, 1982) and the inherent forces of power at play. These roots stem from historical, social, economic, and political forces that have grown to establish particular ways of 'doing school', privileging certain forms of learning over others as well as how pedagogy is taken up, i.e. literacy teaching and learning. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) refer to roots and the trees they ground as a metaphor for structured systems that impose a priori ways of being. Relatedly, in order to understand the problem this study addresses, I argue that educators must recognize the dominant systems of the past that continue to press upon students' daily engagement with learning, in general, and more specifically, literacy, in schools.

The Territorialization of Schooling

When something territorializes, it marks its territory through identifiable structures, systems, and established ways of working. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) characterize territorialization as encounters and effects that align with the prescribed norms of a particular territory. Take, for example, the territorialization of American schooling. Ever since formal schooling's inception, competing interest groups have vied for curricular control, thus deciding what counts as learning through schools and whose desires are served (Kliebard, 2004). In this sense, schooling has territorialized as an organism structured through power-laden desires, largely those of white, middle and upper-class men in positions of power, marking its territory through specific systems and practices feeding those desires.

For instance, beginning in the 1930s, social efficiency proponents advocated for schooling that reflected the industrial revolution of the time, pushing schools to not only prepare students for their adult, working roles in society but also to sort students in a machine-like way based on IQ scores that produced biased results (Kliebard, 2004). This was especially impactful for urban cities where diverse populations were vast. For example, new immigrants, the poor and working-class, students labeled as disabled, and racial and ethnic minorities were positioned as inferior and sorted into working-class tracks preparing them for vocational work, such as factory-based work (Kliebard, 2004; Tyack, 1994). Thus, aspects of factory-model schooling continue today through deficit discourse around sorting, tracking, and leveling based on how one territorializes (or not) to the structure and systems of the school. This is particularly evident regarding literacy. For example, students are often officially and unofficially labeled as good/bad, high/low,

or successful/struggling, usually based on results from high-stakes standardized tests, school-based grades, and developmentally-based reading inventories and assessments, which are tied to racialized and classed experiences that are used to ascribe such identities.

Nearly a century later, similar exclusionary practices steeped in injustice continue to prevail; even much of the same language persists. For example, in recounting the views guiding educational leaders nearly 100 years ago, Tyack (1974) communicated the dominant perspective guiding educational leaders: "...[a]n efficient school...will measure and account for every child, providing different opportunities depending on his or her needs" (p. 190). A closer reading of this belief leads one to consider *who* determined the needs of the child and *by what measure* they were determined.

In the current educational era, these closer considerations point to the neoliberal order, which undoubtedly prevails in the territorializing of the school. Neoliberalism can be understood as an infusion of corporate control into everyday human action (Taubman, 2010). Deleuze (1995) called this a control society, in which "the corporation has replaced the factory, and the corporation is a spirit, a gas" (p. 2) because of the way control over ways of thinking and doing invisibly permeate people's daily actions. The effects are legion for all aspects of society, and education is no exception.

Taubman (2010) claimed that a recognition of neoliberalism's impact on education reveals how "corporations have penetrated into the depths of consciousness and the bodies of the populace and how interests, discourses and practices of corporations dominate our approaches to education" (p. 98). In our current era of schooling, these are evidenced through the pillared guises of standards and accountability, resulting in the

top-down audit culture that regulates everyday schooling practices (Taubman, 2010).

Government policies such as The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and more recently Race to the Top, exacerbate prescribed notions of what counts as learning along the K-12 schooling trajectory, when benchmarks should be achieved, and what these should look like (or how they should be performed).

As these policies call for increasingly standardized curriculum, assessment, and accountability, teaching and learning becomes tightly controlled (Tanner, 2013), with an increased emphasis on end-product, largely ignoring students' varied processes of engagement, especially those that follow non-linear, non-normative paths (Eisner, 2003). In this sense, such policy-based reforms operate on the same recurring logic and assumptions of imposed control, thus reinforcing the roots of American schooling, producing a well-marked territory with little room for forms of engagement that might wander from the prescribed domain.

Implications for Literacy Research and Pedagogy in Schools

Literacy is one area of school curriculum that has garnered national attention, most recently through increased emphasis on accountability and standards measured by high-stakes, standardized assessments. Though heightened by these emphases, notions of schooled literacy (Cook-Gumperz, 1986) have existed for quite some time. Schooled literacy encompasses the power-laden, historically and socially constructed practices that determine what counts as reading and writing as well as what determines acceptable forms of participating in school learning. Schooled literacy practices tend to reflect development models of literacy that privilege cognitive-based stages of skill attainment

tioned to particular notions of time. Street (1984) discussed this as an autonomous model of literacy, characterized as having a “technical and neutral nature” (p. 29), value- and context-free, meaning literacy is a neutral skill unaffected by broader social contexts. For example, conceptions of literacy that view populations or individuals in terms of being literate or illiterate fall into the autonomous model of literacy, which is often reflected in schooled literacy.

This approach to literacy has been challenged through research, most notably through a sociocultural theoretical perspective. Sociocultural models of literacy broaden literacy from a single set of technical skills to social practices in which people engage (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 1992, 2000; Street, 1984), thus resulting in a social practice perspective reflecting cultural, social, and historical contexts, all of which inevitably influence the production of knowledge (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). Though the past several decades of literacy theory and research has moved beyond the exclusive reliance on cognitive theories and drawn from sociocultural theories that challenged developmental, cognitive models of literacy, notions of schooled literacy continue to regulate students’ engagement with and assessment of literacy learning in schools.

Examples of this are most evident through government-based policies and initiatives, such as the Common Core State Standards, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and the National Reading Panel, which produced publications that informed the *Reading First* initiative that serves as the reading guideline for NCLB. One of these publications, *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*, identified the “ingredients of effective programs to teach children to

read” (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001, p. 2-1), naming instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension. These nationally known policies and initiatives rely on very specific understandings of what counts as literacy and the effects are inescapable. Not only is schooled literacy continually reinforced through government funding and accountability assessment, but also the reliance on and privileging of schooled literacy perpetuates the neoliberal agenda through imposed control over whose engagements with literacy are of value in school and what engagements count as valuable or valid.

Literacy research from sociocultural perspectives has been valuable for informing understandings of youth’s literacy practices, especially out of school, and has worked to disrupt schooled literacy through attention to students’ rich social and cultural resources. For example, sociocultural research has contributed to further understanding of youth’s literacies through attention to funds of knowledge (Moll, Amaniti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992), culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2001), critical literacy (Jones, 2006; Morrell, 2007), multimodality (Kress & VanLeeuwen, 2001; Siegel, 2006; Vasudevan, Schultz, & Bateman, 2010), new literacies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011), and multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996). Essential to much of the sociocultural work on literacy is increased attention to the complex relations of power that influence how literacy is taken up as well as how power shapes identity and agency (Lewis, Moje, & Enciso, 2007).

Though such sociocultural research has contributed to understandings of youth’s engagements with literacies and has worked to counter the deficit perspectives that often characterize youth, especially culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse youth,

schooled literacy continues to dominate how youth should engage with literacy in school, and thereby how they are valued in the school context. For instance, Sanford, Rogers, and Kendrick (2014) point out the “unabated insistence by many policy makers and educators” (p. 1) on implementing standardized assessments to evaluate youth’s literacy, thus perpetuating continued tension between youth’s real-time engagements with literacy and the ideal expectation of how their engagement should look and what it should produce. Sociocultural research has been instrumental in changing how literacy is conceptualized and has pedagogically influenced many educators to expand from a singular definition of literacy to multiple literacies that youth bring into the classroom in many diverse forms. However, the larger system of schooling prevails in determining what counts as literacy engagement. Youth’s engagement with literacy in school, and therefore, how they are valued, remains territorialized to notions of schooled literacy.

This imposed regulation results in dire implications for youth that continue to impact their lives past the age of schooling, particularly for youth who do not align with the dominant culture represented in these policies and initiatives (i.e. white, middle class, English speaking). Black and Latino youth from low-income families who attend schools in low-income neighborhoods are most likely to incur the devastating consequences that are issued by the imposed control of schooling, and schooled literacy. These consequences include deficit-based labeling at school, school failure, a higher dropout rate compared to White students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015), and further production of the school to prison pipeline (Winn & Behizadeh, 2011).

Ultimately, American schooling is a constructed system that seeks to impose control over

youth in ways that affect life trajectories. This needs to be a major issue of concern for our nation's leaders as well as scholars, researchers, and educators.

Statement of the Problem

Students of all ages, in general, and youth, in particular, are measured and valued by their engagement with literacy in schools as determined by the dominant structure of schooling and the conception of literacy attached to it, most often exemplified through schooled literacy. Inherent to this dominant system is the imposition of control. In relation to education and literacy, this concerns whose desires matter and for what purposes, thus imposing fixed boundaries regarding how youth should engage with literacy in school.

Essentially, this issue of control assumes there will be an ideal way for youth to engage with literacy, via textual outcomes, predictable engagement, and rationalized and prescribed cognitive development, with the expectation that this will produce the ideal student, as evidenced through totalizing emphasis on predetermined outcomes. Such assumptions and enactments lead to consequences for youth who engage with literacy differently than expected throughout their learning trajectory, or in Deleuzian terms, who stray from the territory. This is an issue that remains and cannot easily be displaced, as it is the imposed power structure, or image of thought² (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987); rather, it must be recognized and worked against.

² The image of thought is a Deleuzian term that refers to an assumed universal view or way of working, typically aligning with dominant forms of power.

Much of the literacy research on youth has examined youth's literacy engagement through an emphasis on practices, including those occurring out of school, to understand how these are socially and culturally situated and produced (Christenbury, Bomer, & Smagorinsky, 2009; Rowsell & Pahl, 2015; Vasudevan & Campano, 2009). As discussed previously, this research remains invaluable for informing understandings of youth's literacy practices, especially out of school, and for countering schooled literacy and the deficit perspectives that ignore youth's rich cultural knowledge and resources.

Schooled literacy, however, continues to dominate how youth should engage with literacy in school and how they are valued in the school context. With the current emphasis on standardization, stability and rational, linear control are expected but often contradicted by what youth are actually doing in the classroom through their engagement with literacy (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Leander & Rowe, 2006). Essentially, a prevailing focus on *what* youth are producing through their engagements with literacy (such as textual products and scores on high-stakes tests) has often resulted in an oversight of the in-the-moment, and sometimes unexpected, intensities and desires that charge youth's engagements with literacy in the classroom. Schooled literacy imposes control over these intensities, often stifling different forms of engagement with literacy that hold potential for new ways of thinking about literacy, and specifically for this study, youth's engagements with literacy. Leander and Boldt (2013) highlighted this rhizomatic perspective on literacy as

not projected toward some textual end point, but as living its life in the ongoing present, forming relations and connections across signs, objects, and bodies in often unexpected ways. Such activity is saturated with affect and emotion; it creates and is fed by an ongoing series of affective intensities that are different from the rational control of meanings and forms. (p. 26)

Shifting a focus from the text-centrism of schooled literacy to the affective intensities Leander and Boldt (2013) referred to allows for an exploration of youth's engagement with literacy as relationally produced through encounters, consisting of people, texts, ideas, and objects and always evolving. Yet the purpose of this affective stance must not be overlooked; most essential to this approach is that a rhizomatic perspective brings concentrated attention to working within and against totalizing systems with the intention of 1) drawing on affective intensities to think about what could become possible within that system (or what could be transformed out of that system) and 2) using what could become possible to gradually shift the totalizing system. This is ultimately a political act.

For this study, the totalizing system to work within and against is that of schooled literacy, particularly through a key focus in examining how youth's unexpected encounters with literacy (whether seemingly mundane, off-task, or without intentional purpose) produce shifts in thinking differently about youth's engagement with literacy in schools. This is especially vital for culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse youth, whose educational experiences continue to be dominated by attention to the structure of schooled literacy rather than the ruptures to this structure. These youth, like the youth with whom I worked in this study, have been poorly served by schooling through prevailing structures of dominance such as schooled literacy.

Theoretical Framework

To theoretically guide this research study, I took up Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the rhizome to explore how youth in a seventh grade New York City public school engage with literacy in an English Language Arts classroom. I will first introduce Deleuze and Guattari to contextualize their approach to philosophy and to discuss why the present time is ripe for considering a rhizomatic approach to explore literacy and how youth engage in literacy practices in schools. I will then examine rhizomatics in detail, specifically laying out key integral concepts and the theoretical framework for this study.

The Rationale for Rhizomatics

Rhizomatics, the theoretical concept of the rhizome, consists of concepts created by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) for the purpose of disrupting dominant power structures that organize social life. Deleuze and Guattari were French scholars who collaborated on a number of writings throughout the 1970s and 80s and whose work contributed to critical and poststructuralist theory in a variety of fields (Colebrook, 2002). Deleuze and Guattari met just after 1968, an important year in France because of a student-worker uprising that led to intentional efforts of many students and scholars to extend beyond traditional ways of thinking, learning, teaching, and researching, much of this happening outside the walls of universities, attempting to push the limits on modern thought (Rajchman, 2014).

Deleuze and Guattari could be considered (non)philosophers,³ as their philosophical aims had much to do with disrupting dominant philosophy. For Deleuze, this involved deconstruction of the codependent relationship between traditional philosophy and State thought, or the structural, representational thought attached to Western humanism (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007; Massumi, 1987). In Deleuze's words, "The exercise of thought thus conforms to the goals of the real State, to the dominant meanings and to the requirements of the established order" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, p. 13). Thus, traditional philosophy served as images of thought that reproduced the status quo and reinscribed structures of power. In other words, philosophy and the thought it produced was "tied too closely to a project of promoting identity and sameness and of marginalizing difference" (May, 2003, p. 140). For Guattari, a psychoanalyst and political activist, efforts at disruption were focused on alternative psychiatric methods and disrupting the hierarchical relationship between psychoanalyst and analysand (the patient being psychoanalyzed) through group therapy (Massumi, 1987). Deleuze, in tandem with Guattari, worked toward producing ideas and concepts without a priori image, or State thought, that assumed a status quo or normative structure. Thus, they generated their (non)philosophy through the creation of concepts to think differently about life and social structures (May, 2003; Semetsky & Masny, 2013).

Ultimately, through their (non)philosophy, in general, and rhizomatic theory in particular, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) were concerned with the "exercise of thought" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, p. 16) and imposed control that might suppress and stifle ways of doing things. Their ideas derived from a shared concern regarding power structures

³ This informal title is due to their critiques of philosophy. Rather than see themselves as philosophers, they considered themselves pragmatists.

that assume conformity and control in ways that limit possibilities of what things (or people) can become through the limiting of desire.

With American schooling's history of imposed control (as described in earlier sections) and current neoliberal emphasis on standardized forms of learning and evaluation, rhizomatics (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) provides a theoretical perspective to critically expand current research and counter current practice. More specifically, in exploring literacy, rhizomatics places emphases on an emergent, relational stance as opposed to rationalized, linear development and text-centrism that values an ideal form of engagement, thus stifling other possible forms of literacy engagement in schools.

Rhizomatics

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the rhizome is ultimately guided by a logic of becoming and emergence. Rather than always measuring reality by how it aligns to modern philosophy (i.e. Enlightenment ideology or Western humanism) or imposed structures of thought, they suggested an understanding of reality as moment-by-moment production that functions in connections with other things and ideas, which might produce a new way of experiencing life and is always in an evolving state. In this sense, we can move beyond conceptualizing things through beginnings and endings, as these do not exist; rather, all bodies (not just humans, but any object, thing, or idea) are always in the middle of things.

To more fully understand this stance of emergence, it is helpful to grasp the nature of the rhizome. A rhizome is an underground plant that grows horizontally in an unpredictable fashion, with shoots, or lines, sprouting in unstandardized form, forming

spontaneous connections with other lines along the rhizome (Figure 1). Deleuze and Guattari characterized these shoots as lines, which I will further discuss shortly. The significance of the rhizome extends far beyond the fact that it is a type of root; rather, *it is about the way a rhizome functions*.

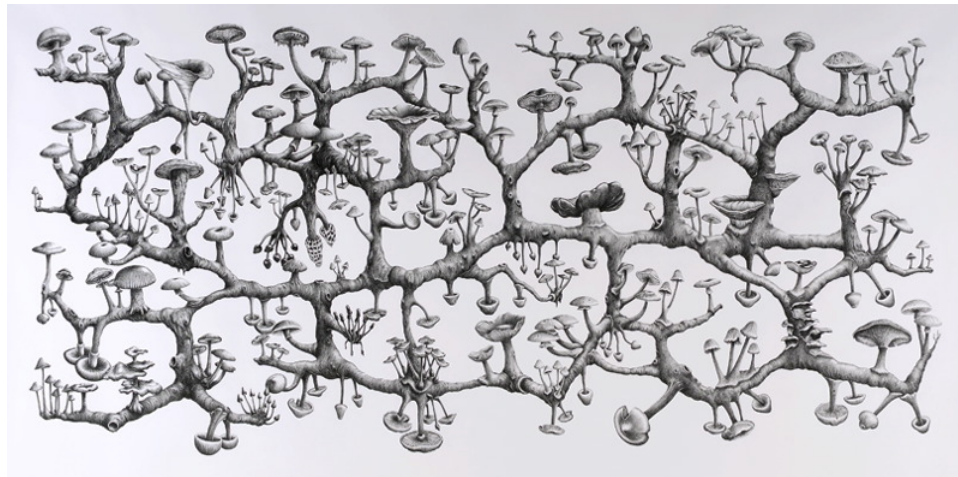


Figure 1. Example of a rhizome.

The rhizome's functioning provides an alternative way of thinking about concepts, ideas, and social interactions as *an always-emerging network of connections* that has no predefined form; this is contrary to systems and ideas that are linear, top-down, with fixed centers and determined patterns of growth, such as trees. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) comparatively explained:

The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and...and...and..." This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb "to be." (p. 25)

Their comparison juxtaposes the assumptions of fixed structures (presuming how something should be) and open structures (allowing for 'and...and...and'). Kamberelis (2004) further elaborated on these types of arborescent, or tree-like, structures as

linear, hierarchical, sedentary, striated, vertical, stiff, and with deep and permanent roots. They are structures with branches that continue to subdivide into smaller and lesser structures. In their various social and cultural instantiations,

arborescent models of thinking, acting, and being amount to restrictive economies of dominance and oppression.” (pp. 163-164)

Deleuze and Guattari’s critique of arborescent structures is necessary for understanding rhizomatic theory. Rhizomatics conjures an understanding of in-the-moment functioning that spreads unpredictably and in limitless directions, creating new possibilities for change to imposed structures of dominance, as opposed to arborescent functioning, which is much more structural (e.g. through binary logic and centered or hierarchical systems) and normalized.

To be clear, they are not claiming it (life, concepts, ideas, understanding) has to be one or the other (tree or rhizome). Rhizomatic functioning does not simply displace tree functioning, or vice versa. Rather, these must work together. It is not a matter of suddenly replacing the hierarchical, structural logic upon which many systems and institutions are built (e.g. schools) but of recognizing the functioning of both tree and rhizome logic to create change. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) emphasized:

The important point is that the root-tree and canal-rhizome are not two opposed models: the first operates as a transcendent model and tracing, even if it engenders its own escapes; the second operates as an immanent process that overturns the model and outlines a map, even if it constitutes its own hierarchies, even if it gives rise to a despotic channel...It is a question of a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing, and of a process that is perpetually prolonging itself, breaking off and starting up again. (p. 20)

Through this explanation, we can more clearly see the relationship between tree logic, transcendence, and tracing. Because much of society’s dominant structures of power operate on tree logic (binary relationships and centered systems of power and structure), an assumption of transcendent thought is often taken for granted. This means there is already an assumed and accepted right way of thinking, understanding, or doing something, and the measure of success depends on how one aligns to this correct way.

For example, when thinking about how a student engages in literacy practices in school, we can identify the structured logic that determines how good/bad or successful/unsuccessful the engagement is, and therefore, how high/low the student is or the degree of passing/failing that the student has obtained. This all depends on how the student has aligned with the ideal structure of engagement, as measured through the way he has engaged (How has he aligned with the literacy practice? What was the developmental sequence like? What was the timing like for this engagement? Is he *on level* or *behind*?) and the final product produced.

If the student aligns to the ideal form of engagement, transcendence has been reached. The student has reached the expectation set before him and his engagement in the literacy practice can be traced to match the original copy. In this sense, “[a]ll of tree logic is a logic of tracing and reproduction” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 12). Their concept of tracing comes out of the process of decalcomania (decal for short), an artistic technique used to trace designs from paper to other materials, such as glass, metal, wood, or clay (Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary, n.d.). Think of a decal you might press onto your car window or a screen press transferring an established print to another material. In this way, tracings are about the reproduction of an established norm, structure, or way of doing things.

While tree logic, transcendence, and tracing might be seemingly ideal for social functioning, especially as established by those in power, it assumes structure, sameness, and an ideal way of doing things that stifles actual in-the-moment happenings (that may or may not align with the ideal), that may lead to new way of doing things and likely, change. Because of the rhizome’s emergent nature, rhizomatic functioning can never be

traced, or copied, because it is “open and connectible in all its dimensions” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 12), like that of a map. Thus, mapping is an essential principle for how the rhizome functions. Deleuze and Guattari explained

What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious...the map is open and connectible in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. (p. 12)

Their use of mapping refers to an open system that can flow in any which direction. The map does not preexist giving a prescribed direction (in the sense of a roadmap or Google map directions); rather, the map is constructed as reality unfolds. In this sense, the rhizome is not based on reproducing a prescribed norm, or arriving at the ideal way of doing something; rather, it is based on moment-by-moment unfolding that has to be mapped, as it could not possibly be traced back to an original, because an assumption of rhizome logic is that there is no original to copy. Rather than being transcendent, or seen in relation to something, it is immanent, based on flows of connections in and of themselves. To more clearly understand these flows and their importance, we must explore rhizomatic lines.

Rhizomatic Lines

If rhizomes produce maps, what exactly is being mapped? This is a productive question for considering rhizomatic lines. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) clarified

unlike a structure, which is defined by a set of points and positions...the rhizome is made only of lines: lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions, and the lines of flight or deterritorialization as the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature. (p. 21)

The lines of the rhizome, and when engaging in rhizome logic to consider reality in the making, are always in motion. In this sense, the rhizome, like reality, is always becoming, always in an emergent state. Rather than being in a fixed, structural state, it continues new growth through multiple connections with other lines. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) described principles of the rhizome to more clearly make their argument for how the rhizome system works through these lines. On the rhizome, **connections** are inevitable because growth is always happening in an unpredictable fashion. The rhizome grows and extends through shoots, or lines, that emerge and link to other lines in an unruly way so that “unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21); this is where **heterogeneity** comes into play. There is never standardization in the mode or medium of these connections. Rather, difference abounds.

On the rhizome, difference is the norm, as there is no inherent structure expecting conformity or aligning to a predetermined structure, such as with the tree; in fact, the rhizome would not be a rhizome if standardization were to become a norm. Indeed, there are multiple lines emerging at varied times and spaces on the rhizome to form multiple connections, hence **multiplicity**, “which designates a set of lines or dimensions which are irreducible to one another. Every ‘thing’ is made up in this way” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, p. vii-viii). These lines that make a rhizome are “directions in motion” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21) and when they connect, form a multiplicity. This multiplicity, Martin and Kamberelis (2013) expanded, “celebrates plurality, proliferative modes of thinking, acting, and being rather than unitary, static, binary, and totalizing modes”

(p. 670). Here, it is essential to understand the rhizome in terms of diverse lines, rather than as one standardized whole.

As in everyday moments that make up reality, there are lines, or encounters, that are surprising and take off in new, unexpected directions. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) called this an **asignifying rupture**, or line of flight, or deterritorialization (since the line flees from the current territory, or state of things). They explained that “a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines” (p. 9). Lines of flight that abruptly rupture and change direction contribute to a new becoming of the rhizome, which inevitably produces new multiplicities. Deleuze & Guattari emphasized to “always follow the rhizome by rupture; lengthen, prolong, and relay the line of flight...increase your territory by deterritorialization” (p. 11). In essence, these lines of flight are the lifeblood of the rhizome.

Mapping everyday occurrences, or reality in-the-making, offers a way to identify and analyze the types of lines that are present. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) emphasized two main functions of lines: territorialization/reterritorialization and deterritorialization (see Table 1). They described:

Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. (p. 9)

Table 1

Types of Rhizomal Lines

Territorialization/Reterritorialization	Deterritorialization
Segmentarity	Line of flight
Stratified	Rupture
Organized	Molecular
Attributed	
Molar	
Rigid	

As principles of the rhizome, mapping and tracing are essential. A map of lines is constructed based on what has actually happened, but mapping cannot be an end to itself. Rather, “*the tracing should always be put back on the map*” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 13). By putting the map in conversation with the tracing, the structural expectation, one can identify lines of segmentarity, or territorialization as well as lines of flight or deterritorialization.

In thinking about the classroom again, mapping allows for following students’ *lines of territorialization* (when they align with the tracing, or dominant norm), but mapping also allows for following *lines of deterritorialization*, or lines of flight. Martin and Kamberelis (2013) discussed how mapping lines of territorialization and lines of flight:

makes visible the multiplicity and creative potentials inherent in any organization of reality: the offshoots, the expanding root systems, the ruptures, and the detours that are continually producing new relations of power and all manner of becoming(s). (p. 671)

These principles of the rhizome offer a way to theorize engagement with literacy as a network of connections that emerges in situ as opposed to linear, standardized connections aligning to an a priori form.

Rhizomal Logic: Disruption through Desiring Encounters

“..for it is always by rhizome that desire moves and produces” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 14)

If a rhizome functions through lines, by what logic are these lines produced? Deleuze and Guattari (1987) linked to desire as the productive force that energizes and produces rhizomal lines. To conceptualize desire they counter the Freudian approach to desire (again through a critique of psychoanalysis), which equates desire with lack. They argue that rather than understanding desire as wanting something one is lacking, desire is productive and transformative. In their work on Deleuze in relation to desire, Jackson and Mazzei (2011) discussed desire as producing an effect, leading one to think about what desire is producing, particularly in relation to the transcendent tracing (the norm of what is expected) and lines of flight. Encounters of desire, or intensities, propel lines of connectivity and heterogeneity, forming multiplicities, and often creating ruptures, or lines of flight, to produce something new. Deleuze and Parnet (2007) discussed this in further detail by explaining:

...[y]ou encounter people (and sometimes without knowing them or ever having seen them) but also movements, ideas, events, entities. All these things have proper names, but the proper name does not designate a person or a subject. It designates an effect, a zigzag, something which passes or happens between two as through under a potential difference...” (p. 6)

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) emphasis on the middle, or inbetweenness, of things is essential for understanding the desiring, or affective, nature of rhizomatic lines. "A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes *between* points, it comes up through the middle..." (p. 293). They make clear that lines are always becoming (meaning they are never segmented and fixed at a stopping point) and that it is not necessarily the beginning or ending point that matter; rather, it is what happens in between these points, "where things pick up speed" (p. 25).

The crux here is that there is great substance in the emerging relations between encounters of desire and the effects they produce, thus extending the rhizome in unexpected ways. Rhizomal logic and the focus on desire as productive sheds light on the issue of stifling encounters or intensities in students' engagement with literacy in the classroom, i.e. how and when those encounters should happen, what they should be or how they should look, and what they should lead to. The lines produced in the rhizome inevitably move along with as well as away from this established norm; for example, in a classroom event, students' encounters (interactions, dialogue, movements) produce lines that sometimes align with the established norm (e.g., schooled literacy practices). In this way, students' affective intensities stay within the territory of, or align to, what is expected. These lines are considered to be territorializing. Of course, there are also occurrences when students' affective intensities or encounters do not stay within the territory, resulting in deterritorialization or lines of flight.

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatics show the production of reality in the moment, produced by encounters and effects that spontaneously interrelate in multiple

(perhaps even chaotic) ways, resulting in an always-emerging network of connections between people, materials, and ideas. Mapping these encounters as they occur through their effects produced in a particular time and space allows for an opening up of possibilities for how we think about youth's engagements with literacy in schools.

Reconstructing 'Youth' through a Rhizomatic Lens

What does a rhizomatic stance mean for how I conceptualized *youth* in this study, especially the youth who participated in this study? To begin, I chose to use the term youth rather than other terms such as 'adolescents' or 'teenagers' because as Lesko (2001) discussed, these terms are socially constructed signifiers that carry assumptions of worry, angst, and problems. Moje (2002) explained the varied psychological, sociological, and anthropological perspectives that have constructed conceptions of youth. For example, adolescence is often looked upon as a problematic time in which teenagers are driven by "raging hormones," thus positioning them as a group whose actions need to be harnessed (Lesko, 2001). Moje also discussed another prevalent conception, that of the teenager who is not child, but also not yet adult. In this case, adolescence is seen as a developmental period through which youth are measured by what they are to become. These conceptions of adolescence produce discourses of risk (Vasudevan & Campano, 2009) and position youth as problematic or as contained within a developmentally challenging phase.

In relation to literacy research, Moje (2002) argued for an alternative to these conceptions based on cultural studies, relating closely to the sociocultural perspectives that have shaped much of contemporary literacy research. In this sense, Moje shifted the

focus from a deficit-based perspective to one of resource, looking to draw on the rich and complex literacy practices youth take up to understand life, create texts, and represent themselves. This also shifts the focus from the dominance of the middle-class, white male, as Lesko (2001) problematized, whose resources are typically most valued in society, especially in institutions such as school. Rather, youth of other races, classes, and gender who are typically marginalized, for example, are focused on to understand the resources they draw on as well.

This shift to *youth as a resource* (Moje, 2002) is helpful in countering deficit-based constructions of youth and has provided scholars with a construct for enhancing and valuing the narratives of marginalized youth. Yet, a rhizomatic stance inherently complicates this perspective because of its emphasis on assemblages, which expands the concept of subjectivity from *being* to *becoming*. In relation to rhizomatics, an assemblage is a multiplicity of rhizomal lines, meaning an always-becoming network of relations among humans, objects, ideas, beliefs, etc. Assemblages work to produce “possibilities for breaking up meta-narratives to better understand processes of becoming, where subjects are never truly formed in any meaningful or territorialised or striated way” (Riddle, 2013, p. 47). The value of an assemblage is experimenting with what these lines have produced; how does the assemblage work and what new transformations has it made? Because reality is produced through flows (connections or ruptures of lines) of desire, seemingly fixed structures can always be worked within and against (linking again to re/deterritorialization). Riddle (2013), in drawing upon rhizomatics, pointed out the normalized reliance on over-coded categories shaped by Western thought, such as race, class, gender, and youth. Riddle elaborated in relation to assemblages:

The power of the rhizome is in its refusal to become over-coded, where categories and classifications restrain the boundaries of the rhizome. Instead, the rhizome is able to form a plane of unbounded multiplicities that are referred to as assemblages. (p. 46)

This perspective allows us to think in terms of *and...and...and...* relations as previously discussed in this chapter. Rather than viewing youth as a fixed subject defined by social categories, such as race, class, and gender, we can view youth as formed by ongoing relations that shape such categories (and continue to shape, since these relations are always in motion, always becoming) in myriad ways. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari referred to “a thousand tiny sexes” (p. 213), making a connection to the multiplicity of relations that flow to constitute categories in diverse ways, thus pushing us to trouble singular definitions of such terms. This does not mean I ignored heavily relied upon terms in my study, but rather, I did not take them for granted as stabilized terms and worked to trouble the socially dominant ways in which many of these over-coded constructs are used to oppress and criminalize inner-city youth of color. For example, in working primarily with Black and Latino youth who are publically identified as being of low socioeconomic status, I aim to see youth through *and...and...and...* relations rather than static aged, raced, or classed constructs. Further, this means decentering from the construct of youth to recognize the networks of relations that work to create an assemblage of youth.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the rhizomatic functioning of literacy, including youth’s engagements with literacy, in a 7th grade English Language Arts

classroom. With Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatics as my theoretical framework, I examined the rhizomal relations of literacy (Leander & Boldt, 2013). Leander and Boldt (2013) communicated the urgency in such examination with their claim that

Literacy *is* unbounded. Unless as researchers we begin traveling in the unbounded circles that literacy travels in, we will miss literacy's ability to participate in unruly ways because we only see its properties. We can hold literacy at the center of the world only as long as we keep it in place at the center of our world. What might we make of the invitation to consider literacy in "and...and...and" relations? (p. 41, italics in the original)

This notion of "and...and...and" is significant for rhizomatics and is a characterization of its inner workings. Likewise, such an emergent, unfolding stance is inherent to youth's engagement with literacy and begs further investigation, especially on behalf of youth who are daily marginalized, punished, and othered because of processes that are not deemed acceptable or amenable to schooled expectations, such as schooled literacy.

A rhizomatic perspective brings attention to the emergent relationships and encounters of desire that work to produce possibilities for how youth's engagement with literacy is understood. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) linked rhizomatics to pragmatics. Experimenting with rhizomatics is not about coming up with a 'right' or totalizing answer but is about opening up new pathways of thought that might work to shift dominant structures that tend to regulate certain ways of thinking, and in the case of my study, engaging with literacy in a school space. To rhizomatically explore youth's engagements with literacy in one middle school English Language Arts class, I relied on the following questions to guide my inquiry:

1. In what ways are youth expected to engage with literacy in the 7th grade English Language Arts classroom?

2. In what ways do youth's engagements with literacy deterritorialize from or reterritorialize to schooled literacy practices?
 - a. What possibilities might these produce for youth in schools?

Significance of the Study

“...why not think *that a new type of revolution is in the course of becoming possible*”

(Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, p. 147)

This study explored youth's engagement with literacy from a rhizomatic perspective (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), which ultimately seeks to examine difference as productive and aims to create possibilities from unexpected, real-time differences. This approach adds to a conceptualization of literacy as rhizomatic and guides an examination of implications for theory, pedagogy, and practice.

The current implementation and assessment of literacy in schools revolves around a discourse of literacy as disciplined rationalization to be taken up in prescribed, linearly developed ways. Predetermined outcomes and the ways in which these should be achieved are currently a hallmark of literacy teaching and learning in schools, largely because of the neoliberal agenda to emphasize high-stakes testing and standardized notions of literacy, which values specific forms of literacy engagement and determine what counts as literacy (Stornaiuolo, Hull, & Nelson, 2009). This imposition of control over students' engagement with literacy in schools and the assumption of this engagement as disciplined and developmentally ordered territorializes literacy pedagogy and practices to notions of schooled literacy, relying on static outcomes based on an ideal form of engagement.

Exploring youth's literacy engagement as rhizomatic is significant for understanding literacy's unbounded and emergent nature, especially in relation to how youth engage with literacy in schools. More specifically, this study considered the varied ways in which youth's engagement with literacy, especially occurrences that are seen as off-task, mundane, or unexpected, might open up new understandings of literacy and possibilities for youth in schools. This runs counter to the current conceptions of schooled literacy that often marginalize students who do not align to the ideal image of how one should engage with literacy. This study was significant for examining unexpected differences, through real-time encounters in the classroom, and following how these differences highlighted the literacy engagement of youth who seemingly stray from the over-coded normalized path. How might unexpected occurrences produce possibilities that work to transform the dominance of structures such as schooled literacy?

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research focused on youth and literacy has been explored and examined in a variety of ways, though youth are often overlooked, ignored, or under-researched (Christenbury, Bomer, & Smagorinsky, 2009; Moje, 2002). In offering a review of relevant and current research regarding youth and literacy, I will show shared concerns between my work and the work of researchers in the field while also pointing out ways in which my research approach varies to offer expanding possibilities for thinking about youth in relation to literacy, particularly in schools.

To begin this review, I will discuss current research on youth and literacy, which predominantly stems from sociocultural perspectives. As I will explain, sociocultural inspired research has revealed much about the ways in which youth engage in literacy both in and out of school and how culturally and socially situated practices shapes youth's identities. My purpose in including a brief overview of this research is to discuss shared aims through my rhizomatic perspective while also articulating how such a perspective differs theoretically.

Sociocultural Understandings of Youth and Literacy

Since the social turn in literacy research (Gee, 1999), much of the work on youth and literacy has been examined through varied sociocultural perspectives. Such perspectives, as briefly discussed in Chapter I, take up different theoretical frames, such as literacy as a social practice (i.e., New Literacy Studies) (Gee, 1992; Street, 1984), multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996), and critical literacy (Jones, 2006; Morrell, 2007). Even though these theoretical approaches vary, they share the common characteristics of focusing on the socially and culturally situated practices people engage in to make meaning in their lives.

Vasudevan and Campano's (2009) extensive review of youth literacies serves as a sound starting point for discussing recent research on youth and literacy from sociocultural perspectives. They examined literature and research on youth literacies through a sociocultural framework, paying particular attention to the socially and culturally constructed literacy lives of youth. By highlighting research that demonstrates youth's abilities as "creative and socially engaged knowledge producers" (p. 312), Vasudevan and Campano illuminate risk as a prevalent social construction that schools inadvertently take up and thereby subject youth to, particularly through labels pertaining to *at risk* discourse.

Through their critique, the scholars countered this deficit-based perspective by highlighting recent research on youth literacies, particularly of racially and ethnically diverse youth whose home and community literacy practices do not fit the dominant

norm. More specifically, Vasudevan and Campano (2009) highlight several key areas through which recent research on youth's literacy practices have garnered attention. I will discuss these in relation to my own understanding of the research on youth and literacy and will make connections to other relevant studies that have been published since Vasudevan and Campano's review.

Out of school literacy practices have been a large focus for recent research. As Vasudevan and Campano (2009) pointed out, researchers have found value in locating themselves within the everyday contexts within which youth engage in literacy practices. Hull and Schultz's (2001, 2002) work on out of school literacies highlighted varied practices that people, in general, and youth, in particular, engage in throughout their communities and homes. For example, Hull and Schultz (2001) presented a vignette from Knobel's (1999) ethnographic case study on youth in Australia. This vignette demonstrated how a 13-year-old boy was disengaged in school and resisted the reading and writing practices he was expected to take up in school. However, at home, this boy was heavily involved in practices connected to religion and work. He engaged in scripture reading, distribution of religious literature, and religious-based presentations. As an apprentice to his father, the boy eagerly designed a flyer for his father's business on a computer. In juxtaposing the boy's literacy practices (and his confidence in taking up these practices) at home with those in school, a sociocultural perspective highlights the cultural mismatch often taking place between home and school as well as the ways in which engagement in literacy practices influences identity.

Cultural mismatch is a prime area of interest for sociocultural research. By showing the rich, complex practices of youth outside of school, especially traditionally

marginalized youth of color, researchers have demonstrated the discrepancies between youth's home/community cultures and school culture. For instance, Heath (1983), Ladson-Billings (1995), Moje (2000), and Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) (to name a few seminal studies) have all conducted invaluable research showing the ways in which children and youth take up literacy practices in their homes and communities, though these may differ from those taken up in schools.

By examining youth's out of school literacy practices, researchers have shown youth richly engaged in numerous practices such as creative writing through poetry, songs, and drama (Gustavson, 2007; Vasudevan, 2009); digital technology and social media (Hull & Nelson, 2005; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Lewis & Fabos, 2005) and spoken word and hip-hop (Fisher, 2003; Morrell & Andrade, 2002; Vasudevan, 2009), to name a few. This body of work shed light on aspects of youth culture that were being overlooked and ignored in both research and practice, though Hull and Schultz (2002) and Gee (2003) advocated for moving beyond dichotomizing in/out of school practices by working to find connections between these.

For example, Vasudevan, Schultz, & Bateman (2010) explored youth's literate identities as a way to bridge out of school practices with those in school. They use the term *literate identities*, which they conceptualize from a sociocultural theoretical stance to encompass the myriad ways students engage in multimodal composing practices to make meaning and communicate in and out of the classroom. Similar to Vasudevan and Campano's (2009) concerns, their study was situated in response to the limiting discourse of youth's literacy capabilities. Vasudevan, Schultz, and Bateman drew on literature

exploring youth's practices out of school to support schools' efforts in bringing in youth's experiences out of school into the classroom.

The researchers highlighted the ways in which one youth who was typically disengaged in school learning and participation throughout his years of schooling experienced drastic changes through multimodal digital composing. Specifically, when this student was encouraged to include artifacts from home and community, which involved a neighborhood walk to his home, along with the use of a digital recorder, photographs, and a computer to compose a digital story, he developed new literate identities that changed how he positioned himself in the classroom and how his multimodal engagement led to being valued as a learner:

When he was given the opportunity to document and include multiple aspects of his identity in his school writing, [he] became more engaged in school tasks. Furthermore, his school identity evolved from being a student with a reputation for restlessness and resistance to being a composer of stories, who learned new software quickly and became a leader in helping his fellow classmates learn the technology. As a result, he took on a recognizable literate identity in his classroom experience that positioned him differently in relation to his peers. (p. 461-462)

Vasudevan, Schultz, and Bateman's (2010) work on literate identities demonstrates how sociocultural research aims to shift literacy teaching and learning in schools. By drawing attention to who students are and expanding on the social and cultural resources they bring into the classroom, the researchers disrupted and expanded on conceptions of schooled literacy through a sociocultural lens.

The overlap between identity and literacy practices is prevalent throughout much of the sociocultural research on youth and literacy. In light of out of school literacy practices, researchers often examine the ways in which the family and community influence not only the practices youth take up, but also how this aids in their identity

construction. Other researchers have also investigated the influences of popular culture (Hagood, 2004; Morrell, 2004) and digital applications (Lam, 2006; Stornaiuolo, Hull, & Nelson, 2009) on identity construction. In fact, Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) called for a stronger linking of identity in relation to agency and power when investigating literacy practices through a sociocultural lens. Their purpose in drawing on these three concepts was to highlight the complex ways identity influences and is influenced by relations of power, thus advocating for a critical aspect of sociocultural theory.

Along with examining everyday practices youth engage in and the ways these shape identity construction, literacy research taking up sociocultural perspectives have also expanded meaning-making modes from a sole reliance on print to an inclusion of multiple modes, hence a focus on multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996) and multimodality (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001; Siegel, 2006). Some of these have focused on digital and web 2.0 (meaning digital technologies through which youth not only consume information but contribute to as well, such as web design, social networking, fan fiction and podcasting) to showcase youth engaging multimodally to make meaning (Black, 2005; Brass, 2008; Forte & Bruckman, 2009; Hull & Katz, 2006; Hull & Nelson, 2005; Jones & McIntyre, 2014; Knobel & Lankshear, 2006; Lapp, Fisher, Frey, & Gonzalez, 2014; Mills, 2010; Ranker, 2008; Rosen, Carrier, & Cheever, 2013; Rowsell & Burke, 2009; Simon, 2012; West, 2008). Though some researchers implicitly equate multimodality with digital technology (Mills, 2010; Serafini, 2012; Wissman, Costello, & Hamilton, 2012), multimodality extends to all types of modes used to make meaning, including the use of graphic novels (Chun, 2009; Smetana, Odelson, Burns, & Grisham, 2009), manga (Leander & Boldt, 2013; Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006), play

(Honeyford & Boyd, 2015), comics (Bitz, 2004; Ghiso & Low, 2012; Simon, 2012; Wissman, Costello, & Hamilton, 2012), sketching (Siegel, 2006), dramatization or performance (Rozansky & Aagesen, 2010), art (Cowan & Albers, 2006), and lyrical based texts, including rap, hip hop, poetry, and spoken word (Alvermann, 2006; Fisher, 2007; Hill, 2009; Jocson, 2005, 2008; Kinloch, 2005; McGinnis, 2007; Morrell, 2007; Wissman, 2011). As evidenced through this summarized list, expanded emphasis to multiple modes has been significant for more widely recognizing the rich literacy practices youth engage in to make meaning as well as for valuing these in school.

Connections to Schooled Literacy

The review of research thus far demonstrates the significant contributions of literacy research underpinned by sociocultural perspectives, especially in countering deficit perspectives of youth. Vasudevan and Campano's review is significant for my own work because we share the common goal of countering the dominant systems that feed off policy and standardized testing through which youth, especially those whose evolving engagements with literacy are not valued, endure numerous negative effects. Other aims of sociocultural research, including merging out of school and in school literacy practices, drawing on youth's identities to connect to agency and power, and expanding from print-centric modes to multiple modes of meaning-making have all enhanced understandings of youth and literacy. Even more importantly, these aims have explored and challenged schooled literacy practices, often through ethnographic research, which has contributed to understandings of the complex dynamics at play and that produce schooled literacy practices in particular ways.

For example, Lewis (2001) conducted a yearlong ethnographic study in which she explored the social nature of particular literacy practices in a 5th and 6th grade classroom. In doing so, she explained that claiming literacy as a social act extends beyond “people constructing knowledge together through social interaction” to involve “readers who have been constructed through social codes and practices that shape their relationships to texts, including literary texts and how such texts might be defined” (p. 56). This perspective is central to sociocultural perspectives on literacy, hence the move from conceptualizing literacy as autonomous to ideological (Street, 1984) and expanding from primarily psychological conceptions to other disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, and linguistics (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 1992).

By immersing herself in the classroom to become a part of the classroom culture, a key aspect of ethnographic research, Lewis (2001) focused on five focal student participants as well as the classroom teacher and investigated the official daily literacy practices of the classroom. While Lewis does not explicitly call these *schooled literacy practices*, she does highlight the ways in which these practices were established through normed rituals, which characterized them as official and school-sanctioned literacy practices in the classroom. Since the literacy portion of the class schedule was organized by four main practices, she made these her focus and analyzed the social nature of these throughout the year. These practices included: read-aloud, peer-led literature discussions, teacher-led literature discussions, and independent reading.

By examining the social nature of these schooled literacy practices, Lewis (2001) demonstrated how these practices were shaped and produced by the social context and factors such as social class, gender, age, perceived ability, and peer status. For example,

when discussing the read-aloud, she drew on the teacher's role in prioritizing this practice as a way to establish the expected culture of the classroom, as defined by the teacher's social and interpretive expectations. Lewis noted the ways in which gender constructed the read-aloud practice in particular ways by claiming "the feminine was accentuated, through the voice and body of the teacher, the ritualized and exaggerated display of female bonding among the girls, and the social and interpretive norms associated with girls presentations of self in relation to text" (p. 83). Further, she shows how gender played into the way the read-aloud practice was taken up. For instance, one male participant interacted in this practice in varied ways, including engaging as expected, resisting engagement all together, or sometimes joining with others who also resisted to form a different type of engagement, one on the margins. By examining the way gender played into the construction of the read-aloud practice of the classroom, Lewis articulated the complex social nature of such a practice and how this produces schooled literacy practices in particular ways.

As Lewis (2001) goes through the other schooled literacy practices that were important for this classroom, like the peer-led literature discussion, the teacher led literature discussion, and independent reading, she notes the importance of social and interpretive stances. Important to her analysis are the social dynamics that make those rituals and practices what they are in the classroom. Her analysis and discussion is indicative of what is so vital and important about sociocultural theory, including what we understand and know about youth literacy practices in school.

For example, when discussing the peer-led literature groups, Lewis (2001) points out how the teacher chose the groups based on their high, medium, and low ability levels.

Lewis also describes how age and gender were social factors that affected these discussion groups. Lewis drew on interviews with students and her observations of students in their peer-led literature groups to give examples of the ways in which students negotiated their engagement in the practice, including how power dynamics played into this. For example, on one occasion, a group called out one of the female members for not reading as much as they thought she should have read. In response, she gave a list of all the reasons why she would not have time to read the extra chapters. These reasons mostly included extracurricular activities in which she was involved after school and on the weekends. These reasons made sense to her group, and they easily accepted this and let it go. However, when another participant, a male student in the group, only did a small amount of reading and needed to catch up to his group, he was not cut any slack and was looked down upon because his reasons did not seem as worthy in the middle class, white classroom environment that the teacher (and implicitly, the district) had created and substantiated through daily rituals and conversations.

Lewis's (2001) study contributes to understandings of the social nature of schooled literacy practices, including the ways in which social power is negotiated and often produces the actual engagement of schooled literacy practices in particular ways. Lewis's work is notable for my own study because of the relation to schooled literacy practices. While Lewis demonstrated the ways in which social factors play into students' engagement with schooled literacy practices, which often disrupted or challenged the expected engagement with such practices, in taking up a rhizomatic perspective, the rhizomatic framework I am taking up differs in a few key ways (see Figure 2). While my research will not explicitly focus on the ways in which youth's engagements with literacy

are socially and culturally constructed, I aim to join the shared effort of countering deficit-oriented perspectives and contributing to socially just changes in schools.

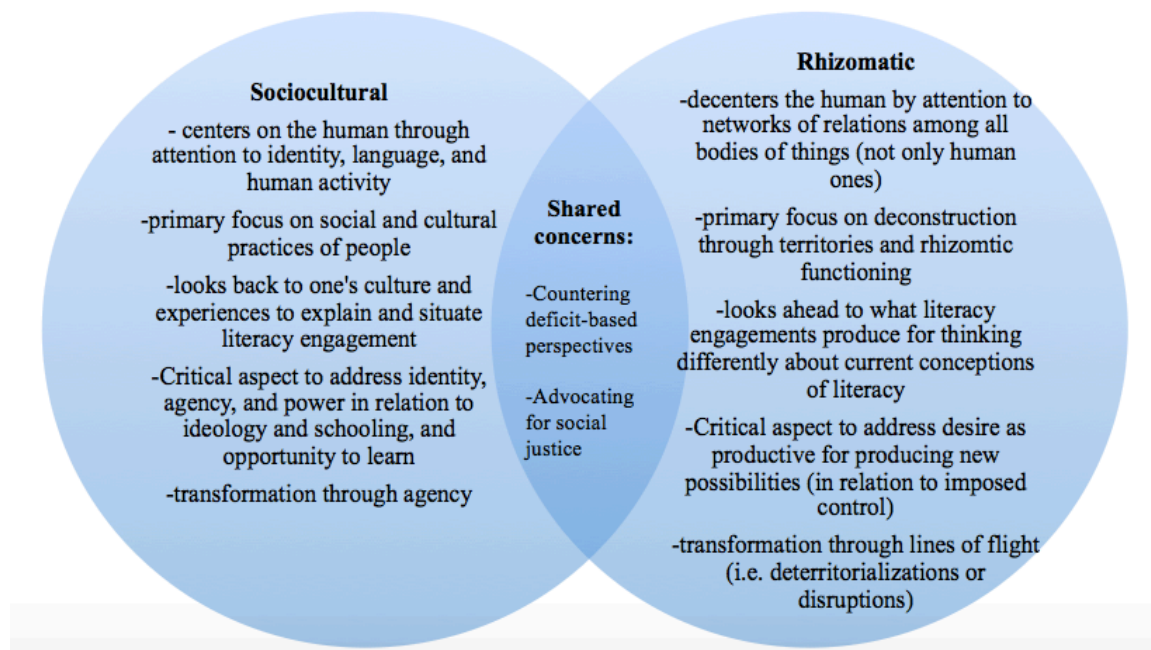


Figure 2: Sociocultural and Rhizomatic Comparison

Rereading with a Rhizomatic Lens

To demonstrate the ways in which a rhizomatic framework contributes differently from a sociocultural framework, I will now review data from Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) with the purpose of presenting the contributions of their sociocultural approach while also rereading the data to demonstrate how a rhizomatic approach might contribute to the field differently.

Lewis, Enciso, & Moje (2007) called for a critical aspect of sociocultural approaches to literacy through more attention to “issues of identity, agency, and power in the production of knowledge” which they argue are “central to understanding literacy as a

social and cultural practice” (p. xi). I find it important to connect to their work because they not only take up sociocultural approaches to researching and conceptualizing literacy (an approach dominant in the field of literacy), but they also argue for a critical lens by making intentional efforts to connect to the broader structures, like school, in which youth’s engagement with literacy takes place. They make clear that applying a critical lens is not always the case for scholars and researchers who have taken up sociocultural approaches to literacy, thus referring to the term *sociocultural* as a “site of struggle” (p. 2).

In demonstrating the ways in which a critical sociocultural approach influences the type of research questions, research focus, and implications for findings, Moje and Lewis (2007) analyzed a classroom transcript based on youth and their teacher discussing a topic of their choice related to the book they were reading as a class. Moje and Lewis’s sociocultural lens led them to analyze the data focusing primarily on the activity or practice in which the youth were participating, the cultural models and Discourses (meaning the cultural ways of knowing and identifying with certain topics or subjects) taken up by the youth, and the relationships between youth’s identities and agency during the discussion. Their sociocultural approach is clear in their research questions as well. These are framed around issues of students’ experiences, cultural ways of knowing, and identities in relation to the learning activity as well as one another and how these constituted moments of agency. To analyze the data and answer these questions, the researchers coded the transcript (though it is unclear if a specific coding method was used) and then drew on activity theory, critical discourse analysis, and cultural studies to guide their analysis. Blending these theoretical approaches toward analysis was key for

the researchers in linking the critical aspect of their sociocultural lens, particularly by paying attention to discourses of power and how they shaped identities and agency as well as what power relations meant for learning within certain activities.

Furthermore, based on their analysis of the transcript data, Moje and Lewis (2007) discussed findings in relation to patterns based off their coding of the data. These patterns included: subjectivities as both invited and constrained, identity enactments and recognitions, activity systems in relation to cultural models and discourses, and moments of agency (or non-agency). For example, one youth, identified as Pilar, was heavily focused on because of her participation in the discussion. Moje and Lewis discussed how Pilar's experience with gangs was invited into the class discussion, with the class discussion being identified as the primary activity of the analysis. They sought to understand the way Pilar's subjectivities, which the authors discuss as motives and desires, were welcomed into the activity. In this sense, how her subjectivities expanded the activity, as well as how her subjectivities were also constrained by the activity, were both important for this sociocultural analysis because of the focus on the activity and identity enactments, including related subjectivities.

Thus, the researchers additionally identified the ways in which Pilar enacted various identities, including, for example, a student identity as well as a gang-connected identity, which led to moments of agency as well as constrained agency for Pilar. By attending to discourse through linguistic analysis (meaning the words or utterances Pilar voiced) and how Pilar linked the cultural models of good/bad and police/gang activity, Moje and Lewis (2007) demonstrated Pilar's moments of agency, which they conceptualized as directly related to identity enactments. For example, they discussed

Pilar's discourse around gang activity and the way she used this to deconstruct typical notions of gangs as bad. In this way, the researchers' sociocultural lens privileged a continued focus on identifying cultural models and discourse taken up by the students and how these further led to their moments of agency. Equally important, however, were Pilar's non-agentic moments in which she backed away from her gang-connected identity when challenged by another student. Central to their analysis and findings were the ways in which relations of power, circulating through cultural models and Discourses, play into opportunities to learn.

I offer this detailed discussion to highlight some of the ways sociocultural approaches have expanded understandings of literacy, and in this case, youth's engagements with literacy in schools. For example, this sociocultural analysis contributes to understanding how identity, subjectivity, and Discourse plays into youth's opportunities to learn through school-sanctioned literacy practices. My move in taking a rhizomatic approach is based on my belief that the field could benefit from expanding to other approaches, as others are already doing (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Leander & Boldt, 2013; Leander & Rowe, 2006; Leander & Sheehy, 2004; Lenters, 2016; Masny & Cole, 2009; Wargo, 2015), which hold great promise for further contributing to understandings of literacy and specifically for this study, for rhizomatically examining how youth engage with literacy in schools.

To demonstrate how a rhizomatic approach might contribute differently, I will reread Moje and Lewis's (2007) data through a rhizomatic lens. A rhizomatic approach shifts the research questions, research focus, and implications for analysis (including theoretically as well as methodologically) *from* attention to the ways in which power

shapes identities and agency through which cultural models and discourses are taken up in a specific activity or practice *to* attention to the ways in which desire moves through sociomaterial encounters to produce effects that can then be examined to consider potential change to the dominant, totalizing systems within which these encounters take place. It is important here to note not only the object of the researcher gaze but also the action at hand. While many sociocultural approaches, and qualitative approaches in general, seek to interpret what something means, rhizomatic approaches seek to notice what is produced and how that noticing might move one to think differently about social reality, based on the unexpectancies of what is produced. This does not mean that social reality is suddenly changed by what is noticed, but that the thinking about what is possible is fueled by what is noticed.

For example, using this same piece of data, the research questions would be formed around issues of encounters in the event (and connected to the event through other data), how desire flowed through these encounters, and how these encounters reinforced or deterritorialized from the dominant structure of concern, thus shifting the focus of the research project. So, for example, rather than a central question being ‘What are the opportunities to learn in this activity?’, a driving question becomes ‘How do youth’s unexpected encounters produce new possibilities for how we think about literacy, in general, and how we understand youth’s engagements with literacy, in particular?’

Implications for analysis would shift as well. Rather than analyzing the linguistic details of the transcript and coding for patterns or themes, a rhizomatic lens looks for the encounters in the transcript (expanding beyond language to movement of bodies beyond the human, such as materials, beliefs, and ideas) and how these align to the original

tracing, or the expected outcome of imposed control. For instance, when I reread the data and reconsider the encounters from a rhizomatic lens, the focus shifts from identifying identity enactments and interpreting what these mean to examining the encounters and what they produce for thinking differently, for purposeful—and potentially political—deconstruction of the larger structure of imposition and control. In fact, the data transcript could be viewed as produced rhizomatically because it evolved moment by moment, largely through verbal discussion but also through ideas and beliefs, thus producing networks of encounters, all driven by desire. Methodologically, this means less focus on interpreting Pilar--what she learned, and her identity enactments--and more focus on examining the assemblaging encounters and how they de/reterritorialize to imposed structures of thought through the encounters.

Thus, to continue rhizomatically rereading the data, I must identify the imposed structure of thought. To demonstrate a rhizomatic approach, I have identified the cultural model of goodness/badness as the totalizing system I am countering. This would imply problematizing the cultural model, such as goodness/badness in relation to gangs, perhaps because of its binary properties. The analysis would then become about mapping the encounters and looking for new lines of thought – deterritorializations– in regard to the cultural model of goodness/badness.

One way to do this is through following the lines of the encounters, as discussed in Chapter I. What lines of flight stray from the dominant cultural model? This makes the focus not about how power shapes identity, or aided/constrained opportunities to learn, but rather about how desire circulated through encounters to produce something new, a new line of thought, in relation to the cultural model of goodness/badness. Pilar's role in

the discussion is but one part of the assemblage; a rhizomatic lens looks to the network of relations, the encounters of desire, people, movements, ideas, events, and entities.

Though I am relying on a transcript of verbal discourse, thus limiting the bodies and movements from which I can draw, my rhizomatic lens still allows me to consider the encounters of talk and ideas in the classroom discussion of the four students and teacher to examine how desire produced lines of flight from the cultural model of goodness/badness in relation to gangs. It is not just Pilar's desire here; it is the network of relations in the transcript and how encounters (here, encounters of talk and beliefs) lead to more and more encounters that disrupted the cultural model.

Further, the researchers' sociocultural lens privileged a continued focus on identifying cultural models and discourse taken up by the participants and how these led to moments of agency by the students. However, a rhizomatic stance shifts agency from being solely for/about the students to being enacted through the human *and* more-than-human encounters that occurred in the event (Kuby, Rucker, & Darolia, 2017). Thus, we can consider how desire flows to produce a unique formation of encounters through which lines of flight emerged unpredictably and in unexpected ways.

In summary, I believe a rhizomatic approach shares the aim of sociocultural approaches in arguing for social justice, specifically through countering deficit perspectives as well as positivist research approaches (to be discussed in Chapter III). For sociocultural approaches, this largely happens through attention to social and cultural constructions of identity and practice in relation to how recognizing and understanding these offers other ways of being and knowing. For rhizomatic approaches, this shared aim of social justice occurs through attention to rhizomatic functioning and the production of

difference in relation to deconstructing the dominant structures within which the activity occurs. This involves examining the connections, the heterogeneity, the multiplicity of rhizomal functioning, and just as significantly, the ruptures or lines of flight that work to de/reterritorialize to produce new possibilities, in this case, for how youth engage with literacy. Having demonstrated the ways in which a rhizomatic approach may offer the field new thinking around and understanding for youth's engagement with literacy, I now turn to the central focus of my literature review, that is, relevant research that takes up rhizomatic perspectives related to literacy.

Literacy Research from a Rhizomatic Perspective

Central to my study is the body of research that examines literacy from a rhizomatic theoretical perspective¹. Taking up a rhizomatic stance (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) places emphasis on the effects produced through students' encounters with others, including texts, people, ideas, and objects, and how these effects produce their engagement with literacy. In this sense, engagement with literacy is always in a state of flow charged by ever-occurring networks of encounters. A rhizomatic approach privileges the unfolding, moment-by-moment relations of literacy engagement, highlighting the new understandings and experiences these lead to, especially those that create change in the midst of dominant, fixed structures of power.

¹ There are a number of studies taking up rhizomatics in diverse ways, in both theoretical framework and methodology. I use both in this study, but the literature review focuses only on the theoretical applications of rhizomatics in exploring literacy. The methodological discussion will follow in Chapter III.

Scholars and researchers have only recently begun to analyze literacy through a rhizomatic lens (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Leander & Boldt, 2013; Masny & Cole, 2009; Wargo, 2015). This review of research includes studies exploring literacy as rhizomatic. Specifically, I will consider connections in relation to my own study and research questions. While I have synthesized and organized these according to differing rhizomatic functions, I see these as interrelated and not in isolation from one another (e.g. how youth affectively engage with literacy and the network of relations inherent to this).

Affectively Charged Encounters

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) emphasized the emergent nature of the rhizome, always in production through encounters and the effects they produce, also referred to as affective intensities, or desire. Deleuze and Guattari recognized desire as the productive force that energizes and produces rhizomal lines. In this sense, affect encompasses intensities produced through movements and connections between bodies (i.e. things, ideas, objects, and people). Recognizing affect in this way connects to principles of the rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), which privileges the in-the-moment emergence produced through affective intensities that spontaneously interrelate in multiple (perhaps even chaotic) ways, resulting in an always-emerging network of connections between people, materials, and ideas.

Leander and Boldt (2013) and Wargo (2015) provided insight into the affective dimension of literacy, particularly from a rhizomatic stance. Leander and Boldt (2013) researched the rhizomatic workings of a 10 year-old boy's engagement with literacy by

observing him throughout one day in his home. Their ultimate concern was the growing prevalence of literacy research and pedagogy that aims for a precise and predetermined result. They trace this concern to the New London Group's *A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies* (New London Group, 1996) and the "disciplined rationalization" (Leander & Boldt, 2013, p. 22) used to put forth a vision for "design grammars," referring to the modes youth might use to produce texts. Central to Leander and Boldt's (2013) concern, and mine as well, is the emphasis on the final text, or product, and the sense that youth would and should engage in intentional, purposeful decisions and actions when taking up varied literacy practices (especially when a final product or text is expected). Leander and Boldt contended, "if grammatical metalanguages are the powerful guide for how rational subjects produce and interpret meanings, then how might we explain the emergence of unintended meanings?" (p. 31). This is not to discount all rational lines of thinking that may or may not have particular end points in mind or that may stray from an intended end product. However, oftentimes, especially in relation to literacy teaching and learning in schools, there is little room for affectively charged emergence that might lead to engagement with literacy in ways other than prescribed.

Leander and Boldt drew on embodiment, or the body as text, to consider literacy engagement that functions by experience, the "emotion, physical, sensation, response, or energy" (p. 29) affectively felt and employed, sometimes irrationally, with no set end-point or text. They explained:

What this raises for us is a question of whether we understand bodies as stepping through predetermined subject positions toward rationally designed change...or as opening toward new possibilities that cannot be determined in advance. Our view of change shifts from a description of large ruptures and intentional, deliberate strategies and resistances—not that such things don't happen—to a view of the everyday and of what might emerge if we understand

ourselves as both mediated and not reducible to mediation, and if we privilege indeterminacy and emergence over stasis and determination. (p. 32)

Predetermined results and the ways in which these should be achieved are currently a hallmark of literacy teaching and learning in schools. This imposition of control over students' engagement with literacy in schools and the assumption of this engagement as disciplined and developmentally ordered territorializes literacy pedagogy and practices to notions of schooled literacy, relying on static outcomes based on an ideal form of engagement. Leander and Boldt argued that whatever "horizon lies in front of the text/subject subsumes any significance or effects of the text/subject as emergent in practice" (p. 34). I share their concern that this serves to stifle or ignore the rhizomal relations of youth's literacy engagement.

To explore literacy as rhizomatic and examine what indeterminacy and emergence might look like, Leander and Boldt (2013) analyzed how the participant, Lee, interacted with manga, a type of Japanese comics, to highlight the unfolding emergence displayed through Lee's encounters, sensations, desires, and movements, or affective intensities. It should be noted that their analysis was not based on a formal study or large set of data; rather, they recounted the day of observing Lee as he "engaged in many kinds of reading and play activities" (p. 26) related to two manga texts. These included sitting to read at various points of the day, which is typically expected when thinking about how someone might engage with a text. However, interspersed in these reading sessions (ranging in length of time from 5-30 minutes) were other activities (some related to the text and some not), like putting on costume items similar to those of the manga characters (a headband, toy daggers), emulating moves of the characters, verbalizing sound effects, watching television, eating, searching the internet manga-related accessories, to name a

few of the many activities of the day. These increased when a friend joined him for part of the evening, in which they further took up activities, many of which were manga-related.

Central to Leander and Boldt's (2013) argument is that Lee, who was viewed as a struggling reader in the eyes of the school and was reluctant to engage in school literacy practices, engaged with literacy in this brief vignette in ways that were affectively charged through the production of desire, though this was not qualified or driven by reaching predetermined results, or a final text; rather, it was "about the vividness of being and experiencing being" (p. 42) that allowed Lee to engage in literacy in a dynamic, embodied way. This was evidenced through talk, play, and movement, and unfolded as Lee freely interacted with the manga texts.

While Leander and Boldt's (2013) discussion of Lee is brief and meant more to counter text-centrism and showcase rhizomatic engagement with literacy than to present a methodologically in depth and rigorous study, their analysis serves as an entry point to further examining youth's engagement with literacy as rhizomatic. Wargo (2015) also argued for taking up literacy as rhizomatic and aimed for this understanding to permeate what is happening in schools, since youth engagement with literacy, particularly writing and composing of narrative, is often constrained and "handcuffed to the do-s and don'ts disciplined by form" (p. 60).

In his study examining how one youth used the mobile application Snapchat to compose a personal narrative, Wargo (2015) conducted a connective ethnography, which expands traditional ethnography to include spatial perspectives, to research the affectively charged engagement of Ben, a 17-year-old, high school student, in an out-of-

school setting. Wargo focused on the literacy engagement of composing personal narrative, with Ben using Snapchat as the primary medium of production. Snapchat is a mobile application that allows users to compose a digital story using photos, videos, and text and then share the digital story with other Snapchat users. As Wargo observed Ben's literacy practices using Snapchat, he conceptualized literacy as rhizomatic through what he termed *elastic literacies*. This theoretical distinction was particularly important for his study and findings because he specifically positioned elastic literacies, which "take into account the types of practices that emerge from relational social ties and interactions with human and nonhuman actors across an array of environments" (p. 51), counter to multiliteracies, which are design-focused and often privilege text-centric outcomes. For example, Wargo noted the ways in which Ben's snapstory was a flowing assemblage of "digital, physical, and geographic" (p. 59) materialities. Elastic literacies privilege the movement, sensation, and indeterminacy Leander and Boldt (2013) also valued in their study.

Aiding Wargo's (2015) connective ethnography methodology, Wargo analyzed data collected through video observations (including the Snapchat videos and their changing time-space-geographical markers), interviews, and field notes to examine how Ben's literacy engagement with Snapchat composing was affectively charged. He found that such embodied composing was charged by memory (and the experience of remembering that memory) and felt history (the sensations and feelings connected to one's history in relation to memory). As Ben worked to recreate and tell a story from his past (through Snapchat), he relied on past experience and knowledge of the affordances of the Snapchat app, which emerged through gestures, bodily movement, and talk, in the

production of his narrative. Wargo concluded that Ben's affective engagement "was less about his history with me as a researcher...than it was about his histories with the moment and the audience with whom he wanted to share it" (p. 55). Wargo highlighted the intersections of space, time, activity (movement), and sensation as key for Ben's affective engagement in composing his narrative. Wargo also pointed out the emergent nature of Ben's literacy engagement; since Ben relied on these affective elements to compose his narrative, it was not until these intersected that Ben's own composing could unfold.

Both Leander and Boldt's (2013) and Wargo's (2015) studies provide insight regarding what affective literacy engagement might look like for youth. Drawing on rhizomatics, both of these studies explore the participants' embodied emergence, though each looked at different types of literacy engagement. Leander and Boldt allowed us to experience Lee's engagement through an emergent stance, one where he relishes in reading his manga texts through play, movement, interaction with props, media, and technology, and a friend without a predetermined outcome in mind or with a final, planned production of text. Wargo (2015), on the other hand, examined the affective dimension of literacy through Ben's mobile composing, noting the embodied engagement Ben displayed when connecting to his memories and felt history. Especially notable in these studies, and important for my own, is the presence of the desire that drove these participants' embodied affectivity. Ultimately, the participants acted based on the sensations and feelings experienced in their engagement, even when taking up varied literacy practices.

The power and presence of desire and its rhizomatic functioning cannot be ignored. One area I hope to expand on through my study is how conceptualizing youth literacy engagement as rhizomatic might lead to new possibilities for youth who are traditionally devalued along raced and classed lines due to the controlling and imposing nature of schooled literacy. While Leander and Boldt (2013) mention their participant as a struggling student in school, more attention to implications for youth, especially diverse youth from nondominant and minoritized communities, are needed. Additionally, both studies connect back to the territorializing structure of text-centrism but identify multiliteracies as the culprit; however, I believe the focus should be more on sociohistorical contexts of schooling, especially neoliberalism and the imposed control that permeates much of schooling, such as schooled literacy.

Assemblages: Networks of Encounters

The affectively charged nature of one's engagement with literacy is very much part and parcel to the interconnected, network of encounters, also called assemblages, and the ongoing effects these produce. Rhizomal lines are produced through encounters (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007) or intensities (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), which are when something happens to produce an effect of any sort. Here, *effects* refer to anything produced from encounters, which can occur through bodies of all types. Studies conceptualizing literacy as rhizomatic understand *bodies* in broad terms, recognizing that potential forces for affect go beyond humans to objects, ideas, and movements (Kuby & Vaughn, 2015; Leander & Boldt, 2013; Leander & Rowe, 2006).

Deleuze and Parnet (2007) discussed these bodies as *things* that should not so much be looked at by the name that signifies them, but rather by the effect produced by the encounter between *things* of all sorts. This is of great importance in the present educational era in which stasis is projected (via policy) but is constantly contradicted (via reality). Phillips and Willis (2014) argued that though current education reform emphasizes standardization, “the landscape of literacy practices today is fluid, interactive, multimodal, ever-changing, adaptive and collaborative” (p. 76). One’s engagement with literacy is always moving in a flow of networked connections and encounters, producing varied effects for how such engagement might actually manifest itself and what might come of it.

Connecting back to Leander and Boldt (2013), networks of encounters and effects are evident in Lee’s engagement with his manga texts. For instance, Lee forms a constellation of encounters and effects through movement, play, use of the Internet, watching of TV, interaction with his friend, Hunter, and their use of props. To be more specific, I have included an excerpt from Leander and Boldt to offer a snapshot of the multiple encounters and effects taking place:

At 2:00 p. m., Hunter arrived...Lee immediately showed Hunter the *InuYasha* books, and Hunter began reading the first in the series. After about 40 minutes, the boys equipped themselves with toy swords, knives, and Lee’s collection of *Naruto* headbands and began playing their versions of scenes and themes from both series. Throughout the afternoon and evening, Lee and Hunter moved freely among multiple spaces and activities...at one point they carried their books, costumes, accessories, and weapons outdoors and sat reading in a porch wing. With no spoken planning, Lee stood up, grabbed a sword, and began swinging it at Hunter. Hunter dropped his book and picked up a sword, and for the next several minutes the battle moved between the porch and the front yard...Just as suddenly as it began, Hunter sat down and started narrating a favorite scene... (p. 27)

Of course not all encounters and effects will play out this way, but this scene contributes to an understanding of how an emphasis on encounters and effects brings attention to affects and possibilities they produce, especially in light of the unexpected.

To further explore this, Phillips and Willis (2014) offer insight into the emerging encounters that take place in youth's engagement with literacy and what effects these encounters might produce. To counter the current text-centrism that often serves to measure and qualify youth's literacy engagement, Phillips and Willis conceptualized texts as alive and emergent, "in constant unfolding processes of creation in the here-and-now through coexistence and interrelationality and engagement with others" (p. 78). This concept of *living texts* draws attention to the network of relations that, when valued and allowed to emerge, welcomes indeterminacy that "is alive with budding rhizomatic connections stimulating new ways of thinking, being and creating" (p. 78). To examine what such networked connections might look like and what effects they might produce, they researched twelve youth participants, 8-12 years old, involved in a project facilitated by a community organization. The project consisted of six workshops in which the organization's leaders worked with the participants to develop a neighborhood walk based on their observations of the neighborhood, lived experiences, and ideas for discussions in which they would eventually lead adults. In this way, the youth produced living texts through effects from varied encounters or relations that were evidenced by the researchers' observations and analysis.

Phillips and Willis (2014) discussed detailed accounts of two participants, Paige and Bella, 10 and 13 years old, respectively, highlighting the interrelations that charged each participant's living text. For example, the researchers point out Paige's encounters

with landscape feature, previous conversations, humor, and imagination to produce “a living text through unfolding processes of creation via coexistence with others and practices of interrelationality” (p. 82). This is further explored through discussion of Bella’s walk, which she intentionally planned to have a political message. Bella engaged in shared encounters with the adults on her walk, advocating for free-range chickens. Bella’s living text emerged as she drew from her own experience fostering neglected chickens and welcomed adults’ input and contributions to produce a living text of liberation and empowerment. Phillips and Willis claimed:

The living texts that each child host created constantly changed, being created and recreated, in response to audience variation for each iteration of their walk, landscape and pedestrian variation, climate, mood, thought processes and degree of hunger and fatigue. (p. 85)

By valuing the in-the-moment process of producing these living texts, Phillips and Willis hone in on the network of connections that emerge and produce meaningful, and unexpected, effects.

Researching literacy as rhizomatic calls attention to networks of encounters and the effects they produce as inherent to literacy engagement. While Leander and Boldt (2013) and Phillips and Willis (2014) offered a cursory insight into this rhizomatic aspect, these studies, along with Wargo (2015), noticeably lack in depth connections to how youth engage with literacy practices in school as well as discussion and implication for how exploring literacy as rhizomatic contributes to change and transformation. Though these studies mentioned the current problem of text-centrism, schooled literacy practices, and stifling of affectivity, emergence, and indeterminacy due to

standardization, they take place outside of school¹² and do not actively pursue the transformative aim of rhizomatics (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) in relation to merging theory and practice. To be fair, they each *hoped* for some type of change and transformation and certainly helped inspire my proposed study but left much room for the deterritorialized effects that work to put rhizomal logic-immanence and open mapping- in conversation with tree logic-transcendence and reproductive tracing.

Lines of Flight: Exploring New Possibilities through Deterritorialization

Masny (2009), Leander and Rowe (2006), and Kuby and colleagues (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Kuby, Gusthall, & Kirchhofer, 2015; Kuby & Vaughn, 2015) further contribute to conceptualizing literacy as rhizomatic. Not only do these studies explore the affective engagement and interrelated encounters and effects, they also examine rhizomatic deterritorialization, also called lines of flight or asignifying ruptures (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Deleuze & Guattari emphasized to “[a]lways follow the rhizome by rupture; lengthen, prolong, and relay the line of flight...increase your territory by deterritorialization” (p. 11). More specifically and important for my study, these studies focus attention on deterritorialization from the dominant territory of schooled literacy

² One part of Phillips and Willis’s (2014) study did take place in a school, though I did not include it in this review since the focus was on pedagogical implications and different than the first half of the study, as I have reported and discussed in this chapter.

practices and explore potential for new literacy possibilities regarding youth (Leander & Rowe, 2006) and children (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Masny, 2009).³

Similar to Wargo's rhizomatic-influenced conceptualization of literacy as elastic literacies, Canadian researchers Masny and Cole (2009) also draw from a number of Deleuzian concepts to conceptualize literacy through what they call Multiple Literacies Theory (MLT). Masny and Cole explained that MLT encompasses *Reading*, *Reading the World*, and *Reading the Self* and stated that it:

is a framework and lens for understanding empirical evidence that consists of words, gestures, attitudes, speaking, writing, and valuing; and ultimately examines the processes and manners in which the literate behaviors come together through becoming with the world. (p. 6)

In taking up MLT as her theoretical and analytical guide, Masny (2009) examined the in-process perceptions of one participant, Estrella, as she engaged in various literacy practices in multiple writing systems. To figuratively map Estrella's de/reterritorializations, Masny provided vignettes, each followed by reflective analysis, to lay out Estrella's creative and unexpected process of becoming (meaning, how her multiple literacies developed). As data for her analysis, Masny included observations of Estrella's literacy engagement at school and at home, interviews with Estrella's mother about Estrella's multiple literacies experiences, texts produced by Estrella, and photos Estrella took when given a camera and told to take photos of anything associated with literacies.

³ Though Kuby and Rucker (2015) and Masny (2009) researched elementary aged participants (rather than adolescent youth), I chose to include their studies because there is little available research on conceptualizing literacy as rhizomatic and after extensive review, I believe their studies contribute to the direction and development of my own study.

Masny (2009) provided six vignettes along with subsequent analysis for each to show Estrella's perceptions of engaging with multiple writing systems, including French, English, Spanish, and others that Estrella invented. Masny also used these varied analyses to map Estrella's process of becoming literate in using these writing systems and to expand on the unconventional transformation that took place. More specifically, the vignettes showed the deterritorializing effects that charted Estrella's path.

For instance, when interviewing Estrella, along with her mother, about her writing of a Mother's Day card in both French and Spanish, Masny discovered Estrella's preference for writing in Spanish for special occasions, such as cards, whereas she preferred French for writing stories, because it was the more appropriate and expected writing system for school. Along with this, Estrella had written in both languages because she did not know enough to write what she wanted to communicate in Spanish, so she creatively responded by also incorporating French. Masny included this scenario as one vignette because it showed Estrella's deterritorializing from the use of French in school along with the influence of her home environment that gave her space to combine both languages, which aided Estrella's process of becoming literate in both writing systems.

The vignettes each offer evidence of Estrella's creativity and deterritorialization to *become other* in her learning of and use of multiple literacies than what she was before. Most important for Masny (2009) was the unexpected creativity that deterritorialization brought about and the ways in which "creative processes allow literacies to move beyond, extend, and transform multiple literacies and learners" (p. 28). This creativity was produced through the interconnectivity of the writing systems, Estrella's experiences, and varied locations (i.e. school and home).

While Masny (2009) rhizomatically explored one participant's engagement with literacy through acquiring varied written language systems, Kuby and colleagues (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Kuby, Rucker, & Kirchhofer, 2015; Kuby & Vaughn, 2015) produced connected research studies based on several years of data exploring children's *literacy desirings*. Kuby and Vaughn (2015) used the term *literacy desiring* in reference to "the unfolding, unexpected, agentic and in-the-moment aspects of creating multimodal artefacts" (p. 3), intentionally moving away, or deterritorializing, from an assumption of literacy as requiring fixed design and text-centrism. These studies research different aspects of literacy desirings from a rhizomatic perspective. Most pertinent for my study is Kuby and Rucker's (2015) research of second graders' literacy engagement with composing personal narratives in school.

Kuby and Rucker (2015) examined the rhizomatic workings of children's engagement with composing narratives in a second grade classroom. With Rucker as the classroom teacher, and Kuby the university researcher, they welcomed students' affective engagement, produced through their interactions with materials, space, and time. In taking a rhizomatic stance, they allowed for these networked encounters and welcomed the effects that were produced. For example, they discussed the indeterminacy of these effects, such as students not always having a clearly defined end-goal. The in-process forming of connections was not already fixed and only emerged from students' time with the materials. This highlights the networked relationship as opposed to a hierarchy of humans over materials.

Another effect was an observed embodiment of the literacy desiring as conceptualized by Kuby and Rucker (2015). To explore these effects, particularly those

of deterritorialization, they focus on one participant, Neil. They refer to deterritorialization, or lines of flight, as fissures, all of which relate back to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatics and notion of asignifying rupture. Kuby and Rucker found that their allowance for and examination of lines of flight from the normalized territory of schooled composing practices led to a deeper understanding of Neil's literacy desirings and opened up unexpected, yet valued and productive, engagement in his literacy practice.

One specific example included the way in which Neil's emerging use of time, space, materials, and conversations with others led him to create a 3D game board as his personal narrative text. Neil revised and further developed his game-text when other classmates played his game and had to ask questions to figure out how the game should work. Based on their observations and interactions with Neil, Kuby and Rucker (2015) recognized his literacy engagement (as well as the other students interacting with Neil through the game board) as rhizomatic, as the moment-by-moment unfolding occurred without predetermined outcome and occurred non-linearly.

Kuby and Rucker (2015) reported several varied scenarios based on Neil's literacy desirings and worked to merge a rhizomatic understanding of literacy engagement with practice by urging educators to embrace students' literacy desirings, particularly in the area of writing instruction. They argued:

We believe much good comes from giving children time, space, materials, and permission to **play-with** and **live-out literacy desirings**. Even within a climate of mandates and standards, this type of teaching and learning can happen. As educators, we have to *imagine* the possibilities, *trust* students, *advocate* for curricular space for literacy desiring, and *also give students permission* to create other possibilities. (p. 326, bold and italics in the original)

Just as Kuby and Rucker (2015) drew from their research to advocate for rhizomatic understandings of students' engagement with literacy, Leander and Rowe (2006) also argued in a related manner. They conducted a rhizoanalysis of a literacy performance of three high school boys in search of "unpredictable becomings that are inherent in classroom spaces" (p. 442). They used the rhizoanalysis to map evident connections and becomings of youth's literacy performance and to highlight the interconnections of modalities, texts, and bodies.

Central to their concern was the complex interrelations and effects produced during the performance, which are often overlooked when trying to attach fixed logic and understanding to youth's engagement with literacy practices in schools. They acknowledge that interpretations often "fail to bring to life the experience of performances as embodied, rapidly moving, affectively charged, evolving acts that often escape prediction and structure" (p. 431), and draw on rhizomatics (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to conduct a rhizoanalysis based on the affective intensities and their effects within a literacy event. This approach privileges "the myriad and dynamic relations among texts, modalities, and bodies" which "recasts the problems of multimodality and the body as elements of a more general problem of connectivity, including the stabilizing and destabilizing effects that particular connections have" (p. 432).

Drawing on two years of data consisting of transcribed video-taped segments and conversations with participants to gather information regarding their personal, institutional, pedagogical, and racial histories, Leander and Rowe (2006) analyzed one literacy event based on a literacy performance of three male youths to investigate the becoming nature of the performance, the affective intensities produced in the

performance, and the youth's identities. The performance consisted of a poster presentation based on a text the youth read and were presenting to their classmates. They remind us that these performances concerned both presenters and audience members and extended beyond simple elements of talk and texts, "but are rather multimediated and constituted through relations of talk, structured and rearranged room spaces, movements and organizations of bodies, and often print text, images, and video clips" (p. 428). Leander and Rowe's analysis showed how, at times, the students acted to reterritorialize to the performance expected by the teacher, while at other times, they deterritorialized by producing lines of flight.

More specifically, Leander and Rowe (2006) produced three spatial arrangements to present the varying lines of territorialization or deterritorialization and to analyze the "multiple connections and novel becomings produced by literacy performances" (p. 433). The first spatial arrangement identified recognizable lines of segmentarity, or territorialization. Found through the text-centeredness of the space, lines of segmentarity allow for seeing how familiarity with text-centeredness as a historically and spatially significant practice produces the space tightly connected to and stemming from the text; essentially, it is a territorialization of the space. For example, in the beginning of the performance, the boys took up conventional schooled notions of literacy to present their poster, which represented their understanding of the text as they were expected to present it to the class; it was "a text-driven space containing agreed upon elements" (p. 445), such as summarizing statements, explaining the drawings on the poster, and addressing questions from the audience (other students).

In the midst of this text-centered space, however, Leander and Rowe (2006) revealed, possibilities emerge. The second spatial arrangement showed a line of flight that produced a space no longer only text-centered, but a space of becoming-producers and consumers as the youth interacted with their classmates during the literacy performance. Thus, rather than passively existing with the text-centered performance, student talk related to humor and embodied movements, or affective intensities, come into play:

...rather, the student text offers up something for the audience to be confronted with and to imaginatively 'buy.' The poster text (as representation, drawing) is being linked, or rather, pushed toward materially and imaginatively becoming spoiled ham. The performers take up a stance of thinking within the imagined relations between the meatpackers and merchants rather than about these relations. (p. 446)

Suddenly, this line of flight produced a space that is no longer only text-centered, but the presenters become producers and the audience members become consumers, actually involved in the text through the performance. Whereas in the first spatial arrangement students were adhering to the text-centric expectations, they were now transforming the performance through unexpected encounters and ongoing effects. Leander and Rowe's analysis highlighted the rhizomatic nature of the performance through affective engagement and interrelations. The third spatial arrangement (which is like an offshoot of the first and second arrangements) is also produced through affective intensities, in this case, dealing with gore and dismemberment. Another audience member verbally responded to the presenters, which led to various responses and reactions - not just verbal, but also embodied. There was an unexpected occurrence of audience response, laughter and humor, and bodily movement and shifting.

For Leander and Rowe (2006), their analyses of the second and third spatial arrangements map two lines of flight, or deterritorialization, from the first spatial arrangement territorialized by text-centeredness. These scenarios of asignifying rupture (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) move Leander and Rowe to advocate for a rhizomatic literacy pedagogy. They urge (presumably educators and possibly researchers) to

[a]llow for forms of becoming that escape our means of description (precisely the point), expanding ‘schooled becoming’ that is overly anchored to texts, static meanings, standards, and ready verbal description. Making room for diversity... involves more than a departure from teacher guides to student-centered forms of dialogue, from teacher-centered to student-centered social space. Rather, it involves an affirmation of the production of difference in pedagogy, a valuing of multiplicities and their contingent movements that cannot be defined in rubrics” (p. 451)

Here Leander and Rowe link deterritorialization to productive difference. It is this difference, the difference between the map and the tracing, the rhizome and the tree, which produces change. This is a connection point with my own study, though I believe these connections extend beyond literacy performance and are relevant for literacy theory and pedagogy as a whole.

Conclusion

These final three studies, Masny (2009), Kuby and Rucker (2015), and Leander and Rowe (2006) most fully (theoretically) informed my own study because of their attention to the rhizomal relations of their participants’ engagement with literacy, the interrelation of encounters and the effects produced, and the deterritorialized effects that create differences between the territory of the dominant, centered system of schooled literacy practices and the embodied lines of flight that disrupt the rigid structure.

Masny's (2009) study offered a beginning look at what it might mean to examine deterritorialized effects and consider them in light of the dominant system in which they were produced. However, while Masny focused on the creativity that intensified the deterritorialization of her participant, further examination and discussion of how this perspective of literacy as rhizomatic contributed to transformation was lacking. She briefly mentioned that the becoming-process aided the participant's literacy transformation but gaps remain regarding the details of this transformation as well as how this transformation produced changes to the dominant educational system.

Kuby and Rucker (2015) highlighted literacy as rhizomatic through the concept of literacy desirings, making a connection between rhizomatic literacy and writing instruction. Leander and Rowe (2006) made a similar connection by focusing on literacy performance and the potential for appreciating and welcoming difference in literacy performances in school, including emphasis on different encounters and intensities, moving beyond sole emphasis on the performers themselves.

Kuby and Rucker (2015) and Leander and Rowe (2006) both discuss deterritorialization from the dominant territory of schooled literacy practices, including text-centrism and rational design. While they make initial connections to how literacy pedagogy might look differently based on conceptualizing literacy as rhizomatic, I aimed to extend the discussion and analysis by thoroughly examining students' deterritorialization in connection to the dominant territory of schooled literacy practices and through that examination, discuss potential possibilities for working within and against the totalizing structure of schooled literacy.

For example, Kuby and Rucker (2015) point out the rhizomatic functioning of literacy taken up by students in their classroom, which is somewhat similar to work of other researchers, such as Dyson (2003), who argued children take varied developmental paths to literacy learning. I believe one distinction of research taking up rhizomatic theory is bringing the analysis full-circle to put rhizomatic functioning in conversation with the totalizing functioning, or to put the tracing back on the map (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). While Kuby and Rucker did not specifically include this aspect in their analysis, I believe this is what distinguishes a rhizomatic approach from others.

Further, all of the studies reviewed, aside from Leander and Rowe (2006), leave out discussions of race, class, and special populations of youth. I aimed to give more attention to rhizomatic implications for the urban youth with whom I worked. In sum, my review of the literature demonstrates a continued need for detailed attention, research, discussion, and implications regarding the transformation of both dominant conceptions of literacy and schooled literacy practices.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Each researcher who puts the ‘posts’ to work will create a different articulation, remix, mash-up, assemblage, a becoming of inquiry that is not a priori, inevitable, necessary, stable, or repeatable but is, rather, created spontaneously in the middle of the task at hand, which is always already and, and, and... (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 620)

Just as I crafted a theoretical approach that draws on rhizomatics (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to explore youth’s engagement with literacy in school, so I assembled the methodology that guided my study, while also recognizing its becoming nature. I used the term *assemble* because in taking up a post-qualitative stance (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; St. Pierre, 2011), I had to be selective in how I defined and used each component of the methodology that guided my study. By post-qualitative, I mean that I drew on poststructural ideas through Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) rhizomatics to design and conduct the qualitative study while also troubling traditional, taken-for-granted research practices, such as data collection methods, researcher role, and analysis.

St. Pierre and Pillow (2000) articulated the way a poststructural lens highlights “critical concerns about what it is that structures meanings, practices, and bodies, about why certain practices become intelligible, valorized, or deemed as traditions, while other practices become discounted, impossible, or unimaginable” (p. 29-30). In assembling the

methodology for this study, I, too, was critically concerned about making methodological choices that were intentional and though may not always follow the status quo, might contribute new possibilities and understandings for the educational field. This was not a simple or straightforward task because the methodology had to support and work with the theory and paradigm within which the study was situated (Collier, Moffat, & Perry, 2015), what Jackson and Mazzei (2011) discussed as *thinking with theory*.

Currently, research situated in positivist and post-positivist approaches are heralded as the gold standard of educational research, privileged by governmental agencies and policymakers as ‘real science’ or delivering an ‘objective truth’ (Martin & Kamberelis, 2013; St. Pierre, 2011). The field of literacy research has not avoided this; in fact, since the turn of the century, this has only strengthened (Kamil, Pearson, & Moje, 2010). This produces a territory of educational research that serves to govern, contain, and control research and knowledge production (Brown, Kuby, & Carducci, 2014). The spotlight on positivist approaches has left other approaches, such as qualitative and post-qualitative on the fringes, especially in regard to government and policy level change.

However, it is essential for the field of education, and certainly for my own research, to consider a few key questions when thinking about the methodology that guides educational research: *What works for whom (when taking up the ‘find what works’ mentality)? In the search for the ‘right answer’, whose worldview is privileged? Along with this, what if there is more than one way, or one truth, on which we are relying to make decisions and conclusions about the youth in our schools?* Similar to the rooted tracings anchoring current educational practices (as described in Chapter 1), many research approaches often serve to reinscribe the hierarchy and deficit-based views

already established from the firmly fixed roots grounding most teaching and learning in schools. While such research studies may provide illusory comfort and confidence in gleaming simplistic, clear-cut answers, they will fail to account for multiple perspectives and truths, which then often leads to exclusionary and unjust practices. St Pierre (2004) recognized the significance and connection between one's research paradigm and issues of justice by claiming:

We are in desperate need of new concepts, Deleuzian or otherwise, in this new educational environment that privileges a single positivist research model with its transcendent rationality and objectivity and accompanying concepts such as randomization, replicability, generalizability, bias, and so forth—one that has marginalized subjugated knowledges and done material harm at all levels of education, and one that many educators have resisted with some success for the last fifty years. (p. 286)

This is not to say all research efforts are caught up in the positivist tradition. In fact, many literacy scholars, researchers, and educators have resisted such forms of research; however, positivist research models continue to dominate policy and state thought, and the literacy field has not been immune to this dominance. In addition, even though a great deal of literacy research is rooted in qualitative approaches, researchers often place prime importance and purpose on interpretation focused toward explaining why something happened the way it did or representing why something is the way it is (see Leander & Rowe, 2006; St. Pierre, 2013 for detailed discussions on this).

While appropriate for other methodologies, interpretivist-based research approaches do not quite fit with the rhizomatic theory driving this study. These approaches look to representing and explaining the meaning of something, as though it is possible to fully represent the dynamics of an experience through one interpretation. In this vein, interpretation is something we do *to* the data rather than thinking *with* the data

(MacLure, 2013). Massumi (1987) discussed rhizomatic thinking as moving away from representational thought to engage in nomad thought. He explained:

The question is not: is it true? But: does it work? What new thoughts does it make it possible to think? What new emotions does it make it possible to feel? What new sensations and perceptions does it open in the body? (p. xv)

In this sense, the research is less about interpreting meaning from the data and more about considering what the data produces for thinking differently. As MacLure (2013) points out, troubling representation is not to argue that it must not or does not happen, and likewise, I am not rejecting interpretation (Leander and Rowe, 2006). However, I am thinking with the theory to reorient interpretation toward focusing on what is produced (rather than claiming to understand what it all means) and how this might lead to thinking differently about possibilities for youth in schools.

To further elaborate on these issues and the methodology of this study, in the following sections I describe my researcher stance and then introduce the research design. Following these, I discuss the site and participants, describing how I chose both for the study. For the remainder of the chapter, I then detail the data collection sources and procedures, rhizomatic analysis, measures of validity, and limitations to consider for the study.

Researcher Positionality

In taking a rhizomatic poststructuralist stance, it should come as no surprise that I did not assume a set identity as *researcher*. Rather, I recognized my subjectivities as multiple and always becoming. One typical way to consider multiple subjectivities is to

point out public identity markers, as unofficially and officially labeled by societal structures. For instance, I am a Christian, white, middle class, female; these labels can be expanded to include wife, mother, and daughter, to name a few. My professional labels include middle school reading teacher, literacy coach, graduate student and instructor, and beginning researcher.

Of course, these identity markers are signifiers that mean different things to different people and though often essentialized, do not actually mean anything on a surface level, but rather are taken up diversely depending on the assembled context. It is ironic that these complex subjectivities and the diverse experiences that make up each of these labels can be (or at least attempt to be) represented and contained in one single word, i.e. *Christian, white, or teacher*.

Words can only take us so far into really knowing what these single word labels actually mean to different people at different times and how they will affect my conduct of this research study. Additionally, there are also elements of my multiple subjectivities that cannot possibly be named or completely realized, especially when taking the position that one is always becoming as a process of interactions with others (people, things, and ideas). In this sense, I am an assemblage of intensities that are always evolving. St. Pierre (2011) troubled the implications of such an assemblage in this way:

If one no longer thinks of oneself as ‘I’ but as entangled with everyone, everything else—as haecceity, as assemblage—what happens to concepts in social science research based on that ‘I’—the *researcher, the participant, identity, presence, voice, lens, experience, positionality, subjectivity, objectivity, bias, rationality, consciousness, experience, alienation, reflexivity, freedom, transformation, dialogue?* (p. 619)

As the researcher, I considered how my multiple subjectivities will ‘became’ as I inserted myself into the production of reality in the study. As youth in the study

‘become’, so do I, in even more ways than simply *researcher*. For example, I often considered how my affective intensities, or desires, affected my presence, my analysis, and even the data? I knew it would be impossible to predict this. Thus, I embraced my own becoming in the sense that I was produced and influenced by the theory and allowed for my own lines of territorialization to the methodology as outlined as well as unforeseen lines of flight. In this way, I saw myself as a nomad, wandering in and out of multiple subjectivities throughout the study, remaining open to emerging possibilities throughout, particularly related to my outlook on data collection and analysis. Davies (2004) aptly highlighted the intertwining relationship between the researcher and data:

Researchers are not separate from their data, nor should they be. The complexity of the movement and intersections amongst knowledge, power, and subjectivity *require the researcher to survey life within itself* (p. 5, italics in the original)

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) discussed the nomad as a wanderer who recognizes the assumed *a priori* state of things, or the ideal expectation for how things should be according to dominant perspective, but seeks out new possibilities. They state:

The nomad has a territory; he follows customary paths; he goes from one point to another; he is not ignorant of points (water points, dwelling points, assembly points, etc.). But the question is what in nomad life is a principle and what is only a consequence. To begin with, although the points determine paths, they are strictly subordinated to the paths they determine, the reverse happens with the sedentary. The water point is reached only in order to be left behind; every point is a relay and exists only as a relay. A path is always between two points, but the in-between has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a direction of its own. The life of the nomad is the intermezzo. (p. 380)

As a nomadic researcher, I recognized myself as a part of the emergent assemblage, acknowledging the fluidity and unpredictability of this.

Understanding my researcher stance as nomadic acknowledged my ‘inbetweenness’ as the researcher. I was aware that I am always coming into the

classroom in the middle of many territories: students, the teacher, policies, local events pertaining to the school, and all of their histories and interactions. Once again, the complexity of these territories can never be fully represented by a single word signifier. It is uncontainable and impossible to account for it all. So like St. Pierre (1997), I must learn “to live in the middle of things, in the tension of conflict and confusion and possibility” (p. 176). For example, not only did I enter into the classroom during different days of the week, but I also entered in the midst of the duration of a school day, after the school year had begun, and even more broadly, in the middle of youth’s K-12 trajectories as well as the Common Core driven curriculum and testing era. It was essential I take these complexities into account, and for me, this was by first acknowledging that I could not possibly capture a complete ‘beginning and ending’ for this study. My rhizomatic approach allowed me to move beyond this acknowledgement to functioning as researcher in this way.

Study Design

The difficulty for the poststructural researcher lies in trying to function in the ruins of the structure after the theoretical move that authorizes its foundations has been interrogated and its limits breached so profoundly that its center no longer holds (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 613)

St. Pierre (2011) argued for post-qualitative studies, which “open up structures being disciplined, regulated, and normalized” and that contribute to “*a reimagination of social science inquiry*” (p. 613, italics in the original). It is important to note the emphasis on *opening up*, as this indicates the deconstructive process of working within and against

(Derrida, 1972/1982) as opposed to a complete rejection of traditional structures of qualitative research. With this in mind, I took up post-qualitative inquiry, which included many of the traditional signifiers (such as data, methods, analysis), while also keeping in mind how these could work differently (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005).

Qualitative research is particularly valuable because of attention to open-ended inquiry used to understand and explicate specific problems and issues (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). In thinking with my theory, though, I aimed to reframe some aspects of qualitative research through a rhizomatic lens by pushing the boundaries—or perhaps disrupting the boundaries—of some aspects of qualitative research. In this sense, I heeded the post-qualitative call to work within and against the traditional norms of research (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; St. Pierre & Pillow, 2000).

Martin and Kamberelis (2013) further expanded on the significance of a post-oriented approach in stating:

By eschewing notions of essentialist identities, brute data, and fixed categorization of phenomena and processes, postmodern/post-structural approaches aim for more dynamic, historic, contingent, and situated understandings of complex human interactions, events, and institutions. (p. 669)

I suppose in taking this stance I hope to join others who have pursued post-oriented theory in reimagining the potential for qualitative research and the concepts through which this might happen (Brown, Kuby, & Carducci, 2014; Lather, 2013; Leander and Rowe, 2006; St. Pierre, 2011). To heed Martin and Kamberelis's (2013) call to move beyond "essentialist identities, brute data, and fixed categorization of phenomena and processes" (p. 669), I assembled a methodology that allowed me to become as researcher while mapping the complex, ever-emerging dynamics inherent to youth's engagement with literacy. This affected all aspects of the study, including how I positioned myself as

a nomadic researcher and becoming assemblage, what counted as data, and how I analyzed the data, which I will continue to describe in detail in the following sections.

To rhizomatically explore youth's engagements with literacy, I addressed the following questions:

1. In what ways are youth expected to engage with literacy in the 7th grade English Language Arts classroom?
2. In what ways do youth's engagements with literacy deterritorialize from or reterritorialize to schooled literacy practices?
 - a. What possibilities might these produce for youth in schools?

Selection of Site

I conducted this study at a New York City public middle school. The school itself was situated on the first floor of a large complex, with the first three floors comprised of schools and the remaining floors for affordable housing. The school shared building space with three charter schools, including the cafeteria, auditorium, gymnasium, and outdoor recreational space. Student demographics include 60% Black, 35% Hispanic, 4% White, and 2% Asian. Of this population, 33% were students with special needs, 8% were English Language Learners, and 94% received free and reduced lunch.¹

I learned of the school through my husband, who taught physical education and health there. Over time I became acquainted with the principal, administrators, and several of the teachers. Upon learning of my role as a doctoral student at a nearby university, the principal welcomed me into the school for part of my fellowship work, conducted in my first year of graduate study, as well as for ongoing research. I

¹ I have masked the identity of the school to protect the privacy of the school, teachers, and students.

enthusiastically accepted her offer and emailed the three English Language Arts (ELA) teachers, who each responded quickly, welcoming me into their classrooms any time. For my fellowship, I partnered with two ELA teachers to work as a literacy mentor to 6th and 7th grade students during ELA class. The students I worked with varied, depending on the current unit and student needs as determined by the teacher.

For the current research study, I was particularly interested in researching in an ELA classroom because of the daily emphasis on explicit literacy instruction through reading and writing. I felt that the intentional teaching of literacy in an ELA class would be the most opportune time to examine youth's engagement in relation to literacy learning, especially since ELA is the official space for literacy teaching and learning in most districts and schools. Further, I wanted to explore what was happening in this space because of the school's urban location and its low-performing status as deemed by the city and state.

After a few emails and through working on another research project, the 7th grade teacher, Ms. T (a pseudonym), invited me into her classroom to conduct the study. I shared all aspects of my study with Ms. T, and we regularly discussed the study throughout the planning and conducting stages of research. The ELA class taught by Ms. T took place during school for the duration of a 90-minute period.

Assemblages

Assemblage is a key concept theoretically as well as methodologically. In an effort to think with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), I plugged in the concept of assemblage into this study. An assemblage is a network of relations of bodies, material

and non-material, human and non-human (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Thus, rather than focusing primarily on student participants, I also explored varied interactions. This made the youth participants one part of the assemblage but not the sole unit of study.

To determine which youth were eligible for the study, Ms. T distributed a consent form detailing the study and explaining confidentiality and voluntary participation. Ms. T explained to the students that the study was completely voluntary and would not require any activity or time outside of her 90-minute class period. Ms. T asked the students, along with a guardian, to sign the form in order to be a possible participant in the study. Ms. T was a participant in the study as well, particularly through verbal exchanges (described in the next section).

Data Collection and Production Methods

As I explored the affectively charged, moment-by-moment unfolding relations of encounters that were produced in the classroom, I used qualitative methods for collecting data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Most important for thinking about the data, particularly in the rhizomatic sense I am took up, was not just what data I collected, but *what I actually did with it*. Davies and Gannon (2005) presented a way of thinking about this with a poststructuralist view that was helpful for moving forward: “[d]ata are examined not as if they described or explained an independently existing ‘real world’ but as constitutive work that itself is implicated in the production of ‘the real’” (p. 319). St. Pierre (2002) referred to the potential linearity of qualitative research methods (not that this is always the case), meaning they tend to assume that interpretation and meaning derived from data exist in linear form.

For example, data is collected and examined to identify themes and these themes are then used to interpret and represent what happened in the data. Through this normed assumption, we can see how just as reality is produced in the moment based on the interactions between people, materials, and ideas, so the researcher enters in the midst of this fluidity and begins trying to *capture* what is happening and then produce fixed meaning from it. Therefore, in troubling data from a rhizomatic stance, I recognized that just as interactions were in motion and forming rhizomatic networks of connections, so was the data.

I collected and produced data through observations, exchanges (a type of post-interview of sorts), artifacts, and my researcher journal, keeping in mind MacLure's (2013) claim that "we are no longer autonomous agents, choosing and disposing. Rather, we are obliged to acknowledge that data have their ways of making themselves intelligible to us" (p. 660). Because I aimed to map lines of flight and de/reterritorialization of assemblages, these observations were key for my analysis and were the primary data used to map encounters. My study was structured through two phases:

- Phase 1: Data Collection and Emergent Analysis (January 2016-March 2016)
- Phase 2: Continued Analysis (March 2016-June 2016)

Observations. I conducted observations 2-3 times per week during the first phase of the study (detailed below) for the entire 90-minute class period. Observations were a vital data source, as I aimed to map emergent assemblages produced in the classroom as youth engaged with literacy practices in the classroom. Marshall and Rossman (2011)

discussed observation as paramount to qualitative research in that it “entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting” (p. 139). I relied on this understanding of observation to document youth’s literacy-related engagements, which then allowed me to map lines of territorialization as well as lines of flight (which I further discuss in the rhizomatic analysis section of this chapter).

As data was produced during the study, I remained aware of my role in the classroom. My rhizomatic stance helped me to move from seeing myself as either nonparticipant or participant (Creswell, 2013) to understanding my presence as an inherent part of the research assemblage. By this, I mean that even though my initial role as the researcher was that of a bystander in the classroom, with little to no interference or interaction with the students and teacher, I still influenced what was happening in the classroom. I attempted to ‘lay low’ with the goal of respecting the classroom structure the teacher has established. In essence, I did not intend to deterritorialize this aspect of the classroom system. However, I recognized that my presence in the classroom went beyond influencing the dynamics; in fact, as a part of the assemblage, I played into the production of reality while in the classroom. Further, I recognized that while these were my intentions as the researcher, I could not (nor did I intend to) control how I was read or positioned by the students or the teacher.

While conducting observations, I recorded field notes and at times, audio-recorded. Because I aimed for consistency in form (Marshall and Rossman, 2011), I designed a basic observational protocol (see Appendix C) to use each time I observed. This protocol was in chart-format, with a column for time stamping alongside a column

for description of my observation. My description notes focused on actual descriptions of “flows of activities” (Creswell, 2013, p. 169) taking place in the classroom. I also included a column to the right of the description column designated for corresponding reflection. After my first few observations, I adapted this protocol to a single-page format, still with time stamps and with description notes. I indicated corresponding reflection with italicized font. I recorded reflections both during the observation as well as afterwards. To aid in recording the multiple interconnections and flows of activities, I occasionally audio recorded the observations. These recordings allowed for more thorough observation experiences than a one-time observation and provided a means for recalling sounds produced through the emerging encounters and interactions happening in the classroom.

My theoretical lens guided my observations. In the beginning of the first phase of my study, I adopted a broader observational stance, noting as much as possible during the time I spent in the classroom to become familiar with the students, the inner workings of the classroom, and how students interacted with each other, materials, values, and ideas. During this phase, I began to focus my observations around the interactions of the students who agreed to participate in the study. As I engaged in reflection and analysis during the first few weeks of observations, my observations became even more tightly focused around my research questions, theoretical framework, and human participants (see Table 2 for overview of research methods, output, and total expected quantity). Starting from a broader standpoint and then honing in throughout the research process allowed me to begin with my theoretical framework in mind but not to be so focused

from the beginning that I missed important or relative happenings in the classroom that connected to exploring youth's unfolding, affective engagement with literacy.

Exchanges. My method of exchanges was a post-interview concept of sorts, a deterritorialization from the typical interview territory. The intended purpose of using interview as a method for data was to gain insight and perspective from specified participants in the study related to the research questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). However, similar to Honan (2014), when assembling my methodology, and in leaning on post-qualitative and rhizomatic underpinnings, I felt a need to disrupt the normalized approach to typical qualitative interviews. Rather, central to my concern was how to make the interview less of a power-laden question-and-answer format and more of a rhizomatically based dialogue. For my study, this resulted in a shift from the traditional qualitative interview (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) to what I called *exchanges*.

I believe this placed emphasis on the interconnected encounters that inevitably took place during the study. It also allowed for sporadic and emergent exchanges that were less hierarchical and more attuned to a rhizomatic approach in that they unfold in real-time.

While not preestablished or structured in a traditional sense, these exchanges did not disparately exist, standing alone as pieces of data. Rather, because of the assemblage nature of my research study, exchanges were linked to the other data methods, i.e. observations, artifacts, and researcher memos. This approach related to Honan's (2014) intentional placing of traditional interview data in relation to her researcher journal and purposeful tactics (after interviewing) to disrupt the normed habits of interviewing, such as relying on a set structure and following the typical interviewer-interviewee protocol.

Table 2

Summary of Data Collection Methods

Method	Output	Total number
Observations	Observation field notes and audio transcripts	2-3 lesson observations (of 90 minutes each) per week
Artifacts	Photographs of artifacts	Included school sanctioned documents, curriculum and teacher resources, and student-produced resources
Teacher-Researcher Exchanges	Emails, text messages (if applicable), and audio recording	Ongoing
Participant-Researcher Exchanges	Audio recording and field notes	Impromptu debriefings throughout each observation
Researcher Journal	Memos	Varied according to observations, ongoing reflection, and analysis

Exchanges with Ms. T as well as the focal students were integral to the study. While Ms. T was not a focal participant, her insight was helpful in understanding the history of the school, the class, and the students in the class as well as the norms and expectations guiding the interactions in the class. These teacher-researcher exchanges were vital for identifying the existing milieu, or tracing, of schooled literacy practices taken up by students in her classroom. Additionally, participant-researcher exchanges allowed for a more organic and interconnected flow of communication, rather than the hierarchical structure of the traditional interview.

Artifacts. Collecting artifacts such as school-produced documents, teacher-produced lessons and handouts, and student-produced creations (in multimodal formats) were photographed as an additional aspect of the analysis. Artifacts were helpful in understanding the ideas and beliefs most valuable for the school, the teacher, and the youth (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). For example, when one of the focal participants produced an artifact related to his or her literacy engagement, photographing that artifact and having it available for the analysis was useful because it allowed for further connections and support throughout the data.

Researcher journal. I maintained a researcher journal in tandem with my observation notes, in which I recorded following each observation and/or exchange as well as at any point throughout the study when I was moved to record an insight that might prove useful later in the study. I recorded my ongoing thoughts, reflections, ideas, and insight in the researcher journal, and in taking up rhizomatic thought, I allowed connections to form in multiple ways, meaning recordings did not always remain linear but sometimes collided, overlapped, or broke from one another.

I viewed maintaining a researcher journal as similar to writing memos, which for Maxwell (2012) refers:

to any writing that a researcher does in relationship to the research other than actual field notes, transcription, or coding. A memo can range from a brief marginal comment on an interview transcript or a theoretical idea recorded in a field journal to a full-fledged analytic essay. What all of these have in common is that they are ways of getting ideas down on paper (or in a computer), and of using this writing as a way to facilitate reflection and analytic insight. (p. 19-20)

I found value in extending from Maxwell's explanation by considering my own encounters and effects, or nomadic wonderings, I had in thinking about the research.

For example, St. Pierre (1997) pointed out the presence of transgressive data, which is not traditionally recognized in research. For St. Pierre, terms like *data*, along with other normed aspects of research, serve as signifiers for certain ideas that represent research. For instance, typical methods such as observations and interviews constitute data. However, St. Pierre troubles this notion by pointing out that it is only data because someone has said it is data, but what might be missing by only relying on these normed perceptions, or signifiers? She refers to emotional, dream, sensual, response, and memory data as transgressive because even though these are not typically recognized as data, they most certainly played into her data collection and analysis. Drawing on St. Pierre's (1997) thinking around transgressive data resonated with me for this study because it pushed the boundaries of traditional research with the aim of uncovering possibilities for what *could be*.

Rhizomatic Analysis

Always follow the rhizome by rupture; lengthen, prolong, and relay the line of flight; make it vary, until you have produced the most abstract and tortuous of lines of n dimensions and broken directions. Conjugate deterritorialized flows. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 11)

If youth's engagements with literacy are rhizomatic, I believe my analysis must also be rhizomatic (Mac Naughton, 2004). Educational researchers have taken up rhizomatic analysis (also called rhizoanalysis) in differing ways (Alvermann, 2000; Cole, 2009; Collier, Moffat, & Perry, 2014; Eakle, 2007; Hagood, 2004; Handsfield, 2007; Honan & Sellers, 2007; Leafgren, 2009; Leander & Rowe, 2006; Lenters, 2016; Mac Naughton, 2005; Masny, 2009, 2013). However, my encounters with Deleuze &

Guattari's rhizomatics *effected* an intensified gaze toward mapping and tracing. In this sense, rhizomatic analysis derives from the first four principles of rhizomatics (connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and asignifying rupture) and extends beyond mapping connections and lines of flight (which has served as the analysis for some researchers) by drawing on the final two principles of mapping (cartography) and tracing (decalcomania).

Therefore, mapping is a key aspect of rhizomatic analysis. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explained:

...the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight (p. 21).

Rhizomatic analysis allows for mapping reality as it unfolds through lines of territorialization (affective intensities that align to the territory, or the expected norm) as well as lines of deterritorialization, or lines of flight. On the vitality of lines, Deleuze & Parnet (2007) explained "this is why the question...never consists in interpreting, but merely in asking what are your lines...?" (p. 143). Just as the rhizome has shoots, or emerging lines, encounters and effects produces lines of connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and rupture. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) specifically discussed lines of territorialization that form "according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees" (p. 9) through lines of flight.

In thinking with the theory, I took up mapping through writing (as opposed to an actual production of a map). In fact, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) understood writing as "surveying, mapping, even realms yet to come" (p. 5). I think the reason why mapping is

so important to the rhizome is that it is pointing out that what happened--the production of reality--was not the intention, or the tracing, or transcendence. In education, this is sometimes referred to as the lived curriculum, but oftentimes the lived curriculum is analyzed and interpreted to see how it could align with the territory or tracing. I think the purpose of mapping, however, is not to see just how an event aligns to the dominant mode of thought or organization but is to consider what new possibilities could be created out of it.

Mapping assemblages produced in the classroom through youth's affective engagement with literacy practices allowed for a close look at lines of territorialization and deterritorialization. However, this was only one part of the analysis; as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) implored: "*the tracing should always be put back on the map*" (p. 13).

They expand on tracing and mapping by explaining:

What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented to toward an experimentation in contact with the real...it fosters connections between fields...The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification...Maps have multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back 'to the same'.
(p. 12)

For my analysis, the tracing referred to the dominant structure of literacy learning taken up in public schools, typically through schooled literacy practices, as I described throughout the previous chapters. In this way, mapping and tracing moves the analysis "from identifying what is present or contained within an interaction to *analyzing the interaction as a process of producing difference*" (Leander and Rowe, 2006, p. 434, emphasis added), which was the aim through my rhizomatic analysis.

Conducting a rhizomatic analysis in this way illuminates difference and highlights the movements, the breaks and ruptures (Alvermann, 2000), the in-process affective

engagement with literacy, in light of the top-down structure of literacy learning currently in place in most K-12 schools. Putting the tracing back on the map I created through observations led to productive disruptions (via deterritorializations), which Davies (2004) discussed as having “the capacity to create new trajectories” (p. 7). Analyzing by reading the map in light of the tracing reminds us that the overall goal is not an attempt to completely replace the current hierarchical structure, the assumed transcendent ideal (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), with some new space that is completely free of any such structure. Rather, it is to lead to “the discovery of the available lines of flight within that space” (Kamberelis, 2004, p. 167). In this way, rhizomatic analysis is a form of deconstruction to see what *could be*, the actualized affectivity, the emergent unfolding as possibility and to value what is made possible through such a disruption.

Researchers in the educational field have taken up rhizomatic analyses in varied ways, but I have found Leander and Rowe (2006) and Handsfield (2007) most helpful in guiding the ways in which I conducted the rhizomatic analysis. The emphases in these analyses were on mapping youth’s encounters, or affective intensities, and exploring the becoming nature of these. It is important, however, to clarify particular aspects of the rhizomatic analyses conducted by these researchers. For Handsfield (2007) and Leander and Rowe (2006), tracing is the researcher’s reliance on representational logic to explain the data. For Handsfield, this was coding her data with a closed coding system typical of qualitative research, and for Leander and Rowe, this was analyzing data by tracing meanings “that fail to capture their movements in time” (p. 451), which would focus on identifying a fixed meaning rather than focusing on emergence through the data. As I developed my understanding of tracing as a necessary aspect of rhizomatic analysis, I

agreed and took up Handsfield and Leander and Rowe's thinking, which helped me to realize tracing as a result of the belief that some kind of explanation for the data already exists and it is the researcher's responsibility to represent it.

However, I also extended the tracing from not just being about what I did with data but to include the existing structure within which I am working. When discussing tracing, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) gave the example of someone undergoing psychoanalysis, who will always within that context be 'read' in relation to the Oedipus complex. In psychoanalysis, this means the patient will always be over coded and interpreted based on the structures that make up the complex. Similarly, in thinking about how students engage in literacy and learning in schools, they will always be 'read' and 'measured' within and against the dominant structure within which they exist; this is the tracing. For students in today's public school system, this is an extension of the factory model schooling from the early 1900s (Kliebard, 2004; Tyack, 1974) and in relation to literacy, this is how top-down policy has filtered into conceptions of literacy and learning in the classroom. For New York City public schools, like many public schools across the nation, this reflects emphasis on high-stakes testing and dominant discourses guiding the acceptable trajectory of youth's progress and development as literacy learners.

Therefore, I first analyzed by expanding on the tracing, the current literacy landscape experienced by Ms. T and her students. To understand the tracing, I presented evidence from exchanges, artifacts, and my researcher journal. After identifying the present traces of the ideal literacy practices youth are expected to engage in (including how they should engage in these), I mapped assemblages produced in focal events through observations in relation to artifacts, exchanges, and memos through lines of

territorialization, deterritorialization (lines of flight), and reterritorialization. This aligned with Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) assertion that "[w]hat must be compared in each case are the movements of deterritorialization and the process of reterritorialization in an assemblage" (p. 143). The assemblage, in this case, were focal events, which were determined as youth engaged in literacy practices in the classroom.

Through my rhizomatic analysis, I produced *possibilities* to discuss the emergent, affective encounters and effects produced through youth's engagement with literacy in light of the ideal tracing. My focus on presenting possibilities through the analysis was intentional in order to disrupt the assumption that fixed findings should be identified.

Rhizomatic Implications for Validity

Rather than asking what a concept means, you will find yourself asking 'Does it work? what new thoughts does it make possible to think? what new emotions does it make possible to feel? what new sensations and perceptions does it open in the body?' (St. Pierre, 2013, pp. 284-285, quoting Massumi, 1992, p. 8)

Assuming a poststructuralist stance evokes tension in even typing the word *validity*, which extends from a positivist research tradition. Even traditional notions of qualitative validity, which center on interpretivism and trustworthiness (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), did not suffice. For my study, validity, defined by Lather (1993) as "the conditions of the legitimization of knowledge in contemporary post positivism" (p. 673), was guided by Lather's poststructural conception of rhizomatic validity. Working toward a reconceptualization of validity connected to and guided by rhizomatics, which she identified "as a journey among intersections, nodes, and regionalizations through a multi-centered complexity" (p. 680), Lather's discussion of rhizomatic validity closely

followed suit. For example, rhizomatics is based on principles of heterogeneous connections, forming unexpected multiplicities.

Similarly, these principles guided my conceptualization of validity, particularly in the way I valued data and what counted as data. Rather than picking and choosing so that my findings, or assemblages, were prettified and clean-cut, I considered all data, even seemingly discrepant data. Just as rhizomatics values unexpected productions of difference, so I valued even seemingly arbitrary pieces of data. My aim was to let “contradictions remain in tension, to unsettle from within, to dissolve interpretations by marking them as temporary, partial, invested” (Lather, 1993, p. 681), which I sought to do through reflexivity.

For me, reflexivity was just as crucial to rhizomatic validity as valuing discrepant data. I made an effort to be transparent throughout the study to show how I am very much integral to how the study is conducted as well as to what is reported. I agree with Luttrell’s (2009) description of reflexivity:

For reflexivity is about much more than researcher self-conscious awareness. It is about making the research process and decision making visible at multiple levels: personal, methodological, theoretical, epistemological, ethical, and political. The reflexive practitioner attends to all levels. (p. 4, italics in the original)

Throughout these first few chapters, I attempted researcher reflexivity by explaining my understanding and practice of rhizomatics as it connects to my study. I continued reflexivity throughout all phases of my study, explicitly through the researcher journal, and implicitly throughout field notes.

Finally, Lather (1993, p. 686) put forth a working checklist based on how rhizomatic validity might be evaluated. Though I did not explicitly evaluate my study by this

checklist, I used it to guide my discussion of *possibilities* in relation to validity. The criteria was as follows, with my own understanding of these formed into guiding questions in italics:

- unsettles from within, taps underground

How do my analysis and mapping of lines of flight connect back to the tracing, the current literacy landscape of youth in schools?

- generates new locally determined norms of understanding; proliferates open-ended and context-sensitive criteria; works against reinscription of some new regime, some new systematicity
- supplements and exceeds the stable and the permanent, Derridean play
- works against constraints of authority via relay, multiple openings, networks, complexities of problematics
- puts conventional discursive procedures under erasure, breaches congealed discourses, critical as well as dominant

How do my analysis and mapping of lines of flight reveal the emergent, affective nature of youth's engagement with literacy practices and implications for new possibilities for how literacy learning is understood and taken up in schools? How are these possibilities discussed in light of the current literacy landscape, the tracing?

Limitations to Consider

I believe it is important to be upfront and as transparent as possible about the limitations inherent to this study. In taking up a rhizomatic stance, I understand aspects of the study, and thus subsequent knowledge production, as “partial, incomplete, and always being re-told and re-membered” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2011, p. 3).

Further, due to local IRB policy, I refrained from video recordings and photographs of students and solely relied on audio recording and in-person field notes for classroom observations. This was simply a constraint to which I had to adhere and

wished to do so to follow the NYC DOE's research guidelines as a prerequisite for doing research in the school, and to respect students' privacy. However, I recognized this limitation, especially since my analysis depended on the movement-oriented encounters occurring in the classroom. Regarding participants' complex interactions, movements, thoughts, and manners, what MacLure (2013) calls "bodily incursions," were challenging to record through writing and audio; however, like MacLure, "[r]ather than fleeing from the challenge, or trying to dissolve it by recruiting it to representation, we might welcome the event that it inaugurates" (p. 664).

Leander and Rowe (2006) also highlighted "the problem of multimodalities and the body" (p. 431) in regards to methods that adequately represent the affective intensities and their effects in certain instances in the classroom. My poststructuralist stance readily confronted this issue of representation; for even if I had every freedom to fully videotape and photograph each moment in the classroom, who am I to claim what is or is not happening? Therefore, I conducted the study and rhizomatic analysis as described, employing the validity measures as outlined, recognizing throughout that mine is but one discussion of many possible findings.

Conclusion

Taking a rhizomatically-based theoretical stance, I conducted a rhizomatic analysis to explore youth's engagements with literacy in one middle school English Language Arts class, specifically focusing on the lines of flight that veered from schooled literacy in productive ways. Davies (2004) elaborated on the advantage of such a

poststructuralist stance through “its openness to meanings not yet thought of, and in its dedication to not getting stuck in old clichés and explanations” which “is often surprising, joyful and energizing, bringing life to research and to teaching—breathing life into the educational institutions in which we are (always becoming) subjects” (p. 9). Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) rhizomatics was central to the theory guiding the study, as well as the analysis. My goal was to contribute to the field by shedding light on the rhizomatic functioning of youth’s engagement with literacy in schools and analyzing these in relation to current notions of literacy learning schools.

Chapter IV

ESTABLISHING THE TRACING

Essential to my rhizomatic analysis is first establishing the present tracing, or ideal expectation for literacy learning in one 7th grade ELA classroom. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) discussed the tracing as the reproduction of an established norm, structure, or way of doing things. Subsequently, for research that is more positivist-oriented, the tracing is typically the dominant and normed frame of analysis, especially when evaluating and measuring student learning and success. When this is the case, the findings are meant to reinforce the frame of analysis. For example, if a successful reader is defined as one who engages in close reading as evidenced through in-school reading habits, grade performance, and test scores, then the analysis would be framed by this norm. All data would be analyzed and categorized by how a reader aligned with this dominant conception. Yet, for a rhizomatic analysis, the tracing is but one part of the overall analysis, as will further be discussed in Chapter Five.

Throughout the duration of this study, I relied on observations and field notes, artifacts, and verbal and written exchanges to determine what I have established as the tracing, the ideal expectation of a youth literacy learner in this ELA classroom. Not only have I determined this as the tracing for the study based on these forms of data, but I have

also relied on these to show how this tracing was produced in the classroom. Daily evidence of the ideal expectation for engagement is essential for establishing the tracing in this study. Thus, the guiding question for this aspect of the analysis is: What was the expectation of the ideal literacy learner in this classroom?

It is also important to note how my researcher lens (i.e. my reliance on the theory, my noticings, my physical position in the classroom) influenced the tracing I present in this chapter. More specifically, my observations and exchanges in the classroom constantly produce evidence of what the tracing, or the ideal expectation of youth literacy engagement, is during this study. My past experiences, curricular knowledge of literacy and English Language Arts, relationships with students and Ms. T, and physical positioning in the classroom contribute to my ever-shifting assemblage as a researcher.

From my first day in the classroom, I began examining evidence of the tracing by considering the origins of what was being produced in observations and exchanges with the teacher (Figure 1). My own experiences as a teacher and literacy coach influenced this aspect of my analytical lens. I knew from my time as a teacher that I was not an entity unto myself, free to teach without constraints. I also knew from coaching other teachers how outside expectations could influence curricular decision-making and implementation. For example, national and state influences, such as the Common Core State Standards and the state test, came to bear on all other aspects that produced the tracing. This was especially evident when ELA teachers were mandated to begin a test prep unit 3-4 weeks before the ELA state test, which I will discuss in further detail later in this chapter. Simultaneously, school expectations as well as the teacher's background

experiences, both personal and professional, also served as mediating factors for producing the tracing in this classroom. However, these varied origins do not remain separated; really, the city implications were influenced by and absorb the national implications, thus producing the local reality in a particular way based on school, teacher, and students. Therefore, while I will describe individual aspects of the tracing, they are not kept isolated from one another and eventually collude in a way to produce the particular tracing I will describe.

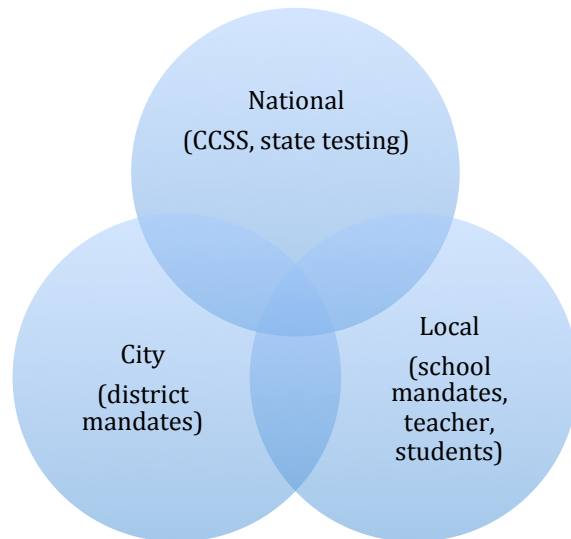


Figure 3. Origins of classroom elements that produced the tracing.

Entering in the Middle of Things

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) emphasize that there is never really a clean beginning or ending to things, rather we are always in the middle. Likewise, as the researcher I entered into the middle of a complex entanglement of socio-material relations that constituted the life of this classroom. In recognizing this, I realize I am producing what I understand as the tracing based on my particular observations. To introduce the everyday, recurring elements of literacy teaching and learning in Ms. T's (all names are pseudonyms) classroom, including focal participants, I have included a modified excerpt from a single observation. In taking up a rhizomatic perspective, I view all of these elements as active agents in the classroom. This means Ms. T and the students were essential to the life of the classroom, of course, but other things were as well, such as beliefs, ideas, mandates, policies, and objects. I chose this vignette as a glimpse into the life of the classroom, paying particular attention to everyday recurring instances that produced the tracing for this classroom.

About Ms. T:

Ms. T has taught for 5 years, with the past 3 being at this school. She spent her childhood years in an urban area of a large midwestern city, and after her parents divorced, split time between there, where her mother, who is African American, lived, and NYC, where her father, who is Nigerian, relocated.

When asked how this particular school year was unique from others, Ms. T explained she was more familiar with the curriculum and had more freedom in bringing in certain topics, such as issues of race, class, culture, and power. In her past years at the school, she had to negotiate the curriculum with co-teachers, an element that was not as present this year.

To introduce Ms. T and the focal students, I included text boxes throughout this section to provide a bit more insight into how the participants identified themselves to

me. I explicitly included how they identified themselves racially, ethnically, and linguistically to communicate some of the diversities that comprised this classroom. With a rhizomatic perspective, differences are valued and positioned as strengths that offer potential for productive change in a social environment. While explicitly pointing out some of these identity markers may be somewhat helpful in communicating a part of who these students are, I recognize it is also limiting. As I discussed in Chapter III (see Researcher Positionality), labels only take us so far, a reflection of the limitations of language and representation. Additionally, I found it important to introduce students in this way because in one of my exchanges with Ms. T, she explicitly referred to her own background experiences and identity markers as well as the focal students (see section on Significance of Test Prep on Race and Social Justice in the Classroom).

As the researcher, I was intentional about not inserting myself as a participant in the classroom. This does not mean I was not a part of the classroom assemblage; I recognize that I was, yet I did not take an active stance. I discussed this with Ms. T before the study began as well as with the students on the first day of my observations in the classroom by explaining that I was not taking the position of teacher or expert but wanted to observe how they learned in the classroom. In fact, I told the students to basically pretend I was not there and reiterated that I was not the teacher and would not report to Ms. T on my observations. I let them know that at times I may ask follow-up questions to get more insight into what was happening in the classroom, and they were free to answer or not. I explained that regardless of their response, I would not be reporting to Ms. T.

I felt my positioning in this way was important because in establishing the tracing, as well as mapping lines of flight (see Chapter V), I did not want to intentionally alter the

recurring instances that would produce the tracing or the lines of flight that might occur. This stance, of course, is challenging. I cannot control how the students interpreted my presence. For example, as I mentioned in Chapter III, I was not completely unknown to some of the students. My husband worked at the school, and I had attended some school functions, such as sporting events, with him. I was also seen in and around the school quite a bit when dropping off our daughter to my husband at the end of the school day on my way to work. Since my husband was well liked by the students (as reported to me by some students and other teachers), I believe this played into my warm reception. I cannot say how it affected how the students saw or understood me, but I feel certain it mattered in how they interpreted my presence in their classroom. So, while I did not make any intentional actions or efforts to alter the recurring instances that produced the tracing, I still could not control students' reactions to me. While this strategy was overall successful for my theoretical and methodological approach, it also proved to be challenging at times because as students became more comfortable with my presence in the classroom, they sometimes looked to me for guidance on assignments or simply wanted to talk.

In the following section, I will use the vignette to offer a more detailed discussion about the tracing, or ideal expectation for students' literacy engagement in this 7th grade English Language Arts classroom.

Students begin entering Ms. T's classroom. When they enter the room, they pass the classroom's whiteboards, located on the front wall of the classroom, on their left. Ms. T has written the objective and agenda. This board also serves as a placeholder for the current anchor charts they are referring to during class (see Figure 4).

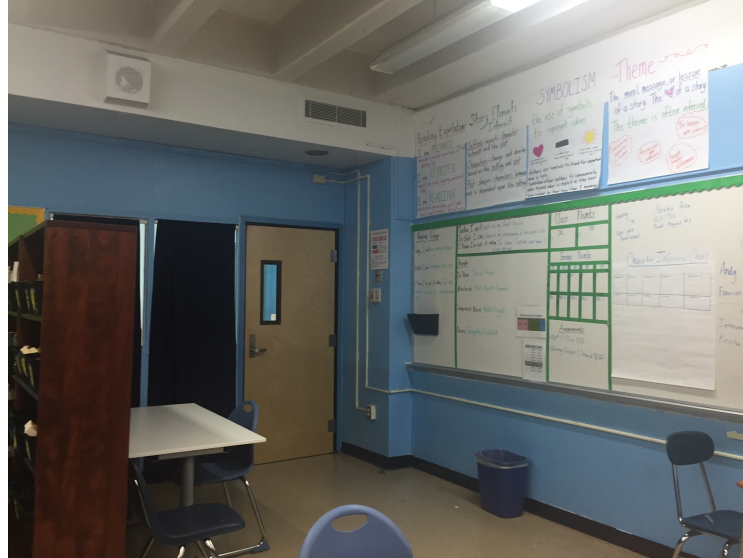


Figure 4. Entryway of Classroom.

I hear much chatter and laughter, and I see a few students chasing one another around the room. The Do Now is displayed on the Smart Board:

Do Now

HW #15 Due

**Can all information pieces be trusted?
Why or why not?**

Done? – read your IR book

A few students are sharpening pencils, some talking at table groups, some talking across the room, a few asking if they can go get their homework out of their lockers (located in the hallway), a few asking if they can borrow pencils. Ms. T says this is her last day to let them borrow her pencils.

Bobbie: Ms. T, are you checking?

Ms. T: Not today, Bobbie, but do your best.

Bobbie is one of a few who are writing in their notebooks. A man is raising his voice in the hallway (the door is open). This lasts for about 15 seconds and then it all gets quiet. Students are writing, Ms. T says she is coming around to collect homework. Jordyn asks for another HW packet.

Ms. T is giving out warnings to three

students

whose voices she can hear. There is murmuring throughout the classroom. One girl is putting on lip-gloss, and a few students' heads are hunched over, resting in their hands.

Ms. T: Take one more minute, one more minute.

A student asks if he can go to the bathroom.

Ms. T: Wait, we need to figure out what's going on at Table 5.

Another student asks, "Who is table 5?"

Ms. T calls out the girls' names at the front, middle

About Bobbie:

Bobbie is a black, African-American English speaking female. She was born in NYC and lives in Harlem. She has been at the school for her entire middle school experience thus far. When asked about her overall feelings on her ELA class, she responded:

It's fine. It's not really...it's not supposed to be fun. It's supposed to be learning.

When asked how learning is different from fun, in her opinion, she responded:

Because fun is what benefits you, doing what I like to do. Like if I want to write something I want, but learning, it's not always what you want.

About Jordyn:

Jordyn is a black, West Indian and African American, English speaking female. She was born in North Carolina, but has lived in NYC for most of her life. She currently lives in upper Manhattan. When asked about her overall feelings on her ELA class, she responded:

It's okay. Like, sometimes we have bad days and sometimes we have good days.

When asked what makes a bad day and what makes a good day, she responded:

A bad day is when we just talk all day and don't listen to the teacher. A good day is when we participate and get along.

table, Table 5. She goes to this table, and says, “Wow,” looking at their notebooks. “So this is what you decided to do with your time?”

One student asks, “What do you mean (referring to the question on the screen)?”

Ms. T: I’m glad you asked that question.

Ms. T explains to the girl, but loud enough for the whole class to hear and addressing the whole class by looking around the room as she speaks, what she means by sources being trusted. “I love that a lot of you took the responsibility...” She stops because there is someone yelling in the hallway. She walks over and shuts the door.

Ms. T: Guys, that (the yelling in the hallway) should not be an excuse to not do your work.

Ms. T walks around to check the students’ Do Now responses in their writer’s notebooks. More students are writing in their notebooks now. One female student has already put hers away in the table basket located near the center of the desks, but Ms. T asks her to get it out. She huffs with her voice and shoulders and reluctantly grabs her notebook out and flips it open. Ms. T looks over the girl’s response and uses her pen to make a check mark at the top of the page, nods, and moves on to the other tables. There are still a few murmurs throughout the room.

Ms. T counts down from three and turns on the light. She starts to talk to the class, but then, because there is ongoing talking, she says, “I’ll wait.” The students get quieter as she lingers for several seconds.

Ms. T continues: I noticed that none of you said, “Yes” to the Do Now.

As Ms. T continues to say something, Rey raises his hand and says, “I did.”

Ms. T: Rey, will you please give me a chance?

Rey: But I said 'yes.'

Ms. T: Okay, I must have overlooked.

She asks Rey to give more information as to why he responded this way.

Rey: If they have evidence for what they're talking about.

O: Who wants to respond to that?

Bria: Um, I disagree. I think not all of it can be trusted. I'm not saying that all of them can't be trusted, just some of them can't be

trusted because some information can be wrong and someone might just want to put what they want to put. And some of it might be out of date. The information has to be updated sometimes.

About Bria:

Bria is a black, West Indian and African American, English speaking female. She was born in Brooklyn and moved to Manhattan when she was four. When asked about her overall feelings on her ELA class, she responded:

ELA? I like it, but...I like it. I mean, certain kids talk too much, but it's a great class overall.

Ms. T nods and asks if anyone else has thoughts on this.

Another student: I disagree with him (Rey) because he said that all can be trusted and that evidence can also be research.

In response to this, Ms. T asks if they think writers present more than one side of the story when they write.

Malcom: I think that writers will use two sides because if you look at two sides, you get different perspectives of certain types of

About Rey:

Rey is a male Arab from Yemen who speaks Arabic and English. He moved with his family from Yemen to NYC four years ago and transferred into this middle school in between the fall and spring semesters of this year. When asked why he transferred schools, he responded:

My mom didn't want me to go to that school anymore because they didn't take good care of me. It was for my safety because I was getting into fights, and the school didn't solve the problems. This (his current school) was the only school available.

knowledge and it...it gives more information so it might be more trustworthy. So yeah, that's what I think.

Ms. T: Okay, so you think if they present both sides, it's a more trustworthy source?

Malcom: Yes.

Ms. T: Who knows what the opposite of what that would be called? (brief pause and silence) If they only present one side, there's a word for that. (brief pause and silence) It starts with a 'b.'

Malcom: Basically?

Ms. T: Not 'basic.' When you only present one side of the story, it's a what? Who knows?

Malcom: Biography?

Ms. T: Not 'biography.'

Malcom: Oh, I'm bugging.

A few students laugh quietly.

Ms. T: It's actually 'bias,' right? So it would be considered bias.

One student audibly says, "Oh."

Ms. T: So there was one more person who wanted to share something.

Jordyn raises her hand.

About Malcom:

Malcom is a black, West Indian, Puerto Rican, and African American male. His primary language is English, and he moved to NYC four years ago to live with one parent, after previously living with the other in another state. When asked about his overall feelings on the school, he responded:

The teachers are real, all of them. Like disrespectful, they discriminate.

When asked how, in his opinion, they discriminate, he responded: *Like one time I was walking behind her (points to a girl in the room) and Ms. T yelled at me but not her.*

When asked what he feels is being discriminated against, he responded:

Gender. Like, when girls hit us, it's okay. But if we try to hit them, it's not okay.

Ms. T: Are you willing to share out?

Jordyn: Mmm hmmm.

Ms. T: Did want to share out about this?

Jordyn nods yes.

Ms. T: Okay, go ahead.

Jordyn: I put 'no.' I don't think it could be trusted because some people that write they get their permission from online. Sometimes it's not true.

Ms. T: Okay, so thinking about the sources, right? And if you think a source is credible, which is what you guys learned last year.

Ms. T: Okay, moving on. Go ahead and put your writers notebooks away. Do that now.

Movement ensues all around. Students begin putting their notebooks into the center baskets. This takes a few minutes, and then Ms. T starts calling students back to her attention. It has progressively grown louder in the room, with students talking to one another throughout the classroom. Ms. T raises her voice and explains that after going through their notebooks last week she noticed that there was more work that needed to be done before they were finished (with their current assignment). She explained that for today, they needed to do two things. She displays this on the Smartboard at the front of the room:

-Finish Perspective notes

-Finish Independent Reading Book

notes

Ms. T begins clarifying who the narrator was in the documentary they have been watching and discussing over the past few days. She says she is going to take some notes and pulls up a word document on the Smartboard screen so that students can see as she types.

As she types, Ms. T asks the class, "What perspective does the narrator give us?"

One male student responds, "We get the perspective of the workers, the factory workers. And the problem is, even after the accident, the factory workers still have the buildings, and they still have to work, and they still have buildings that have cracks all over the place."

Ms. T: Okay, so the workers...

Male student: They are still working.

Ms. T: The workers are still working in...poor conditions?

Male student: Yeah, oh, an unsafe environment.

As this conversation is produced between Ms. T and the male student, Ms. T has been typing so the rest of the class can see their co-constructed response for how the narrator provided this particular perspective.

Ms. T: Okay, what else does this narrator show us?

Rey's hand shoots up in the air.

Ms. T: Rey?

Rey: The workers were making clothes, and most of them, I think, were immigrants?

He ends his response with a bit of a question, seeming unsure.

Ms. T: Okay, so immigrant workers making clothes.

She types out Rey's response as she repeats it aloud.

Ms. T: Okay, so why is that significant? Go ahead.

Rey: Because...(inaudible)...they just want a job...(inaudible)...even though they were starving.

Ms. T: Okay, how much money do they make?

A few students speak aloud amounts. I hear, "Two dollars a day." "No three dollars." "It's two."

Ms. T: Yes, so a small amount of money.

She types out as a few students are debating how much money per day.

Ms. T: ...for less than \$3 a day. Okay, so what else is the narrator showing us?

These are a lot of things that are not going really well, but then he also does something else. What else does he show us?

There is a long pause in the room, and students are silent.

Ms. T: What about the one company? It's very different from the other companies.

Malcom: Oh! There was the one company that like...it showed how the workers...how she came to the workers and treated them with respect and they didn't have to...like...be all bunched up in a small room when it's hot. They could talk to each other. Agree on standards, and like, have freedom. And their working condition was fine.

Ms. T: Okay, so we're going to stop right there. This is just a start. Based on all of what we can see and what we've been sharing, and based on what the narrator is showing and the information and the perspective he is providing, what does he believe

about this topic? He doesn't really come right out and say it, so that's what I want you to focus on today. What does he believe about this topic and how do you know? I don't want you to do this in bullet points; I want this to be in paragraphs. So, now I want you to take out your reader's notebooks and finish your notes.

Students begin murmuring. About 6-7 students walk over to the shelves that hold the table baskets with the notebooks. Malcom and Rey are also handing them out to students, sometimes throwing them to other students nearby. After 1-2 minutes of this, Ms. T tells them, "Guys, let's go, a few more seconds."

Ms. T: As you are working, I'm coming around to check in on each one of you. Students continue talking and notebooks continue being passed and thrown. One student tells Ms. T he can't find his notebook, so she suggests where he should look.

Ms. T: 3 – 2 – 1. Oh another thing, please be sure that your notes for my class are in the front and separate notes for reading groups are in the back. You should begin your notes now.

It quiets down a bit as students begin this independent work time. After a few minutes, Ms. T begins going around, looking at students' written work, every now and then speaking to the class. For example, she interjects for them to provide more details.

Ms. T: "Pretend you are writing for someone else who has not seen the documentary."

One student asks: Ms. T, what are we writing again?

Ms. T points to the Smart Board screen and then says, "Kaitlyn, do you want to fill her in?" Kaitlyn responds by explaining to the student how they are writing the author's perspective and explaining how they know that is the perspective.

Ms. T says aloud to the class, “When you say ‘they,’ who are ‘they?’ Make it specific.”

One student raises her hand, followed by Kaitlyn, while Ms. T finishes talking to the class. Ms. T goes over to the first student to discuss her question. There is a bit of murmuring, A different student is laughing with his table group. Ms. T goes back up to the Smart Board. Students are calling out questions, and it gets louder in the classroom. Kaitlyn says something to Ms. T about how it’s mostly women.

Ms. T: (speaking aloud to the entire class) Kaitlyn has made a good point. It was mostly women in the documentary. That’s something to think about.

Ms. T continues checking students’ notebooks. Some students are writing, Malcom is laughing with his table, and with Rey, while writing. Another two students at the table are looking at a note that one has finished writing and are laughing.

Ms. T calls out Malcom. He laughs and puts his hands to his head and says, “It’s not me!” She asks him a question, he says something (inaudible), and she says, “Okay, I’ll keep an eye out.”

Ms. T tells them they have a few more minutes. Jordyn’s head is in her hands. She’s sitting up, using her fingers to rest against her closed eyes. Kaitlyn is sitting at her desk; she has let another student look through her notebook. Bobbie’s head is down on her desk, resting on her

About Lydia:

Lydia is a black, Latina and African American, English speaking female. She was born in NYC and lives in Harlem. When asked about her overall feelings regarding the school and the ELA class, she responded:

It’s a good school. It’s just that most of the kids are bad, so it’s kind of hard for the teachers to educate the kids if they’re going to be acting bad. They curse, fight, run in the hallways, and people get hurt. ELA is one of my favorite subjects, depending on the students in the class. Sometimes it can be a good day and sometimes it can be a bad day.

arms. Lydia's head is also down on her notebook. Rey raises his hand and Ms. T calls on him. He takes his notebook up to Ms. T to ask a question.

After Ms. T and Rey finish their discussion, Ms. T tells the class, "One more minute." After the minute, she then tells students to put up their notebooks, and students begin putting their notebooks into the appropriate basket.

Elements of the Tracing

In connecting back to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatics, the tracing demonstrates the transcendent logic by which an organization exists. As I discussed in Chapter I, this means there is already an assumed and accepted right way of thinking, understanding, or doing something, and the measure of success depends on how one aligns to this correct way. This vignette offers a glimpse into the everyday norms that produced the ideal expectation for literacy engagement in this class. Discussing the tracing in this way demonstrates the daily in's and out's that formed expectations for youth engagement. I introduce these elements in the order by which I encountered them. For example, I start with the experience of entering the room and beginning the class session. This ordering is not meant to determine one element as more important than the other, as they all connect in various ways to produce the tracing. The following sections will further detail these tracing elements.

The Lay of the Land: Routines and Instructional Norms

Like most traditional classrooms, students entered from a hallway through a single entrance. From the time they walked/ran/jumped/danced through the doorway, students began engaging in classroom routines established by Ms. T. The desk layout was always the same (see Figure 5 for a map of the classroom) with desks forming a table and each table group positioned in a particular place in the room.

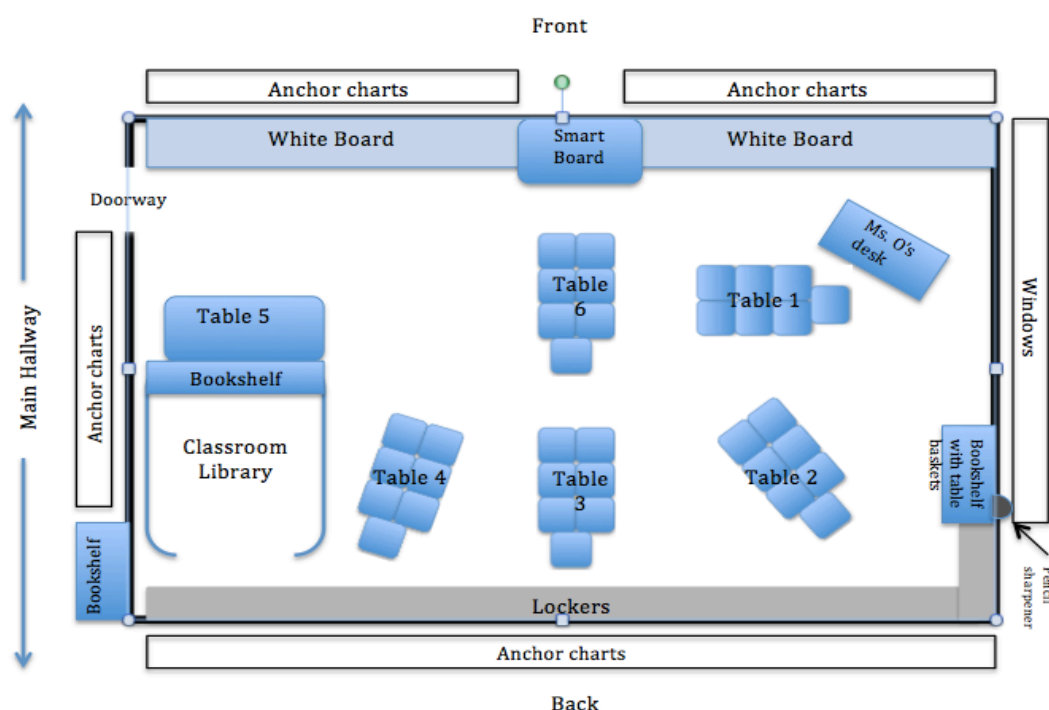


Figure 5. Map of the Classroom.

The students expected this, a fact demonstrated by their confusion when table groups had shifted out of place one day after a substitute had been in the room. Though the table groups were still in tact, their placement had shifted, and the students balked at the changed arrangement. Their reaction to this slight change showed they expected a very specific classroom arrangement upon entering.

Each day, the first few students who entered would grab each table group's basket and place the baskets on each table accordingly. Table groups were composed of 5-7 desks (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Example of a table group composed of desks.

The baskets were located on the far side of the room, across from the entrance, on a bookshelf. Each basket contained each table group member's student work folder and composition book, which they referred to as their reader's or writer's notebook (Figure 7). Once baskets were distributed, students knew to begin the Do Now, which Ms. T displayed through a projector onto the Smart Board each day.



Figure 7. Class bookshelf with table group baskets containing student work folders and reader's/writer's notebooks.

Do Now. The Do Now is a mandated instructional activity put in place by the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE). Essentially, it is a warm-up for the day's instructional focus. In a resource document provided for new teachers, the NYC DOE explained the Do Now as a "routine or procedure...that can serve as [an] opportunit[y] to check students' understanding of content ("First Class: A Resource for New Teachers in New York City," 2015). The Do Now is a mandated element of all secondary classrooms in NYC and is included on school administrators' observation and evaluation forms. Ms. T always had the daily Do Now displayed on the Smart Board at the front of the room (see Figure 8 for examples).

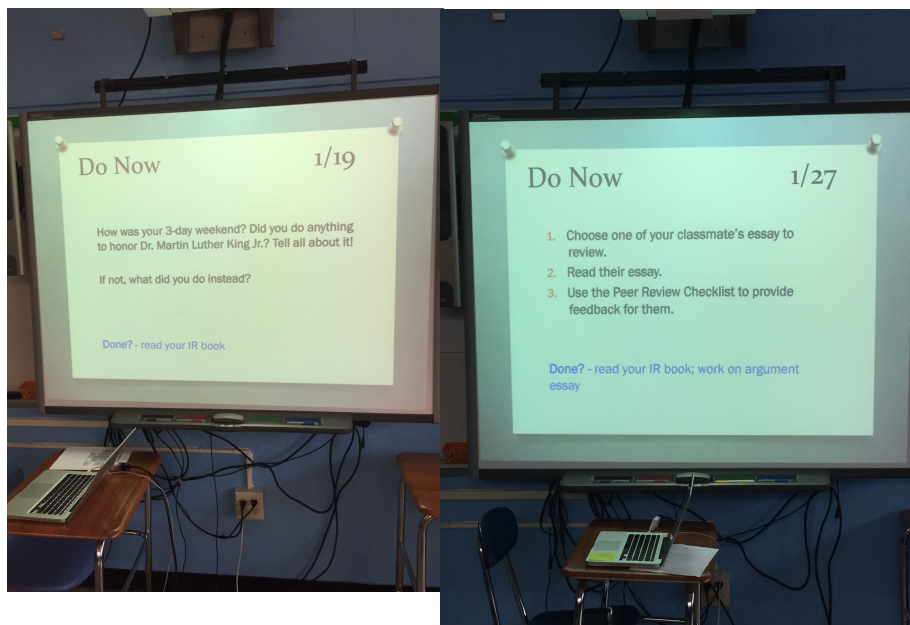


Figure 8. Smart Board screen with the daily Do Now displayed.

As described in the NYC DOE materials, Ms. T's Do Nows tied into the instructional focus for that day. For instance, in the vignette, Ms. T's Do Now asked for students' open-ended response to the questions, "Can all information pieces be trusted? Why or why not?" These questions connected directly with the instructional focus of author perspective, which Ms. T further elaborated on and taught through class notes and independent student work that day. Typically, during the Do Now, students were allotted 5-10 minutes to complete the Do Now and, depending on time, Ms. T would give students an opportunity to share their responses aloud. Oftentimes, this time of sharing led to a teacher-led Initiate-Response-Evaluate (IRE) format (Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979), which I will further discuss later in this section (see IRE, this chapter).

Objective and announcements. Immediately following the Do Now, Ms. T would instruct students to put their notebooks in their table baskets, and while students were doing this, she would display either the daily announcements or the daily objective

on the Smart Board. An announcement screen was only necessary when there were indeed announcements to share. Sometimes, these included information about after school tutoring, special school visitors, and occasionally included a video segment 2-3 students had prerecorded with other teachers. Then, Ms. T would display the objective screen on the Smart Board. Once displayed, she would ask for a student volunteer to read the objective aloud. Though not as explicitly referred to, Ms. T also had a section on the front white board reserved for the daily objective and agenda, which she updated each day (Figure 9). After reviewing the objective, Ms. T would then move on to the mini-lesson for the day, which most typically involved class notes on the Smart Board.

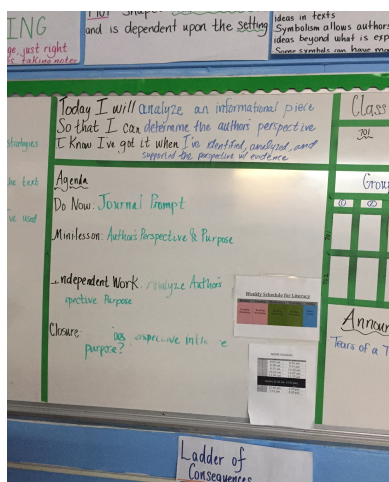


Figure 9. Front white board with daily objective and agenda sections.

Mini-lesson: Smart Board instructions and notes. Nearly everyday I observed, Ms. T used the Smart Board as a way to communicate instructions or display (and sometimes co-produce) notes during class. I emphasize the Smart Board here, more than the mini-lesson, because it was the primary object of visual focus as well as language. Though this part of the day's agenda was identified on the whiteboard as "mini-lesson," it was never referred to as a mini-lesson by Ms. T or the students. Rather, actions and

words were centered on the Smart Board. For example, in the vignette, this segment of the class revolved around the Smart Board, which was used to prompt the discussion on author perspective.

Sometimes, anchor charts were displayed on the whiteboard (on either side of the Smart Board), serving as supplemental notes to which Ms. T would refer during her use of the Smart Board (Figure 10). The charts are typically either created by the teacher or co-created between the teacher and students to display key information that the teacher believes will assist students in their learning. For example, on the day Ms. T was beginning an informational text unit, the class began as usual with the Do Now: *What's the purpose of informational (non-fiction) texts? Give examples.* As students responded through open-ended written response in their notebooks, Ms. T went to each notebook to check responses, and then walked to the front of the room, stating:

Alright, you guys obviously know a whole lot about why you should read and write informational texts, and that's really cool because there's not a lot of teaching that needs to take place around that. I'm just going to give you a few reminders though. Well first of all, good morning. (Some students respond "Good Morning.") So I just want to share with you (she walks to the anchor chart "Why do we read Informational Texts?" some of the reasons we read informational texts.

Ms. T went on to explain the different points on the chart, using the example of how articles pop up on Facebook newsfeeds, and how they mentioned in their notebooks many of the things on this chart.

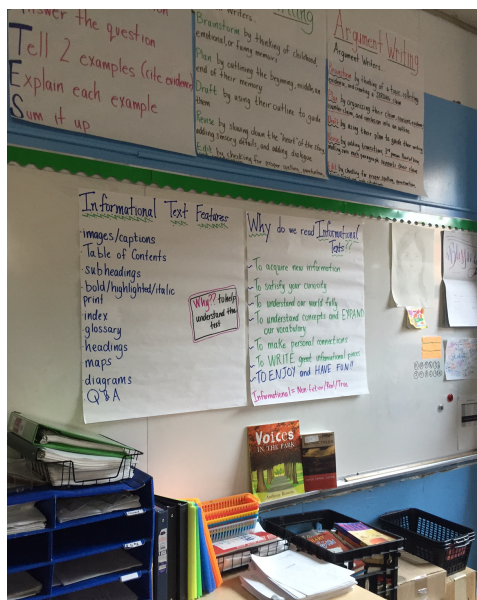


Figure 10. Example of Anchor Charts on the front white board.

Later in the class (after the objective and announcements), she transitioned to the Smart Board to display notes for the lesson as they engaged in an IRE-based discussion.

Initiate-Response-Evaluate (IRE). While never called IRE by Ms. T, I recognized the discussion format based on my previous experiences in classrooms as well as knowledge of this traditional format. As aforementioned in this chapter, IRE stands for Initiate-Respond-Evaluate and is a format for a traditional communication structure used by teachers (Mehan, 1979). Using IRE, Ms. T first initiated a question for which students were to respond. Students responded, usually by raising a hand or being called upon, and then Ms. T would evaluate this response by asking a follow up question and further commenting on the students' response. For example, this discussion format was evident in the vignette earlier in this section. After Ms. T displayed the lesson instructions on the Smart Board, she then led the class in an IRE-based discussion on author perspective. She

posed questions and then called on students to respond. As students responded, she typed responses and further prompted them with another question or a clarifying statement.

IRE discussions happened everyday I observed in Ms. T's classroom. Another excerpt demonstrates this pattern:

After displaying a particular advertisement in which students were to analyze from different angles, Ms. T moves to "Perspective," now displayed on the Smart Board.

Malcom: It's a guy's perspective. It's not a woman's perspective

Ms. T: How would it be different if it were a woman?

Malcom: No, a woman wouldn't think like that.

Male student 1: It's a woman's perspective because she is saying that they can do all that.

Ms. T: So gender equality.

Ms. T goes back to the handout on the Smart Board and pulls up the "Position" section, which states: How does the language used in the text position people? She calls on Bria.

Bria: "They have to look like a lady. They have to act girly, but when it comes to thinking, they have to think like a man."

Ms. T then goes to the "Power" section. Ms. T asks, "Who has the power? Is it men, is it women?"

Male student 2: The company.

Ms. T: Tell me more about that.

Male student 2: Well, they hire them.

Ms. T: Okay, yeah, they make decisions.

Ms. T then goes on to the “Reconstructing the Text” slide, which she explains means recreating it for what they think it should be.

Ms. T: So, for example you could change up the words. How could we change the wording on here?

Male student 3: (quietly) Feel like a man.

Ms. T: Feel like a man? How is that any different? If it were me, I would maybe take out this men vs. women text all together.

(Field Notes, June 20)

Throughout this discussion, Ms. T initiated questions around concepts she wanted the students to consider, such as *perspective*, *power*, and *text reconstruction*. Students raised their hands to respond, offering their thoughts on what these concepts meant in relation to the text they were reading together. Ms. T implicitly evaluated their responses by asking a clarifying question and introducing the next concept (as it relates to their response) as well as explicitly, when the excerpt concludes with her explaining one way she would have reconstructed the text (as it relates to the student’s response). For Ms. T’s class, engagement in this type of discussion ushered in the next activity, typically student-centered work time.

Student-centered work time. This segment of the class was like a handing of the baton from Ms. T to the students. They were expected to engage in literacy by doing what they had just discussed as a class through the Smart Board notes and IRE discussion. Their engagement during this work time ranged from independent to partnerships to table groups. For instance, in the *vignette*, Ms. T finishes up the notes on the Smart Board and tells the students she wants them to continue in this fashion, identifying author

perspective and providing evidence, independently through writing in their notebooks. At one point during this work time, a student asks her what they are supposed to be doing. She points to the Smart Board screen, referring to their previous segment of the class.

I purposefully labeled this element of the tracing as student-centered work *time*, because timing was a noticeable organizing factor. In the earlier excerpt, Ms. T paces the students with a few time-based markers. At one point, she counts them down 3-2-1 to get their attention so they know how to move forward with the work. She also voices “A few more minutes” and then “One more minute” as the class is coming to a close.

Implicit Tracing Elements

While these *Lay of the Land* tracing elements were largely explicit because of the daily routine and structure, I identified other elements of the tracing that were just as present, though not as obviously explicit.

Participation expectations. As in all social situations, there were acceptable norms of behavior and engagement that were expected and deemed appropriate. Sometimes, these were stated (i.e. *There should not be talking* or *You should be reading independently right now*). At other times, these were implicit but were communicated through conversation. For instance:

It's still quiet while Ms. T is talking. She switches to the Word view on the Smart Board and begins an example of how she's going to construct this paragraph. She speaks aloud as she types. She says what she's typing and also adds in an explanation of what she's doing. She looks up and says, “There is a lot of playing. What happens is that usually the people who are playing have lots of questions at the end and those who are

focused are going to get it this first time.” She then asks students to give a thumbs up if she has met the criteria, for example, if she has claim in her paragraph. One student asks how he's supposed to know if that is the claim. She says that she already said it and that means he wasn't listening. He says, “Okay,” and then about 30 sec later, says, “Oh I see, I was listening.”

(Field Notes, January 20)

As my observations continued, I noticed these expectations included behaviors exhibited through the body, specifically movement, sound, eye focus, and bodily position. These expectations became especially salient to me once I recognized Ms. T's classroom management expectations and tactics. Through her management, it became clear if/when students were expected to exude specific engagement, such as being silent, quietly conversing, facing a certain direction, or sitting a certain way.

Management. *Malcom is fidgeting with something at his desk, making audible noise, and Ms. T asks him to stop, noting it is disruptive. He argues back, and she tells him that is his warning. Just then, another student speaks aloud and asks Ms. T a question about the Do Now. She responds, explaining that as long as they can write about it and discuss their response, it is fine. Malcom speaks aloud saying it is not fair that she (the other student) can ask something aloud but he can't. Ms. T tells Malcom to come over by the door, and they exit the room. (Field notes, January 19)*

This scenario occurred during my first day of observations. I felt very much a part of this event because on that particular day, I sat in Ms. T's desk, which was located very close behind Malcom's desk and table group. My proximity to the event, I believe, increased the intensity and tension I felt from this exchange, even though I was not a

direct part of it. In fact, there were numerous instances throughout the semester in which Ms. T enacted specific management strategies during her teaching, producing the expectation for the ideal youth literacy engagement in particular ways.

Classroom management strategies are expected in most classrooms. In fact, my own undergraduate teacher education program offered a course on classroom management, and in my experiences as a classroom teacher and working with teachers, it is a heavily focused on topic. It is not surprising that Ms. T employed certain tactics when it seemed students were straying from the ideal expectation of how they were supposed to be engaging in the classroom literacy activities. However, rather than assume that management “is what it is”, it is necessary for my theoretical lens to examine how these management strategies produced the tracing in this particular classroom and to consider not only what this meant for the students’ engagement with literacy in the classroom but also how such management strategies worked to reterritorialize students when they veered from the tracing. From my observations, I found several key tactics Ms. T used to direct students back to the expectations for engagement in her classroom.

***Highlights.** I want to highlight Table 2, and they all get a point for working on their Do Now.*

Ms. T regularly recognized students’ engagement that aligned with the expectation. In this instance, Ms. T praised, or as she would say *highlighted*, the members of a table group who were independently engaging in a written response in their writer’s notebooks for their Do Now. While I always noted these highlights in my field notes, it was not until I reviewed all of these recorded instances together (which I coded once I noticed these were a normed aspect of the classroom) that I found highlighting to be an

explicit source of management in the classroom. Ms. T most often highlighted certain students when there were some who were engaging as expected but others who were straying from the expectation. For example:

There is a lot of chatter in the room. Some students are up and about, some writing in their notebooks. Ms. T begins highlighting certain students and tables who are working. She tells them this is a much better start to the day than yesterday.

(Field notes, January 19)

Another highlighting instance occurred one day after Ms. T had introduced the main literacy assignment for the day, told students to begin, and informed them they had 40 minutes for the activity. When students did not respond or take action, she stated:

I see people sitting idle. I'm very serious about this time. You need to get started right away. I want to highlight Lydia and Malcom.

(Field notes, February 11)

Because highlights like this occurred on a regular basis throughout the semester, they produced the expectation for the ideal literacy engagement in a particular way for this classroom.

Sometimes, though not as often, Ms. T gave students points along with these highlights. In a follow-up exchange with Ms. T, I learned that points were given toward monthly incentives, such as pizza parties, ice cream, computer time, or any other student suggestion that was appropriate or affordable. Points were the main incentive, other than highlighting, used by Ms. T to reward students' engagement with literacy in the classroom.

I'll wait. Students are talking. Ms. T says she'll wait. Ms. T says she wants to highlight some of the groups. (Field notes, February 5)

Intentionally waiting on students to engage as expected in the classroom was another management strategy Ms. T employed. Ms. T explicitly informed students when she was waiting on them before moving forward. This most often happened when she was giving instruction or engaging in IRE. She would often pause, make eye contact with the student(s) who were veering from the expectation, and would tell them "I'll wait." When students adjusted their engagement, she continued. For example:

Ms. T sits up front and starts to go through instructions. There is some talking so she says, "I'll wait." It gets quiet, and she begins again. A voice interrupts. She again says, "I'll wait." (Field notes, May 20)

Waiting for students in this way often brought a few moments of silence as Ms. T stalled the lesson until students were engaging as expected. Usually, students were straying from the expectation because they were talking to one another, either at their table groups or across the room to one another. For instance:

Ms. T counts down from three and turns on the light. She starts to talk to the class but then, with many students still talking, she says, "I'll wait."

(Field notes, March 1)

While oftentimes waiting in this way allowed Ms. T to move forward as she planned, sometimes it took multiple occurrences or further action of other management strategies. During one such occurrence, Ms. T had just finished going through announcements on the Smart Board and was moving on to the objective for the day:

Ms. T then goes into the Objective (on screen) and says they are going to pick up where they left off yesterday. Students are talking. Ms. T: "I'll wait." (There is still some talking.) "Still waiting." When it gets quiet, she explains they are going to continue to apply the strategies they learned and practiced this week by practicing with partners. "Before you're going to start, I'm going to review some of the strategies we've practiced." She starts to discuss, but some students are talking and she stops, pausing, waiting for them to stop. She continues talking aloud, reviewing the strategies. Some talking continues. She stops and thanks those students who are not talking and whose eyes are up front. She stops and calls out one male student (I notice another student dancing some more in his seat). Ms. T goes on and displays the sheet she created as a toolbox from this week to provide them tools they can use in their writing. She stops to wait again for it to get quiet. "I told you guys if it's March, and I'm still saying the things I said to you in September, there's not been a lot of growth." She goes on to discuss her disappointment about this, saying they're still exhibiting the same behavior from August. (A student corrects her by saying "September" aloud.) Ms. T says, "Yes, thank you, September." She then continues going over the chart.

(Field notes, March 11)

Warnings. Ms. T often used warnings as a specific response to individual students who did not meet behavioral expectations. For example:

Ms. T is at her desk and tells the students she is giving out warnings today and that she is not raising her voice like she did yesterday. It's fairly quiet now, with students writing, or dancing (Jordyn is dancing at her desk). One student speaks

out, and Ms. T tells him he is getting a warning because he still has his hoodie on. She writes "Warning" on the board and writes his name underneath. Ms. T tells the class she is coming around to see what they have written in their journals for their Do Now. As she's starting, she tells one student, "Voice off."

(Field notes, April 19)

Warnings served as a territorializing force to evoke expected behaviors in the classroom:

If students do not have notebooks on their desk, Ms. T asks them to get it out. Someone asks for a pencil. Ms. T tells them to remember, she is not giving out pencils anymore. Malcom says something out loud; another student joins in. Ms. T tells them they now have a warning. Malcom questions her on this and she says, "No, it's just one warning." She helps them adjust their desks into their table group and reminds the class that this will be graded. It's quieter now, with just a few murmurs. Ms. T starts checking notebooks. It gets a little louder. Ms. T tells them she's about to give out more warnings and it gets quieter.

(Field notes, May 4)

Spatial Adjustments. Ms. T also used spatial changes to reterritorialize the students. For instance, if something was happening that felt disruptive, she sometimes asked a student to change seats.

Some students are writing silently. Many are talking, especially the front table of girls closest to the white board. Ms. T comes over right then and tells them to stand up and that she is moving their desks. She starts moving them around, displaces their table group and puts them in two vertical rows.

(Field notes, Feb 11)

Moving a student to a new location often allowed for the redirection Ms. T needed. In the above excerpt, Ms. T moved desks, which spaced the students differently. At other times, if something disruptive was happening, she sometimes asked a student to move to another seat.

Ms. T starts reading, but then stops and tells a student to move up to the front. O says, "I hate that we're taking out time for this."

(Field notes, May 10)

Countdowns and calls. Another form of management for Ms. T's classroom was the use of countdowns and calls to get students' attention in a quiet and succinct manner. I have included a few excerpts to illustrate how this worked in the classroom, highlighting the different strategies that were used:

Some students are talking and writing, and Ms. T begins counting down and collecting papers from each table group.

(Field notes, Jan 19)

Ms. T: Let's go ahead and put your notebooks away. Let's come back together in 3-2-1, Good morning.

(Field notes, Feb 26)

Ms. T tells them to think about reading on their own and then get together with their partners. She pulls up the assigned partners on a spreadsheet on the screen. When the partner names comes up, there's laughter and some "Nooo!", some "Yessss!" responses. Ms. T tells them to move to their groups. As they move, some students are arguing about their partners. Ms. T gives the "If you can hear my

voice, clap once. If you hear my voice, clap twice” call. With it now quiet, she commends them for their maturity in handling the partner assignments.

(Field notes, March 16)

Grades. Ms. T’s use of grades and grading was multifaceted in that it served as a tool for evaluating students’ literacy engagement, which is the more expected function of grading. For example, as previously described with the Do Now, Ms. T would periodically use a checkmark system as a formative assessment tool to quickly and efficiently evaluate students’ responses. However, grading also served as a tool for classroom management, and as discussed throughout this section, all forms of management produced the expectation for literacy engagement in particular ways. For example, nearly everyday I was in the classroom, during the Do Now several students would ask aloud, “Are you checking today?” meaning they wanted to know if Ms. T was going to come around and assign a grade to their responses. Usually, Ms. T was indeed “checking” (see Figure 11 for an example), therefore placing higher stakes on the students’ engagement in the Do Now response.

Students inquired aloud about grades for different activities, asking Ms. T if something would be graded. If Ms. T let them know it was to be graded, students wanted to know so they could determine the amount of effort and level of engagement they wanted to express. At other times, Ms. T would offer information that an assignment was to be graded, implicitly letting them know this was to be taken seriously and they had better be working as expected.

All of these management strategies worked in conjunction with the daily norms and routines to produce the ideal expectation for literacy learning in the classroom. While

these elements remained present throughout the semester, albeit taken up in fluid and changing ways, one particular element suddenly appeared a few weeks into my observation and altered the tracing in very specific ways. With this in mind, the territorializing element of test prep will now be examined.

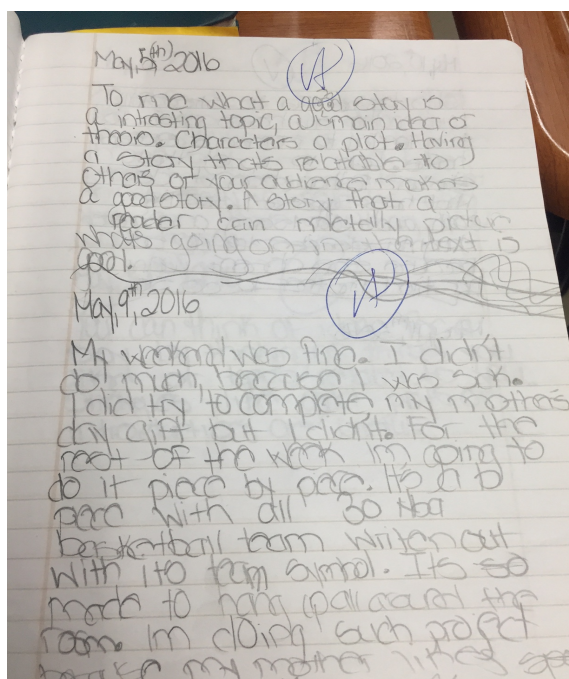


Figure 11. Example of grading for the Do Now.

Test Prep

*"We're all caught up in test prep."*¹

On one particular day in February, I arrived a few minutes early and began setting up at the back desk of Table Group 3 (see Figure 3 for the classroom map). As Ms. T was

¹ To include Ms. T's stance, I have interwoven her words from our exchanges in italics throughout this section.

preparing for the class to arrive, we began to chat for a bit. I asked her how things were going. While I did not know it at the time, that seemingly small question ushered in the defining territorial element of the next six weeks: test prep. Ms. T, like numerous public school teachers across the United States, had now entered the test prep zone because of the looming state standardized test date. Of course, it is not that the standardized test had not already heavily infiltrated Ms. T's teaching and expectation for the students' literacy learning.

*Whenever I plan, I always plan with the idea that
my instruction should be rooted in
(the Common Core State) standards.*

When asked how national or state policies influenced her teaching and how she wanted students to engage with literacy in her classroom, Ms. T was quick to bring up the national standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). These standards guided her thinking about teaching and student learning all year long. In fact, her instructional thinking was deeply rooted in these standards and had been throughout her teaching career.

I've only ever worked with Common Core since I've been a teacher.

As a former teacher myself, I felt I understood where Ms. T was coming from on this matter. Because we both began teaching after the nation-wide implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, our experiences as teachers has always been heavily influenced by macro-level standards that tie into high-stakes testing. While the standards clearly played into the every day tracing, the actual standardized test, however, made this aspect of the literacy tracing much more salient.

Significance of Test Prep on Race and Social Justice in the Classroom

Inclusion of topics around race and social justice was one major way in which the tracing was produced differently throughout the semester. Talking with students about race could certainly have been absent from this classroom, as it is from many classrooms and research on literacy education, but Ms. T made concerted efforts to use such topics as platforms for discussion and teaching. In one of my exchanges with Ms. T, she referred to her own background experiences as well as the identity markers of her students (race, ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic status) as important factors for how she defines and conceptualizes successful literacy learning in her classroom.²

For me, I came to New York City and an urban district for a reason... with the diverse student population...I think it's also personal for me, having grown up in an inner-city and some of the experiences I've had as a student, undergraduate, and graduate student.

So I always think and plan from the perspective of the world and how they'll face it in the future, so that's important to me.

Even though they come from diverse student backgrounds and diverse language abilities, I think it is important for them in literacy to gain exposure to various genres and ones that are very close to home, ones that have books that represent their language, AAVE, Spanish, other dialects. But I also think it's equally

² Ms. T's curricular decisions to include critical and culturally relevant pedagogy could be analyzed as a line of flight. I elaborate more on this in the Limitations section in Chapter VI.

*important to view these books not just for the sake of comprehension
(can you read, can you pass this assessment, can you write this piece)
but to also view it through a critical lens and looking at race, looking at class,
looking at culture and even, why did the author write this book?*

I saw Ms. T's intentional inclusion of critical and culturally relevant pedagogy as especially important in the United States in a time when racial tensions have escalated as a result of recent incidents between police and minoritized populations, particularly African Americans, leading to public outrage (albeit of varying stances and viewpoints) and the Black Lives Matter movement. Being that this study was conducted in a middle school in Harlem, it is even more important and necessary to discuss the evident ways race produced the particular tracing of this classroom.

To begin, Ms. T's positionality as an educator greatly influenced her curricular decisions in the classroom. As a highly educated, black, African American and Nigerian female who grew up in an inner-city urban environment, yet frequently interacted with close family members who lived in a suburban town outside a large Midwestern city, Ms. T's ultimate aim as a teacher has always been to focus her efforts in low-income, urban schools. Growing up, she noticed the differences between her educational experiences and those of relatives who lived in suburban areas that had more resources. Upon discussing this, she stated, "*We had textbooks; they had novels.*" Ongoing differences like these pushed her to question issues of equity. This, coupled with the strong value her family placed on education, construct her positionality as an educator. When asked about how this affects her stance as a literacy teacher, she replied:

It's kind of the backdrop of the classroom. Yes, I'm a literacy teacher, but I'm always thinking about the ways race, class, power, and culture play a role not only in the literature but also students' everyday lives. Because these students are in an urban and low-income setting, I personally don't believe that literacy should be taught in the absence of those factors (race, class, power, and culture). I feel very strongly about that.

Of key concern for her, especially when planning her own curricular units, were bringing students' attention to issues of social justice. For example, during my first few weeks of observation, Ms. T and the class engaged in an informational writing unit that Ms. T had designed. This unit featured a documentary about the lack of labor laws in third world countries, the workers' personal experiences, and the countries, like the United States, that profit from such unjust circumstances. Just as important as identifying the elements of an informational writing piece was analyzing an informational piece (as stated in the February 23 daily objective), which the students were to do through the documentary.

To introduce the documentary, Ms. T displayed an article on The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, a devastating fire that occurred in a New York City sweatshop in 1911. As Ms. T read through the article, she stopped at different points to ask the students' questions, like: What is a sweatshop? Why would someone choose to work there? What's the significance of immigrants? Why immigrants? Why would they be willing to work in those conditions? Who had the power to allow conditions to be this way? This discussion led into the documentary viewing and ongoing analysis, which took place over several days. As students viewed the documentary, Ms. T would often pause the viewing

and ask follow-up questions. After watching one part in which the factory workers in a remote area of China are seriously injured or killed in a factory accident because of poor working conditions, one such discussion ensued:

Malcom: But I want to ask you, how come all these sweatshops keep having all these tragedies?

Ms. T (to the class): Who wants to answer that question?

Malcom: But why are people still losing their lives? Why don't people care about their lives?

Bria: I think they don't care because they're just worried about making money.

(Field notes excerpt, February 24)

Just after this discussion, the video featured one woman who worked in a factory with no labor laws in place. She talked about how she and other workers formed a union to demand changes to their working conditions. When the union confronted the factory managers with their list of changes, the managers locked the factory doors and many of the women were beaten. As this woman was telling her story, there were several audible responses from students in the classroom:

"Uh uh."

"No."

"Replay it."

This was a sobering moment in the classroom. Ms. T did replay this segment of the video and then after, asked the students what happened here.

Malcom says something about the cops and being black. Ms. T asks him about this. Malcom talks about how “once the cops got you in their hands, they can do anything they want to you.”

Ashton: All these things relate to slavery, cause you know how the master always hits the slave.

There were several inaudible murmurs throughout the classroom.

Ms. T: I’m going to stay with what Malcom said now, about being black, and Ashton mentioned slavery.

Male student 1: Race.

Ms. T: Is it just race?

Bria: Or class.

Ms. T asks her what she means by this.

Bria: What I mean by class is it depends on the type of class you’re in so if you’re rich they might believe anything you say. You can bribe cops and stuff, but if you’re poor and living in the, not trying to be mean, but if you’re living in the projects, they might arrest you for no reason.

Ms. T asks the students how they think this might relate to the workers in the documentary.

Female student 1: They live a tough life.

Ms. T: But why is that so? Do they have power?

Female student 1: A little bit.

Ms. T: What is that called? What power do they have? Who does have the power?

Male student 2: White people

Female student 2: I think it's the stereotype, like if you're white, you have like white privilege and stuff.

Ashton: Because white people almost have power over everything cause the stereotype is sometimes true.

Ms. T: What stereotype?

Ashton: Like how white people overpower things sometimes.

Female student 3: Stereotypes, like um, like just like, similar to what Bria said, if you live in the projects, the cops is going to have a stereotype of you.

Ms. T brings it back to the video.

Female student 2: It reminds me about the documentary we watched, how they said he talked like a white boy (referring to a documentary they watched earlier in the school year).

Ms. T: I didn't realize we were out of time, so let's get ready to transition. Guys, I'm setting the timer for one minute to transition. Actually 30 seconds, let's go. Your notebooks should be in your baskets.

Here, Ms. T invited a classroom conversation that connected deeply to the lives of the students. With 99% of the students being a racial minority (only one female in the class was white), and with recent tragedies occurring between police and people of color, incorporating such discussions was a priority for Ms. T. Other elements of the tracing are present as well, though; just as quickly as this discussion took off, Ms. T ended it due to time constraints of the classroom timeframe.

Ms. T sought to promote students' thinking on societal injustices beyond those regarding race. On another occasion, Ms. T challenged students with questions around systemic social injustice during a discussion about a story they had just read:

Ms. T: But what do you guys think? Is crime necessary?

Male Student 1: It's like a...Because, like James he had to steal, he got to steal for his sister. People steal for the fun of it. For the thrill.

Ms. T: Thank you. Ok, the whistling needs to stop. Okay, so, are there systems in place that provoke people to do these things?

Lydia: Yes.

Bobbie: You know how if you were a convict and you get released from jail and you can't get a job, it's probably hard so they go back to doing crimes.

Female Student 1: Um, maybe people, umm... (Another female student interrupts, laughing, Ms. T calls her name)...some people commit crimes because of gang affiliation because, like, peer pressure. It could make them do something.

Ms. T recaps what Bobbie and the other student have said.

Male student 1: Can you repeat the question?

Ms. T: So even though these things are happening, are there external things that cause people to get into these situations?

Malcom: Well, it's like, depends on how your circumstance is. You know in the past, if you've been molested and raped and stuff. You might hurt people. You might have flashbacks that make you do bad things.

Female student 2: Like trauma.

Malcom: Yeah, like trauma. And if parents have been on drugs and you haven't eaten and stuff, it causes you to do things to survive. You might steal. You got to get money so you can put food on the table.

Female student 2: Can I add something? But see most people do that, but the state don't care if that's what's happening.

Ms. T: Okay, who do you mean by the state?

Male student 2: Government

Ms. T: Yes, okay.

Female student 2: Once you get incarcerated for a crime, they don't care the reason you did it, they care that you did it and they got you.

Male student 1: You could grow up in a two parent home and your mom could be addicted to a drug and your dad could sell drugs and if you see that, most likely you do what your parents do.

Ms. T: Kind of follow that pattern? Okay, (and she sums up with what's been said.)

(Field Notes, February 11)

Ms. T invited conversations around race, class, and power and planned her units with these topics in mind. It was noticeable, however, when the mandated test prep unit took place, that these conversations were no longer present. This element of the tracing dissipated and shifted, as the discussions became more heavily about test-taking strategies for reading and writing. The change in discussions was reflected in the expected student engagement as well. Perhaps this is because, as Calkins, Ehrenworth, & Lehman (2012) pointed out, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) overlooks the

personalization of the reading experience by omitting engagement through making text-to-self connections and related skills. For instance, Compton-Lilly (2013) critiqued the ways in which the CCSS privileged text-based correct meanings and literal interpretations, thus ignoring the multiple ways of knowing that literacy scholars have been advocated for over 30 years. The implications of these standards and the high-stakes test that accompanied them produced the ideal literacy expectation for student engagement in Ms. T's classroom. This shifted tracing serves as more than a change in the curricular expectation of students; rather, it "perpetuates the status quo, the privileging of particular ways of understanding texts and assessing comprehension," (p. 4), which as Compton-Lilly aptly argues, "exacerbate[s] rather than address[es] inequity" (p. 5).

Ms. T openly acknowledged the heavy implications of state testing for her school.

The testing has become a big issue. Knowing the concrete scores from last year, knowing that our school is pretty much at stake, I think for me I found was more intense in the way I engaged students with the test prep unit.

Ms. T was not exaggerating by stating that her school was at stake. In the recent weeks up to this point, several city and district NYC Department of Education (DOE) personnel had visited the school, including individual classrooms, and the school was in the process of becoming a New York State priority school. According to the NYC DOE, priority schools are those identified as the bottom 5% lowest performing schools in the state, measured by 2014-2015 data ("School and District Accountability," 2015). According to

the New York State Department of Education (“Commissioner identifies,” 2015) a new receivership law accompanies priority school status, stating that priority schools are:

granted new authority to, among other things, develop a school intervention plan; convert schools to community schools providing wrap-around services; expand the school day or school year; and remove staff and/or require staff to reapply for their jobs in collaboration with a staffing committee. (Burman, 2015, paragraph 6)

With these developments, and with public acknowledgement of low test scores for the school, the principal had already held several one-on-one meetings with teachers to discuss the upcoming state test.

We were mandated to use a specific test prep curriculum for these upcoming weeks. The literacy department is very tense; all of the teachers seem tense.

Ms. T discussed how she felt she needed to be more transparent than usual with the students. She felt her language was different than usual, especially in explicitly relating their learning to the test.

This was the first time I can think that I was really explicit with my kids and used the word ‘test.’

Ms. T described this as being more intense with them than usual. For her, this was especially evident through timing and pacing.

I found I was very particular about managing their time, even formulaic in the way they wrote, versus how I usually give them a lot of freedom in how they write.

In one of our exchanges, Ms. T specifically referenced how this intensity manifested itself through her expectation for their writing engagement. While students had engaged in producing a writing portfolio earlier in the semester, in which she would encourage

“you’re the writer, use your voice,” when it came to test prep, her language changed to “this is how they want you to answer.” For Ms. T, her expectation altered by being “very specific about taking into account the audience and who they were writing for.”

For instance, during one day’s lesson, the focus was writing a short response essay, as students would be required to do for the ELA state test. While most elements of the tracing, the expected literacy engagement, remained the same, the ways in which these elements were taken up changed to reflect the test prep unit. For example, the objective and agenda clearly reflect the mandated test prep unit (Figure 12). Along with this, the supplemental white board notes, such as the Test Prep Short Response Strategies anchor chart (see Figure 13) also reflected the explicit changes taking place.

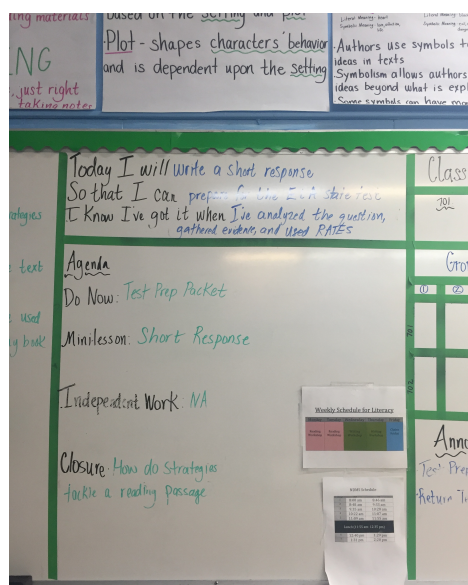


Figure 12. Objective and agenda during the test prep unit.

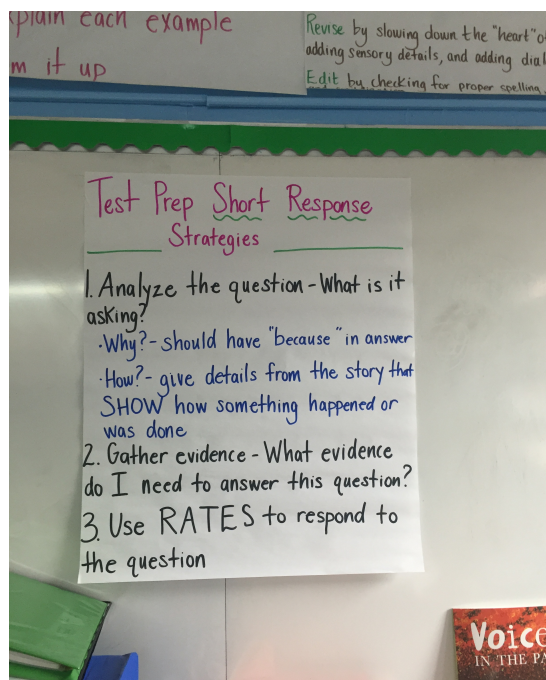


Figure 13. Test prep short response strategies.

This anchor chart demonstrates the change in language Ms. T noted in our exchange. She felt she had to be more explicit than usual about how students should construct their written responses. The students then practiced this skill during independent work time, in which they read a passage silently, answered multiple-choice questions (as they would do on the test), and then constructed their short essay response (Figure 14).

This is but one example of how the test prep unit shifted the way the tracing was produced in the classroom. While the basic elements of the tracing remained in place (objective, agenda, do now, management, and routines), the content of these were impacted by decisions outside of Ms. T's control. Ms. T and I had several verbal exchanges about what test prep meant for her instruction, especially altering her original unit plans to align with the school-wide mandate. My field notes and the artifacts collected during this time reinforce this aspect of the tracing. For example, the format of

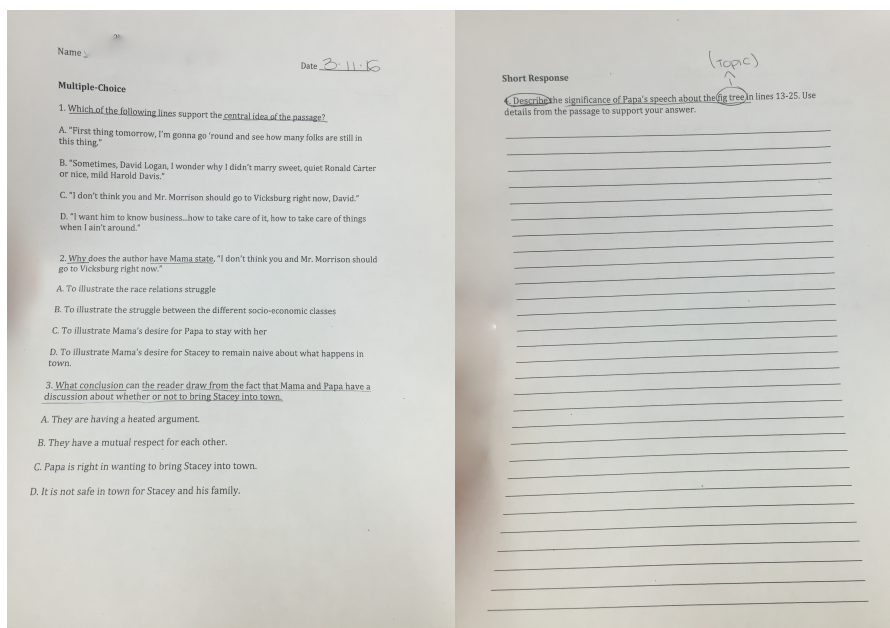


Figure 14. Example of test prep response for both reading and writing.

the students' daily Do Now changed from a written writer's notebook response to a short text/passage that corresponded with subsequent multiple choice questions paired with short essay response (Figure 15).

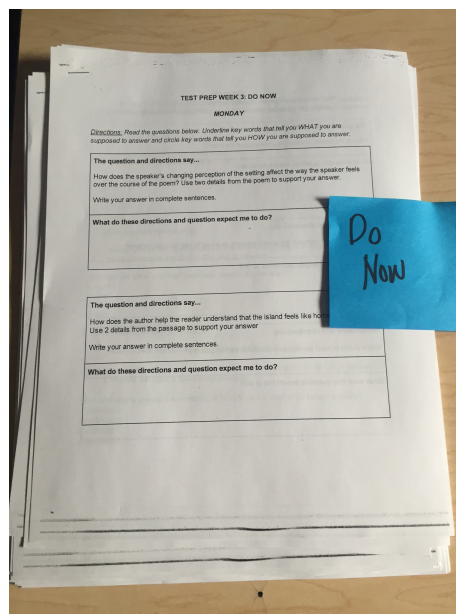


Figure 15. Example of the Do Now during the Test Prep Unit.

This expectation changed for the duration of the mandated test prep unit. During this time, students were expected to engage in literacy learning through reading and annotating the text and then responding to the multiple choice and essay question. This expectation was reinforced when it was time to review their responses as a class, at which point Ms. T displayed the same passage on the Smartboard and initiated an initiate-reply-evaluate (IRE) format (Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979) to review how students should be thinking about and responding to the text. In an interview with Ms. T, the emphasis on test prep came up, and she stated that the pressure felt greater this year than ever before because of the expectation to raise scores. This stress played into her expectation of the type of literacy engagement that was expected of her students.

Remembering Researcher Reflexivity

While I did not interject myself in the vignette or discussion of the explicit and implicit tracing elements, I must address my place in my production of the tracing. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, I intentionally positioned myself as an observer rather than participant. I truly did not want to interfere in the production of data, as it was important to my analysis to try and understand what constituted the ideal expectations of a successful literacy learning in this classroom. For example, in the vignette, when students entered the classroom they did not seem to notice I was there. Especially in the beginning of the study, they seemed to take my instructions to pretend I was not there quite literally. As the study and semester progressed, there were only slight changes to this stance; students began greeting me on a daily basis and wanted to talk at times, but for the most part understood I was there as an observer and would not interfere.

Still, my positionality influenced my understanding of the tracing. For example, when I realized curricular shifts were occurring due to test prep, I identified test prep as an element of the tracing and adapted this as a part of my analytical lens. Other researchers who may not have had my same experiences with test prep in the classroom might not feel as strongly about this element of the tracing. This is but one example of the ways researcher positionality affects data production and analysis.

The Tracing, Relations of Power, and Further Exploration

Besides examining schooled literacy, that is the recurring norms, routines, management tactics, instructional strategies, and curricular impositions, that produced what was expected of the ideal literacy learner in this ELA classroom, I believe it is essential to sum up the tracing element of the rhizomatic analysis by also considering the relations of power that inevitably circulated to produce the tracing. These schooled literacy elements that produced the tracing culminate to create what Foucault (1987; 1980) described as a disciplinary society, in which power is dominated over subjects not through one single source but through societal ways of being and doing. In the case of schooling, and more specifically this classroom, schooled literacy serves as a powerful discourse that deems certain ways of being, acting, and knowing as worthy of acceptability or not, imposing a dominant system of control.

This system is inherently racialized and privileges an autonomous model of literacy (Street, 1984), marginalizing other ways of knowing. Research shows such regulation to occur through emphasis on language use and standard English (Delpit,

1992; Wheeler & Swords, 2004), the treatment of schooling as neutral through “colorblind discourses” (Majors, 2014), direct instruction tied to basic skills (Dudley-Marling & Paugh, 2005), a reliance on monomodality (Siegel, 1995, 2006), and most focused on in this study, a discourse of literacy as disciplined rationalization with predetermined outcomes, each of which perpetuates the autonomous model of literacy connected to schooled literacy.

The regulatory forces produced through schooled literacy and inherent power relations were especially prevalent in the tracing through the emphasis on testing. As Campano, Ghiso, and Sánchez (2013) argued, inequities are perpetuated through evaluations of “schools, teachers, and students tied to accountability measures” (p. 100), a pressing notion that Ms. T brought up in relation to how her instruction changed in relation to high stakes testing. These changes reflect the trends Au (2007) reported regarding curriculum and instruction: content narrowing to reflect only what would be on the test, separating content into distinct pieces, and increasing teacher-centered instruction in effort to cover all test related material (as cited in Campano, Ghiso, & Sánchez, 2013).

These relations of power matter because ultimately, the purpose of this study and rhizomatic analysis is to explore how the everyday occurrences that are dismissed as inferior or incorrect due to dominant systems of schooling have potential to lead to alternatives for thinking about youth’s literacy engagement in school learning. Moving forward, I will continue with the rhizomatic analysis by mapping *lines of territorialization* (when forces align with the tracing, or dominant norm) as well as mapping *lines of deterritorialization*, or lines of flight.

Chapter V

MAPPING ASSEMBLAGES:

FOLLOWING LINES OF FLIGHT AND AFFECTIVE INTENSITIES

[w]hat distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real...it fosters connections between fields...The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification...Maps have multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back 'to the same'. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 12)

Establishing and understanding the present tracing (see Chapter Four) is essential for moving forward with the rhizomatic analysis, which involves mapping real-time engagements with literacy that occurred in the classroom. In thinking with the theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), I have drawn from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) discussion of mapping and tracing, which guides my analytical approach. As discussed in Chapter III, mapping entails surveying reality in real-time, following the ways in which action veers from the dominant, established territory. As a part of this rhizomatic analysis, my ultimate purpose and goal is to follow these lines of flight and examine their deterritorialization and (if present) reterritorialization to the tracing (as described in Chapter Four). Unlike other methodological approaches, I am not trying to interpret what these different forms of literacy engagement mean or even qualify the end literacy

product students construct. Rather, I am focusing the analysis and interpretation toward examining the lines of flight and the real-time assemblages, that is the network of relations of bodies, material and non-material, human and non-human (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), to consider their productive forces and how these might work toward unsettling the fixed tracing.

Mapping Assemblages

The following vignettes and data excerpts offer insight into the real-time lines of flight that occurred in the classroom during the study. As I analyzed the data, I found myself rhizomatically reading it, meaning certain intensities were produced in me as I read and re-read the data, leading me to describe lines of flight through persistent types of encounters that occurred in the classroom rather than describing one event in full. This stance reflects my researcher positionality as sometimes-nomad (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), recognizing the tracing, or the ideal expectation for how things should be according to dominant perspective, but seeking out new possibilities (see Chapter III for more discussion on this). These encounters are not meant to represent all that occurred in the classroom; rather they are meant to add to our thinking about the affective intensities produced and what potential these hold for thinking about literacy research and practice. Each line of flight is produced through an assemblage, that “in its multiplicity, necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 22-23). Assemblages are fluid and often fleeting (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Leander & Rowe, 2006), coming together at various moments in time.

While some lines of flight quickly reterritorialized without much effect, others were more prominent and merit further attention.

I mapped the research assemblage by examining the data, including my field notes and the ongoing exchanges that produced the data. Like Latour (2005) and Lenters (2016), I followed the material and non-material participants to produce the assemblages, identifying these as key elements, examining their connections, and then looking for the affective intensities, or forces, produced *between* these connections (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007). These assemblages attracted my researcher gaze because of the lines of flight produced during different class segments. To guide my inquiry on lines of flight, assemblages, and intensities, I asked the following questions of the data: *What assemblages veer from the expected to produce a line of flight? What/who is present in the assemblages? What intensities are produced between connections in the assemblages?*

As I examined the data in this way, I identified four lines of flight produced out of assemblages that formed during the English Language Arts class. Each of these lines of flight can be located in an assemblage that generated particular intensities (see Table 3), or what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) also refer to as *incorporeal transformations*. This concept extends from their thinking around rhizomal logic, which played into their beliefs on language. Deleuze and Guattari argue that the basic function of language is the *order-word*, which they relate to redundancy, meaning the primary function of language in society is representing what is already expressed through language. Massumi (2002) refers to this representational model as seeing “the basic task of expression as faithfully reflecting a state of things” (p. 5). Yet, Deleuze and Guattari argue for a linguistic logic

based not on what language represents but on what language does through incorporeal transformations, or affective intensities, that are produced through emergent assemblages. They explain “the incorporeal transformation is recognizable by its instantaneousness, its immediacy, by the simultaneity of the statement expressing the transformation and the effect the transformation produces” (p. 81). Thus, in an assemblage, the elements are no longer single subjects but entangle in an unpredictable way to become, to transform. To illustrate their concept of incorporeal transformations, Deleuze and Guattari offer several

examples, one being that of passengers on an airplane:

In an airplane hijacking, the threat of a hijacker brandishing a revolver is obviously an action...But the transformation of the passengers into hostages, and of the plane-body into a prison-body, is an instantaneous incorporeal transformation. (p. 81)

The transformation in this example results from a culmination of plane-passengers-hijackers-gun-escapeless assemblage; it is not about describing a cause and effect but about the transformation that emerges from the culmination.

By juxtaposing the linguistic purposes of order-word and incorporeal transformation, Deleuze and Guattari argue for a use of language that looks to the virtual, the intangible but still real, or what Massumi refers to as “extra-linguistic forces” (p. 7) and what becomes from these. So, what does this mean for my linguistic analysis? How do I analyze assemblages of difference, lines of flight, and affective intensities if not through language?

In contemplating these questions, I reminded myself that the juxtapositions of rhizomal logic and tree logic, or mapping and tracing, or order-word or incorporeal transformation are not about one replacing the other, but once again, working within and

against. I cannot altogether eschew language, or interpretation for that matter, or at least I have not come to believe so at this point in my writing on the subject. However, I believe I must problematize the purpose of my language, including the aim of interpretation, in my rhizomatic analysis. My analysis is not about explaining what happened through the data or attaching a signified meaning to it, but to look to the emergence, becoming, and potential for transformational change through the assemblages. While the words I attach to these assemblages and lines of flight cannot possibly include the unseen, such as intensities that are not articulated or expressed (Leander & Boldt, 2013), I can intentionally focus the analysis on the intensities that hold potential for transformation and subsequently, offer insight to the production of difference through lines of flight that may have been missed otherwise.

I have named these lines of flight *Playful Eruptions*, *Passing the Baton*, *Multimodal Evocation*, and *Phone Check: I'm Writing a Book*, as these de/reterritorializations produced salient assemblages of literacy engagement in the ELA classroom. My naming of these does not presume to capture what has happened but to serve as a place marker of sorts so they can be accessed by the reader. These are not in any particular signifying order and do not represent all that happened in the classroom. In the section that follows, I first describe these lines of flight by recounting events in the classroom. These events, or what Massumi (2002) calls “expression of potential” (p. 32) are presented to invite the reader into the becoming assemblages as I observed and experienced them in the classroom. I analyze these assemblages and examine what

Table 3: Lines of Flight with their Corresponding Assemblages and Affective Intensities

Line of Flight	Assemblage	Intensities
Playful Eruptions	students (their bodies and voices), movement, table groups, chairs, pencil sharpener, pencils, student notebooks, Ms. T (her body and voice), independent reading books, paper, Smartboard	laughter dance peer-to-peer interaction (wrestling/fighting, hand shakes)
Passing the Baton	Ms. T (her body and voice), students (their bodies and voices), IRE instruction and discussion, documentary, Smartboard, writer's notebooks, class notes, laptops, table groups	spontaneous peer assistance
Multimodal Evocations	documentary (content, images, sounds), screen, students (their bodies and voices), Ms. T (her body and voice), table groups, writer's notebooks	visceral response
Phone Check: I'm Writing a Book	iPhone, Notes app, Bobbie, <i>Maya Angelou</i> , students (their bodies and voices), Ms. T (her body and voice), me (researcher), table groups, independent reading books, movement, distraction	enacted agency

intensities were produced. In the final section, I then consider these intensities in light of the original tracing to discuss possibilities for reterritorializing schooled literacy assumptions for youth's engagement with literacy.

Through following these lines of flight, it became apparent that participants' interactions with each other, including the students in the study, Ms. T, material objects,

and the immaterial (ideas and beliefs) connected in particular ways to generate affective intensities that significantly impacted their literacy engagement and experiences. Each line of flight produced particular intensities. *Playful Eruptions*, for instance, highlights the daily encounters of students and their surroundings to prompt deviating moments of laughter, dance, and varied forms of peer-to-peer interaction. *Passing the Baton* follows one literacy event in which Ms. T charged students with writing an essay independently and the interrelated moments of chaos that produced spontaneous peer assistance. *Multimodal Evocations* highlights the multimodal impact in students' literacy engagement and the visceral response generated through this particular assemblage. Finally, *Phone Check: I'm Writing a Book* details the enacted agency (Kuby, 2017) produced through the entanglement of an emerging assemblage of Bobbie-iPhone-Notes App-Maya Angelou. Each of these lines of flight reterritorialized in ways that altered youth's real-time literacy engagements, which I will further explore in the following section. Perhaps even more importantly though, the affective intensities that were produced are valuable for thinking beyond the real-time literacy engagements to the potential shifting of schooled literacy, as detailed in the everyday tracing of literacy engagement in the classroom. These will be considered in the final section of this chapter as well as Chapter VI.

Lines of Flight: Indeterminate States of Potential

In this section, I draw on the data to think with the theory (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012) in mapping the assemblages that produced lines of flight through students' literacy

engagements in the classroom. Through detailing these lines of flight, I extend from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatics to focus on the intensities produced and consider the becoming-potential for further thinking about literacy research and practice.

Playful Eruptions

Students begin entering the classroom as the class period begins. More students are now rushing in, and there is movement and chatter all around. I hear lots of laughter. Rey is dancing throughout the room, and he begins play fighting with another male student. Two other students begin chasing one another, dodging between the table groups, smiling broadly all the while. A few other students are play wrestling by the pencil sharpener. (Field Notes, April 20, 2016)

Varied encounters of what I term *play* spontaneously occurred throughout the class time every day. Conceptions of play related to literacy learning has primarily been examined at the early childhood and early elementary levels, specifically in relation to the ways children's social worlds influence their engagement with literacy practices in the classroom (Dyson, 1993, 2001; Wohlwend, 2015). Yet less research focuses on the relationship between play and literacy learning at the late elementary and middle school levels. Play's relationship with literacy at this age level typically relates to online gaming (Apperly & Beavis, 2011; Gee, 2003; Kingsley & Grabner-Hagen, 2015) and is sometimes argued as more suited for after-school programs than in schools (Honeyford & Boyd, 2015). Leander and Rowe (2006), however, drew attention to the playful humor and interactions that often occur in unexpected moments in secondary classrooms.

As evidenced in the excerpt above, play ranged in activity, and while these encounters took place while entering the classroom, impromptu play erupted at different segments throughout the class time. For example, play fighting between students, both male and female, was a popular form of play. While not all students participated in this type of play, it occurred regularly in the classroom. In another instance, for example:

As students are working independently at their desks, Rey walks over to sharpen his pencil but stops short and begins play fighting with another student, whose seat is closest to the pencil sharpener. As that student stands up, they give a couple of slaps back and forth before laughing and calling an informal truce, and both boys then sharpen their pencils before returning to their seats. (Field Notes, May 10, 2016)

While sometimes this type of play occurred out of Ms. T's sight, she intervened when it became evident, and she felt it necessary:

Two boys make their way to the door and begin play pushing each other. Ms. T tells them to keep their hands to themselves. They continue pushing with grins on their faces. In a much louder voice, Ms. T tells them, "Stop! I'm not having any more of this." She turns to the whole class and states, "I'm tired of the boys putting their hands on each other." (Field Notes, May 10, 2016)

Fighting was but one mode of play in which students regularly engaged. Play also took form through dance, hand gestures, and laughter. The following excerpts offer a glimpse of such play:

As students are working independently on their readers' notebook responses, Jordyn and another girl do a dance in their seats and silently make hand gestures

to each other across the room. They laugh a little and then return to their notebooks. (Field Notes, May 10, 2016)

At another time during reading group:

Students are supposed to be reading independently. Ms. T is conferencing with Rey about his independent reading book. Meanwhile, Jordyn and her tablemate are whispering back and forth. Jordyn is even dancing a little in her seat. They are playing some little game by hiding from each other behind their books, and then peering out, smiling as they do so. (Field Notes, January 26, 2016)

Students' engagements in varied forms of play were prevalent during their ELA class. These forms of play emerged within, and also because of, the space of and lived experiences with the things that made up their ELA classroom. These networked connections and lines of flight evoked laughter, smiles, and a sort of entering into a different realm for just a moment.

At the front table, one girl has rolled up a set of papers and is looking at classmates through her "telescope." She is smiling and seems to enjoy catching people off guard with her telescope viewing. When she catches someone's eye, she waits for their acknowledgement and smile and then smiles in return. (Field notes, February 5)

These lines of flight created new territories of social engagement during class, typically veering from the purpose of lesson element and expectation (e.g. independent work, silent reading, IRE). In effort to keep students focused and on task, Ms. T worked to reterritorialize students to the expected engagement. For example:

It is still quiet while Ms. T is talking to the class about their assignment. She switches to the Microsoft Word view on the Smartboard and begins an example of how she is going to construct this paragraph. She speaks aloud as she types. She says what she is typing and also adds in an explanation of what she's doing. As she's talking and typing, some students' heads are down. A few are looking at the screen. Others are whispering or making gestures to fellow tablemates or peers across the room, sometimes laughing quietly. Ms. T looks up from her typing and says, "There is a lot of playing. What happens is that usually the people who are playing have lots of questions at the end and those who are focused are going to get it this first time. Give me a thumbs up if I have met the criteria for constructing this paragraph. For example, have I made a claim?"

It's quiet for a moment. Then, a student asks how he is supposed to know if that [what she has written] is the claim. She says that she already went over this and that means he wasn't listening. (Field Notes, January 20, 2016)

Playful lines of flight also included impromptu and informal chatter. What I simply termed as chatter throughout my field notes is actually quite complex, consisting of types of talk and physical interaction in which students engaged throughout each class period. These amounted to lines of flight, all producing different outcomes, some reterritorializing as quickly as they deterritorialized and others prolonging to great lengths. The following example is but one of many instances of informal chatter:

After another two minutes, a few students begin to chat. This is partly because one girl is up sharpening her pencil but takes a while to hold it, talk with some people near the sharpener, and empty out the container that catches the shavings from

the pencils being sharpened. Ms. T tells her to just throw the shavings away. The whole event, though, spurs on chatter throughout the classroom. Ms. T says, "It sounds like everyone is finishing up." She continues going around to check students' notebooks. Some students are chatting at table groups; one student is reading a chapter book. (Field Notes, January 20, 2016)

Ms. T worked to reterritorialize random student chatter usually by noticing it aloud, as she does here in this excerpt. At times, she also redirected students, moved students to new locations, or moved herself to a new location. For instance:

As Ms. T begins reading the excerpt from the article the students read together last week, students begin chatting all across the room. Ms. T quickly stops and says she understands why they got held in their previous class [before coming to her class]. Another student yawns loudly while one says something aloud. Various interruptions erupt across the room. Malcom makes some kind of noise with his mouth. She tells him to cut it out. He says, "What? The noise?" She replies, "Yes, the random noise you're making." He quickly jabs, "It's not random." (Field Notes, February 2, 2016)

Observing with a rhizomatic perspective in mind, I found the importance in the persistent nature of informal chatter is not so much about what students were talking about; rather, it is the nature of the exchanges. It was almost as if these were compulsive interactions. Talking, connecting, and interacting seemed to matter a great deal to them. Sometimes these were open conversations and at others they were more surreptitious, with varied volumes, ranging from yelling to whispering. Sometimes conversations had no sound at all, just mouths moving and eyes conveying supposed thoughts.

Much like the often-referenced water cooler in the work place, the pencil sharpener served as a gathering place for interaction. Sometimes it became a playground of sorts, offering a space for play, like one of the previous scenarios in which Rey began play fighting with another student before calling a truce and sharpening pencils. On another occasion:

Ms. T tells the students she is not checking Do Nows in their notebooks today, but they will be sharing aloud. After her announcement, there is a lot of movement in the classroom. Some of this movement consists of voices, some of physical bodies – turned around in chairs, flipping through notebooks, or putting notebooks in/pulling them from baskets, touching someone’s hair, walking to and from supplies – like the pencil sharpener, or tossing paper at the trash can. Suddenly there is a loud slap. The room gets uncomfortably quiet and movement stills. All attention turns to Rey and another boy, who are both standing by the pencil sharpener. Rey holds his face and Ms. T asks him what happened. “Did he slap you?” The boys erupt into laughter and say, “April Fools!” The rest of the class starts laughing. Ms. T says she does not think this is funny. The boys then go and sit down. (Field Notes, April 1, 2016)

The pencil sharpener also served as a destination, allowing students to choose their paths to and from, as one student did in the following excerpt:

One student starts walking back from sharpening his pencil at the pencil sharpener. He chooses to walk through the middle of the room, allowing him to pass by all table groups. Ms. T tells him to walk around the front (not through the

tables). He argues with her, and she tells him it makes no logical sense to cut through the tables that way. (Field notes, April 20, 2016)

Though a small object in the classroom, the pencil sharpener served as an informal gathering spot and impetus for movement, play, and chatter.

At any given moment, assemblages of play included students (and their hands, feet, bodily core, eyes, and voices), desks, spaces in the classroom (such as desks/table groups, the spaces between these, and the library), the pencil sharpener, and class materials, including books, paper, student journals, and students' perceptions of Ms. T's presence. All of these material and non-material things connected during playful lines of flight in particular ways that can be examined by turning attention to what was produced. From a rhizomatic stance, desire is the productive force that energizes real-time social life (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Playful eruptions produced socially charged intensities, such as play fighting, chatter, handshakes, dances, and peer-to-peer interactions, laden with smiles, humor, and attention-seeking actions. These affective intensities unintentionally worked to transform fixed learning spaces, such as table groups or the classroom library, into something else all together. At times the classroom and its defined, fixed spaces became a wrestling ring, a play yard, or a hang out spot. For example, the pencil sharpener provided a communal place, a common ground that was shared in a way different from the planned table groups. This space was not already imposed and could quickly morph from a functional place to ready a writing tool (that is, the pencil) to a hotbed of flurried interactions, verbal exchanges, and physical movement. These socially charged interactions often resulted in commotion, or perhaps more accurately expressed COMmotion, with the prefix COM defined as “‘with,’

‘together,’ ‘in association’, and [with intensive force] ‘completely’” (<http://www.dictionary.com>), creating a common ground distinct from the classroom yet still in the classroom. This is never stated or declared, but rather is *felt*. The very fact that these desires, intensities, are indeed felt produces a tension and pushes against the inevitable reterritorialization to the expected stability of the learning environment. While the socially charged interactions produced in these playful lines of flight worked to deterritorialize from the expected literacy engagement in the classroom, they were also produced in another classroom event that de/reterritorialized in a completely different way.

Line of Flight: Passing the Baton

Students’ desires to interact on multiple levels and in myriad ways sometimes evolved into other lines of flight that altered their engagements with literacy. One such deterritorialization occurred on a day in early March. I had arrived before class to check in with Ms. T and set up for the observation. We chatted for a bit, catching up on things. As it got closer to the start of class time, she informed me class would be a bit different on this day because they were trying to finish up the current unit before moving forward with test prep next week.

Ms. T: *The students need to write their essay in the next two days, so you’ll see, things may feel a little rushed because we need to get finished.*

Students begin entering the classroom, and it is business as usual. The Do Now is on the Smartboard.

Ms. T: *Today's Do Now is so quick. We are writing the parts of an essay, so jot them down quickly.*

From my field notes:

The daily routine continues, as students respond in IRE format to Ms. T's review of the Do Now. She then reads through the objective and announcements before displaying the notes for the day on the Smartboard: Planning Subtopics. Over the next few minutes, Ms. T and the students engage in an IRE-based review of possible subtopics they may choose to write about in their essays. Ms. T models and explains how the students can use the brainstormed list to choose subtopics and create an outline for their essays.

Ms. T: *For some of you, this might feel like a lot, but let me show you some students' work from the last class and show you that you can do it. It's possible for you to do this work today. I have faith in you guys and know that you can do it.*

When Ms. T finishes modeling how to do this, she tells them that today they are going to create their own outlines, similar to hers and the examples she has displayed. When they are finished, they are to let her know, and then they can get their computers to begin writing their essays. She tells them to get started.

Chaos ensues.

At least that is how I, the researcher, interpreted the following moments after Ms. T released students to begin working. More objectively, 5-10 students simultaneously began asking Ms. T questions about the assignment as she is addressing a student who refused to respond to her directions. Ms. T asks the student to step outside. The table

group behind me began having a discussion about someone calling someone else a derogatory term. Ms. T's act of releasing the writing activity to the students was like the passing of the baton and was symbolic of handing over responsibility for the creation of their essays.

In the midst of many different sounds, movements, and actions that continued throughout the duration of the student work time, I witnessed students' literacy engagement that evolved through an assemblage that produced intensities of spontaneous, unsanctioned peer-to-peer assistance.

From my field notes:

One student approaches Bobbie, sitting at Table 5 where I am also sitting, and asks, "What do we have to do?" Bobbie starts to explain and then says, "You know, from what we watched in the video." He responds, "I didn't watch the video. I was asleep." She sighs, "I can't help you then." He recants, telling her he did watch the video but does not know what to do. Bobbie starts explaining, "Okay, you need to start with an opening sentence." They begin talking quietly, sometimes playfully pushing each other or the papers away. The student abruptly walks away from Bobbie for a few minutes and then returns, asking her for help again.

Boy: Come on, Boobie.

Bobbie: Can you please call me Bobbie and not Boobie?

The boy laughs and walks away. Bobbie begins trying to set up her own document in Microsoft Word on the laptop Ms. T has provided. She asks the girl next to her for help, reasserting her feelings that she does not like to use the computer for typing out her

work. The girl laughs with Bobbie, who is playfully complaining about having to use the laptop, and helps her get the document ready. The boy returns to Bobbie's desk.

Boy: Boobie!

Bobbie's female tablemates now speak up.

"Yo, her name is Bobbie. I'm getting tired of you saying her name like that."

Another girl jumps in, "You need to say her name correctly. It's Bobbie."

The boy doesn't say anything, but hands Bobbie his notebook to show his progress and asks for help. Bobbie takes it and looks over it. She tells him first to erase the outline explanation he has copied from the Smartboard. She tells him he needs to actually write an introduction first (as opposed to copying "Introduction" from the outline example on the screen). Bobbie points up to the screen to show him the example, but he says he cannot see it. She tells him, "Come with me," and they walk up to the screen at the front of the room. Bobbie puts her finger onto the screen where it says "Hook Reader" and "Introduce title of documentary and narrator" on the outline Ms. T discussed and modeled. She takes 1-2 minutes to further explain [I can't hear all the details], and then the boy starts writing in his notebook, pressing it up against the screen as he writes. Bobbie remains beside him, monitoring, and points up to the screen a bit more as she interjects from time to time.

At the same time Bobbie has been helping the boy with his writing, two students, a boy and a girl at our table group, are in conversation about the essay. The male student, who had been sitting with his head in his hands for a few minutes, began the conversation by asking the female student what to do. She responded by looking to Ms. T's example on the Smartboard and explaining the assignment. She continues helping him, giving him

examples he could use for his subtopic. She tells him, “Like, rust in the pipes.” He writes ‘rest in the pipes’. “No!” she says with a smirk, “Not ‘rest,’ ‘rust’ in the pipes.” The boy laughs and says “Oh!” He then adds in another sub topic, to which she responds, “Yes, finally, now you’re thinking, stupid.” He smiles and laughs a little and keeps writing.

After an extended pause due to their independent writing, the girl asks aloud, “Ms. T, it’s five paragraphs, right?” From across the room, Ms. T, who has been continuously answering other students’ questions, quickly looks up and nods yes, and the boy loudly sighs, muttering, “Oh my gosh” and hangs his head down. The girl looks over to him and encourages him to move on to his third subtopic. She probes him about the documentary, reminding him of the fast fashion industry discussed in the video. He is making eye contact, nods his head, and then starts writing. After a minute or so, he puts in his headphones and then continues writing for several minutes.

During these minutes he was writing, I began noting other things happening in the classroom. Ms. T had been circling the room, quickly assisting students who called out for her. She often redirected students who were talking or out of their seats, as she had already explained that this was an independent assignment. Ms. T was open to students assisting one another, though, as long as they stayed on task and completed their work. My attention turned back to the boy at my table, who had just removed his headphones and broke the silence, all because he began to help the boy who Bobbie had also been helping. This boy, who only 20 minutes ago had no idea what to do for writing his essay, was now teaching another student how to construct the essay. He labeled the parts of the essay that the student still needed to complete (basically the paragraphs after the introduction). The other boy responded, “That’s it?” and began writing.

In this event, the assemblage consisted of the students, their desks, their writer's notebooks, class notes, the Smartboard, Ms. T, Ms. T's notes on the Smartboard, and the documentary. All of these elements acted as participants and in their connection, generated spontaneous peer assistance that both deterritorialized from the expected engagement in the writing of the and reterritorialized as an unsanctioned, collective event in which the students produced their essays in the midst of moving in and out of teacher-learner roles in an out of synch, disordered process. It is important to go beyond noticing their assistance and to notice the irrational happenstance of it all. What was meant to be an independent activity became a line of flight, carried off by affectively charged interactions based on different learning needs and experiences, which then reterritorialized as a collective engagement with ever-morphing roles.

In the assemblage, there is a transfer of roles and an enjoyment in doing so. Although Bobbie had a somewhat contested interaction with the boy who sought her help, she continued to offer guidance when he asked. At times throughout my observations, this boy had shown resistance to official help on assignments, particularly when interacting with an English Language Learner (ELL) teacher who sometimes worked with him in the classroom. On one occasion, I observed his resistance to the ELL teacher who was trying to guide him on a writing assignment. While he would not make eye contact or respond in words or action to this teacher, he *did* respond to his tablemates, who also tried to help him on the same assignment. When I asked Bobbie what moved her to continue helping him, even though he purposely mispronounced her name and approached her inconsistently, Bobbie replied:

Because I don't think its...because I know how it feels when you want help from a teacher and she like, in math sometimes, they can't help me. But I can ask a student and they help me, so I can understand.

Bobbie's educational experience with peer assistance, as a learner, seemed to serve as an intensity propelling her desire to offer help, as a teacher, to another. The assembled elements came together to produce bursts of spontaneous peer assistance that charged youth's engagement with literacy. The students did not set out to be 'teachers' or 'experts', or even 'novices' during their independent writing assignment, yet the circumstances moved them to act. The process was de/reterritorialized by the affective intensity of spontaneous peer assistance, which inherently altered students' literacy engagement with the essays.

Line of Flight: Multimodal Evocations

Heads are still down on desks. One student sticks his tongue out at another student. A female student begins filing her nails. Two students are talking, whispering back and forth.

I recorded these notes during an observation of the class notes portion of class. These beginning notes, however, are not necessarily specific to one particular day; they could be found for any class session throughout my field notes. There were many instances when students' bodies and cognitive attention seemed indifferent and potentially unengaged from the expected learning event. For example, heads might be down on desks with eyes closed or students' bodies might be completely turned away from Ms. T when she expected their engagement and response to be directed toward her

or the front of the room where the Smartboard was placed. In this particular scenario, Ms. T was leading the class in a discussion based on an article they had just read together that recounted *The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire* in New York City. While 4-5 students were very involved in the discussion, responding to the IRE format Ms. T often used, most remained seemingly distant and engaged in other activities. That is, until Ms. T presented the documentary *The True Cost* (Morgan, 2015).

From my field notes:

Ms. T begins the film. It shows a few white female models lining up for a fashion show. There is a sudden stillness in the classroom, feeling as though even the air has stilled. Students' eyes are fixed on the screen. One student audibly responds, "What the hell?" As the video continues, Ms. T prompts, "I want you to think about what Bobbie brought up, about the shift to take those jobs overseas." No heads are down anymore. All eyes are on the screen.

The narrator gives a startling statistic. "Wait." One girl responds aloud, as though trying to process in time. Ms. T pauses the video and repeats what the narrator said, telling them to think about this. Most students are jotting in their notebooks. The film continues, with music now playing in the background. One student at the back table group starts dancing in his seat. A few other students follow suit.

I noted in my field notes: *It's amazing the difference in how students are responding and interacting with their papers, pencils, eyes, focus, and screen compared to their engagement in other types of activities that usually take place in the classroom.*

Suddenly, Ms. T interjects, stopping the video, jarring the students from their engaged trance. "Okay, so we have to stop for today, but we'll come back to this

tomorrow.” I hear several “Ughhh!” responses throughout the classroom as someone flips the lights on.

The next day, Ms. T begins transitioning back to the film after the usual Do Now, objectives, and announcements. From my field notes:

Ms. T pulls up a slide on the Smartboard titled “Author’s Perspective: How the author feels about a subject.” She leads a discussion about how all texts are written from a certain perspective, even informational texts. Two students are involved in this discussion, with the rest remaining silent or seemingly distracted, for example, with heads down, eyes searching the room or looking down. Ms. T then asks the students to summarize what they know so far from the film, and then tells students to get ready to continue the film.

Once again, like yesterday, it gets quiet and all eyes are on the screen aside from the occasional writing in the notebook. The difference between body language, gaze, and noise is obvious, and very blatantly different, compared to the other activities that normally occur in the classroom.

Ms. T pauses the documentary for a moment after a female journalist reporting on the lack of labor laws overseas supporting fair wages and safe working environments smirks and laughs, stating that regardless, she still needs her smartphone. As she laughs, there are several gasps throughout the room. Ms. T pauses the documentary and addresses the class.

Ms. T: Let’s talk about that.

Malcom: That [what happened on the video] is disrespectful.

Another male student, sitting in the back of the room: *Wait. Can we replay that? She should have gotten fired after that.*

Ms. T: *Explain why you say that.*

Student: *Because the whole world is watching that. It's not funny that she's just laughing about that.*

Ms. T: *I'll replay it.*

Students' engagement with the documentary (including the content, images, sounds, and music) produced a line of flight that generated students' visceral responses. All of these assembled elements evoked felt emotions expressed through students' bodies (concentrated stillness, eyes open and focused on the screen) as well as their voices: *What the hell? Wait. Ugh! That is disrespectful.* This line of flight produced an intensified engagement I had not yet witnessed in the class. These intensities created a line of flight from the students' usual engagement, reterritorializing to the local norm with an affectivity that charged the discussion and learning event.

The visceral responses produced by the assemblage of engaging with the documentary (including the content, images, and sounds), the screen, and students worked to reterritorialize the typical lack of engagement to the expected engagement but in a different way, with an added intensity. Lines of flight work to deterritorialize from the expected, but they also always reterritorialize in some way. Sometimes reterritorialization is about returning to the same; perhaps no change was sought or accepted. Sometimes, though, the very act of reterritorializing produces the change. Such was the case for lines of flight produced by affective student responses to the

documentary shown in the classroom. In this vignette, students' visceral responses reterritorialized to the expected engagement with an added intensity.

In this assemblage, visceral response was produced between the screen, documentary, images, and sound. The students' engagement changed from the static, disembodied IRE format, all of which I had regularly observed until this day, to visceral responses and drastically different embodiment. This response aligned with the engagement expected of students, though it actually carried an affective quality not discussed or expected, shifting the tracing from neutrally affective to affectively charged. The connection between the documentary and its content to the students themselves produced an undeniable, affective intensity – a desire – unprecedented in my observations.

Line of Flight: Phone Check – “I’m Writing a Book”

Students' use of smartphones played into their everyday literacy engagements. I often noted these as *phone checks* in my field notes. It was not unusual for students to have their phones out (I'll continue to use the term phones, though to be clear, these were all smartphones). In the same academic year I conducted observations, the NYC DOE passed a cell phone policy that no longer banned cell phones in schools. While one mandate of the policy required students to keep all phones off and out of sight during the school day, the prevalence of phones was noticeable. Each class there were usually at least 3-5 phones visible on various students' desks. Sometimes students left these alone, just sitting, and other times they did a quick check. For example, students would quickly touch their phone, maybe open an app, use the keypad quickly, and then put the phone

back in place. Other times, students' usage was a bit more surreptitious, at times checking Instagram or snapping a group selfie with peers. During a few assignments in which students were on laptops connected to the Internet, they chose to use their phones to look up information rather than the computers. When observing them, I was surprised at this, considering they had laptops directly in front of them, but I think this speaks to their comfort with smartphones and their connectedness to them. Students' Smartphones became a part of the classroom assemblage, fluidly active at different times.

On one such occasion, what I identified as another phone check quickly assembled into an entirely different event. From my field notes:

Ms. T announces, "It's time to get your books for reading group time. You should begin reading independently."

Students are moving around the room. Ms. T helps two students get situated in their seats. She tells the class they will not be sitting in the library today (her classroom library) and to start reading independently at their desks.

Students' chatter continues throughout the room, while some students are sitting at desks, already reading silently. Others are sitting at their desks with their independent reading books lying closed in front of them. One student comes in through the classroom door and another responds with a shout. Ms. T tells the shouter to step outside. He says he is sorry, that the student came in unexpectedly. Ms. T tells him it is okay but to step outside. They step outside for about a minute and then return.

During this time, Bobbie moves from her seat at Table 6 to Table 3 (see Figure 5, Chapter 4), where Jordyn, Lydia and I are sitting. Ms. T is now helping students search through a large box of books behind her desk so they can choose new independent books

for the reading group time. Bobbie has her phone out with two books in front of her, both closed. She is engaged with her phone, looking at the screen and using the functions to access it. As she is doing so, Bobbie looks up at me, silently holding my gaze. After a few seconds, I break the silence and ask her, “What’s up?”

Bobbie: I don’t want to be here.

Me: Why not?

Bobbie: Because I don’t like this class. It’s boring.

Bobbie often exhibited this kind of reluctance in class. Throughout my field notes, I noted occasions in which Bobbie preferred to keep her head down on her desk or resist participation when called upon. When I asked her during an informal exchange about her feelings regarding the ELA class, Bobbie responded with an unsure shrug, stating, “since it [time in the class] is learning, it is not supposed to be fun and is not always what you want.”

After expressing her boredom, Bobbie resumes the use of her phone, which has remained in her hands during our brief verbal exchange. She sets the phone in front of her and begins flipping through one of the books, Maya Angelou, also in front of her (Figure 16). Jordyn has just gotten up to sit at the back of Table 4 as Lydia comes over to look at Bobbie’s phone. In response, Bobbie pulls it closer to her, obstructing Lydia’s view. Lydia takes the hint and walks away, leaving Bobbie and me at the table group.

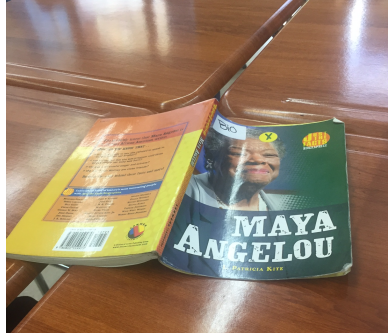


Figure 16. Maya Angelou text

I ask Bobbie if she would be willing to tell me about what she is doing on her phone. I remind her (as I told the students at the beginning of the study and tell them each time I ask them questions about how they are engaging with the human and non-human during class) that I am just curious about what she is doing and not in any way trying to stop what she is doing.¹

Bobbie pushes her phone (see Figure 17) a little closer to me and says, “I’m writing a book.”

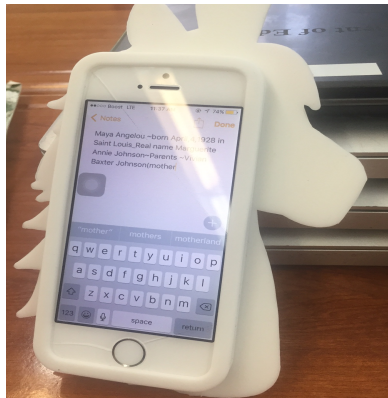


Figure 17. Bobbie’s Phone

She shows me her iPhone screen, which currently displayed the “Notes” app, where she has typed out a few notes from her reading of Maya Angelou for the book she was

¹ I was explicit about this during the study and remain explicit here in this text because I did not in any way want the students to think I was out to get them in trouble for being on their phones during class time. Even if they were not supposed to be on their phones, I reminded them that I was not the teacher and was truly curious to know more about what they were doing.

writing. Admittedly, I was a bit surprised by Bobbie's openness, response, and literacy engagement. I certainly was not expecting this, especially considering her usual attitude and (in)activity regarding literacy engagement in class. Even in this moment, she was supposed to be reading silently, since it was reading group time.

I ask her to tell me more about her book.

Bobbie: I wanted to start this book with different...with famous people, but I might add regular people in it, too.

I ask her to tell me more about this.

Bobbie: So, for example I am thinking Maya Angelou, Malcolm X or Madam C.J. Walker, with just their information and stories in it.

Me: So, is this something you're doing on your own?

Bobbie: Yeah, I like writing.

Me: But, is it for this class? Or just on your own?

Bobbie: Oh, no, just something I thought about and wanted to do.

She tells me more about the Maya Angelou book. "I'm going to read this one first and see if it makes the writing easier."

Bobbie's literacy engagement was ongoing in times and places I did not experience, but in this particular moment, a number of participating elements entangled to produce a particular assemblage:

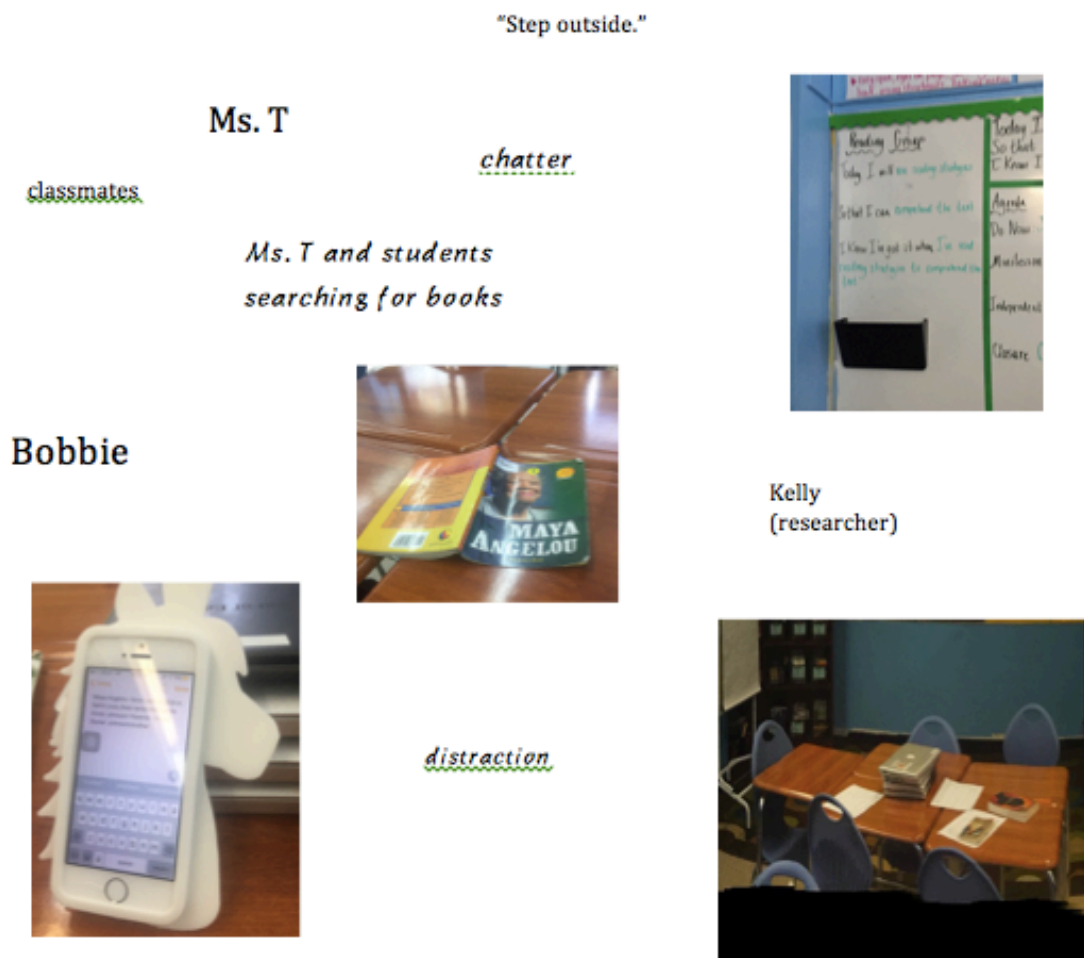


Figure 18. Assemblage of Bobbie's Literacy Engagement

The assemblaging of *Bobbie-iPhone-Notes app-Maya Angelou-distraction-Kelly-table group-noise- movement* suddenly became participants in the research assemblage. As discussed earlier in this chapter, it is not only these elements of the assemblage that matter for the analysis, but even more so, it is what happens *between* these elements (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007; Lenters, 2016) and examining what is produced by their intra-activity (Barad, 2007). For example, Bobbie-iPhone-Notes app-Maya Angelou merged into one assemblage. The iPhone was no longer a smartphone sitting on the desk and Bobbie was no longer a bored, disengaged, (non)reader. The assemblage produced an

incorporeal transformation, one of becoming-text, becoming-biographer, in that moment in time.

The interconnectivity of the assemblage participants produced an enacted agency, that is “the in-betweenness, togetherness, flows, and forces of human(s) and nonhuman(s)” (Kuby, Rucker, & Darolia, 2017, p. 356) to create new possibilities for Bobbie’s literacy engagement. Bobbie’s knowledge of and use of her iPhone prompted a multimodal response to her reading of *Maya Angelou* and other noteworthy African-American leaders. She mentioned Malcolm X and Madam C.J. Walker as potential contributors to the book she was authoring. Bobbie made a connection between these historical, African-American activists and seemingly connected herself to them as well. Bobbie’s particular literacy engagement emerged in this moment also because of the persistent distractions in the room: Ms. T asking a student to step outside for a private discussion, classmates searching for books to read, and noise and chatter throughout the room. Because of these distractions, Bobbie not only moved at her leisure throughout the classroom, but also found freedom to use her iPhone without attempting to hide her actions. While phones were permitted in the building, they were not supposed to be out during class; however, Bobbie clearly felt at ease using hers for her intended purpose during this reading group time. Though she did not like to type on a laptop (as expressed earlier in the chapter) and on other occasions, her ease with the phone played into the assemblage. Additionally, I was present during all of this and offered Bobbie an opportunity, albeit unknowingly, to share her work.

In the assemblage, the iPhone must also be considered as an active element. It is not just that Bobbie used the iPhone as a tool for multimodal response, but the iPhone

acted on Bobbie as well. It was as though the functioning and possibility from the phone invited her into an assemblage, a network of connections into a becoming of otherness. With this perspective, one must consider: how did the Notes app invite Bobbie to become as a writer? How did this intra-activity move to reconfigure literacy engagement in this moment in time?

Mapping this assemblage shows a line of flight propelled by enacted agency through the collusion of iPhone, the Notes app, Maya Angelou and her biography, distractions in the classroom, and, of course, Bobbie. This line of flight led to a becoming-other, for Bobbie and for the iPhone. Bobbie became more than a disengaged, bored, (non)reader; the iPhone was no longer a quick check but was becoming a living, emerging text. Bobbie openly discussed her ideas and activity with clarity and intention. This contrasted drastically with her usual demeanor during class, in which on various occasions I heard declarations of disappointment and witnessed a not so subtle disengagement with literacy. The question moving forward is how this deterritorialization that emerged into a transformative moment can be put into conversation with the territory of schooled literacy, particularly through attention to the difference that has been produced and to what might become. Enacted agency is an affective intensity that will be taken up in the following section, along with the other intensities discussed in the study, to work the rhizoanalysis toward a productive shifting of the territory of schooled literacy.

Putting the Tracing Back on the Map

A rhizomatic analysis of the data led me to map real-time assemblages, laying out lines of flight that de/reterritorialized from the tracing as identified in Chapter Four. This tracing described the expectations of ideal literacy engagement for youth in one, seventh grade English Language Arts class. A necessary aspect of the analysis is to put this tracing in conversation with the mapping to create a juxtaposition, leading to consideration for what has been produced out of the lines of flight in relation to the tracing, particularly in how they de/reterritorialized to the expected literacy engagement. In this sense, analytical attention turns to “difference...to describe how what has been moves in relation to what is now becoming” (Boldt & Leander, 2017, p. 411). Thus, while the lines of flight serve as discoveries from the study, the crux of the rhizomatic analysis is how the mapping spurs thinking and action in relation to the tracing.

Through the lines of flight of playful eruptions, passing the baton, multimodal evocations, and Bobbie’s phone/book, intensities were produced out of youth’s engagements with literacy. Playful lines of flight occurred throughout my observations and at varied times during class each day. While not overtly tied to literacy engagement, these lines of flight, carried off by chatter, play fighting, and handshakes and gestures, produced socially charged interactions in the midst of opportunities for literacy engagement. For example, these lines of flight occurred during the Do Now, class notes and the IRE discussion, independent work time, and independent reading time. Because these lines of flight veered from the expected engagement, Ms. T, drawing on standards, high-stakes testing, and her own pedagogical beliefs, worked to reterritorialize them to

the task at hand. The recurring reterritorialization highlights the work toward control over the type of social interactions that were getting out of control. As a body in the room, I felt this tension through Ms. T's persistent struggle to redirect these social and bodily interactions. Indeed, play as described in these lines of flight are often regarded as off-task, bad behavior, and irrelevant to the learning process. Typically, interactions like chatter, laughter, play, and surreptitious phone-checks may be disregarded as separate from youth's literacy engagement in a classroom, but a rhizomatic perspective seeks out the productivity in such irrational and unexpected forms of engagement.

The assemblage of spontaneous peer assistance also produced socially charged intensities, working to de/reterritorialize literacy engagement of writing an informative essay. While this line of flight seemed to veer from the expectation, and in a sense it did because students did not engage independently as expected, it also reterritorialized with an unanticipated interchange of teacher-learner roles. The engagement became an unsanctioned collective event, propelling students to shift roles and take up literacy engagement differently than expected. Also a reterritorialization, the assemblage of the documentary, including its content, images, music and sounds, and students' responses produced intensities of visceral response that disrupted the viewing of the documentary, moving Ms. T to pause and let students discuss, which then reterritorialized to engaging as expected, but with an added *felt* intensity.

During one reading group time, the assemblage of Bobbie-iPhone-Notes app-Maya Angelou produced a line of flight that demonstrated enacted agency. This assemblaging became agentic through the interconnectivity of bodies to produce Bobbie's multimodal response, merging her felt connection to Maya Angelou and other

historical African American activists to her response via iPhone/Maya Angelou/notes app. This line of flight moved Bobbie beyond resistance to a new form of literacy engagement in the classroom.

In putting the tracing of schooled literacy in this English Language Arts classroom in conversation with these mapped lines of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, the rhizoanalysis moves to what can become possible by examining difference. For this study, I have identified schooled literacy, socially constructed through the history of U.S. schooling and current imposition of neoliberal control, as the totalizing system that dominates normed assumptions of what youth engagement with literacy should look like in most public schools. To illustrate this claim, I began the rhizoanalysis by detailing the ways these norms played out in one seventh grade English Language Arts classroom. These everyday, recurring practices established the particular tracing, or ideal expectation for youth engagement with literacy, for this classroom and these students.

Mainstay elements of the tracing assumed youth engagement with literacy as an independent act to be taken up in prescribed ways. These were evident through the Do Now, class notes and IRE instruction, independent work time, and reading group time. These lesson elements were facilitated and implemented by Ms. T but came to be through a number of influencing factors beyond her, such as the NYC DOE, Common Core State Standards (CCSS), Ms. T's teacher education history and experience with the standards, and school mandates. High-stakes testing according to the CCSS and the local pressure to improve test scores also played into the expected literacy engagement in the classroom, which became evident through the mandated test prep unit.

Regardless of why varied elements were present, the students' engagement in the literacy-based lesson elements reflects adhering to particular schooled literacy practices. This includes, for example, following the ordered lesson sequence and engaging oneself accordingly (as opposed to playful interactions not related to the task at hand) or reading independently during reading group time (as opposed to having a cell phone out, or doing anything other than independent reading). Perhaps most glaringly obvious is that the expected literacy engagement does not privilege affective intensities, thus largely ignoring unsanctioned social, visceral, and multimodal forces.

Theories of change support the notion that sustained change to a seemingly fixed system must be gradual and occur over time working from the inside out. This idea aligns with Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) discussion of tree logic (i.e. tracing, transcendence) and rhizomal logic (i.e. mapping, immanence) in that one does not easily replace another; rather, it is useful to recognize the logic undergirding systems to instigate gradual change from within. Indeed, juxtaposing the logic of schooled literacy with the affective logic that produced intensities through youth's real-time engagement brings attention to the unsanctioned, felt engagement with literacy for youth in one English Language Arts classroom. In moving forward with the rhizoanalysis and discussion, I will discuss how this study's mapping might work toward the deterritorialization of the larger totalizing systems of schooled literacy and influencing factors, such as high-stakes testing and neoliberal control, and will explore what new possibilities are seen because of the rhizomatic analysis.

Chapter VI

POSSIBILITIES:

WHAT IS (ALWAYS) BECOMING POSSIBLE

The purpose of this study was to explore the rhizomatic functioning of youth's engagements with literacy in a 7th grade English Language Arts classroom. One affordance of a rhizomatic theoretical stance and analysis is the ultimate attention to deconstruction of a totalizing source, which in the case of my study, is schooled literacy and the marginalization of students of difference. Experimenting with rhizomatics is not about coming up with a 'right' or totalizing answer but is about opening up productive pathways of thought that might work to shift dominant structures that tend to regulate certain ways of thinking, and in the case of my study, engaging with literacy in a school space.

Taking up rhizomatics theoretically and methodologically was important not only for examining literacy as rhizomatic and exploring how these young students used literacy in expansive, affective ways but also for the emphasis on moving toward transformative change. How might this study and these de/reterritorializations of literacy practice shift the territorializing notion of schooled literacy? What change-potential is there moving forward, particularly for diverse students and considering affective

engagement as inherent to literacy learning? A rhizomatic methodology entails that these lines of flight cannot stand on their own; they only matter to the extent that they are used to deconstruct totalizing territories. The purpose of this study is not just exploring what youth are doing in the classroom, but even more so, using these realities to counter and nudge the imposed literacy territory to shift in more socially-just forms that better serve all children and youth.

In this final chapter, I draw again upon the tracing and the mapping produced throughout the study. In doing so, I return to the research questions that guided the study and discuss the findings in light of the relevant literature on literacy research from a rhizomatic perspective and in conjunction with/against the current territory of schooled literacy within which these findings exist. I also discuss implications for practice, research, and policy. I then discuss limitations of the study, followed by final thoughts to conclude the chapter and dissertation.

What Possibilities do Lines of Flight Produce?

The research questions guiding my study were:

1. In what ways are youth expected to engage with literacy in the 7th grade English Language Arts classroom?
2. In what ways do youth's engagements with literacy deterritorialize from or reterritorialize to schooled literacy practices?
 - a. What possibilities might these produce for youth in schools?

Discussing the possibilities produced by the lines of de/reterritorialization is, in my perspective, a continuation of the rhizoanalysis. By taking this stance, I believe the analysis is always in process, always becoming. As I continue my work in the field, I

predict my thoughts, experiences, and new data will continue to inform this analysis and the subsequent research that will follow. For now, I will further discuss the lines of flight from the previous chapter in light of relevant literature, particularly drawing upon a recurring element present in each de/reterritorialization.

As detailed in Chapter Five, after identifying the tracing, or youth's expected literacy engagement in the classroom, I mapped lines of flight and reterritorialization by following real-time occurrences in the classroom. In doing so, I identified the networked assemblages that worked to produce particular intensities or desires. Youth engaged in multiple forms of playful interactions throughout the English Language Arts class. These practices occurred unexpectedly and played into the real-time literacy teaching and learning in the classroom. Spontaneous peer assistance also emerged, producing de/reterritorializations of the expected literacy engagement, altering youth's processes of engagement in constructing informative essays. Visceral response, an intensity produced by multimodal evocations, affectively charged youth's engagement with literacy learning through interactions with a video documentary. This affective intensity altered students' engagement with the content and reterritorialized the expected engagement in enhanced ways. Finally, through a unique assemblage including Bobbie and her Smartphone, a line of flight produced enacted agency that shifted Bobbie's expected engagement during the independent reading time.

Like others in the field researching literacy as affectively charged and produced through networked assemblages (Kuby & Rucker, 2015; Leander & Boldt, 2013; Lenters, 2016; Phillips & Willis, 2014), the lines of flight produced in the ELA classroom demonstrate the affective intensities present in literacy engagement. For example, the

assemblage of multimodal evocations highlights the ways in which students' responses to the documentary were sometimes visceral and emerged in a way that cannot be contained by language. Rather, these responses evoked feelings and tensions in the room that were not anticipated but contributed to the students' literacy engagement. Conceptualizing literacy—and engagement with literacy—as rhizomatic allows for an understanding of such affective intensities as inherent to literacy learning in schools.

Examining the rhizomatic workings of literacy and youth's engagement with literacy in an ELA classroom was central to my research study. While some exploring literacy in this way identify text-centrism and design-oriented approaches influenced by literature on multiliteracies and New Literacy Studies as a central problem (Leander & Boldt, 2013; Wargo, 2015), I argue instead against the sociohistorical and neoliberal influences on schooling in general, and literacy, in particular, thus leading me to recognize the controlling forces of schooled literacy over the ways in which literacy learning and engagement is normalized in schools.

In explaining schooled literacy as the dominant territory that holds assumptions for the ways in which youth are measured and valued in schools, I intentionally examine deterritorializations produced through affectively charged assemblages in the school setting while also putting this in conversation with the territory of schooled literacy. I continue this approach into the implications based on this study (see the following section). I believe doing so extends the transformational aim intended through a rhizomatic approach to literacy theory and research. In other research, assemblage theory and lines of flight have been taken up, but often this has not occurred in schools or has not connected back to the dominant territories such lines of flight seek to disrupt. My

rhizomatic analysis intentionally included schooled literacy as the tracing and then examined the ways in which lines of flight produced affective intensities that move us to consider possibilities for taking up literacy learning differently in schools.

Each line of flight in my analysis produced different affective intensities that are important to consider for how youth engage with literacy moment-by-moment, assemblage-by-assemblage. As I reread these lines of flight in relation to schooled literacy and the assumptions of an ideal literacy learner in Ms. T's classroom, a recurring element continued to surface; that is, the assemblages and lines of flight all emerged through forms of unsanctioned engagement.

Literacy researchers have called attention to unsanctioned literacy practices in varied ways. Dyson (1993; 1997; 2003; 2008), for example, has extensively examined childhood culture and documented children's writing practices in relation to in-school literacy instruction. In doing so, she described children's official worlds of literacy curricula, comprised of the schooled literacy norms by which children should engage in writing. This official world is very similar to the tracing I discussed throughout previous chapters. In contrast, Dyson also detailed children's unofficial worlds, that is "the situated nature of children's writing" (Dyson, 2008, p. 154). These included the use of language to construct social worlds (Dyson, 1993) and incorporating popular culture into conversations, play, and writing (Dyson, 1997; 2003), thus drawing attention to the out of school resources children draw upon to inform their identities as writers and meaning-makers.

Dyson (2008) argued for literacy curricula that more readily draws on children's unofficial worlds, which would position children as key players in transforming the

current dependence on ‘the basics’ that characterize dominant norms of literacy instruction. Her positioning of children's unofficial worlds as key for transformation is similar to my argument for sanctioning the unsanctioned in relation to youth's engagement with literacy in school classrooms. However, a key distinction is attention to the affective intensities that are inherent to literacy engagement. As I have discussed, affective intensities refer to what is produced through an assemblage, that is, the interconnection of human and non-human social elements in a given moment. For example, through the assemblage of Bobbie-iPhone-Maya Angelou-Notes app, an enacted agency was produced. A rhizomatic perspective shifts subjectivity and agency from being solely about a person to agency becoming possible through the intra-activity of an assemblage (Kuby, 2017).

A rhizomatic perspective also shifts the lens from focusing primarily on the social and cultural resources that inform unsanctioned practices (or unofficial worlds) to focusing on in-the-moment production (which may indeed connect to social and cultural resources but are not the primary focus), which includes the unexpected and sometimes unexplainable, such as the moments of play, spontaneous peer assistance, and visceral response I detailed in other lines of flight.

In work focused on older children, literacy scholars have identified and analyzed youth's unsanctioned literacy practices. Moje (2000) detailed the literacy practices of gang-related youth, which she referred to as “alternative, unsanctioned, and nonschooled forms of representation” (p. 661). Such unsanctioned practices included graffiti writing, style of dress, and hand signals as well as forms of written communication, such as poetry and journal writing. Through exploring youth's use of these practices, Moje

argued that these were youth's ways of constructing their identities, connecting to family and community members, and positioning themselves in relation to other people. Others have equated unsanctioned practices with out of school practices, such as zining (Guzzetti & Gamboa, 2004) and rap (Weinstein, 2006). These practice perspectives are important for understanding youth's rich textual abilities and resources as well as how these play into identity construction and meaning-making. Yet, the lines of flight in my analysis shift the focus from identifying and examining practices to identifying and examining the unsanctioned intensities and desires that produced assemblages in certain ways. I argue these are valuable to consider because they draw attention to the emergent and unfolding nature of engagement with literacy.

For example, in examining youth's rap writing, Weinstein (2006) focused on aspects of pleasure, including the ways youth felt connected to rap as a craft (e.g., Discourse membership, the ways they constructed their identities and social positioning, and the ways it allowed them to play). Her attention to pleasure is similar to my work in that she connected to engagement with learning. In doing so, she argued for attention to practices, such as rap writing, that youth are deeply connected to and moved by, especially youth who are typically disengaged in school. My rhizomatic perspective extends this attention to pleasure by also connecting to engagement, but recognizing engagement as affectively produced, meaning it may include identifiable practices but will emerge in unpredictable ways.

While the literature on rhizomatics and literacy has mainly focused on literacy as an emergent process produced through affective intensities, my analysis moves me to consider how unsanctioned forms of engagement can be thought of in relation to play, the

peer-to-peer learning process, visceral response, and enacted agency. Each of these intensities was produced through assemblages that emerged through moments of unsanctioned engagement. By unsanctioned engagement, I mean localized instantiations of production (moving, interacting, becoming) in the classroom. Such engagement is not ordained but rather flows out of youth's desires as they form networks with others (human and non-human).

I believe such engagement is inherent to who youth are and who they are becoming. If we see desire as productive, change is always happening. This is true for their engagement, which plays into their experiences and how they are shaping and being shaped by those experiences. In situating youth this way, I recognize students' becoming as happening in-the-moment and always forming. How they are engaging with literacy in the present is just as important as how they may engage in any future tense. Because of this, how educators and researchers understand literacy learning and one's engagement with literacy is extremely important for youth's experiences and success in schooling.

Without this qualifier, that of *unsanctioned*, this discussion would be completely different. This is evidenced by putting the tracing back on the map and following these lines of flight. Forms of play, peer assistance, visceral response, and enacted agency are distinguished from the expected forms of literacy engagement because they were unsanctioned. For example, the play produced in the classroom was sporadic, unprompted, and sometimes nonsensical. Even more so, it flowed in response to moment-by-moment living and doing in the classroom, not according to what had already been territorialized, but according to productive desire in that moment. This is distinct from

moments of structured play, which did occur from time to time in the classroom and was characterized more as a ‘break’ or ‘reward’ from the expected literacy engagement.

In fact, all of the lines of flight share the common aspect of *unsanctioned*. The peer assistance, visceral response, and enacted agency all came to be in unstructured ways. For example, collaborative activities involving peer-to-peer interactions were a regular part of the classroom. These activities were preplanned and followed a specific format as set by Ms. T. These types of social play and assistance were ordained, planned, and sanctioned. Yet, moment-by-moment assemblages produced lines of flight driven by intensities that were unsanctioned and that transformed the literacy engagement that occurred.

Historically, sanctioned forms of engagement have at times been discriminatory, whether or not stakeholders (such as school and district leaders, teachers, policy makers) knowingly enact such marginalization. This is one reason why notable scholars, such as Freire (1970) argue teaching as a political act. The persistent problem of imposed control reflects power structures that typically reflect middle class, European American values, thus marginalizing students who do not adhere to such forms of control.

This moves me to consider: How might *sanctioning the unsanctioned* redistribute power relations in more just and equitable ways for all students as they engage in learning in schools? Where might *the unsanctioned* take us in the literacy classroom, a place that is traditionally and currently a very sanctioned, controlled space? I am not suggesting we begin naming specific unsanctioned practices to sanction; rather, I am calling attention to processes of engagement and the affective intensities inherent to varied practices. By choosing to focus on forms of engagement, I recognize the

complexity in sanctioning unsanctioned forms of engagement (i.e., it is not about determining a fixed definition to what is ‘sanctioned’ and ‘unsanctioned.’ Doing so would create a binary that contradicts the fluidity and emergence inherent to the rhizomatic theory and thinking for which I have argued). In considering what it might look like to *sanction the unsanctioned*, maintaining a rhizomatic stance is essential. In the following section, I explore what such an approach might look like, particularly for teachers and implications for practice.

Implications: Practice, Research, and Policy

Implications are also an extension of the analysis, which from a rhizomatic stance is never final. The purpose of the rhizomal emphasis of putting the tracing back on the map is to examine the possible shifting of the tracing. How might the tree be uprooted, even in a small way? This wondering leads me to consider possibilities for literacy teaching and learning in schools, educational research, and policy. My aim in putting forth these possibilities is focused by attention to social justice in the teaching of our youth, particularly youth who are historically and commonly underserved by the American public school system such as the Black and Latino youth who were involved in my study. By drawing upon rhizomal logic, that is the mapping of everyday social life, the totalizing notions of schooling that serve as an injustice to many youth might be countered through deconstruction.

The lines of flight examined in this study (including the theoretical and methodological approaches that produced these), and the possibility of ‘sanctioning the

unsanctioned' have implications for educational practice, in general, and literacy practice, in particular, as well as research and policy. To discuss these, I draw on the concept of *rootedness* (Ongaro & Johnston, in press) as a way to think about transformation in schools. Rootedness is a play off the functioning of rhizomal roots, characterized by emergence and an always-forming nature (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Yet, anything with roots carries the dominant perception of being fixed and firmly planted to a certain way of doing things. By using the term *rootedness* (which carries an assumption of deep, fixed roots) toward rhizomatic aims, a tension is created. In this way, rootedness draws on the idea of working within and against (Derrida, 1972/1982), thus acknowledging the system within which practice and research exists, i.e. working within, while also valuing the local dimension and contextualized needs, i.e. working against. Rootedness responds to the neoliberal conditions that infiltrate systems, such as education, literacy, and research, and the ways in which these conditions often control local possibility that may more equitably serve the very people who are a part of that system. Rather than expect top-down replicas for local context and cultures, as though there is a globalized transcendence to be reached, rootedness embraces the map in-the-making, privileging local roots of growth and flow. The ultimate purpose in conceptualizing rootedness through the rhizome is looking to what becomes possible, namely the local possibilities that emerge and have the potential to be actualized rather than dismissed amid top-down policies and agendas.

Like the interconnectedness of a network, rootedness picks up speed and transformation becomes possible when multiple human and non-human participants interact with an understanding of working within/against. As Figure 19 demonstrates,

implications for multiple stakeholders should be considered when considering how a rootedness approach might contribute to educational change.

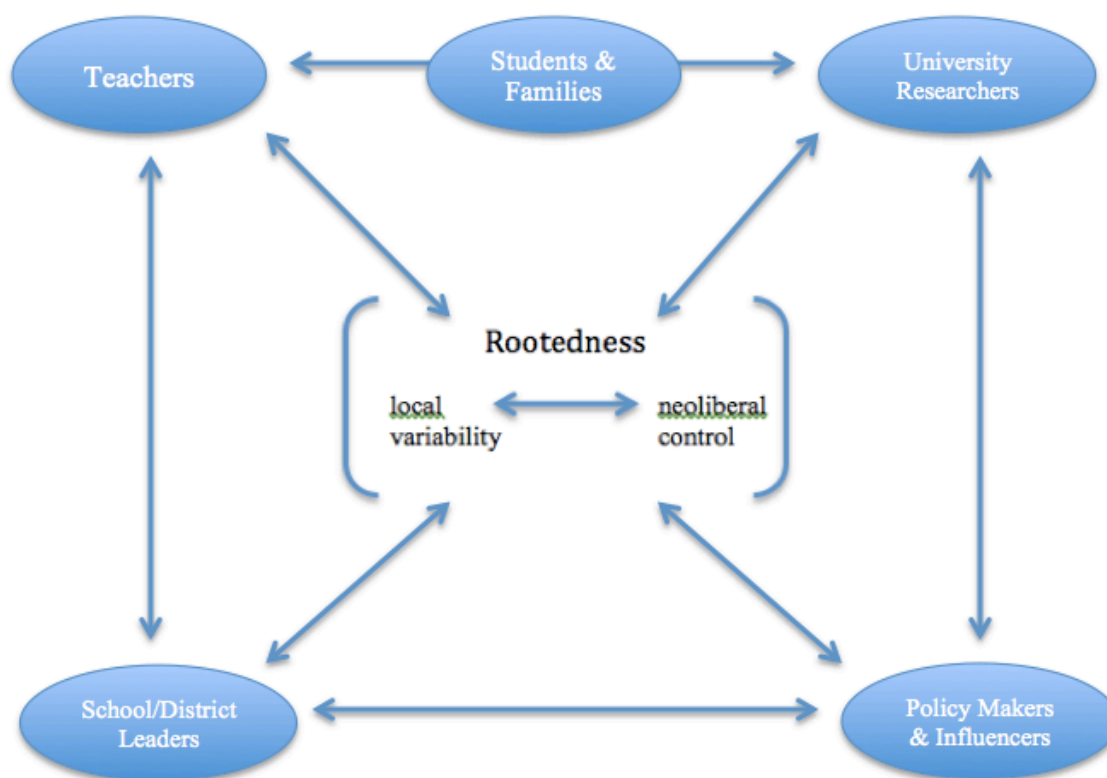


Figure 19. Multiple stakeholders vital to a rootedness approach in local schools.

As I discuss implications, I recognize the complexity of such an approach as rootedness. For example, in these implications I am operating on the assumption that all stakeholders have agreed on such an approach. This is important to recognize because it would take a shared vision and commitment by stakeholders to engage in the transformational aims that rootedness addresses through practice, research, and policy. I do not presume these implications are “the answer” to educational change and literacy transformation, but I offer these implications as suggestions for how we might think about potential change moving forward.

Implications for Practice

What might become possible when teachers *sanction the unsanctioned* in relation to youth's literacy engagement, and how does this approach work within/against? The data from this study provide starting points from which to consider. For example, assemblages—that is, networks of encounters and intra-activity—produced affectively charged moments of play, peer assistance, visceral response, and enacted agency that deterritorialized literacy engagement at particular moments in time. While these lines of flight were not planned or intentional, they occurred. Allowing lines of flight to emerge as students engage with literacies diffuses the control of schooled literacy that dominates the ideal expectation of a literacy learner in the classroom. Such diffusion encourages literacy engagement that is less controlled and more in tune with students' affective engagement. In this sense, literacy learning becomes more about the students themselves than about a standardized process.

For instance, the students' moments of spontaneous peer assistance, though seemingly chaotic, disorganized, and at times off-task, came about because students journeyed through the process of learning to write for informational purposes. Their journeys as informational writers have not ended, yet these affective-filled moments contributed to their *becoming* as readers, writers, and thinkers. The process, and the way the students engaged with writing tools, class notes, and understandings of their tasks was different for each student, but an unsanctioned perspective allows teachers to value such differences.

A beginning step in sanctioning the unsanctioned would be to take up a rhizomatic approach to processes of learning. This approach values difference, sees

students and their learning as always in a becoming state (always evolving), and encourages the intra-activity inherent to networked encounters. Such networks produce affective intensities that teachers can value and encourage in the classroom, which in turn leads teachers to valuing and encouraging all students in their classrooms, especially those that are traditionally othered due to differences of ability, race, or class, to name a few.

Teachers could strategically choose opportunities to try this approach. For instance, rather than expecting students to follow a fixed path to completing a certain task, allow for lines of flight as students journey through the process. This could mean a great many different things depending on one's classroom, but could include encouraging student decision-making and choice, unplanned peer-to-peer interaction, spontaneous affective engagement (such as laughter, movement, visceral response), or intra-activity with varied modalities and materials. Similarly, Kuby and colleagues (2015, 2017) have encouraged young children to intra-act with one another, varied materials, and multiple presentation formats to become as writers in a classroom writer's studio. In doing so, they found that children who struggled with traditional writing at the beginning of the school year began to engage in the writing process when allowed to incorporate a variety of materials and modes. Additionally, they found that students performed better on the writing portion of their district assessment, noting

they developed their ideas with details. Many formatted their story with a purposeful beginning and ending, along with specific and descriptive words, conventional spelling and punctuation. The opportunity to act as multimodal users did not seem to limit their potential when asked to write in a conventional format. (Kuby, Rucker, & Kirchhofer, 2015, p. 415)

Sanctioning the unsanctioned in literacy learning offers potential for working within and against the totalized system of schooling in a productive way with potential transformation for the conceptualization of literacy learning in schools as well as the valuing of students and their learning processes.

One problem with addressing these implications solely toward teachers is the discrepancy between how teachers are educated and how they are positioned in traditional public school classrooms. It is a troubling time for teachers who are completing higher education programs increasingly focused on issues social justice and teaching practices that reflect this but then enter schools whose primary focus is elsewhere. For instance, many university accreditation programs require an emphasis on social justice and equitable practices; for literacy educators, this may mean the conceptualization and teaching of literacy as sociocultural, multimodal, and affective. Yet, the neoliberal bottom-line of scores and literacy learning defined by technical definitions of reading and writing create tension for teachers who have experienced literacy as otherwise.

A conundrum results: should teachers draw on their higher education and training or do they adhere to their school's expectation and possibly, mandate? After all, they are employees of the school district and signed a contract agreeing to the district and school terms. This speaks to the shortcoming of literature that suggests teachers should intentionally subvert district and school mandates. I understand the intention of these suggestions, but it places teachers and school leaders at odds, resulting in a myriad of problems. It is troubling that such a tension exists and consequently erodes youth's daily

experiences, including how they are positioned and controlled in the classroom. This is a prime example of teaching, and education, as a political act.

Rather than only focusing on teachers, a networked approach is necessary when considering implications for practice. School and district leaders are equally as important in the rootedness approach. These leaders must commit to goals that reflect rootedness, particularly in how they value their local context, students, and teachers. For example, if teachers seek to sanction the unsanctioned in their approach to teaching literacy, there must be a space for teachers' voices and decision-making regarding curricular approaches and then actual support for the enactment in such an approach. This entails being aware and up front with stakeholders, such as teachers, regarding the imposed neoliberal interests. For instance, instead of assuming high-stakes testing as the learning standard and creating mandates based on such a norm, consider localized interests and needs in light of neoliberal interests. Initiate a space for dialogue regarding such needs and interests. This approach privileges the reflexive practice discussed for teachers, but affects multiple stakeholders, such as school and district leaders.

Implications for Research: Rootedness Research

Implications for research are two-fold. First, research efforts should include multiple stakeholders who have invested interests in local issues and productive change. Second, research should focus on these local issues while also keeping the larger, sociopolitical landscape in mind. To further discuss these implications, I will expand on Rootedness Research (RR), a research approach introduced by Ongaro & Johnston (in press), and the RR framework.

At the heart of RR is the aim to respond to the neoliberal forces that impose global ideals that often counter, ignore, or discount everyday local realities. Thus, RR offers a research process that embraces, supports, and protects local possibilities while concurrently working within/against these forces. This results in an intentional research response to the ways local experiences and realities interact with cosmopolitan values and policies.

Building from the concept of rootedness, RR functions according to the rhizomatic principles of connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying rupture, mapping, and tracing (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The first four of these principles undergird the commitment to value varied stakeholders and the emphasis on co-creation and collaboration. Also fundamental to the process, RR offers a way to use Deleuze and Guattari's notion of tracing and mapping to evaluate the local (like the lines of flight discussed in this dissertation) and analyze with neoliberal realities in mind. The idea is to recognize it is not productive to ignore these forces, as if research findings exist outside of these imposed ideals. The following framework offers integral steps for conducting RR.

Rootedness Research Framework.

1. Gather varied stakeholders, including school professionals (teachers, administrators, etc.), students, parents, professional researchers (e.g., university professors), community leaders, and any other interested and willing stakeholders, to establish consensus on key issues of concern. An outcome of this step should be the co-creation of a manageable number of research questions in relation to the identified issues. Varied

(and even opposing) stances on these key issues should be acknowledged and recorded.

2. Create multiple research squads. Each squad should include a mix of stakeholders (e.g. at least one professional researcher per squad, at least one student per squad, etc.) who share a common position on the identified key issues. Multiple squads are valuable for purposefully incorporating a breadth of input and diverse researcher subjectivities.
3. Research squads should collect and tentatively analyze data in parallel. This step allows for research questions to be approached from multiple positions, thus highlighting the rhizomal functioning of connectivity, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and asignifying rupture. This step also aims to reduce the tendency to rely on one centralized stance in the research process and instead open up analysis and evaluation to multiple stances.
4. Research squads come together to discuss findings, particularly in relation to how these incorporate, resist, or change globalized imposition (i.e. put the tracing back on the map). The outcome of this step should be to arrive at an actionable conclusion based on local realities as well as sociopolitical factors and develop a plan for ongoing evaluation. In this way, the RR process yields an immediate plan in regard to the key issues (i.e. aspect of the school program) and also establishes a system that discourages a dismissal of minoritized positions.

While the RR framework is still tentative, I believe it holds promise for a research approach that both includes diverse stances and values local realities to recognize, critique, and morph imposed neoliberal forces, particularly related to schooling issues, such as literacy education. Further, I believe RR creates and prioritizes a closer link between research, practice, and activism, offering a research approach that bites with the political teeth Martin and Kamberelis (2013) advocated for when discussing rhizomatic implications for research. Recognizing that neoliberalism is advanced through economical, cultural, and political networks (Ball, 2012), RR empowers the proposed stakeholders and squads to resist through networks of communication, participation, and sociopolitical change. RR as a form of political activism works rhizomatically to create lines of flight in the midst of global assumptions that hold potential to shift how such assumptions play out in local contexts.

Implications for Educational Policy

These implications and possibilities are important because they offer one way to productively seek out alternative approaches to practice and research. This comes at an exceptionally unique and strange time with persistent emphasis on high-stakes testing, national standards that permeate curricular decision making in ways that marginalize culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students, continued neoliberal infiltration that has coopted learning for the profit of corporate interests, and most recently, a controversial appointment by the Trump administration of Secretary of Education, Betsey DeVoe. This appointment has put a spotlight on school vouchers and school choice, essentially threatening public education.

This assault on public education is raging, and many stakeholders want to push back. Thus, policy makers and policy influencers must consider options for change. A rootedness approach would be strengthened through collaboration with policy makers. Specifically, universities and schools of education (and the researchers and professors who are integral to these) and public school district leaders should be seen as resources and potential collaborators to policy makers and influencers. Such collaborations should look to a variety of research methodologies that represent varied interests to work toward equitable and just changes that serve the public.

Limitations of the Study

Reflecting on limitations of the study is important for being as transparent as possible, but also for considering my work moving forward. Just as my rhizomatic stance views things as always in process, so I understand my work as a researcher as always becoming; thus, recognizing limitations of the study are productive for moving forward.

To begin, I acknowledge the limitation of the rhizomatic stance from which I worked, particularly in examining the data from a racial and ethnic perspective. This was not lost on me throughout the study, especially conducting the study in a school in Harlem. In my reading of Deleuze & Guattari (1987), I find they do not often distinguish forms of 'difference.' For them, difference consists of social reality veering from or in tension with the dominant expectation of social life. Thus, I focused on *difference* in the sense of activity that veered from the normed expectations of what a literacy learner should look like or how he/she should engage as a literacy learner. Drawing on

rhizomatics, I explored how affective intensities emerged through networks of relations and de/reterritorialized literacy learning in the classroom.

However, other theoretical approaches, such as sociocultural or critical race theory, would allow for more direct focus and interpretation on issues of race and sociocultural matters. While I did discuss the ways in which control over students is often racialized and emphasized over marginalized students, I believe a more thorough lens could be taken up by expanding the rhizomatic framework I used. In future research, I plan on incorporating the aspects of rhizomatic theory and methodology with others that open up room for such interpretations and discussions.

Additionally, as I discussed the lines of flight produced in the data, I felt limited by relying on the linearity of language. In theorizing literacy as rhizomatic, I privilege affective intensities as inherent to literacy engagement. Yet, I wonder how such affective intensities might be better taken up by researchers in such analyses. This is a wondering that continues to linger and one that I hope will influence how I play and (re)present data in the future.

Finally, I believe the rhizomatic approach as I outlined in Chapters One and Three could be strengthened in future endeavors. I would adapt the methodology to engage human participants more intentionally, taking up the Rootedness Research approach suggested in the implications for research. For example, methodologically I made a choice to limit lines of flight to students' engagement with literacy in the classroom, but in doing so, I intentionally left out Ms. T's lines of flight. Regarding curriculum, she made decisions that could have been mapped and discussed in relation to the tracing of what was expected of her, including how she should expect students to engage with

literacy. Additionally, I did not include Ms. T or the focal students in analysis of the data. I believe including this as a part of the methodology would allow for a real-time reflection of how events were taking place and being mapped, what these meant in relation to the tracing, and potential ongoing adaptation to explore intentional efforts deconstructing and challenging the tracing. This would entail much more involvement with key stakeholders and community members, which would require approval to incorporate such discussions and research curriculum in class. Though these obstacles are not always easily cleared, I believe it a worthwhile consideration for future research.

Always Becoming: Not So Final Thoughts

The conclusion of this dissertation serves as an impetus for my anticipated future work in the field of literacy education. This study of rhizomatics in relation to literacy and methodology has generated possibilities for practice and research that I look forward to pursuing through collaboration with educational stakeholders who also aim for transformative change. For me, this work is so very important because it recognizes that things have not always been, will not always be, and are always already becoming. This research privileges intensities, and it will take intensities—intense interrogations, intense efforts, and affectively charged responses—to spark movements of educational change with the aim of creating more socially just learning opportunities in schools.

REFERENCES

- Alvermann, D. E. (2000). Researching libraries, literacies, and lives: A rhizoanalysis. In E.S. Pierre & W.S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (114-129). New York: Routledge.
- Alvermann, D. (2006). Ned and Kevin: An online discussion that challenges the 'not-yet adult' cultural model. In K. Pahl & J. Rowsell (Eds.), *Travel notes from the new literacy studies: Instances of practice* (39-57). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Apperley, T., & Beavis, C. (2011). Literacy into action: Digital games as action and text in the English and literacy classroom. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 6(2), 130-143.
- Armbruster, B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2001). *Put reading first: The research building blocks for teaching children to read*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.
- Au, K. H. (2007). Culturally responsive instruction: Application to multiethnic classrooms. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 2(1), 1-18.
- Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (2000). Literacy practices. In D. Barton, M. Hamilton, and R. Ivanic (Eds.), *Situated literacies* (7-15). New York: Routledge.
- Bitz, M. (2004). The comic book project: Forging alternative pathways to literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 47(7), 574-586.
- Black, R.W. (2005). Access and affiliation: The literacy and composition practices of English-language learners in an online fanfiction community. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 49(2), 118-128.
- Brass, J. J. (2008). Local knowledge and digital movie composing in an after-school literacy program. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 51(6), 464-473.
- Brown, R. N., Kuby, C. R., & Carducci, R. (Eds.). (2014). *Disrupting qualitative inquiry: Possibilities and tensions in educational research*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Burman (2015). <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2015/commissioner-elia-identifies-144-struggling-and-persistently-struggling-schools-begin>
- Burnett, C., Davies, J., Merchant, G., & Rowsell, J. (Eds.). (2014). *New literacies around the globe: Policy and pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.

- Calkins, L., Ehrenworth, M., & Lehman, C. (2012). *Pathways to the Common Core: Accelerating achievement*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Campano, G., Ghiso, M. P. , & Sánchez, L. (2013). “Nobody knows the... amount of a person”: Elementary students critiquing dehumanization through organic critical literacies. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 98-125.
- Cazden, C. B. (2001). The language of teaching and learning. *The language of teaching and learning*, 348-369.
- Christenbury, L., Bomer, R., & Smagorinsky, P. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of adolescent literacy research*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Chun, C. W. (2009). Critical literacies and graphic novels for English-language learners: Teaching *Maus*. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(2), 144-153.
- Cole, L. (2009). Mapping a rhizomatic ecology of reading. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* [Online], 5(1), 32-47.
- Colebrook, C. (2002). *Understanding Deleuze*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Collier, D. R., Moffatt, L., & Perry, M. (2015). Talking, wrestling, and recycling: An investigation of three analytic approaches to qualitative data in education research. *Qualitative Research*, 15(3), 389-404.
- Compton-Lilly, C. (2013). The Common Core State Standards and student diversity: Closing the gap. *Wisconsin English Journal*, 55(2), 3-6.
- Cook-Gumperz, J. (Ed.). (1986). *The social construction of literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cowan, K., & Albers, P. (2006). Semiotic representations: Building complex literacy practices through the arts. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(2), 124-137.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Davies, B. (2004). Introduction: Poststructuralist lines of flight in Australia. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 17(1), 1-9, DOI: 10.1080/0951839032000150194
- Davies, B. (2009). Deleuze and the arts of teaching and research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22(5), 626–631.

- Davies, B. & Gannon, S. (2005). Feminism/Poststructuralism. In B. Somekh & C. Lewin, (Eds.), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* (318-325). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- decalcomania. (n.d.) In Merriam-Webster Online. Retrieved December 13, 2015, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/decalcomania>
- Deleuze, G. (1995). Postscript on control societies. In G. Deleuze (Ed.). *Negotiations, 1972-1990*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Parnet, C. (2007). *Dialogues II*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Delpit, L. D. (1992). Acquisition of literate discourse: Bowing before the master?. *Theory into practice*, 31(4), 296-302.
- Derrida, J. (1972/1982). *Margins of philosophy* (A. Bass, Trans.). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Dudley-Marling, C., & Paugh, P. (2005). The rich get richer; the poor get direct instruction. *Reading for profit: How the bottom line leaves kids behind*, 156-171.
- Dyson, A. H. (1993). *Social worlds of children: Learning to write in an urban primary school*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Dyson, A. H. (1997). *Writing superheroes: Contemporary childhood, popular culture, and classroom literacy*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Dyson, A. H. (2002). *The brothers and sisters learn to write: Popular literacies in childhood and school cultures* (Vol. 64). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Dyson, A. H. (2003). "Welcome to the jam": Popular culture, school literacy, and the making of childhoods. *Harvard Educational Review*, 73(3), 328-361.
- Dyson, A. H. (2008). Staying in the (curricular) lines: Practice constraints and possibilities in childhood writing. *Written Communication*, 25(1), 119-159.
- Eakle, A. J. (2007). Literacy spaces of a Christian faith-based school. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42(4), 472-510.
- Eisner, E. W. (2003). Questionable assumptions about schooling. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 84(9), 648-657.

- First Class: A Resource for New Teachers in New York City. (2015). Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/Employees/Teachers/NewTeachers/FirstClassNewsletter/default.htm>.
- Fisher, M. (2003). Open mics and open minds: Spoken word poetry in African diaspora participatory literacy communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 73(3), 362-389.
- Fisher, M. T. (2007). *Writing in rhythm: Spoken word poetry in urban classrooms*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Forte, A., & Bruckman, A. (2009). Writing, citing, and participatory media: Wikis as learning environments in the high school classroom.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977*. Pantheon.
- Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical inquiry*, 777-795.
- Foucault, M. (1987). The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom: An Interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984 in *The Final Foucault: Studies on Michel Foucault's Last Works. Philosophy & social criticism*, 12(2-3), 112-131.
- Freire, P. (1970). The adult literacy process as cultural action for freedom. *Harvard educational review*, 40(2), 205-225.
- Gee, J. P. (1992). *The social mind: Language, ideology, and social practice*. JF Bergin & Garvey.
- Gee, J. P. (1999). The future of the social turn: Social minds and the new capitalism. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, 32(1-2), 61-68.
- Gee, J. P. (2000). The new literacy studies: From 'socially situated' to the work. *Situated literacies: Reading and writing in context*, 180-196.
- Gee, J. P. (2003). What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy. *Computers in Entertainment (CIE)*, 1(1), 20-20.
- Ghiso, M. P. , & Low, D. E. (2013). Students using multimodal literacies to surface micronarratives of United States immigration. *Literacy*, 47(1), 26-34.
- Gustavson, L. (2007). *Youth learning on their own terms*. New York: Routledge.
- Guzzetti, B. J., & Gamboa, M. (2004). Zines for social justice: Adolescent girls writing on their own. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39(4), 408-436.

- Hagood, M.C. (2004). A rhizomatic cartography of adolescents, popular culture, and constructions of self. In K. Leander & M. Sheehy (Eds.). *Spatializing literacy research and practice*, (143-160). New York: Peter Lang.
- Handsfield, L. J. (2007). From discontinuity to simultaneity: Mapping the “what ifs” in a classroom literacy event using rhizoanalysis. In *56th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference* (216-234).
- Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, M. L. (2009). *Beats, rhymes, and classroom life: Hip-hop pedagogy and the politics of identity*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Honan, E. (2014). Disrupting the habit of interviewing. *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, 5(1), 1-17.
- Honan, E. & Sellers, M. (2008). (E)merging methodologies: Putting rhizomes to work' in Inna Semetsky (ed.) *Nomadic education: Variations on a theme by Deleuze and Guattari*, Sense Publishers, Rotterdam, Netherlands, pp. 111-128.
- Honeyford, M. A., & Boyd, K. (2015). Learning through play. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*.
- Hull, G. A., & Katz, M. L. (2006). Crafting an agentive self: Case studies of digital storytelling. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 43-81.
- Hull, G. A., & Nelson, M. E. (2005). Locating the semiotic power of multimodality. *Written communication*, 22(2), 224-261.
- Hull, G., & Schultz, K. (2001). Literacy and learning out of school: A review of theory and research. *Review of Educational research*, 71(4), 575-611.
- Hull, G. A., & Schultz, K. (Eds.). (2002). *School's out: Bridging out-of-school literacies with classroom practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2011). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. New York: Routledge.
- Jocson, K. M. (2005). " Taking It to the Mic": Pedagogy of June Jordan's Poetry for the People and Partnership with an Urban High School. *English Education*, 132-148.
- Jocson, K. M. (2008). *Youth poets: Empowering literacies in and out of schools* (Vol. 304). New York: Peter Lang.

- Jones, S. (2006). *Girls, social class, and literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Jones, S., & McIntyre, J. (2014). 'It's not what it looks like. I'm Santa': Connecting Community through Film. *Changing English*.
- Kamil, M. L., Pearson, P. D., Moje, E. B., & Afflerbach, P. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 4). New York: Routledge.
- Kingsley, T. L., & Grabner-Hagen, M. M. (2015). Gamification. *Journal of adolescent & adult literacy*, 59(1), 51-61.
- Kinloch, V. F. (2005). Poetry, literacy, and creativity: Fostering effective learning strategies in an urban classroom. *English Education*, 96-114.
- Kliebard, H. M. (2004). *The struggle for the American curriculum, 1893-1958*. Psychology Press.
- Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2006). Weblog worlds and constructions of effective and powerful writing: Cross with care, and only where signs permit. *Travel notes from the new literacy studies: Instances of practice*, 72-92.
- Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. London, UK: Arnold.
- Kuby, C. R. (2017). Why a paradigm shift of 'more than human ontologies' is needed: putting to work poststructural and posthuman theories in writers' studio. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 1-20.
- Kuby, C. R., & Rucker, T. L. G. (2015). Everyone Has a Neil: Possibilities of Literacy Desiring in Writers' Studio. *Language Arts*, 92(5), 314-327.
- Kuby, C. R., Rucker, T. G., & Darolia, L. H. (2017). Persistence (ing): Posthuman agency in a Writers' Studio. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 17(3), 353-373.
- Kuby, C.R., Rucker, T.L.G., & Kirchofer (2015). 'Go be a writer': Intra-activity with materials, time and space in literacy learning. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. doi: 10.1177/1468798414566702
- Kuby, C. R., & Vaughn, M. (2015). Young children's identities becoming: Exploring agency in the creation of multimodal literacies. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 1468798414566703.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.

- Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms*. The Jossey-Bass Education Series. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lam, W. S. E. (2006). Culture and learning in the context of globalization: Research directions. *Review of Research in Education*, 30, 213–237.
doi:10.310/0091732X030001213
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2011). *New literacies*. United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Lapp, D., Fisher, D., Frey, N., & Gonzalez, A. (2014). Students can purposefully create information, not just consume it. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 58(3), 182-188.
- Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford university press.
- Lather, P. (1993). Fertile obsession: Validity after poststructuralism. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34(4), 673-693.
- Lather, P. (2013). Methodology-21: what do we do in the afterward?. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 634-645.
- Lather, P. , & St. Pierre, E.A. (2013). Post-qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 629-633.
- Leafgren, S. (2009). *Reuben's Fall: A rhizomatic analysis of disobedience in kindergarten* (Vol. 12). California: Left Coast Press.
- Leander, K., & Boldt, G. (2013). Rereading “A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies”: Bodies, texts, and emergence. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 45(1), 22-46.
- Leander, K. M., & Rowe, D. W. (2006). Mapping literacy spaces in motion: A rhizomatic analysis of a classroom literacy performance. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(4), 428-460.
- Leander, K. M., & Sheehy, M. (2004). *Spatializing literacy research and practice* (Vol. 15). New York: Peter Lang.
- Lenters, K. (2016). Riding the lines and overwriting in the margins: Affect and multimodal literacy practices. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 48(3), 280-316.
- Lesko, N. (2001). *Act your age!: A cultural construction of adolescence*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

- Lewis, C. (2001). *Literary practices as social acts: Power, status, and cultural norms in the classroom*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lewis, C., Enciso, P. & Moje, E. (2007). *Reframing Sociocultural Research on Literacy: Identity, Agency, and Power*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lewis, C., & Fabos, B. (2005). Instant messaging, literacies, and social identities. *Reading research quarterly*, 40(4), 470-501.
- Luttrell, W. (2009). The promise of qualitative research in education. In *Qualitative Educational Research: Readings in Reflexive Methodology and Transformative Practice* (pp. 1-17). New York: Routledge.
- MacLure, M. (2013). Researching without representation? Language and materiality in post-qualitative methodology. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, 26(6), 658-667.
- Mac Naughton, G. (2004). The politics of logic in early childhood research: A case of the brain, hard facts, trees and rhizomes. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 31(3), 87-104.
- Mac Naughton, G. (2005). *Doing Foucault in early childhood education*. London: Routledge.
- Majors, Y. J. (2014). Joy and the “Smart Kids”. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 57(8), 633-641.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2011). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Martin, A. D., & Kamberelis, G. (2013). Mapping not tracing: Qualitative educational research with political teeth. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, 26(6), 668-679.
- Masny, D. (2009). Literacies as becoming: A child’s conceptualizations of writing system. In D. Masny, & D.R. Cole (Eds.), *Multiple literacies theory. A Deleuzeian perspective* (pp. 13-30). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Masny, D. (2013). Rhizoanalytic pathways in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 19(5), 339-348.
- Masny, D., & Cole, D. R. (2009). *Introduction to multiple literacies theory: A Deleuzian perspective*. Sense Publishers.

- Massumi, B. (1987). Translator's foreword: Pleasures of philosophy. In G. Deleuze & F. Guattari (Eds.), *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Massumi, B. (Ed.). (2002). *A shock to thought: Expression after Deleuze and Guattari*. Psychology Press.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2012). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- May, T. (2003). When is a Deleuzian becoming?. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 36(2), 139-153.
- McGinnis, T. A. (2007). Khmer rap boys, X-Men, Asia's fruits, and Dragonball Z: Creating multilingual and multimodal classroom contexts. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 50(7), 570-579.
- Mehan, H. (1979). *Learning lessons*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mills, K. A. (2010). A review of the "digital turn" in the new literacy studies. *Review of Educational Research*, 80(2), 246-271.
- Moje, E. (2000). "To be part of the story": The literacy practices of gangsta adolescents. *The Teachers College Record*, 102(3), 651-690.
- Moje, E. B. (2002). Re-framing adolescent literacy research for new times: Studying youth as a resource. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 41(3), 211-228.
- Moje, E. B., & Lewis, C. (2007). Examining opportunities to learn literacy: The role of critical sociocultural literacy research. In C. Lewis, P. Enciso, & E. Moje (Eds.), *Reframing Sociocultural Research on Literacy: Identity, Agency, and Power*, (pp. 15-48). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
- Morrell, E. (2004). *Linking literacy and popular culture: Finding connections for lifelong learning*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
- Morrell, E. (2007). Chapter Twelve: Critical Literacy and Popular Culture in Urban Education: Toward a Pedagogy of Access and Dissent. *Counterpoints*, 235-254.

- Morrell, E., & Duncan-Andrade, J. M. (2002). Promoting academic literacy with urban youth through engaging hip-hop culture. *English Journal*, 88-92.
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). Retrieved from <https://www.corestandards.org>
- The New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard educational review*, 66(1), 60-93.
- Ongaro, C. & Johnston, K.C. (in press). Rootedness research: Local possibility amid a cosmopolitan network. *The William & Mary Educational Review*.
- Perry, K. H. (2012). What is literacy? A critical overview of sociocultural perspectives. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 8(1), 50-71.
- Phillips, L. G., & Willis, L. D. (2014). Walking and talking with living texts: Breathing life against static standardisation. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 13(1), 76-94.
- Rajchman, J. (2014). Foreward: A pedagogy of the concept. In Carlin, M. & Wallin, J. (Eds.), *Deleuze & Guattari, Politics and Education: For a People-Yet-to-Come*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Ranker, J. (2008). Composing across multiple media: A case study of digital video production in a fifth grade classroom. *Written Communication*, 25(2), 196-234.
- Richardson, L. & St. Pierre, E. (2005). Writing: A method of inquiry. In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd Edition. Eds. Denzin and Lincoln (pp. 959-978). Sage Publications.
- Riddle, S. (2013). Youth as rhizome: music, machines, and multiplicities. *Social Alternatives*, 32(2), 45.
- Rosen, L. D., Carrier, L. M., & Cheever, N. A. (2013). Facebook and texting made me do it: Media-induced task-switching while studying. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 948-958.
- Rowell, J., & Burke, A. (2009). Reading by design: Two case studies of digital reading practices. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(2), 106-118.
- Rowell, J., & Pahl, K. (Eds.). (2015). *The Routledge Handbook of Literacy Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Rozansky, C. L., & Aagesen, C. (2010). Low-achieving readers, high expectations: Image theatre encourages critical literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(6), 458-466.

- Sanford, K., Rogers, T., & Kendrick, M. (Eds.). (2014). *Everyday Youth Literacies: Critical Perspectives for New Times*. Singapore: Springer.
- School and District Accountability. (2015). Retrieved from <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/OSFEP/Programs/Accountability.htm>
- Schwartz, A., & Rubinstein-Ávila, E. (2006). Understanding the manga hype: Uncovering the multimodality of comic-book literacies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 50(1), 40-49.
- Semetsky, I., & Masny, D. (Eds.). (2013). *Deleuze and education*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Serafini, F. (2012). Reading multimodal texts in the 21st century. *Research in the Schools*, 19(1), 26-32.
- Siegel, M. (1995). More than words: The generative power of transmediation for learning. *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue canadienne de l'éducation*, 455-475.
- Siegel, M. (2006). Rereading the signs: Multimodal transformations in the field of literacy education. *Language Arts*, 84(1), 65.
- Simon, R. (2012). "Without comic Books, there would be no me": Teachers as connoisseurs of adolescents' literate lives. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 55(6), 516-526.
- Smetana, L., Odelson, D., Burns, H., & Grisham, D. L. (2009). Using graphic novels in the high school classroom: Engaging deaf students with a new genre. *Journal of adolescent & adult literacy*, 53(3), 228-240.
- Stornaiuolo, A., Hull, G., & Nelson, M. E. (2009). Mobile texts and migrant audiences: Rethinking literacy and assessment in a new media age. *Language arts*, 86(5), 382-392.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (1997). Methodology in the fold and the irruption of transgressive data. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 10(2), 175-189.
- St. Pierre, E. A. (2002). Comment: "Science" rejects postmodernism. *Educational researcher*, 31(8), 25-27.
- St Pierre, E. A. (2004). Deleuzian concepts for education: The subject undone. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 36(3), 283-296.

- St. Pierre, E. A. (2011). Post qualitative research: The critique and the coming after. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4, 611-626.
- St. Pierre, E. A. S. (2013). The appearance of data. *Cultural Studies↔ Critical Methodologies*, 13(4), 223-227.
- St. Pierre, E. A., & Pillow, W. (Eds.). (2000). *Working the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education*. New York: Routledge.
- Street, B. V. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Tanner, D. (2013). Race to the top and leave the children behind. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 45(1), 4-15.
- Taubman, P. M. (2010). *Teaching by numbers: Deconstructing the discourse of standards and accountability in education*. New York: Routledge.
- Thrift, N. (2008). *Non-representational theory: Space, politics, affect*. New York: Routledge.
- Tyack, D. B. (1974). *The one best system: A history of American urban education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *The Condition of Education 2015* (NCES 2015-144), Status Dropout Rates. Retrieved November 1, 2015 from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16>.
- Vasudevan, L. (2009). Performing new geographies of literacy teaching and learning. *English Education*, 41, 356-374.
- Vasudevan, L., & Campano, G. (2009). The social production of adolescent risk and the promise of adolescent literacies. *Review of research in education*, 33(1), 310-353.
- Vasudevan, L., Schultz, K., & Bateman, J. (2010). Rethinking composing in a digital age: Authoring literate identities through multimodal storytelling. *Written Communication*, 27(4), 442-468.
- Wargo, J. M. (2015). Spatial stories with nomadic narrators: Affect, snapchat, and feeling embodiment in youth mobile composing. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, 11(1), 47-64.
- Weinstein, S. (2006). A love for the thing: The pleasures of rap as a literate practice. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 50(4), 270-281.

- West, K. C. (2008). Weblogs and literary response: Socially situated identities and hybrid social languages in English class blogs. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 51(7), 588-598.
- Wheeler, R. S., Swords, R., & Carpenter, M. (2004). Codeswitching: Tools of language and culture transform the dialectally diverse classroom. *Language Arts*, 81(6), 470.
- Winn, M. T., & Behizadeh, N. (2011). The right to be literate: Literacy, education, and the school-to-prison pipeline. *Review of Research in Education*, 35(1), 147-173.
- Wissman, K. K. (2011). Rise up!": Literacies, lived experiences, and identities within an in-school "other space". *Research in the Teaching of English*, 45, 405-438.
- Wissman, K., Costello, S., & Hamilton, D. (2012). 'You're like yourself': Multimodal literacies in a reading support class. *Changing English*, 19(3), 325-338.
- Wohlwend, K. E. (2015). *Playing their way into literacies: Reading, writing, and belonging in the early childhood classroom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Appendix A

STUDENT INFORMED CONSENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH: Your child is invited to participate in a research study on youth engagement with literacy in the English Language Arts (ELA) classroom. I will be joining your child's ELA class for 2-3 days per week from January-May 2016. While in your child's class, I will be observing the students. At times, I will interact with them to hear more about what they are doing and learning. For example, if your child contributes to a class discussion or chooses to read a particular book, I may follow up him/her to hear more about his/her participation. If time allows for a one-on-one discussion with your child, I may audio record our conversation so I can listen to it when writing up my research. Please note that my research is confidential. No one else will have access to my files and all names, including your child's, will be omitted by using pseudonyms. In addition to interacting with your child, I may also make a copy of his/her work in the class, with his/her teacher's permission. Student work and transcribed conversations (omitting all students' names) may be shared at professional meetings for educators or may be included in academic writing.

The research will be conducted by Kelly Johnston at your child's middle school.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The research has the same amount of risk students have during usual classroom activity. An additional risk is students possibly feeling uncomfortable during the audio recording or copying of student work. To minimize this risk, the researcher will remind the students that he/she can request the audio recorder be turned off at any moment and for any reason. If the student feels uncomfortable, he/she can request that his/her voice is not audio recorded or that his/her work is not copied for researcher use. If your student is audio recorded or if his/her work is used, your child's name and the name of the school will not be used at any time.

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study.

An alternative to participating in this study is to choose not to participate. Your child will still participate in the classroom lessons as normal; however he/she will not participate in the individual conversations with me nor will his/her schoolwork will be used for this research. As your child would not participate in the interview, there will be no audio recordings.

PAYMENTS: You and your child will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

DATA STORAGE TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY:

All data will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home or on the researcher's password protected laptop. At the end of the study, the researcher will analyze data from the study, which may include your child's participation in class conversations and classroom work. Data derived from your child's participation in the

lessons (such as his/her written work or the audio recorded conversations) may be used in scholarly presentations or publications. All participants will be given pseudonyms in the publication and presentation of the research data to keep their identities confidential. Your child's name or identifying information (like the name of the school) will not be shared.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take the same time as normal participation in classroom, with occasional follow-up time per the teacher's approval.

HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED: The results of the study will be used in conference presentations and published as articles in journals or chapters in a book. Any data shared will use a pseudonym.

Appendix B

STUDENT'S RIGHTS

Principal Investigator: Kelly Johnston

Research title: (Re)Imagining Possibilities for Youth in Schools: A Rhizomatic Exploration of Youth's Engagements with Literacy

- I have read and discussed the Research Description. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My child's participation in this research study is voluntary. I may refuse to have my child participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future medical care, employment, student status or other entitlements.
- The researcher may withdraw my child from the research at his/her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies my child will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my child's participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (512) 623-9195.
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my child's rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.
- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If audio taping is part of this research, I () consent to be audio taped. I () do NOT consent to being audio taped. The written and audio taped materials will only be viewed by the principal investigator.
- Written and audio taped materials () may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research or () may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.

Signature Page to Follow

My signature means that I agree to have my child participate in this study.

Participant's (child's) signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Guardian's Signature/consent: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Teachers College, Columbia University

Assent Form for Minors (8-17 years-old)

I _____ (child's name) agree to participate in the study entitled: (Re)Imagining Possibilities for Youth in Schools: A Rhizomatic Exploration of Youth's Engagements with Literacy. The purpose and nature of the study has been fully explained to me by Kelly Johnston. I understand what is being asked of me, and should I have any questions, I know that I can contact Kelly Johnston at any time. I also understand that I can quit the study any time I want to.

Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Investigator's Verification of Explanation

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to _____ (participant's name) in age-appropriate language. He/she has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and he/she provided the affirmative agreement (i.e. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C

TEACHER INFORMED CONSENT

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH: You are invited to participate in a research study on youth engagement with literacy in the English Language Arts (ELA) classroom. I will be joining your class for 2-3 days per week from January-May 2016. While in your class, I will be observing the students. At times, I will interact with them to hear more about what they are doing and learning. For example, if a student contributes to a class discussion or chooses to read a particular book, I may follow up him/her to hear more about his/her participation. If time allows for a one-on-one discussion with a student, I may audio record our conversation so I can listen to it when writing up my research. I will also arrange for informal conversations with you to discuss your thoughts around the literacy instruction and learning in your classroom. Please note that my research is confidential. No one else will have access to my files and all names, including yours, will be omitted by using pseudonyms. In addition to interacting with your students, I may also make copies of students work in the class, with your permission. Student work and transcribed conversations (omitting all students' names as well as yours) may be shared at professional meetings for educators or may be included in academic writing.

The research will be conducted by Kelly Johnston in your classroom.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The research has the same amount of risk you experience during usual classroom activity. An additional risk is possibly feeling uncomfortable during the audio recording of conversations. If you feel uncomfortable and would like me to stop recording, I will turn off the recorder.

There are no direct benefits for participating in this study.

An alternative to participating in this study is to choose not to participate.

PAYMENTS: You and your child will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

DATA STORAGE TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY:

All data will be kept in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home or on the researcher's password protected laptop. At the end of the study, the researcher will analyze data from the study, which may include your participation in conversations as well as copies of artifacts from your class. Data derived from your participation may be used in scholarly presentations or publications. All participants will be given pseudonyms in the publication and presentation of the research data to keep their identities confidential. Your name or identifying information (like the name of the school) will not be shared.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take the same time as normal participation in classroom, with a possible additional time for follow-up conversations.

HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED: The results of the study will be used in conference presentations and published as articles in journals or chapters in a book. Any data shared will use a pseudonym.

Appendix D

TEACHER'S RIGHTS

Principal Investigator: Kelly Johnston

Research title: (Re)Imagining Possibilities for Youth in Schools: A Rhizomatic Exploration of Youth's Engagements with Literacy

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future medical care, employment, student status or other entitlements.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at his/her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (512) 623-9195.
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.
- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If audio taping is part of this research, I () consent to be audio taped. I () do NOT consent to being audio taped. The written and audio taped materials will only be viewed by the principal investigator.
- Written and audio taped materials () may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research or () may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.

Signature Page to Follow

My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Teachers College, Columbia University

Investigator's Verification of Explanation

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to _____ (participant's name) in appropriate language. He/she has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and he/she provided the affirmative agreement (i.e. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: _____

Date: _____