Copyright
by
Charlotte Lee Land
2019

The Dissertation Committee for Charlotte Lee Land Certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Designing Critical, Humanizing Writing Instruction: Exploring Possibilities for Positioning Writers as Designers

Committee:

Allison Skerrett, Supervisor

Randy Bomer

Anna E. Maloch

Melissa R. Wetzel

Clay Spinuzzi

Designing Critical, Humanizing Writing Instruction: Exploring Possibilities for Positioning Writers as Designers

by

Charlotte Lee Land

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Austin
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin
May 2019

Dedication

For the teachers and students who opened up their classrooms, their thinking, and their notebooks to me—

May you always keep writing to change the world,

And may we always find inspiration in your powerful work as writers, teachers, and learners.

Acknowledgements

First to Kit, my everything, it's hard to know where to start. You have been my thought partner, my biggest cheerleader, my personal chef, my therapist, my questioning reader and careful proofreader, my reminder to move and to get some sleep, and my fellow adventurer. You have made this possible. I cannot thank you enough for wrapping me up in your forever love and your unquestioning faith. I know that no matter what the future brings, we will tackle it together, drawing strength from each other, growing together, side-by-side, in love.

To my parents, you have always taught me—through your actions and your words—to work hard, to take pride in whatever I do, and to leave each little corner of the world I touch a little better than I found it. I have always known I could go after the moon because you believed in me and would always be there to catch me if I fell. And to my sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews, and friends from far, thank you for understanding my crazy, for laughing with me, for asking about my work (and for sometimes not asking me about it!), for forgiving me when I get busy and forget to call, and for always welcoming me home again.

To Jess and Saba, I would not have survived grad school without you. You're my writing and thinking partners for life. I hate thinking about not having your hugs and smiles close by, yet I know our work together is never over but to be continued. Thank you for being willing to listen, to share, and to sometimes just tell me what to do. Thank you for teaching me how to write with and beside others. I learn from you every day.

And to my other writing partners and friends along the way—Thea, Kira, D'Anna, Natalie—thank you for reading my work and letting me talk through ideas, and thank you for trusting me to look at your work too. I am a better writer because of each of you! To others who have graduated and moved on—Laura, Amber, Michelle, Michiko, and so many others—who were always so generous with your time, your thinking, and your writing at each step of the way. Thank you for first paving the path, for showing me the way, and for reminding me there's life at the end.

To Susan, thank you for never forgetting to check in on me and for never giving up on me being fun! To the rest of my LLS family, thank you for thinking with me and challenging me in courses; for encouraging me through kind words; for sharing your snacks, smiles, and spaces with me. I will miss seeing you around 334, and I can't wait to see the ways you each go out and change the world.

To my Heart of Texas community, thank you for showing me the awesome power of a dedicated group of writing teachers who are hungry to learn and who never quit putting in

the work and showing up for young writers. Thank you for welcoming me into your community and into so many of your classrooms. And to Deb, thank you for showing me how to lead, for inviting me to take up this important work alongside you, for being kind and caring always, and for bringing beautiful flowers. You brighten my world.

To my brilliant committee, this work has your fingerprints all over it—in the theories and literature you introduced me to; in the ways of thinking about teachers, students, and writing you taught me; and in the designing and doing important research you modeled for me. To Allison, across my time here, you have showed me what it means to be an engaged scholar, relentless in asking questions and sharing answers with the world. In your classes and through your writing, you have pushed me to think and rethink who the young people are, and who the teachers are, in our classrooms and how we can create learning spaces for them that are critical and caring. Across the last year, you have read and reread my words and thought with me about how to make them better. Thank you for not giving up on me and for reminding me that there are so many important stories for me to tell from this work! To Randy, I feel so honored to have learned from you across the years. From our first advising meeting, my first experience as a grad student at UT, you made me feel valued as a teacher and a scholar. Thank you for being so generous with your thinking and for continuously challenging me to keep asking questions about other ways reading, writing, and teaching could go, to keep imagining a better, more just world. To Beth and Melissa, I have learned so much from you both—about learning from talk, about growing teacher leaders, about writing like a scholar. Thank you for always making time for me no matter how busy you were, for encouraging me to keep going, and for offering advice and kind words when I needed them. And to Clay, thank you for welcoming me into your classes and the rhetoric world, reminding me there are so many ways to think of writing that go beyond classrooms, and being a model of how deep engagement with theory and data work together.

Finally, to Paige, Zoe, Penelope, and Gwen—none of these words would have made it to these pages without you. I have learned, and continue to learn, so much from you and your students. Thank you for your thoughtfulness, your kindness, and your time. You are truly models of becoming, and I am so excited that your work has inspired so many other teachers already. Thank you for believing in me—that this journey of learning would take us somewhere—and for trusting me to think alongside you, to work with your young writers, and to tell your stories. Thank you for saying yes, over and over and over again.

The dissertation production babies—
Wesley Martin, Arya Elizabeth, Wyatt Jonathan, William Patrick, and Elin E.

Designing Critical, Humanizing Writing Instruction: Exploring Possibilities for Positioning Writers as Designers

Charlotte Lee Land, Ph.D.
The University of Texas at Austin, 2019

Supervisor: Allison Skerrett

The purpose of this study was to better understand how teachers across elementary, middle, and secondary grade-levels (re)imagine possibilities and translate them into critical, humanizing writing instruction. Across the study, I drew on sociocultural theories of identity, learning, and language while considering perspectives on interdisciplinary design, humanizing pedagogies, and teachers as curriculum-makers. Following multicase study and participatory design research traditions, I met with four teachers in a cross grade-level inquiry group and followed them into classrooms for one academic year. I generated data through recording conversations and teaching, creating fieldnotes, collecting artifacts, and conducting interviews with teachers and students. I analyzed data using inductive qualitative analysis and then, using theory alongside emerging findings, selected examples to closely examine using discourse analytic methods. The following questions guided this study's design and analysis: How do teachers in a cross grade-level inquiry group (re)design humanizing writing instruction together? What aspects of writing and writing instruction are most visible in teachers' discussion about design and writing? And how do teachers' discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice?

Analysis revealed that teachers' inquiry group discussions explored connections between design and writing while reflecting on current writing instruction and ways teachers and students were positioned within schools. Co-constructing this "figured world" made space to reimagine possibilities and reframe constraints as design conditions. As teachers took up design work, they also appropriated narratives of students that illustrated the “love, faith, and humility” Freire (1970/2005, p. 91) noted as necessary for collective effort towards humanization. The findings also highlighted the emergence of *purpose* and *audience* as central concepts for rethinking writing and writing instruction. These terms were redefined within the group space to include embedded subject positions for students as active designers. In classrooms, one teacher used these tools to transform units to center purpose and audience for writers; another used them as entry points into new practices and subject positions within her growing critical, humanizing writing pedagogy. Overall, findings contribute to understandings of generative, humanizing teacher learning experiences for teachers and for researchers/teacher educators. Additionally, findings suggest tenets for enacting critical, humanizing writing instruction.

Table of Contents

List of Tables xii

List of Figures xiii

Chapter One: Introduction, Purpose, and Theoretical Perspectives 1

Larger Context and Need for the Study 2

Theories and Perspectives 6

Sociocultural theories of identity, language, and literacy 7

Perspectives on design 11

Perspectives on critical writing and humanizing instruction 16

Perspectives on teachers as designers 19

Overview of the Study 21

Chapter Two: Review of Relevant Literature 23

Research on the Teaching of Writing 23

Writing and the impacts of high-stakes testing 24

Supporting students as decision makers 26

Critical and culturally sustaining writing instruction 29

Research on Social Positioning 32

Positioning students as agentive and successful 33

Research on Students as Designers 36

Young people as designers of texts 37

Research on Teachers' Collaborative Design 40

Chapter Three: Methodology 45

Research Questions 47

Contexts and Participants 47

Participants 51

Zoe Grey 52

Paige Douglas 53

Gwen Harris 53

- Penelope Tipton 54
- Researcher positionality 54
- Study Design 57
  - Reflective inquiry group design 57
  - Multicase study design 59
  - Methods of data collection 61
    - Observations and field notes 62
    - Audio and video recordings 63
    - Interviews 64
    - Artifacts 65
  - Methods of data analysis 66
    - Ongoing, emerging analysis methods 67
    - First and second cycle coding of individual cases 68
    - Reading with theory and discourse-level analysis 69
  - Trustworthiness and limitations 70

Chapter Four: (Re)Designing Humanizing Writing Instruction Together 72
- The Reflective Inquiry Group 73
- Creating a Common Backdrop: Setting the Stage for Design 79
- Teachers as Designers 90
  - Teacher histories, identities, and transformation 92
  - Characteristics that enabled “designer” subject positions 98
    - Appreciating students’ strengths and resources 98
    - Humility and taking risks 106
- Conclusion 113

Chapter Five: Designs for Design-Based Writing Instruction 117
- Aspects of Writing and Design in Teachers’ Discussions 118
  - Purpose and audience as (re)defined tools 119
  - Prototyping as a new lens on planning and revising 126
- Designs in Action 128
  - Inquiring into writing to explain: A purpose-study 130

Redefined tools for writers and writing teachers 143

Purpose...144

Audience 147

Prototyping and user-testing 159

Conclusions..162

Chapter Six: Entries into Critical, Humanizing Writing Instruction 167

Entry Points: Moving Towards More Humanizing Writing Instruction.....168

Being a “manager” of students’ writing..169

Trying on audience as a position and a tool for teaching 176

Rethinking talk in the writing classroom 183

Taking Bigger Risks: Changes In Practice And Identity 187

Experimenting with purpose-study: Writing for social justice 188

Changing and growing: A closer at positionality 201

Conclusions..206

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Implications...209

Revisiting Research Questions and Findings..209

Theoretical Significance and Practical Implications.................................212

Critical, humanizing teacher education: Critique and (re)design 212

Implications for teacher education..219

Critical, humanizing writing instruction: Students as designers........223

Implications for classroom writing instruction.................................226

Directions for Future Research 228

Conclusions..232

Appendices...234

Appendix A: Teacher semi-structured interview protocols.......................234

Appendix B: Questions for Students...236

References..237

List of Tables

Table 3.1. School demographic information based on 2016-2017 data 49

Table 3.2. Classroom observations across 2016-2017 school year 61

Table 3.3. Levels and methods of analysis 67

Table 4.1. Overview of reflective inquiry group meetings 76

Table 4.2. Examples of constraints and values shared in teacher inquiry group ...84

List of Figures

Figure 3.1. Data sources across levels of activity. 62

Figure 5.1: Writing-to-explain unit of study anchor chart, 2016/11/01 132

Figure 5.2. "Explaining paragraph" mark-up and practice, 2016/11/09. 134

Figure 5.3. Example of student revision plans (bottom, Ian; top, Mateo). 137

Figure 5.4. Example of student revision plan (Daniela) 137

Figure 5.5. Genre sketches, magazine article. 140

Figure 5.6. Explaining texts publishing, "Sports" section 141

Figure 5.7. Central idea anchor chart. 146

Figure 5.8. Drafting page from Sofia's writing-to-persuade piece. 149

Figure 5.9. Another drafting page from Sofia's writing-to-persuade piece 150

Figure 5.10. Rough sketches of students' brainstormed genre possibilities. 152

Figure 5.11. Pablo's writing-for-change poster. 158

Figure 6.1. Anchor chart of initial memoir "noticings." 178

Figure 6.2. First page of Martina's final memoir. 182

Figure 6.3. Examples of texts offered in writing-for-social-justice unit 191

Figure 6.4. Martina's poem about anger and immigration. 196

Figure 6.5. Sara's infographic about rape culture in the US. 197

Figure 6.6. Adrián's sketch script about gender roles in dating. 198

Figure 6.7. Anchor chart from their fall 2017 memoir genre study 206

Chapter One: Introduction, Purpose, and Theoretical Perspectives

We were somewhere in Iowa, about halfway into a long car ride on one of my partner's many work trips I was tagging along on. Kit was thinking aloud about his upcoming week, a common practice in our relationship. And despite having heard about his work as a business technology consultant a hundred times before, I interrupted him in the middle of his talk. He had been recounting how they were going back to their requirements gathering documents and tweaking the design of one particular part of the software implementation before they could then retest in the "dev" environment, demo the new process to the users, and eventually "go live" with the system. "That's just like writing!" I exclaimed, and in the way that only two nerds who truly enjoy and care about their work can, we spent the rest of the trip excitedly talking about connections between writing and the two similar design processes he drew on at work—the software development life cycle and the agile and waterfall development methodologies.

I had just finished spending four weeks engaging in my own writing and in talking, thinking, and reading about teaching writing as part of the local national writing project (NWP) site. One of the ideas that really resonated with me that summer was thinking of writing as a design process. I had always considered myself a writer, but I had never really thought about the complex work I was doing in composing texts. In the summer professional development institute, we had heard Dr. Randy Bomer talk about and had read about (Bomer, 1995, 2011) writing as an individual, recursive cycle that typically involves paying attention to life and collecting in a notebook, finding a topic, collecting around or growing the topic, designing the text based on the audience, drafting quickly to invite revision, revising or making new decisions about content or structure, editing, publishing for a real audience, reflecting or self-assessing, and starting all over again. Within these processes, writers are positioned as active decision makers who make choices about how the text will go and how it will look based on their purposes for the writing and on the effect they hope to have on their audience. However, writing in many schools, including my own former high school classroom, is often presented as a decontextualized, fill-in-the-blank-like exercise separate from any real audience or social action other than fulfilling a teachers' checklist of requirements. Brainstorming, in these spaces, means listing a few ideas in one sitting and circling one before you start. Planning means filling out a prescribed graphic organizer, drafting means recopying ideas from the organizer to new paper, and revising means going through the teachers' list of expectations to make sure you met them all. Yet, real composition is a much more complex process of designing, and redesigning in multiple iterations, before "going live" with the text for an audience.

That summer I became more and more fascinated by the connections I was finding between writing and other design processes and more and more dismayed by the mismatches between what I now understood about writing and what I had seen and experienced of instruction. I began to wonder what thinking about writing as design might do for writing and for the teaching of writing. What might it mean for teaching for transfer, for teaching habits of mind relevant for different writing situations and maybe even other design situations? What might it mean for thinking about multimodal or digital composing? What might it mean for students' identities as writers? What teaching contexts might support this kind of work? How it might fit within or collide with the standardized, test-driven contexts of many schools? The present study is an attempt to begin addressing some of these many questions that I have been living with for the last few years.

LARGER CONTEXT AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

In today's increasingly post-industrial society, the ability to produce knowledge and texts, rather than just consume them, has become increasingly important in our day-to-day lives (Bazerman, 2007; Brandt, 2005, 2015; Florida, 2014; Gee, 2000; Itō et al., 2010; Luke, 2000; New London Group, 1996). To be ready to participate in today's world means to be ready for "adaptation to constant change through thinking and speaking for oneself, critique and empowerment, innovation and creativity, technical and systems thinking, and learning how to learn" (New London Group, 1996, p. 67). The world has changed and writing has changed along with it. As Yancey (2009) reported, here in the twenty-first century "*writers are everywhere*" (p. 4). These writers are composing texts for multiple audiences using multiple modes of meaning-making. Traditional instruction in schools is no longer enough to support students in engaging in the kind of writing they will do in the world. One proposed way of creating pedagogy that supports student writers in developing the skills and habits of mind needed for participation involves thinking about composing as a design process. Designing texts, in this respect, means actively making decisions about how to creatively apply and remix available conventions in flexible ways for varying audiences (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Kress, 2000, 2010; Leverenz, 2014; New London Group, 1996; Purdy, 2014). It means having a clear understanding of an intended audience and those readers' expectations and needs, holding that knowledge in mind throughout the decision-making process of composing, trying out choices in multiple drafts, and publishing a text to an audience to fulfill a social action or purpose.

Accordingly, design, as process and way of thinking, is no longer contained within a few select trades or professions such as science and technology or fine arts. Instead, design thinking is now a liberal art that informs multiple disciplines, a staple of the new "creative class" (Florida, 2014). Tim Brown—CEO of the design firm IDEO, author of the best-seller *Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and Inspires Innovation*, and a popular speaker on TED Talks—explains that design thinking "is not only human-centered; it is deeply human in and of itself. Design thinking relies on our ability to be intuitive, to recognize patterns, to construct ideas that have emotional meaning as well as functionality" (Brown, 2009, p. 4). Thus, design is not just applicable to making things within specific fields like architecture, graphic design, engineering, or even writing, but design processes and ways of thinking may be much more ubiquitous, appearing across lifeworlds that extend far beyond school or career.

Rather than embracing the new dynamics of literacy and design, however, schools are lagging behind (Yancey, 2009). Literacy classrooms have historically focused much more on the teaching of literature than on the meaningful teaching of writing—on the consumption of texts rather than the production of texts (Applebee, 1984; Bazerman, 2007; Brandt, 2015; Yancey, 2009). Recent state and national standards, along with the high-stakes tests attached to those standards, have sparked slight moves to reflect the rising importance of creating texts, incorporating standards and assessments specific to writing and hence opening up more conversations about teaching writing (Strickland et al., 2001).The Common Core State Standards, for example, ask students to write in three different modes and more generally to "produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience" (W.4). Locally, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), adopted in 2009 and revised in 2017, include standards, across grade-levels, for "writing/writing process" and ask students to write in a variety of genres, including expository and procedural texts, literary texts, and persuasive texts). This attention has, to an extent, shifted some focus from teaching reading to teaching writing. Yet, as scholars have found across disciplines, high-stakes tests and standards plainly constrain instruction rather than opening it up (Au, 2007, 2011; McCarthey, 2008; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Scott, 2008; Skerrett, 2009; Wohlwend, 2009).

The pressures of having high-stakes tests attached to composition add weight to the "product" end of the process-product continuum, positioning the conventions and forms of what is tested over attention to the creative design process (Applebee & Langer, 2011; Brimi, 2012; Brindley & Jasinski Schneider, 2002; Hillocks, 2002; Honeyford & Watt, 2018; Kiss & Mizusawa, 2018; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Watanabe, 2007; Wahleithner, 2018). Students in these schools rarely get chances to write outside of the genres or forms specified by standards or the kind of prompt-writing assessed on the high-stakes test. Then, even those tested conventions and modes of writing then are often further reduced to narrow formulas or expectations based on standardized rubrics. This reducing of modes of writing to narrow forms, rather than social actions in response to audiences and purposes, removes the design element from writing. Writers in test-writing situations only have need and space for a very compressed, inauthentic writing process that typically consists of very brief planning, drafting, and perhaps some reviewing or copy-editing (Gere, Christenbury, and Sassi, 2005). These abbreviated notions of process are strongly echoed in surveys of actual classroom writing instruction (Graham et al., 2014; Hillocks, 2002; Kiuhara et al., 2009; Scherff & Piazza, 2005). Despite efforts to increase the amount of writing students are doing in schools, meaningful writing, then, continues to be undervalued and under-taught across US schools (Appleebee & Langer, 2009; 2011).

The tensions between the traditions of English language arts in school, the politics of standardized tests, and the real needs of students put teachers in situations where they must make important decisions about how they position language, writing, and students in their classrooms and curriculum. Unfortunately, these tensions and the pressures to conform to standardized definitions of what counts as writing and what works for writing instruction can be even more prevalent in schools serving working class communities and communities of color (McCarthey, 2008; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; McNeil & Valenzuela, 2000; Williamson, 2017). Despite the literacy research that reveals ways writing instruction, both in and beyond schools, might offer marginalized students agency and opens possibilities for anti-oppressive education (e.g., Durán, 2017; Flores, 2018; Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012; Johnson, 2017; Kim & Omerbašić, 2017; Muhammad & Haddix, 2016; Skerrett, 2013; Tatum & Gue, 2012; Zapata, 2014), inside schools, writing instruction in schools is too often still dominated by standards and tests. In these schools, teachers are too often handed quick "fixes" and other standardized forms of writing instruction that is dehumanizing, positioning students as deficient and replace students' rich lived histories and capabilities with an easier to manage test-score (Bartolomé, 1994; Dutro, 2010; Genishi & Dyson, 2009).

Besides the promise of better test scores, standardized approaches to teaching writing are even more seductive because large percentages of teachers report feeling unprepared to teach writing (Applebee & Langer, 2009; Graham et al., 2014; Kiuhara et al., 2009). However, when teachers are handed standardized, teacher-proof curriculum to implement, they are relegated to roles as "specialized technicians" rather than "transformative intellectuals" (Giroux, 1985). In order for literacy research to both support teachers in creating more authentic writing opportunities for students and to work against the reality of injustices done to students inside schools, researchers and teacher educators should look more closely at professional learning contexts that support teachers' in creating more critical, humanizing writing pedagogy.

This study contributes to literature on classroom writing and writing instruction, highlighting important overlaps between design thinking, humanizing pedagogy, and writing. In particular, it looks at what happened when teachers used design, emphasizing agency, audience, and authentic activity, as a lens for thinking about writing and humanizing writing instruction. Beyond providing examples of how this kind of instruction might go, this study also adds to understandings of how critical, humanizing space for teacher learning can support teachers in designing curriculum that meets the needs of the students in their individual school contexts. Despite working with different age groups, the teachers in this study all worked in Title I schools that faced immense testing pressure, so these cases also provide some insight into how this type of instruction works in places where teaching is often most constrained.

Three research questions guided the design and analysis of this study:

1. How do teachers in a cross grade-level inquiry group (re)design humanizing writing instruction together?
2. What aspects of writing and writing instruction are most visible in teachers' discussion about design and writing?
3. And how do teachers' discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice?

THEORIES AND PERSPECTIVES

In the following section, I briefly explain the theories and perspectives on learning, identity, writing, and design that framed this study. I draw on sociocultural theories as a base for understanding how learning, language, literacy, and identity development are all situated within local social practices and are mediated by larger cultures and histories. I also draw on perspectives of design and of critical pedagogies to think about writing and about teachers creating curriculum.

Sociocultural theories of identity, language, and literacy

Sociocultural theories of learning are most often based in the work of Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky (1978; 1986), going against contemporary theories of behaviorism, argued that learning is actively constructed within social interactions, which while taking place locally are mediated by larger social, cultural, and historical tools and practices. This focus was a radical shift in the way psychologists, at that time primarily behaviorists and cognitivists, viewed learning and development as "the individual could no longer be understood without his or her cultural means; and the society could no longer be understood without the agency of individuals who use and produce artifacts" (Engeström, 2001, p. 134). Vygotsky and those following in his tradition (e.g., Leont'ev,1977, 2009; Engeström, 1987, 2001; Kozulin, 2003) saw language and other tools as crystallized cultural norms and operations that serve to apprentice individuals into a wider culture while also mediating, as symbolic bootstraps, for reshaping individuals' minds and behaviors. Alongside Vygotsky's understandings of development, many scholars also draw on the work of another Soviet scholar, Mikhail Bakhtin, to help frame their understandings of language, as "not only abstract semiotic systems but inevitably and inextricably also ideological and lived perspectives on the world" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998, p. 170), and personhood, as "socially and historically construed, yet creative" (p. 34). Bakhtin along with his colleague, Volosinov, developed several ideas about the relationship between language, culture, and identity. They argued, for instance, that individuals story their selves through dialogue with the world. Our words, our tools of identifying, are rooted in socially acquired genres, yet individuals exercise agency in their negotiation of the conflicts and power dynamics embedded in different discourses to create an internally persuasive discourse or a new way of identifying.

While many scholars take up different aspects of sociocultural theories, for this study I found positioning, improvisation, and identity to be particularly useful theoretical concepts for my research design and analysis. Scholars studying identity from a sociocultural perspective recognize identity not as a static, pre-existing, autonomous condition but as multiple and shifting, as developed in social practice, and as meaningful only in relation to other social positions (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Holland et al., 1998). Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) explain the "self" is "embedded in (social) practice and [is] itself a kind of practice" (p. 28). Thus, within each local social interaction, actors actively position and are positioned by each other (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Erickson, 2004; van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). This reflexive and interactive positioning happens in any social situation and can be described as "the assignment of fluid 'parts' or 'roles' to speakers in the discursive construction of personal stories that make a person's actions intelligible and relatively determinate as social acts" (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999, p. 17). These temporary, local relational roles taken up in social interactions, together with larger sociocultural resources work as artifacts, or "living tools of the self" that work to "figure the self constitutively, in open-ended ways" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 28), creating the subject positions available for individuals within any given context. Identifying, as an always-emerging process, takes place then as individuals figure themselves alongside other possibilities and as they come to "imagine future positions and their future selves moving within and across those positions" (Moje & Luke, 2009, p. 430). Understanding identity in this way means recognizing both the agency of individuals to (re)author their own identities and practices as well as the weight of culturally and historically sedimented subject positions, discourses, and practices circulating within one's various figured worlds.

It is also important to note that, as Holland and colleagues (1998) point out, individuals are not always conscious of the "figured" nature of social worlds or their own positioning within those worlds, performing discourses and practices of the self and in ways "unmediated by one's reflection upon them as claims to social positions" (p. 139). Ways of acting, speaking, being in the world can become sedimented or "fossilized" (Vygotsky, 1978). However, these markers of positioning can become conscious, this rupturing of "the taken-for-granted" removing them "from automatic performance and recognition to commentary and re-cognition" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 141). When their identity, and the relational subject positions embedded in that identity, rise to the level of consciousness, an individual is more likely to exercise agency in reshaping identity. Those discourses and practices, now recognized as figured, become "tools that can be used to affect self and other" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 140). Changes in identity and activity, then, come about as individuals recognize possibilities for new subject positions, try out these improvised ways of being, add new layers to their sedimentation of experiences, and ultimately create more stable heuristics for future behavior.

I situated this research study in sociocultural theory in order to explore how the social, cultural, and historical conditions of four different classrooms created space for critical, humanizing writing instruction. Particularly, this study examined the teachers' roles in shaping worlds that position students as agentive users of language and literacy. For example, students come to the "figured worlds" (Holland et al., 1998) of classrooms with complex social and cultural positions as well as histories of subject positions made available to them within other school contexts (e.g., good reader, natural writer, poor at math, disruptive, struggling, creative, smart, hard worker, talkative, etc.), and teachers, too, enter learning spaces with histories of experiences where they were afforded particular subject positions (e.g., technician, intellectual, designer, care-giver, manager, prison warden, etc.). Those positions are not fixed, but are ever-changing through the moment-to-moment interactions with teachers and other students. The subject positions teachers take up or reject, along with the opportunities for authentic decision-making that they make available, directly affect what kinds of writing processes are authorized and the available subject positions that students may take up, be assigned to, or resist in that classroom. However, as Vetter (2010) notes, when we talk about teachers positioning students in certain ways, this does not mean that "the positioning of students as readers and writers is a linear event that occurs from teacher to student" but is instead an "interactive, fluid, ever-evolving event in which both students and teacher are in constant negotiation" (p. 39). Teachers and students, through improvisations on standard storylines, are also always actively forming and transforming the "figured worlds" they share as their identities are also formed and transformed by the language and literacy discourses and practices of that space. Thus, sociocultural understandings of figured worlds, positioning, and improvisations (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Davies & Harré, 1990; Erickson, 2004; Holland et al., 1998; van Langenhove & Harré, 1998) were particularly useful concepts for uncovering relationships between language and identity in a teacher learning community and in the teachers' classroom writing instruction.

Sociocultural theories, like the ones described here, are often used to describe the entanglements of identity, learning, language, and activity across disciplines and cultures. This complexity is also particularly important in understanding the ways that writers write and that teachers think about, plan for, and enact writing instruction. For this study then, sociocultural theories were used to not just used to analyze the ways in which both students and teachers learn and identify through social interaction but also to conceptualize the ways they create writing and curriculum. Scholars working with language and literacy recognize that texts can be tools that mediates other social action within an activity network or can at times be the object of activity itself (e.g., Russell, 1997, 2009; Spinuzzi, 1999, 2003). These sociocultural literacy scholars draw on Vygotsky and Bakhtin as they shift the scope to look at communication not just as a means for authoring the self, but also as an object of its own. Central to their study of spoken and written communication is the notion that all signs, including words, always have two sides: its own reality and refraction of another's reality: a "word is a two-sided act" or a "bridge thrown between myself and another" (Volosinov, 1986, p. 86). A word is only half yours, but is also always in anticipation of a response from a reader/audience. This dialogic nature of language emphasizes the inability to separate actors from their social contexts and the importance of audience awareness in guiding their decision making—affirming those as vital aspects in any communicative process.

Sociocultural literacy scholars, in taking up communication as an object of activity, have begun talking about language and literacy as a set of practices (Erickson, 2004; Heath, 1983; Pennycook, 2010; Scribner & Cole, 1978, 1981; Street, 1984). In other words, language and literacy are things people do in specific contexts with specific purposes. This shift includes expanded conceptualizations of reading and writing, including multiliteracies (e.g., New London Group, 1996), New Literacy Studies (e.g., Street, 1993), academic literacies (e.g., Lea & Street, 2006), disciplinary literacies (e.g., Moje, 2007, 2008), and critical literacies (e.g., Freire, 1970/2005; Janks, 2010). The common thread running through each of these theories is "literacy is not literacy is not literacy" (Hull & Schultz, 2001, p. 583). Literacy and language practices of people of all ages are situated within sociocultural activity and take on different forms and functions based on the values, audiences, and purposes of the groups of people engaged in those activities. In this way, writing and speaking can be seen as tools that mediate social activity, the created texts both shaping and being shaped by the communities in which they circulate.

Perspectives on design

In this study, I was particularly interested in how theories of design and design thinking from across different disciplines and from writing scholars might offer new possibilities for EC-12 writing and writing instruction. Design is a term used to describe a wide variety of activities across a wide variety of disciplines, including fine arts, social sciences, engineering, business, and technology. Yet as Buchanan (1992) points out, design mostly "eludes reduction and remains a surprisingly flexible activity" (p. 5). While in some respects, design varies across contexts more than it stays the same, Lawson (2005) points out that many forms of design processes have some common characteristics.

- "The process is endless."
- "There is no infallibly correct process."
- "The process involves finding as well as solving problems."
- "Design inevitably involves subjective value judgment."
- "Design is prescriptive activity... aim[ing] not to deal with questions of what is, how and why but, rather, with what might be, could be and should be."

- “Designers work in the context of a need for action.” (Lawson, 2005, pp. 123-125)

The “both precise and vague ideas…systematic and chaotic thinking…imaginative thought and mechanical calculation” (Lawson, 2005, p.4) involved in these descriptions highlight the complicated, perhaps at times messy, nature of design and design thinking.

While many scholars, including Lawson (2005) and Welch (1999), point out that attempting to map out a process of design is nearly impossible, others agree on some basic, recursive steps including the following often cited processes: Ratliffe’s (2009) six-step process—Understand, Observe, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test—and Brown’s (2009) simpler, three-step process—Inspiration, Ideation, and Implementation. These basic processes are also reflected in more detailed models found in architecture, engineering, and software development (e.g., Cobb, 2011; Howard, Culley, & Dekoninck, 2008; Roozenburg & Cross, 1991). Most generally, these different models refer to having a complex understanding of the audience or users and their expectations; thinking through multiple possibilities for how a product, solution, response might go; developing and testing prototypes or iterations; and making revisions based on audience or user feedback. Across different disciplines and models, there is also a clear expectation that the final product will end up in the hands of real audiences or users. Citing frameworks like the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, which calls for curriculum that supports students’ development of critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication, several programs across the US and the world have argued for and implemented programs to bring design thinking to K-12 schools (Wise, 2016). These programs include the K-12 Lab School affiliated with Stanford’s d.school, the Creativity Labs at Indiana University, the Atlanta K12 Design Challenge, the Henry Ford Learning Institute, and the Design for Change curriculum and associated challenges.

Within writing or composition studies more particularly, several scholars have also taken up design terms to talk about composition (e.g., Buchanan, 2001; Kostelnick, 1989; Leverenz, 2014; Marback, 2009; Purdy, 2014; Sharples, 1999, 2013). Though somewhat isolated, these pieces offer interesting connections between writing and larger ideas about design. Most basically, these scholars have made arguments for thinking about writing as creative, as multimodal, as action, as not neutral, as audience- and purpose-driven and for thinking about writers as agentive and not as reproducers but transformers of structures and conventions. Writers, when theorized as designers, make and remake texts with social actions and audiences in mind throughout the process, which usually includes steps like envisioning or planning, creating multiple iterations, and testing out choices on readers.

Purdy (2014), for example, reviewed writing studies journals to describe different ways that scholars in the field have used “design,” including references to planning/structuring writing, to conceptualizing writing as multimodal or digital, to drawing attention to physical, and to making connections to interdisciplinary design theories. Purdy, pointing to the potential of applying design thinking to writing, then outlined specific, existing parallels between the recursive steps in the design process (as described in Ratcliffe, 2009) and the writing process. Another writing studies scholar, Leverenz (2014), directly discussed several benefits of positioning writing as a design process.

> Design thinking might help students see writing, even academic writing, as a creative act of making, one in which writers make not only texts, but themselves and their worlds...[it] has the potential to help address a number of the challenges of college writing instruction, especially the tension between creativity and convention...it eliminates the question of how to fit multimodal composing into writing classes since it focuses on designing solutions to problems rather than creating forms for their own sake. It also privileges the new and encourages the use of conventional resources in unexpected ways...design thinking has the potential to increase student engagement...And as a creative process, design thinking allows for a sense of agency in a context where no one is ever fully in control. Design thinking also encourages risk and rewards failure as the very means by which we learn what it is we want to do" (p. 3).

Beyond these general arguments found in writing studies pieces, there are also several additional theoretical traditions within writing and literacy studies that explicitly reference design or design thinking: rhetorical genre theories, multiliteracies and multimodality, and critical literacy.

When thinking about the design of texts, many people who write and study writing consider genre as a way of thinking about patterns in text design. Genre theorists generally fall into two camps—structural and rhetorical. Structuralists begin with the text, describing genre as a mostly stable form with distinct linguistic and organizational features. At the other end of this genre perspective spectrum, scholars (e.g., Artemeva, 2008; Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1993; Collin, 2012; Freedman & Medway, 1994; Kamberelis, 1995; Russell, 1997) tend to see genres as "fundamentally dynamic, fluid, heterogeneous, and situated" (Bazerman & Prior, 2005, p. 138), and rather than focusing on textual forms, these scholars start with the process of designing texts or genres in response to an authentic activity. The focus is less on the actual form of the text and more on the text as a performance or interaction between users. While writers may draw on typified responses to similar situations (Miller, 1984), the process is much more complex that simply duplicating forms and features. The designer of the text must not only have knowledge of the typical features of genre, but must make choices based on their understandings of the purposes of genres and conventions, and "how to negotiate one's intentions in relation to genres' social expectations and motives; when and why and where to use genres; what reader/writer relationships genres maintain; and how genres relate to other genres in the coordination of social life" (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 4). By centering action, intention, and audience, the conceptions of writing that rhetorical genre theorists offer parallels to conceptions of design from other disciplines (e.g., Brown, 2009; Lawson, 2005; Ratcliffe, 2009).

While genre theory offers many useful perspectives on writing, this particular line of work has been most intensive in college-level and workplace writing sites (Bazerman, 2007). However, some of these same scholars and others in the field of literacy education have simultaneously been working on new ways of thinking about literacy and literacy instruction in EC-12 classrooms. One particular theory that has been taken up in research and teaching is the theory of multiliteracies and multimodality. Kress (2003; 2010), for example, uses the term design to explain how writers draw on multiple semiotic modes or representational resources to construct meaning for themselves and to communicate with an external audience. Design, for Kress, takes place in the movement from representation to communication: “Representation is focused on me, shaped by my social histories…Communication is focused on social (inter-)action in a social relation of me with others, as my action with or for someone else” (2010, p. 51, emphasis in original).

Kress and his colleagues in the New London Group (1996) built on these ideas and others in their proposal of a new framework for teaching literacy, what they coined a “pedagogy of multiliteracies.” This approach argued for a broadening of our understanding of literacy to account for the “increasing multiplicity and integration of significant modes of meaning-making, where the textual is also related to the visual, the audio, the spatial, the behavioral, and so on” as well as the “realities of increasing local diversity and global connectedness” (New London Group, 1996, p. 64). The New London Group (1996) suggested treating “any semiotic activity, including using language to produce or consume texts, as a matter of Design involving three elements: Available Designs, Designing, and The Redesigned…[in order to] emphasize the fact that meaning-making is an active and dynamic process, and not something governed by static rules” (p. 74). In other words, composers of texts draw on existing semiotic conventions, or orders of discourse—like genres, dialects, styles, or voices, for example. However, as they “re-present and recontextualize” (p. 75) their own texts, these composers or designers of text never merely duplicate, but instead transform them as they repurpose those Available Designs in unique ways, “producing new constructions and representations of reality” (p. 75). These Redesigned texts, in turn, become part of the corpus of Available Designs as the mutually constitutive process continues. This shift from talking about composing or writing to talking about designing marks a “social shift from competence in a specific practice conceived in terms of understanding of and adherence to convention governing the use of a mode…to a focus on the interest and agency of the designer in the making of signs-as-texts" (Bezemer & Kress, 2008, p. 174). Like rhetorical genre theorists, scholars drawing on theories of multiliteracies also center purposes and audiences as important concepts for writers as they make decisions about how to use language to work towards a specific action in the world.

Perspectives on critical writing and humanizing instruction

The positioning of writers as agentive decision-makers, highlighted in both rhetorical theories of genre and the multiliteracies framework, is also a key element of critical literacy theories. These theories are most often based in the work of Paulo Freire, who argues that through literacy one may grow critical consciousness about the world: "To exist, humanly, is to *name* the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new *naming*" (1970/2005, p. 88, emphasis in original). According to Freire, only through language, through dialogue, can people become critical of and transform the world. Critical literacy builds on this foundation, most often examining ways that texts may be read, and be taught to be read, in ways that examine power relations inherent within the language of the text. A few critical literacy scholars (e.g., Bomer & Bomer, 2001; Clark & Ivanič, 1997; Janks, 2010; Kinloch & Burkhard, 2015; Morrell, 2003) specifically look at both critical reading and critical writing as part of their work. Janks (2010) considers critical text production among one of the four major axes of critical literacy: domination, access, diversity, and design. She briefly explains the interdependence of these axes:

> Genre theory without creativity runs the risk of reifying existing genres; deconstruction without reconstruction or design reduces human agency; diversity without access ghettoizes students. Domination without difference and diversity loses the ruptures that produce contestation and change. (2010, p. 27).

For Janks (2010) critical literacy does not just mean deconstructing and critiquing texts. Instead, it should include supporting students in reconstructing or creating new texts. In his argument for critical textual production, Morrell (2003) proposes core tenets of critical composition: beginning with students' lived experiences, engaging with the struggles of marginalized peoples, providing opportunities for authentic connections with people in the world, tackling social injustice having "as its project liberation from oppressive realities," and including space for both action and reflection on action (p. 8). Rather than just consuming or even critiquing, making space for producing texts in critical literacy instruction allows space for individual agency and individual action on the world. At the same time, it also makes us more critical of the texts that we do consume by providing us with insider knowledge into how texts are made. Designing and producing texts is a way of transforming ourselves, their identities, and the world as writers develop "an eye toward changing what is not fair and just" (Bomer & Bomer, 2001, p. 154).

While these approaches to critical writing are important, stepping backwards to look at elements of critical, humanizing pedagogies more generally provides additional insight into how this work might go within literacy classrooms. Critical pedagogies can be traced back to Marxist traditions, and as Giroux (2005) describes, they arose "from a need to name the contradiction between what schools claim they do and what they actually do" (p. 125). In U.S. schools, mistreatment of students is often masked by accountability reforms that claim interest in equality and meritocracy while selectively positioning students as passive objects, ignore students' cultural and linguistic resources, and perpetuate deficit narratives of students and their families. Critical approaches to education focus on analyzing how power is distributed, challenging hegemony and domination, and transforming the world to be more just and equitable through the empowerment of the oppressed. From these basic tenets, many different approaches to critical pedagogy have been built (e.g., Kumashiro, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Paris, 2012; Salazar, 2013). One of these strands is humanizing pedagogy (Bartolomé, 1994; Salazar, 2013). As scholars have long noted, institutions like schooling engage in practices that systematically oppress and dehumanize (De Lissovoy, 2010; Freire, 1970/2005; hooks, 1994). Freire (1970/2005) explains that "The oppressed have been destroyed precisely because their situation has reduced them to things…They cannot enter the struggle as objects in order to *later* become human beings" (p. 68). At the same time, no one can hand someone else subjecthood and liberation, and in fact, attempting to try to give, using a banking approach, someone else knowledge or tools for emancipation further dehumanizes both the giver and the receiver (Freire, 1970/2005). Therefore, the project of a humanizing pedagogy is a collective endeavor towards developing critical consciousness, praxis, and liberation.

In Freire's model of humanizing education, this collective effort takes place through dialogue, or teachers and students engaging in a process of learning and knowing together. Enacting this work in classrooms means that teachers and students reject the implied neutrality of school and "strive to understand the world as it is and as it should be" by engaging in problem-posing, "a method that dissolves the teacher–student dichotomy and transforms all learners into agents of social change" (McLaren & Crawford, 2011, p. 148). Doing this kind of work in the world and in classrooms requires the true humility, faith, and love that makes the "quest for mutual humanization" possible. While proponents of a humanizing pedagogy push back against generic practices or methods, scholars like Lilia Bartolomé, María del Carmen Salazar, María Fránquiz, and Teresa Huerta have drawn on Freire's ideas to outline some core purposes and components of approaches to teaching that resist the dehumanization happening in schools. Huerta (2011), for example, summarizes a humanizing approach to teaching Latino and bilingual students:

> Teachers who employ a humanizing pedagogy in the classroom understand that learning is the act of linking new information to prior knowledge whether in or out of school and that learning occurs in a social cultural context. Furthermore, they understand that language is a tool for learning and that through a culturally bound and socially mediated process of language development, children construct mental frameworks (schema) for perceiving the world around them…[These teachers] engage in classroom practices that respect cultural differences and reflect genuine care for individual students…They critically question their deficit views of subordinated students and recognize students as "knowers" and active participants in their individual learning. Furthermore, they recognize that schools

> generally reflect society’s asymmetrical power relations…[and] take action to create pedagogical structures that help to balance the asymmetrical power relations in society. (Huerta, 2011, p. 49).

As this summary highlights, frameworks for humanizing pedagogies, grounded in sociocultural understandings of learning and language, call for teachers to reframe the subject positions typically afforded students within schools by moving to resist deficit perspectives and instead recognize, honor, and sustain students’ abilities and resources. Huerta’s summary also reminds us that in a classroom taking up critical and humanizing pedagogy, teachers and students should not just be engaged in critical content but also enacting instructional practices that disrupt traditional power hierarchies in schools.

Informed by the perspectives of these and other scholars, I use the term “critical, humanizing” across this study to draw explicit attention to theoretical and practical traditions that honor critique and reconstruction, that appreciate students’ assets and challenge them to grow, and that recognize oppression and the struggle towards liberation. This study adds to these theoretical understandings of critical and humanizing pedagogies by specifically considering how this type of work might happen within writing instruction across EC-12 schools.

Perspectives on teachers as designers

Looking across the theories and research informing writing instruction, it is clear that there is not just a unitary vision of writing or of teaching writing. Instead teachers are often presented with many different, often contradictory, ideas about what counts as writing, what values they should hold about students as writers, and ultimately what the teaching of writing should look like. In looking across the theories about writing and teaching presented so far in this dissertation, overall they stop at frameworks or implications for teaching rather than providing scripted or highly prescriptive lesson plans, thus positioning teachers as makers of curriculum. In other words, teachers, like writers, are also expected to participate in critique and design processes as they shape the environments and experiences students will have with writing. Teachers in this case are professionals who draw on different forms of knowledge—Cochran-Smith & Lytle's (1999) knowledge-for-practice (conventional wisdom or theories of practice), knowledge-in-practice (practical knowledge that appears in practice or reflection on practice, and knowledge-of-practice (inquiry into their own work in connection with others' work)—to design learning environments in more long-term ways and in the moment-to-moment decision making that happens in action (Schön, 1983).

This view of teachers is at odds with the devaluing and deskilling (Giroux, 1985) that has most often characterized schools and educational research since the early 1900s and that has only grown alongside standardized curriculum and testing movements in the past two decades. The latter accountability movements have narrowed the content and approaches to instruction that teachers feel they have to cover and have positioned teachers as self-interested and untrustworthy (Apple, 2007; Au, 2007). In a review of literature about the relationship between teachers and curriculum, Clandinin & Connelly (1992) found that research studies most positioned teachers as "the discrepancy between intended and achieved ends; curriculum is seen as an instrument of reform, and teachers are regarded as mediators between the curriculum and intended outcomes" and that "researchers largely shaped teachers to researcher purposes and paid little attention to what stories the teachers were living and telling in their classrooms before and during the project" (p. 392). Similarly, in professional learning and teaching spaces, teachers are rarely viewed as creative, active participants in reforms, but instead have been shifted "from *agents* of change, to *objects* of change" (Laguardia, Brink, Wheeler, Grisham, & Peck, 2002, p. 14). Teachers, as passive objects handed curriculum and practices to enact, are not often valued as curriculum designers, but instead "their professional duties become about compliance rather than change" (Kohli, Picower, Martinez, & Ortiz, 2015).

Pushing back on these realities in schools, Clandinin & Connelly (1992) agree with others like Giroux (1985), arguing that teachers should be viewed as "transformative intellectuals" and reflective practitioners who are capable of and responsible for designing instructional experiences for their students. From a research perspective, this stance aligns with Engeström (2011) who argued that design methodologies that assume true fidelity in the implementation of standardized, linear interventions are highly problematic. In Engeström's words, "interventions in human beings' activities are met with actors with identities and agency, not with anonymous mechanical responses. If agency is not a central concern in the methodology, there is something seriously wrong with it" (2011, p. 603). Across educational research, there have been similar pushes for more collaboration in both research and teacher education. In research, specific models, such as collaborative action ethnography (Erickson, 2006b), social design experiments (Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010; Fowler-Amato & Warrington, 2017) and participatory design research (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016), ask researchers to invite participants to be collaborators or co-designers in learning, teaching, and transforming schools. Researchers, in these kinds of spaces, are often "observant participants" (Erickson, 2006b), positioned not as an expert but as a fellow teacher/learner. Rather than the researcher providing an answer or an intervention for teachers to implement, teachers and researchers should work together to create new knowledge and design instructional activities. Similarly, in teacher education spaces, several scholars have added to theoretical understandings of teacher learning spaces as generative (Skerrett, Warrington, & Williamson, 2018), as "publicly engaged scholarship" (Kinloch & Dixon, 2018), as dialogical and critical (Kohli et al., 2015), as democratic (Mirra & Morrell, 2011), and as humanizing (Carter Andrews, Brown, Castillo, Jackson, & Vellanki, 2019). Across these different conceptualizations of teacher learning are calls for repositioning teachers as experts and as active participants in their own learning and designing of curriculum and instruction.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In this study, I used qualitative, multicase study (Stake, 2006) along with participatory design research (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016) to explore how teachers across grade-levels create and implement writing instruction when we purposefully position students as designers. The qualitative nature of the study aligned with sociocultural perspectives on writing, learning, and teaching as it asks researchers to look across multiple data sources—in this case primarily observations and field notes, audio and video recordings, interviews, and artifacts—and to pay particular attention to the social practices and contexts in which actors are engaged. Case study was a useful methodology for examining naturally occurring phenomenon, and participatory design research (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016; Engeström, 2011; Erickson, 2006b; Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010) was useful for (re)imagining how teaching might go. Drawing on these latter traditions, I invited four teachers to meet with me in a reflective inquiry group. Following each of these teachers into their classrooms provided a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon by comparing how teachers translate ideas from the group into their different classroom settings. This was especially important as it highlighted the uniqueness of all contexts and ways teachers navigated their own identities as teachers, their knowledge of their students, the politics of their school teaching contexts, and their values for learners and writers in their classrooms to make decisions about what to teach in their classrooms.

In my analysis, I looked across the inquiry group meetings and each teachers' individual classroom writing instruction. Coming back to the theories that guided the design of this study led me to focus on both how the teachers worked together in the group to actively reflect on and (re)construct not just ideas for their teaching but also subject positions available for themselves and their students within school spaces. In particular, I drew on sociocultural conceptions of "figured worlds" and identity (e.g., Holland et al., 1998), on processes and mindsets of design and design thinking (e.g., Brown, 2009), and on critical, humanizing pedagogies (e.g., Freire, 1970/2005) to examine the group space and individual teachers' classrooms. Using these theories to guide my analysis, I considered the ways the teachers engaged in collaborative inquiry and design to critique their school spaces and reimagine possibilities for honoring students' lives and positioning students as capable designers. I then explored how teachers translated this work into their classrooms, in ways that reshaped their teaching and their identities as teachers.

Chapter Two: Review of Relevant Literature

This chapter offers a survey of literature that has informed this study. These bodies include research examining the teaching of writing, the positioning of students in classrooms, young people acting as designers, and teacher learning and designing curriculum. For each of these areas of study I provide an overview of the empirical findings and implications that ground this study.

RESEARCH ON THE TEACHING OF WRITING

While we have seen a rise in the amount of research done in writing since the 1970s, there is still relatively little research that examines writers in P-12 contexts (Juzwik, 2006). Those that do look at young children's and adolescents' writing often focus on individual composing practices in and out of school (e.g., Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2003; Compton-Lily, 2014; Durán, 2017; Dyson, 2013; Lammers & Marsh, 2015; Ranker, 2007) or specific assignments or interventions within school contexts (e.g., Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005; Kiuhara, O'Neill, Hawken, and Graham, 2012; Philippakos & MacArthur, 2016; Purcell-Gates, Duke, & Martineau, 2007). Few focus on the role of writing teachers' actual pedagogical practices. In response to the general lack of awareness of what writing instruction looks like in schools, several large-scale projects have been undertaken, including the National Study of Writing Instruction (Applebee & Langer, 2009, 2011) and other national surveys of teachers across grade-levels (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Graham, Capizzi, Harris, Hebert, & Morphy, 2014; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009). These studies, which rely solely or primarily on self-report data from teachers, have provided a basic overview of the state of writing instruction across the United States. However, they do not provide the kind of in-depth, layered description that may be useful for informing practice, and particularly for informing practice that authorizes positions for students as agentive writers or designers of texts.

Writing and the impacts of high-stakes testing

One important area of study within the research on writing instruction is the effect of high-stakes testing. Even teachers who believe in celebrating the individuality and agency of their students and in teaching students to be critical, independent learners equipped for lifelong writing have to think about powerful governing variables that often get in the way of that work. The most considerable of these concerns is the emphasis on high-stakes, standardized tests. Evidence, across disciplines, has highlighted how the pressures of testing lead to a narrowing of curriculum and a devaluing of the resources of individual teachers and students (e.g., Applebee & Langer, 2009, 2011; Au, 2007; Berliner, 2011; Costigan, 2013; Davis & Vehabovic, 2017; Dutro, Sellan, & Bain, 2013; Genishi & Dyson, 2009; Milner, 2013; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Slomp, 2008). When tests have large potential consequences both for the teachers and the students, it is only natural, and responsible, for teachers to think about how what they are doing in their classrooms prepares students to do well on the test (Berliner, 2011). Within writing instruction, testing demands further complicate tensions teachers may already feel between access and diversity (Janks, 2010) as well as teaching writing and teaching writers (Calkins, 1994).

No matter which side of the access and diversity spectrum teachers' beliefs fall into, they are under pressure to prepare students for standardized tests, and these tests serve as a gatekeeping tool for maintaining standard language ideologies (Lippi-Green, 2012) that do not recognize the range of language awareness and flexibility of students (Dutro et al., 2013; Palmer & Lynch, 2008). This leads many teachers, again often regardless of their beliefs, to feel they need to teach to that part of the test. Despite decades of research that point to the ineffectiveness of grammar instruction (Graham & Perin, 2007; Hillocks, 1984), recent surveys have noted that teachers are often still turning to grammar instruction, especially for writers they see as "struggling" or "less skilled" (Brimi, 2012; Graham et al., 2014; Hillocks, 2002; Kiuhara et al., 2009; McCarthey, 2008; McCarthey & Mkhize, 2013; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; Wahleithner, 2018).

Testing pressures also add weight to the access and writing, or product-centered, side of those continuums when thinking about the forms of writing taught in schools and the focus on those forms over attention to the writer. Teachers often focus in on the types of writing that will be tested (Applebee & Langer, 2011; Hillocks, 2002; Kiss & Mizusawa 2018; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; Scherff & Piazza, 2005; Wahleithner, 2018). Scherff and Piazza (2005), for example, found that students in Florida spent most of their time writing in the forms tested on the FCAT, responses to literature, summaries, and expository and persuasive essays, while the large majority of those same students never or hardly ever wrote in expressive or poetic modes. Similarly, Wahleithner (2018) found that the teachers she interviewed clearly considered the types of writing prescribed by standards and assessed by high-stakes tests when determining what writing they would focus on with their students. These teachers also relied on standardized formulas or expectations based on standardized rubrics (see also Applebee & Langer, 2011; Hillocks, 2002).

Reducing the modes of writing to narrow forms, rather than social actions in response to audiences and purposes, also often moves the center of instruction back to the product rather than the process of writing. Gere, Christenbury, and Sassi (2005) suggest that in on-demand test writing, the writing process must be compressed, explaining that only “planning writing through prewriting and reviewing writing at the end are vital tasks for successful on-demand writing” (p. 49). This emphasis in planning and reviewing, with less time and attention paid to thoughtful revision and editing, has also been echoed in surveys of classroom writing instruction (Graham et al., 2014; Hillocks, 2002; Kiuhara et al., 2009; Scherff & Piazza, 2005). The abbreviated nature of time and attention to writing in general, as reported in Applebee and Langer (2009, 2011), also point toward high-stakes tests as powerful variables that teachers must weigh as they decide what counts as writing, what opportunities for writing they will provide students, and how they might position students within that work.

Supporting students as decision makers

Despite the pressures to standardize writing across school spaces, there are also examples of research that report on classroom teachers who have designed writing environments that support students' decision making in their writing. For example, Harman (2013) used techniques borrowed from ethnography and discourse analysis, particularly systemic functional linguistics, to examine audio and video recordings of classroom instruction, fieldnotes from observations, and artifacts from the classroom in her case study of a fifth-grade ESL classroom. Harman examined how the instruction from the teacher supported two of her students, Miguel and Bernardo, "in learning how to appropriate particular lexiogrammatical resources from children's literature to build cohesion in their writing" (p. 126). Harman found that as the teacher explicitly pointed out linguistic features of shared readings in order to demonstrate "how you can borrow and play with the language from your favorite authors" (p. 132), she was implicitly asking students to consider the original author's intentions while positioning her student writers as rhetorical decision-makers. Harman also found evidence that the students, in separate ways, often appropriated features from the texts they read in their own compositions. In reflecting on her own methods of analysis, Harman noted that it was the combination of the close-up, systemic functional linguistic analysis alongside the more comprehensive, ethnographic analysis methods that "reveal[ed] that [the teacher's] focus on explicit language and intertextuality encouraged Bernardo and Miguel to see text as a mosaic of intertexts" (2013, p. 137).

These findings are similar to those of other studies that look at how students take up writing instruction within the situated practice of the classroom and appropriate them for their own purposes (Ranker, 2009b; Shanahan, 2013; Yoon, 2013). Ranker (2009b) found that even when students did not directly and immediately appropriate the writing strategies the classroom teacher offered, they did call on "resources from their linguistic and cultural repertoires with discrete lesson elements" (p. 423) to compose written pieces across the school year. The first-grade teacher in Ranker's study used a workshop approach, which stressed individual writing processes and students "making their own decisions about what to write and which direction to take their writing" (p. 425). Similarly, the teacher in Yoon's (2013) study also espoused a workshop approach to teaching writing. However, in this study both the teacher and the kindergarten students in her classroom were also negotiating space for writing and decision-making within a mandated scripted writing workshop curriculum. By providing more opportunities for talk, collaboration, and following the interests of the students in the class, the teacher created an environment that supported students' ability to "draw on multiple resources (their own experiences, their imaginations, their peers, and their teachers) to carry out their social intentions" (p. 170) rather than being limited by the narrowed curriculum.

In a close look at a secondary writing teacher, Skerrett and Bomer (Skerrett, 2013, 2014; Skerrett & Bomer, 2011, 2013) described the ninth-grade teacher's pedagogy as one that drew on students existing, out-of-school literacies and connected them to academic reading and writing. In one analysis of the data, Skerrett (2013) examined how the classroom teacher used a multiliteracies pedagogy—overt instruction, situated practice, and critical framing (New London Group, 1996)—to position students "as legitimate members of interconnected literacy communities of practice that included school" whose "multiple languages and literacies as useful tools for developing academic writing identities and practices" (p. 337). Using video recordings and field notes of classroom observations alongside interview data, student home visits, and examples of students written texts as data sources, Skerrett (2013) looked at how this particular teacher's multiliteracies writing instruction on the student's use of her linguistic, cultural, and social repertoires in her composing. In particular, Skerrett noted how the student was drawing on the "centrality of family in [the student's] life" as well as her own "border crossing experiences" throughout her life (p. 347) as well as how the student made specific linguistic moves (e.g., decisions about capitalization, about moving between Spanish and English, and about point of view). The analysis of Nina's text clearly highlighted how the student was positioned as a competent writer who made choices about language and content to design a text that fulfilled her own personal motivations as well as the expectations of her classmates as her audience and of the school assignment.

Similarly, Fisher-Ari and Flint (2018) followed two teachers working with English learners in a diverse urban school in order to explore the relationships between "teacher attitudes and beliefs about ELs and the curricular opportunities available that might (or might not) contribute to teachers' learning and student response" (p. 354). Drawing on three years of classroom observations, teacher debriefs, and student-created artifacts, Fisher-Ari and Flint documented how the teachers' participation in writing workshop professional development experiences helped them move away from deficit perspectives of their students' linguistic, experiential, familial, and cultural resources. As the teachers opened up more space for student choice, they also learned more about their students' lives and gradually "repositioned themselves as facilitators of writing development and their students as individuals who are authors with stories, passion, and insights to share" (p. 365). Seeing the work their students did when allowed more choice in topic, genre, and language, the teachers in this study began seeing their students as powerful decision-makers, whose experiences and ways of seeing the world were rich resources for them as writers.

Though none specifically examined what kind of writing instruction happened when teachers explicitly considered writing as a design process, each of the studies reviewed here (Fisher-Ari & Flint, 2018; Harman, 2013; Ranker, 2009; Shanahan, 2013; Skerrett, 2013; Skerrett & Bomer, 2013; Yoon, 2013) focused on the teacher's role in creating environments for writing that support students in being active decision-makers rather than passive recipients of writing instruction. These studies also each called on multiple data sources and analysis methods to offer a complex view of the instruction and students' activity within those contexts. Through looking at both what the teachers are doing as well as the students' work, the researchers were able to create a "socially embedded" (Dyson, 2013) picture of the often messy process of writing (Fleckenstein, Spinuzzi, Rickly, & Papper, 2008) and the instruction that mediated that writing. Specifically, these investigations all used both more holistic, thematic methods of analysis alongside more fine-grained interpretations of the students' texts and/or classroom discourse to open up space for thinking about writing not as isolated, autonomous products, but as artifacts of a dialogic, socially situated literacy practice. The current study contributes to this body of literature, adding thick descriptions of individual classrooms and cross-case analysis to create a picture of what critical, humanizing writing instruction that foregrounds writing as a design process might look across different P-12 contexts.

Critical and culturally sustaining writing instruction

Another important strand of research in writing instruction to consider is that which has examined critical and/or culturally sustaining writing. While there are many different conceptual pieces that discuss using critical literacy frameworks in EC-12 classrooms, relatively few empirical studies have examined how this work goes. Of those relative few, most center on students' reading of and discussion around literature (e.g., Bourke, 2008; Chafel & Neitzel, 2012; Gainer, 2008; Jones, 2013; Labadie, Pole, & Rogers, 2013; Lesley, 2008; Lewis-Bernstein Young, 2018; Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015). Shared findings across these studies have suggested that students' background and experiences were an important factor in how they took up critical stances (Chafel & Neitzel, 2012; Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015), including Lesley's (2008) finding that students were more likely to take on active roles and draw on their non-school or non-dominant discourses and knowledges once they began to see texts they felt reflected their personal experiences. Other findings suggested the importance of scaffolding and explicit instruction in supporting students' development of critical perspectives on texts (Chafel & Neitzel, 2012; Peterson & Chamberlain, 2015; Jones, 2013; Labadie et al., 2013). Jones (2013), particularly, discussed the important sorts of identity work that must happen with marginalized students in order to reposition themselves as readers who can be critical of powerful, published texts. Overall, these studies showcased how readers, as young as kindergarten-age, have participated in this critical work.

Also leaning on critical literacy, some other scholars have looked more closely at writing, composition, or design in the classroom (Garcia, Mirra, Morrell, Martinez, & Scorza, 2015; Ghiso, 2013; Lalik & Oliver, 2007; Norris, 2014; Scarborough & Allen, 2015). Findings from both Scarborough and Allen (2015) as well as Garcia and colleagues (2015) suggested that having a supportive community of learners and a real audience for created texts were important components of critical literacy composing. Garcia and colleagues (2015) also added that digital modes—including facebook conversations and documentary production—were helpful in positioning students as active participants in civic action and critical discourse.

Literacy research, overall, has also revealed a broad landscape of ideas about writing instruction, both in and beyond schools, that may open up possibilities for culturally relevant and/or sustaining writing practices (e.g., Durán, 2017; Flint et al., 2015; Flores, 2018; Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012; Johnson, 2017; Kim & Omerbašić, 2017; Martin & Beese, 2017; Muhammad, 2015a; Muhammad & Haddix, 2016; Muhammad, 2015; Rosario-Ramos, 2018; Tatum & Gue, 2012; Taylor, 2017; Zapata, 2014). Muhammad's (2015a) study of African American Muslim girls' participation in a summer literacy collaborative, for example, highlighted how "literary freedom" and authentic writing purposes, such as poetry for social change, can afford young writers space to explore and shape their identities as they respond to the world around them. This example, while not explicitly focused on teachers' curriculum and instruction, emphasized implications that others (e.g., Flint et al., 2015; Martin & Beese, 2017; Taylor, 2017; Woodard, Vaughn, & Machado, 2017) have also called for in and beyond schools:

> It is important to use a bottom-up approach and utilize the knowledge that youth have…youth need spaces to enact agency on deciding what is worthwhile for their own development…Literacy instruction should be reimagined so that the teacher is not all-knowing. The girls in this study were able to choose a critical issue that needed attention in their surrounding and broader communities and subsequently seek knowledge on the topic. They were able to step outside of themselves and consider the needs of others while experimenting with language. (Muhammad, 2015a, p. 314)

These implications for practice suggested the need for teachers to open up space for student choice, share more decision-making with students, and create opportunities for critical inquiry and writing for authentic audiences and purposes.

In another study, Woodard, Vaughn, and Machado (2017) interviewed and observed nine elementary and middle school teachers who were identified as enacting culturally sustaining practices in their writing instruction in order to better understand how that framework might translate into classroom practice. Through their analysis of teachers' interviews, the researchers found that these teachers "(1) made space for explicit discussions of language, culture, and power in the writing curriculum and (2) problematized dominant culture (both "official" curricula and languages)" (p. 216). The findings of this suggested important components of culturally sustaining writing pedagogy while also highlighting both isolation teachers felt in their schools when they took up this work and tensions the teachers felt in negotiating competing language ideologies and priorities in curriculum.

In one of the few studies looking at writing instruction and humanizing pedagogy (Bartolomé, 1994; Salazar, 2013), Taylor (2017) examined reading and writing conferences between teachers and students to see how those teachers might use the space of conferences to co-create humanizing instruction. Her findings suggest that humanizing writing instruction is not just defined by the content of curriculum, such as the decision to read or write an explicitly critical text, but also by "particular ways of interacting" that position students not as objects but as fellow humans (p. 201). Additionally, Taylor (2017) noted tensions for teachers in negotiating competing language ideologies and test curriculum, but that the teachers focused "not on critique of these dehumanizing discourses but instead on their construction of humanizing discourses of literacy pedagogy" (p. 204). In another study, Zisselsberger (2016) studied one fifth-grade classroom teacher to see how she drew on both humanizing pedagogy and pedagogical language knowledge to resist standardization and other dehumanizing practices for her bilingual students. Zisselsberger found that while knowledge of language was very important for the fifth-grade teacher, that language knowledge needed to be paired with components of asset-based, humanizing pedagogy to ensure students' success in school. Overall, then, humanizing writing instruction required a balance between supporting students' language and literacy practices with helping them find powerful ways to use those practices and to connect them to their lives.

Looking across these studies and the others highlighted in this section emphasizes the tensions teachers feel when attempting to balance the pervasive discourses of standardized language, deficit perspectives of students, decontextualized writing tasks, and high-stakes testing with critical and humanizing approaches to writing pedagogy that seek to view students as resourceful and capable, to build on assets rather than fill in "gaps," to share important decision-making, and to engage students in authentic inquiry and writing for audiences beyond the classroom. These tensions, as the research highlighted, have been particularly pernicious for teachers working in schools that serve marginalized communities. This dissertation aimed to add to this base of research, specifically by taking us inside teachers' classrooms along with their conversations about (re)designing critical, humanizing writing instruction.

RESEARCH ON SOCIAL POSITIONING

As the previous section might suggest, through its attention to how students were viewed and positioned by teachers or particular instructional practices, another body of literature informing the proposed study draws on sociocultural theories of identity and discourse to describe how teacher and students position and are positioned within instructional contexts. While several of these studies focus on how students took up social identities and create subject positions for their peers (Bomer & Laman, 2004; Clarke, 2006; Johnson, 2011; Leander, 2004), others more specifically looked at the teacher's role in authorizing certain subject positions. The studies examining the relationship between teacher talk and student identity have clearly highlighted the significance of the teacher's reflexive and interactive positioning. In several cases, students were negatively affected by the way the teacher positioned them in relation to their peers and to the content, limiting the subject positions available to the student as those of struggling, unruly, or otherwise incompetent within the classroom context (e.g., Anderson, 2009; Bourne, 2002; Hall, 2009; Reeves, 2009; Wortham, 2003; Yoon, 2008).

Wortham (2003), for example, studied the students and teachers in a joint ninth-grade English/History course and how the identity of one particular student, Tyisha, shifted over the course of the school year. Early in the school year, the teacher recognized and affirmed Tyisha's efforts to participate in class discussions. However, as other students' participation patterns began to better reflect the teacher's expectations, the teacher no longer rewarded Tyisha's behavior, but instead began positioning her as a disruptive outcast in the classroom, effectively removing any status Tyisha had within the class and stifling her participation. In another study, Yoon (2008) looked at how three different teachers positioned English language learners in relation to the curriculum and to their mainstream peers. In one classroom, the teacher drew on culturally relevant pedagogy to include all students in the content of the course and to position all students as intellectual and as having resources to draw on to be successful in the class. The English language learners in her class actively participated and were successful. In the other two classes, however, the same students were "regarded as language learners who simply sat in the classroom with little encouragement for their participation" and were thus "disengaged and silent" (p. 516).

Positioning students as agentive and successful

Other studies showcase ways that teachers have opened up spaces for students rather than restricting their ways of being and participating in the class (Frankel, 2016, 2017; Hall, 2016; Kuby & Vaughn, 2015; Moses & Kelly, 2017; Rex, 2001; Skerrett, 2013; Vetter, 2010; Worthy, Consalvo, Bogard, & Russell, 2012). In one example of this kind of study, Vetter (2010) drew on micro-ethnographic methods of data collection and analysis in her five month, qualitative study of one high school English teacher's classroom within an urban school. Particularly, Vetter's research question asked how the teacher "navigate[d] classroom interactions in order to situate students as readers and writers" (p. 36). She used positioning theory as a lens for conducting discourse analysis across her data sources, including video and audio recordings of instruction and interviews with both the teacher and students in the class. Vetter's (2010) findings indicated both the teacher's reflexive, self-positioning as well as her interactive positioning of students were influential for the identities available for students to take on within her classroom. The teacher in this case understood the role that students' race and culture played into their school identities; she began the year discussing her own background and experiences in an effort to build relationships with students and open up space to acknowledge and work through racial tensions students felt in the classroom, the school, and the world. The teacher also often shared personal stories that "modeled what an 'agent of change' looks like" (p. 45) and was transparent about her goals for empowering students to also take on these roles. Vetter also found that throughout the teacher's discourse during literacy instruction, she consistently repositioned students "from disengaged to engaged readers, from resistant to capable readers, and as members of a writing community" (p. 44). She created these available subject positions through her improvised interactions with students, including making connections between students' interests and the literacy curriculum, asking open-ended questions, using the students' own language in playful ways, and generally being responsive to students' needs and levels of interests. In one example, when a student was resistant to a writing opportunity, the teacher took on the role of a writing coach: "she asked questions, made connections to his everyday life and interests, and gave persistent support that positioned Detrek as a capable writer equipped with an agentive narrative about how to write reflective essays" (pp. 54-55).

In a similar study, Kuby and Vaughn (2015) used cross-case analysis to examine literacy instruction in a kindergarten and a second-grade classroom. The researchers looked across data sources—"pedagogical documentation," including field notes and reflections recorded by the researchers, video and audio recordings of instruction, the teachers' reflective notes, interviews, and student artifacts—and used discourse analysis to look at the shifting identities of students across both classroom contexts. Their findings suggested that the teachers' positioning of the curriculum and their own self-positioning opened up new identities for students. For example, students in both classrooms were encouraged to “play around with literacy” (p. 457) using different, easily accessible materials and modes to follow their interests and questions. In these spaces, “students enacted agency and became teachers, producers and visionaries” who made decisions “not only in what they produced but also in the process of creating” (p. 457). These subject positions were only available because the teachers in the classrooms presented writing as multimodal, flexible, and social. The teachers also both trusted students as learners and writers and shared power with them in the classroom, allowing them to influence the curriculum and to act as “teachers” in the space to share their visions of multimodal texts and their processes for creating them.

The findings from these studies (Kuby & Vaughn, 2015; Vetter, 2010) align with others that examine ways teachers reposition students as capable and agentive users of language (e.g., (Frankel, 2016, 2017; Hall, 2016; Kuby & Vaughn, 2015; Moses & Kelly, 2017; Rex, 2001; Skerrett, 2013; Vetter, 2010; Worthy, Consalvo, Bogard, & Russell, 2012). In each of these studies, the teachers worked to build positive relationships with students in order to help make connections between students’ lives and the academic and social practices of school, relied on modeling behaviors or strategies for successful literacy practice, and encouraged dialogic interactions among students and with the teacher. The current study adds to this body of literature, looking at how teachers across grade-levels position both the content of the writing curriculum and the student writers. Based on the implications of the research in this area, this study was designed to pay particular attention to teachers’ discursive moves, in both planned and unplanned interactions, and to draw on methods of discourse analysis to examine how these moves created parts for students to play within the storyline of the classroom and their lives as writers. In particular, this study provides insights into how teachers might (re)assign meaning to specific tools in ways that include embedded subject positions for themselves and for their students.

RESEARCH ON STUDENTS AS DESIGNERS

As the theory surrounding design suggests, studies that examine design and design thinking come from a wide array of different disciplines and locations. Those that look at young people as designers have often been found in STEM education fields (e.g., Baytak & Land, 2011; Lee, Kafai, Vasudevan, & Davis, 2014; Welch, 1999; Wilson, Smith, & Householder, 2014), art education (e.g., Zande, Warnock, Nikoomanesh, & Dexter, 2014; Watson, 2015), early childhood education (e.g., Davies, 1996; Hope, 2007, 2008; Milne, 2012), out-of-school literacy practices (e.g., Black, 2007; Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2003; Mavers, 2007), as well as in school and after school literacy programs (e.g., Mills, 2007; Norris, 2014; Ranker, 2007, 2009, 2014; Shanahan, 2013; Simon, 2009). These studies have tended to examine specific projects or interventions or follow individual students' design processes.

Welch (1999) noted that the "hidden" work of design made it hard to study; however, in an attempt to better understand how educators might teach design, he developed a method to examine the strategies that designers/students used. With five pairs of seventh grade students as his participants, Welch provided each pair with the same "design brief" that detailed the requirements for building a tower made of paper. Welch audio and video recorded the students' work, and then, within three days, invited the students back for a retrospective interview where they watched the video with the researcher and commented on what they were doing. Using transcripts, accompanied by short descriptions of the students' actions, Welch then coded the data and developed a basic map of each pair's design process. Based on his analysis, the researcher determined that the students' processes were much more complex than any linear model might accurately describe. He also noted that these students did not brainstorm lots of possibilities beforehand, but instead preferred to begin modeling three-dimensionally and moved on to a new idea or model after an attempt failed. The "evaluation" phase that many scholars theorized as a final step in the design process did not appear to be a separate phase for these designers, but instead was an integrated and ongoing way of thinking throughout the process. Welch argued that these findings suggested "a need for teachers to explicitly teach design process skills which will assist students' problem-solving, but which do not impose a strict sequence in which those skills are applied" (p. 32).

In another STEM education study, this time drawing on case study methodology, Baytak and Land (2011) looked at a small group of fifth-graders in a science and technology course. Students in this course were participating in a "learning-by-game design experience" (p. 768) in which they were asked to use Scratch, a free visual programming language often used as an entry to programming and software design (Resnick, 2009), to design a video game about an environmental science topic. Based on their analysis of data collected—including archived drafts of the students' games, pre- and post-interviews with students, field notes and observations, video recordings of students working on games, and students' logged daily design plans—the researchers reported that "the process of designing and testing led to continual redesign" and that both students and the teachers in the space were regarded as peers with whom to share "ideas, concepts, and strategies" (Baytak & Land, 2011, p. 779). The design environment promoted individual agency and collaboration rather than positioning the teacher as expert. This study also confirmed findings from previous studies, like Welch (1999), which viewed student design processes as including some common strategies and trends but no set, linear path.

Young people as designers of texts

As previously noted, there are also several examples of studies that have examined young people as designers of text both in and outside of school. Chandler-Olcott and Mahar (2003), for example, drew on the New London Group's conception of design as a component of their analysis of two early adolescent girls' use of digital technology. Using field notes from formal and informal interviews, a technology-focused student discussion group, and home visits as well as artifacts of their digital technology use, Chandler-Olcott and Mahar reported on the anime-based fanfiction site that one participant, Rhiannon, created. Rhiannon clearly drew from multiple sources and modes to design hybrid texts that were “neither purely derivative nor individually constructed” but instead “represented a blend of social and personal perspectives” (p. 372). The other participant, Eileen, appropriated imagery from other sources, including traditional literature and action figures, and redesigned them, “anime-fying” them in her own original artwork. Both girls’ participation was highly social, embedded in dynamic online communities, and both girls’ individual purposes and motivations drove their design processes. The researchers’ findings suggest that young people often engage in sophisticated design processes outside of school, finding mentorship instead in online communities.

Chandler-Olcott and Mahar (2003) also offered implications for how their findings may be relevant in school. They submitted that introducing more opportunities for students to participate in digital design processes in school may be motivating for students and teachers and students may benefit from positioning those who are already engaging in these outside-school design experiences as experts in the classroom. Subsequent studies have looked at classroom projects that involve more digital technologies (e.g., Kitson, Fletcher, & Kearney, 2007; Mills, 2007; Mills & Exley, 2014; Shanahan, 2013). Findings from these studies included the limitations of relying on teachers’ knowledge of the multimodal affordances of digital technology (Kitson et al., 2007; Shanahan, 2013), concerns about power within and access to digital tools and processes (Mills, 2007), and tensions between using digital composing in the classroom and school standards and high-stakes testing (Mills & Exley, 2014).

Other researchers have looked at how students design texts in print-focused, low-technology environments (e.g., Ranker, 2007, 2009, 2014; Rowsell & Decoste, 2012; Skerrett & Bomer, 2013). Ranker (2007) drew on case study methods to study the complex composing processes of John, an eight-year-old student. He used “available design” as a unit of analysis to isolate design resources, including “characters, themes, motifs, images, layout conventions, story grammars, and other isolatable ideas that John drew from various media and their conventions” (p. 413). These other media included videogames, websites, television shows, and comic books. The student in this study was not merely copying and pasting from different sources, however; Ranker described the student's process as "one of redesigning rather than replicating" (p. 427) elements from multimodal literacy experiences outside of school.

In another of his studies, Ranker (2009a) again used case study methods to examine the collaborative writing practices of three first-grade students in a writing workshop classroom. Ranker collected audio and video recordings of the students composing and the teacher's writing instruction, observational field notes, audio recordings of informal conversations with the students and the teacher, and photocopies of the students' written pieces. Drawing on semiotics as a lens for his analysis, Ranker isolated resources the three students used in composing a jointly-constructed text. The three students imported and transformed different multimodal composing processes. These included "(1) the practice of physically/spatially dividing their work into discrete parts (using separate papers and a numbering system) that each was responsible for developing; (2) the practice of producing elaborate drawings of cars; and (3) the practice of using published books as a source for written meanings and images" (p. 341). The students, as active designers of text, took up these different composing strategies in ways that met their own purposes and needs.

Looking across these design there were several important implications for this study. First, the research has provided evidence that students are capable of sophisticated design thinking and processes across disciplines and locations. Young people—whether in school or out of school, whether using new digital technologies or more traditional print-based tools—take active roles in making decisions and importing multiple semiotic resources to redesign texts. However, there is still much to learn about how these processes work across writing contexts and how teachers' instruction can support students in developing designerly ways of thinking and doing inside of schools. The literature on young people as designers also has also suggested that because of the complex, recursive, and variable processes that designers engage in, researchers examining those processes must draw on multiple data sources and levels of analysis in order to understand them. These implications have guided the design and analysis of this dissertation study.

RESEARCH ON TEACHERS' COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

Research in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Clark, 1983; Clark & Yinger, 1979; McCutcheon, 1980; Peterson, Marx, & Clark, 1978; Yinger, 1980) examining how teachers plan for instruction describes teachers as solitary individuals making decisions based on their own prior experiences and the print resources available to them. Yet just as scholars have shifted in the last few decades away from thinking about learning and literacy as autonomous, individual activities, there has also been a move from thinking about teaching as a unitary, isolated act to a view of teaching that recognizes and capitalizes on its social and collaborative nature (Putnam & Borko, 2000). This change has led to a profusion of research studies and theories on how communities of teachers learn together. Theoretical models of these teacher groups have included inquiry communities (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992), teacher professional communities (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001), communities of learners (Barth, 1984), professional learning communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998), study teams (Tillema & van der Westhuizen, 2006), and communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) among others. While few studies of teacher groups have focused primarily on planning for or designing instruction, studies that examined how knowledge production takes place in collaborative contexts were significant for thinking about the work of a reflective teacher inquiry group.

In one of these studies, Engeström (2005) examined the collaborative thinking of a vertical team of teachers that were in the process of developing a new, multi-age global education curriculum. Using video and audio recordings of planning meetings and classroom instruction as well as interviews with the teachers and their principal, Engeström (2005) looked closely at discourse features, allowing him to describe how the team of teachers co-constructed their new curriculum. The group's talk was characterized by overlapping speech, a high frequency of conditional statements, and returning to consider ideas multiple times. These features showcased the team's shared process that allowed them to explore ideas from multiple perspectives, imagine new possibilities, and create more complex understandings. Engeström described their planning process as taking the shape of a spiral: "It was a far cry from models of rational goal-oriented planning that proceeds in a linear order toward a predetermined destination. Rather, the teacher team's thinking progressed like a vessel on a giant potter's wheel, emerging gradually as each teacher shaped it and added to it" (p. 54). The teachers in this group did not follow a set problem-solving or design method, nor did they create a singular intervention. Yet the researcher, who also collected classroom instruction data, noted that the teachers' instruction seemed "confident and coordinated in the heat of cross-aged implementation" (p. 54).

Another study, conducted by Meirink, Meijer, and Verloop (2007), also examined the collaborative processes of a group of teachers. The researchers recruited secondary teachers from 45 different schools to participate in small groups, leading them to select six or seven interested teachers, across various subject areas and grade-levels, from five different schools. The five different school groups created their own meeting timelines, but were all asked to collaborate around the researchers' given inquiry topic: 'stimulating active and self-regulated learning of students' (p. 149). From those groups, Meirink and her colleagues selected six focal participants. These participants were interviewed within one or two days of each group meeting and were asked to fill out a digital log, detailing what they learned from the meeting and their "thoughts, feelings, and aims that went together with their learning experience" (p. 151). The researchers used content analysis of these data sources along with the researchers' observational notes of the meetings to describe the learning activities of the teachers across the groups.

Meirink, Meijer, and Verloop (2007) found that all of the teachers' activities within the groups could be classified as "experimenting, reflecting, learning from others without interaction, and learning from others in interaction" (p. 154). Each of these categories was then further broken down in to a set of typified actions. For example, within the reflecting category the researchers noted eight different actions, including “valuing elements in colleagues’ teaching methods,” “reflecting on collaboration in study group or on own experiments in teaching practice,” and becoming aware of/recognizing own conceptions or shortcomings/good practices in own teaching method” (p. 154). And in their examination of common configurations of these learning activities, the researchers found that the most prevalent led to valuing of their peers’ methods and confirmation of the teachers’ own teaching methods. Across the participants, teachers noted more change in beliefs or thinking than change in actual practice. As Meirink and her colleagues explained, not having data on the teachers’ actual classroom teaching made it hard to know for sure what changes in practice actually took place as there could have been a mismatch between what they said and what they actually did and teachers may have not even been fully aware of all the changes they were making in their teaching practice.

So (2013) also looked at a group of teachers in an inquiry-based group formed during a graduate school course. In this case, eight teachers from different elementary and middle schools met and in an initial meeting chose inclusive education as a general inquiry topic. The researcher collected observational notes and recordings of teacher meetings, teachers’ reflective diaries, and interviews with three focal teachers. So (2013) noted that difference was generative: “conflicts among teachers, caused by their different backgrounds, provided an opportunity for teachers not previously interested in participation to engage…[and] encouraged them to reflect on their beliefs critically, and to disclose their own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings” (p. 192). Despite the spike in participation based on contrasting perspectives, So found that the teachers’ participation in the inquiry group varied based on how relevant they found the chosen inquiry topic. Those who were already interested in the topic of inclusive education were more active participants. While there were signs that all of the teachers in the group experienced changes in attitudes or knowledge about inclusive education, the teachers most interested in the topic initially were the only ones who also exhibited effort in changing their actual classroom practice. Like Meirink, Miejer, and Verloop (2007), there was no classroom instruction data collected in this study to confirm or challenge the teachers' written or spoken accounts of their knowledge construction.

Teacher groups in these studies were often heterogeneous groups, sometimes including teachers from different content areas and different schools. These teams typically came together around a shared inquiry question or topic rather than a shared teaching context or student body. While their differences may have led to more sophisticated understandings (Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Hindin, Morocco, Mott, & Aguilar, 2007; So, 2013), it is possible that their diverse teaching contexts also contributed to the most commonly noted challenge across this body of literature: finding connections between the talk in the group, teachers' beliefs and attitudes, and their actual classroom practice (e.g., Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Hindin et al., 2007; Ohlsson, 2013; Slavit & Nelson, 2010; Tillema & van der Westhuizen, 2006). A few studies looked at data both from the group meetings and from classroom teaching (Engeström, 2005; Hindin et al., 2007), but most relied on the group's discourse or created artifacts to look for connections to practice, suggesting that more research is needed that looks across contexts to see how teachers draw on collaborative discussions to plan for and implement instruction in their individual classrooms.

Another challenge expressed by researchers in this body of literature was moving beyond storytelling or superficial talk to reflective talk that more often leads to knowledge production and change. Findings from across the literature suggest that engaging in concrete joint tasks (Hindin et al., 2007; Ohlsson, 2013), moving beyond superficial and deficit-oriented talk around student data (Hindin et al., 2007; Ohlsson, 2013; Slavit & Nelson, 2010), and using specific classroom practice data through video or real-time observation (Ermeling, 2010; Hindin et al., 2007) within teacher groups may be helpful strategies for encouraging deep levels of participation, for co-constructing more complex understandings about teaching, and for effecting changes in classroom practice. In this study, I build on this research by facilitating a group of four writing teachers, from different schools and grade-levels, to inquire into the teaching of writing as design by reading and reflecting on shared theoretical or practical readings, videos of the teachers' practice, and students' written work. By looking at the work the teachers do inside the group as well as in their individual classrooms, this study also contributes to the existing literature that explored connections between discourse, beliefs, and practice.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to better understand how teachers across grade-levels planned for and implemented writing instruction that affords subject positions for student writers as agentive designers of texts. In order to explore my research questions, I drew on the traditions of collaborative research, particularly collaborative action ethnography (Erickson, 2006b), social design experiments (Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010) and participatory design research (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016), in my approach to creating a cross grade-level reflective inquiry group. The nature of any qualitative research inherently calls for some level of collaboration between the researcher and the researched, but that collaboration is not always made explicit (Gershon, 2009). Many case studies, for example, rely on informal conversations and formal interviews with participants as data sources along with member checking in order to understand others' understandings of the phenomenon. Participatory research and collaborative design methodologies, rather than maintaining traditional binaries and power relationships between the university and the school, research and practice, the researcher and the researched (Christianakis, 2010; Zeichner & Liston, 2014), call for more democratic relationships, positioning participants not just as consumers but also co-producers of research or theory (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016; Spinuzzi, 2005).

These research traditions were especially important for this study because I view teachers to be active designers of writing curriculum and instruction whose beliefs and assumptions about writing and teaching inform their decisions about practice. Each teacher, despite being engaged in analogous activity systems and sharing some similar perspectives on and goals for students, had her own unique history and relationship with the work and thus experienced teaching differently: "every individual creates their personal sense of this meaning and object" (Heikkilä & Seppänen, 2014, p. 7). Individual perspectives and beliefs can be important in helping a researcher to understand the phenomenon in question, but by engaging the heterogeneity of the group, "a kind of merging or coordination in different ways of seeing emerges and opportunities for learning multiply" (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016, p. 184). Maintaining these perspectives can give us a better picture of the "What could be?" (Bradley & Reinking, 2011) that design-based research seeks to explore.

In addition to designing and participating in this collaborative inquiry group, in this study I also followed each teacher into their classroom, drawing on methods of qualitative, multicase study (Stake, 2006) to guide my data collection and analysis within classrooms. More generally, case study design (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) allows for an in-depth look at a how a particular phenomenon works within a specific context. Because literacy is socially and culturally situated, qualitative case study research is a useful research design for making sense of literacy events, including the complex, day-to-day teaching of writing (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Multiple case study designs provide opportunities for the researcher to examine how a particular phenomenon works across multiple settings or contexts. The phenomenon, which Stake (2006) refers to as the quintain, is like the elephant for the "proverbial blind men" trying to describe the animal they can only feel a small piece of (p. 6), so it is through studying multiple manifestations of the phenomenon in different contexts that we come to better understand that phenomenon. Thus, while looking at just one local case of an aspect of writing instruction can provide in-depth understandings of how that phenomenon works in that one particular context, cross-case analysis can help build more robust understandings and make it easier for researchers and teachers to make informed decisions about how that aspect of writing instruction might work in their own local context.

This study, then, rests between naturalistic research, which describes what already *is* without explicitly working towards change, and experimental research, which often discounts the complexity of contexts and may result in oversimplified "best practices" that are assumed to be generalizable (Bradley & Reinking, 2008; Durán, 2015; Fowler-Amato, 2015; Warrington, 2016; Zapata, 2013). In the reflective inquiry group, the teachers and I acted as co-inquirers as we read and thought together about writing and design; reflected on work taking place in their classroom through the use of video, student work, and/or oral accounts from participants; and proposed new possibilities for moving forward in our writing instruction. This reflective inquiry group served as a primary data source for me to learn more about how the participants were understanding writing as design and (re)designing humanizing writing instruction for their classrooms. However, the participants' thinking did not only work to confirm my own interpretations and add a measure of trustworthiness to the study, but more importantly it expanded the research agenda beyond anyone's individual understanding to enable deeper insight, further agency, and new learning for me as the researcher *and* for the participants (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016). Professional development should be, as Reinking and Bradley (2008) have pointed out "a natural and important by-product of conducting formative and design experiments" (p. 80). While "professional development" can often carry with it connotations of transmission models of learning (Kohli et al., 2015; Skerrett et al., 2018; Webster-Wright, 2009), I would argue disrupting traditional hierarchies between the researcher and the researched, also helped blur boundaries between teacher educator/classroom teacher in ways that created a generative learning space for all participants, including myself as the researcher.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This inquiry was guided by the following research questions: How do teachers in a cross grade-level inquiry group (re)design humanizing writing instruction together? What aspects of writing and writing instruction are most visible in teachers' discussion about design and writing? And how do teachers' discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice?

CONTEXTS AND PARTICIPANTS

Case selection is especially important to all case study research (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Stake, 2006). One important factor to consider is the context. While, as my literature review highlights, writing is often taught in dehumanizing ways across many different school contexts, schools that serve oppressed communities—such as working class, language-minority, people of color—regularly perform these kinds of violences against students, positioning them as less-than-human and subjecting them to narrowed, standardized curriculum (Costigan, 2013; Davis & Vehabovic, 2017; Milner, 2013). It was especially important for me as a researcher concerned with justice and equity in educational spaces, then, to think alongside teachers, highlighting the work they were already doing and continuing to explore new possibilities for how writing could go in schools in ways that resist pressures to standardize curriculum, to emphasize test preparation above other learning goals, and to view students through deficit perspectives. The cases in this study were situated in four classrooms within an elementary, middle, and high school in the same school district in a large, southwestern city. According to the district website, across the 130 campuses in the school district, just under 60 percent of students were institutionally identified as Hispanic in the 2016-2017 school year, just over 25 percent as White, around 4 percent as Asian, and nearly 8 percent as African American. Around 28 percent of students in the district were labeled as "English Language Learners," and around 53 percent of students in the district were labeled as "economically disadvantaged." As with many urban school districts, the distribution of economic disadvantage is not equally distributed across the districts' schools. Based on information available for the 2015-2016 school year, of the 130 district campuses, 77 qualified for and received Title I financial assistance; across those 77 schools, over 80 percent of students were labeled as low-income, and nearly 80 percent were identified as Hispanic. These trends were consistent at each of the three school campuses where I observed. Table 3.1 shows a breakdown of the demographic information available for the three schools that housed the classrooms included in this study.

Table 3.1. School demographic information based on 2016-2017 data

Huerta Elementary[1]							
Total Enrollment	680						
Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity							
African American	7.8%	Hispanic	90.4%	White	1.2%	Asian	0.0%
American Indian	0.1%	Pacific Islander	0.0%	Two or More Races	0.4%		
Enrollment by Student Group							
Economically Disadvantaged	83.1%	English Language Learners	53.3%	Special Education	7.4%		
Northtown Middle							
Total Enrollment	1,040						
Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity							
African American	8.6%	Hispanic	83.4%	White	4.2%	Asian	2.2%
American Indian	0.2%	Pacific Islander	0.1%	Two or More Races	1.3%		
Enrollment by Student Group							
Economically Disadvantaged	90.3%	English Language Learners	58.8%	Special Education	14.4%		
Los Robles High							
Total Enrollment	1,657						
Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity							
African American	8.0%	Hispanic	86.6%	White	2.9%	Asian	1.8%
American Indian	0.2%	Pacific Islander	0.0%	Two or More Races	0.5%		
Enrollment by Student Group							
Economically Disadvantaged	83.9%	English Language Learners	37.8%	Special Education	13.0%		

While the district overall had performed well on the state's standardized assessments, Title I schools have traditionally struggled more than others in the district. For example, in 2015 there were seven schools who did not meet the minimum state standards; all seven were Title I schools that serve student populations that were between 89 and 96 percent economically disadvantaged. While all three schools involved in this particular study were all Title I schools that had historically performed below the state and district averages on standardized assessments, Northtown Middle was the only school represented in this study that did not meet the minimum standards on the state assessments in both 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, earning them an “Improvement Required” rating from the state and even further increased scrutiny and surveillance. The grade-levels represented were all grades, with the exception of the early elementary classroom, that required standardized writing tests in both reading and writing. Though both of these tested subject areas had been weaknesses for the three schools, writing test scores were a targeted area for improvement for each of these schools, which led to an overwhelming pressure for teachers to raise students’ performance on this standardized writing assessment. The principal at Huerta Elementary, for example, noted that they had been working on improving writing across the school, pushing a focus on writing conventions and grammar from kindergarten and working to implement a prepackaged phonics and vocabulary program in beginning in kindergarten to help better prepare students for taking the writing test in fourth-grade. This situation had also motivated the middle and high school administrators to seek out professional development from outside sources, including the local National Writing Project (NWP) site.

---

[1] All school and participant names are pseudonyms.

Besides attention to context, participant selection is also very important in a multicase study. Stake (2006) recommends choosing between four and ten diverse settings, including both typical and atypical contexts. These cases should be chosen purposefully to highlight differences and similarities in the phenomenon’s actualization in ways that help us better understand it. This study looked at four cases of classrooms where teachers were attempting (to various degrees) to try out the same phenomenon: humanizing writing instruction that positioned students as active designers or composers of texts. While my teaching background was in high school contexts, my experiences across graduate school—reading about and working with preservice teachers across primary through secondary contexts, participating and facilitating professional development opportunities with teachers across contexts, and teaching writing to university students—led me to recognize the value of disrupting grade-level silos to better understand writing and writing instruction and to develop common understandings about how to negotiate school spaces to ultimately prepare students to be active writers and thinkers in and beyond schools. Because my experiences and conversations with others had led me to believe that this phenomenon could and should be present across age groups, the four cases I examined, while all geographically and demographically similar, were selected to represent multiple grade-levels, including an early childhood (first-grade), upper elementary (fourth-grade), middle school (seventh-grade), and high school (ninth-grade) classroom. Beyond the age of the writers, these separate contexts varied in many other important ways, including the pressures and attention to standardized testing, the degree of departmentalization or specialization, the preparation or professional development experiences of the teachers, the sense of autonomy teachers had in planning for their teaching, and so on. Together, these cases represented a wide array of variables and helped to present nuanced understandings of how teachers may engage in humanizing writing instruction across contexts.

Participants

I was able to visit a couple of the participants' classrooms before I began this study; however, my initial invites were primarily based on understandings, developed through conversations with participants and/or mutual acquaintances, of who these teachers were or who they were trying to be. While I knew I would see some wonderful writing instruction in each space, I recognized that it was more perhaps important to find teachers who did not feel finished, but were willing to engage in this work together. As a researcher, I was interested in both learning from these teachers' current practices and thinking together about how we all could engage in reflection and action towards transformation (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2019). Based on my experiences with the local NWP site, I understood that community to support the kind of teaching and inquiry-mindset I was hoping to find for my study. The local NWP site was very active, offering an intensive four-week institute in the summer, hosting Saturday workshops throughout the school year, and providing professional development for local schools. Across these opportunities, the NWP site upheld some common assumptions about writing, learning, and students. These included taking appreciative views of students, their experiences, and their existing linguistic and cultural resources (Bomer, 2011; Moll, Amanti, Neff, &

Gonzales, 1992) and understanding writing as a process (Graves, 1983; Murray, 1972/2009). The site also promoted and supported writing instruction approaches, such as writing workshop (Calkins, 1994; Ray, 2001), that complement these beliefs. Members of the NWP site generally agreed that workshop approaches to teaching writing, which prioritize teaching the writer rather than specific products or pieces of writing, were important for developing students' habits of mind—like learning how to analyze a social, rhetorical situation, make decisions based on audience and purpose, and read like a writer—and for promoting student independence and transfer. Many in this teacher community were also dedicated to critical approaches to teaching and identified as teachers for social justice.

Zoe Grey

Zoe Grey, a White female teacher in her late twenties, was in her sixth year of teaching at the time of the study. After teaching second- and third-grade for two years at a different local school, Zoe moved to Huerta Elementary to teach first-grade. Her classroom was self-contained, and while her schedule fluctuated some throughout the year, a day in Zoe's classroom typically included a morning meeting, word work (focused study on language patterns, reading fluency, or spelling), writing workshop, read aloud, reading workshop, math, and science. Zoe received her teacher preparation and certification through the same large public university I attended and was a student in a Master's degree program there at the time of the study. She attended the four-week summer institute hosted by the local NWP site in 2013 and remained an active community member through the duration of the study. As a fellow teacher consultant with the local NWP site, I was introduced to Zoe at several Saturday workshops. However, after spending more time together in a different university-based research project, I came to know and respect the ways she talked about her students and her teaching. Before inviting her to participate in this study, I observed in her classroom on two different occasions to get a better understanding of her teaching style and the work her first-grade writers were doing.

Paige Douglas

Paige Douglas, a White female teacher in her mid-thirties, was in her fourth year of teaching at the time of the study. Paige graduated with a degree in Dance and English, working at a few different jobs including an educational program for a non-profit before going back to school to receive her teaching certification through a Post-baccalaureate program at the same large, public university. Paige had been a self-contained fourth-grade teacher at Huerta Elementary for all four years of her career. A day in Paige's classroom typically included time spent on a mandated "grammar" or language study, writing workshop, read aloud, reading workshop, math, and science. I met Paige when we sat at the same table, both participants in the four-week summer NWP institute in 2014. I also worked closely with Paige during another large, university-based research project. Like with Zoe, I asked and was invited in to observe in Paige's classroom before inviting her to be a participant.

Gwen Harris

Gwen Harris, a White female teacher in her late twenties, was in her fifth year of teaching. After completing her English Education program at a small, private college in the same southwestern city, Gwen worked for one year at Northtown Middle School as a test prep tutor before accepting a position as a Reading/English Language Arts teacher there. Though she spent all five years of her career at Northtown, her specific job title changed several times, giving her experience across grades six through eight as a Reading, English as a Second Language, English Language Arts, and Writing teacher. During the year of the study, Gwen began the year teaching seventh-grade English Language Arts. However, that October, based on a district suggestion for improving test scores, Northtown changed the master schedule to include a required writing-focused course for every seventh-grade student; Gwen and one other teacher were asked to take on that writing course. Additionally, Gwen was the only one of the four teachers who I had not met personally before the beginning of the study. Since I did not have any contacts at middle schools who met my criteria for cases (i.e., Title I school, teaching or at least trying out student-centered writing instruction), I reached out to the director of the local NWP site. She recommended Gwen, who had been involved in some NWP-led professional development at Northtown Middle and who had participated in the four-week summer institute the summer before this study began.

Penelope Tipton

Penelope Tipton, a White female in her mid-thirties, was also in her fifth year of teaching. She first worked in graphic design before going back to school to become a teacher. After teaching ninth-grade English Language Arts in another state for one year, she started teaching English I (primarily taken by ninth-graders) at Los Robles High School. I first met Penelope in a two-week professional development I was facilitating for secondary writing teachers in her school district. By the end of those two weeks, Penelope and some of her colleagues from Los Robles realized they wanted to learn more about writing workshop since they had primarily been focused on teaching literature and only really taught writing to prepare students for the state standardized test. Through a state-wide writing grant, I was able to continue facilitating professional development for the English I and II teachers at Los Robles during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school year. During that time, I had opportunities to get to know her better and to teach a model lesson in Penelope's classroom. While she had not yet participated in the NWP summer institute, her questions suggested she shared many of the same values. Penelope's English I class was double-blocked, meaning she met with each of her classes every day for 90 minutes. While their schedule changed a few times throughout the year, the English I teachers primarily attempted to balance teaching whole-class literature units, writing workshop, independent reading, and test-prep in their weekly plans.

Researcher positionality

Though there were collaborative aspects to this study, as with all qualitative research, the researcher was still the "primary instrument of data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 2014, p. 15), and therefore, my own subjectivities, positionality, and history were carefully considered throughout the study. My interest in this subject began in my own teaching experiences. As a high school English teacher in a Midwestern city, I found my deepest joys and most difficult challenges in teaching writing. I felt many of the same tensions—between structure, support, and student agency, between preparing for standardized tests and teaching writers for life, between celebrating student voices and cultivating access to the dominant forms of language and literacies—the teachers in this study also felt. Though my work as a writing teacher and writing teacher educator provided me with insight into the experiences of the teachers in this study, it was important that I also continually consider how my own history and understanding of education and the system of schooling affected my interactions with participants and my interpretations of the data I collected.

Since leaving the high school classroom, my experiences as a graduate student only further complicated those tensions as I came to understand more and more of the theories and ideologies buried in those tensions and practices. As previously noted, through my graduate studies I also came to see common goals and subject positions as important for student writers across grade-levels and contexts. And while my identity as a White, monolingual, heterosexual, educated, middle-class female may closely resemble the identities of the teachers in this study, the teachers in their schools, and the teachers in most schools across the country, my identity and experiences differed in many respects from the students I observed and thought with about their writing and therefore was even more important to consider as I built relationships with students and analyzed their work.

As a graduate student at a large public university in the same southwestern city, I had multiple opportunities to work with local teachers, including three of the four teachers invited to this study. As previously mentioned, all of the participants in this study were affiliated with the local NWP site in some way. My own involvement with that particular network of teachers initially connected me with each of these teachers. While most of our experiences have been as colleagues in shared professional development spaces, I have also been positioned separately from them in different ways: as a doctoral student, as a research assistant for other university faculty projects, as a facilitator for preservice teachers' field experiences, and as a teacher-consultant leading professional development. Particularly, as a teacher-consultant for the NWP site, one of my roles was to provide professional development for high school writing teachers at Los Robles High School. About once a month across the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, I modeled and helped plan instruction and led discussions about implementing writing workshop with the ninth- and tenth-grade English teachers at Los Robles. This experience, along with my other roles within the university, helped me build relationships with these teachers, but it also positioned me as an expert in some respects. As my goal in this current study was to understand my own and others' beliefs and expansive learning about writing and writing instruction, I was mindful about my role within the reflective inquiry group as well as in teachers' classrooms. Shifting from an "observer as participant" role (Merriam, 2014) to an "observant participant" (Erickson, 2006b) as I moved from the classrooms to the inquiry group setting, in both spaces I worked hard to support and facilitate as a participant rather than dominate activity. That does not mean that I withheld my beliefs or opinions (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016), but that maintaining balance was very important for me in attempts to smooth the hierarchical edges between researcher and participants.

In the inquiry group, this meant that while I helped facilitate the conversation (e.g., providing common materials for the group to read or access to classroom data to share, transitioning between topics during a conversation), I typically stepped back during those conversations, opening up space for the teachers to offer suggestions or comments before stepping in. I shared examples and struggles from my own teaching—both my past work with high school writers and current work with undergraduates—and often brought up interesting and important moves I saw them doing as teachers or their students doing as writers. From our first meeting together, I saw the teachers looking to each other before and as often as looking to me for suggestions for or affirmations of their teaching.

Inside their classrooms, I first spent time building relationships with students through small group or one-on-one conversations about their lives or their writing. As they became more comfortable talking to me about writing, I often took on a role as a more-experienced writer who was interested in their work. While my conversations with students as they were writing were still primarily focused on noticing and understanding the work they were doing as writers, I would also often offer suggestions, usually based on the teachers' minilessons but sometimes from my own work or my students' work as writers. As many of the students grew to trust me as a helpful fellow writer, I believe the majority of the students also saw me as a "nonthreatening adult friend" (Dyson, 2013, p. 181), often excited to see me, to ask me questions, or to share their writing and other stories with me. For the younger students, this often meant excited squeals, hugs, or secreted "love notes" (e.g., "Ms. Land is nice. She is a good reader.") found in the back of my research notebook. For older students, this often looked like sharing stories about their lives beyond school, communicating complaints about school, and asking me questions about their work as readers and writers.

STUDY DESIGN

Data generation and analysis for this study took place in several phases. I gathered data in all four classrooms at the same time. Though some scholars suggest completing, from data collection to write-up, each distinct case in a multicase study separately (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 2014) to ease the management of data collection, collecting data at all sites simultaneously was important for three main reasons: 1) it allowed for a more prolonged look at each site which meant more time for gaining the trust of all participants, 2) it provided more authentic data from all the classroom instruction of all teachers that can support the ongoing reflective inquiry group and vice versa, and 3) it afforded a more balanced look at the type of writing instruction that happens across a school year, including the beginning of the year when teachers and students were creating a community together, the spring's lead up to standardized testing, and so on.

Reflective inquiry group design

In the last part of Phase 1, in October 2016, I began facilitating the reflective inquiry group. While I met with and interviewed each of the teachers separately, they did not know each other, with the exception of Paige and Zoe who worked in the same building, before we began meeting. The top priority in the first few meetings was to get to know each other and begin building trust as a group of human beings and colleagues. Alongside getting to know each other and the different teaching contexts represented in the group, we also began discussing what it means to think and talk about writing as a design process. These meetings took place in the evening local cafés and on the university campus. The variation in bell schedules, locations within the city, and teachers' commitments to after school projects made getting together face-to-face challenging, but not impossible. Chapter four provides a richer description of the inquiry group meetings and a table (Table 4.1) of meeting times, dates, and topics.

During Phases 2 and 3, the reflective inquiry group continued meeting, once or twice a month, depending on the group's schedules and interests. Activities during these meetings included discussing plans for writing instruction, thinking through issues teachers or students were having during writing time, and looking at examples of student writing together. After I began audio and video recording in classrooms, we chose moments captured from the teaching of writing to look at and engaged in dialogic, reflective conversations about the teaching moves we were seeing, using the video as a generative tool rather than a tool for surveillance or documentation (Vossoughi & Escudé, 2016; Zellermayer & Ronn, 1999). We began looking at video by using the retrospective video analysis (RVA) method developed by Mosley Wetzel, Maloch, and Hoffman (2017) as a guide. Paige and Zoe were already familiar with this process because of the participation in another university project. While designed as a tool for mentor teachers who were coaching preservice teachers, RVA can be applied more generally for reflecting on any teaching practice. In the case of the reflective inquiry group, individual teachers—either independently or with my guidance—selected points in their writing instruction that highlighted some or all of the following: teaching strategies that we could notice and name; feedback from students based on their engagement in teaching; surprising or challenging moments that disrupted the familiar; or generative spaces "in that the examination has the potential to lead to expanded learning" (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2015, p. 93). The goal of all of these different activities was to reflect on current teaching practices, to deepen our understandings of what it meant to think about writing as design, and to formulate connections between instructional moves and the positioning of writing students.

Another goal of the group was to plan for instruction together, both sharing possibilities together and reflecting and refining ideas tried out in the classroom. Since each teacher's context was so different, this kind of planning did not result creating a singular unit plan or intervention like some participatory design or formative design studies do. However, similar ideas and even similar units of study were proposed and tried out across multiple classrooms and grade-levels. During teachers' individual mid-year interviews, I asked questions about the group and that data along with informal conversations with participants across the year helped us make sure the group remained a generative space for participants. The group had its final meeting in mid-May to accommodate teachers' busy end-of-the-year schedules in late May and early June.

Multicase study design

Taking place during August and September, the purpose of Phase 1 of the multicase study was to recruit and/or confirm teacher participants and begin getting to know them. I contacted administrators at the three school sites in spring 2016 and began discussing the study with a few teachers. Because teaching assignments change across the summer, the administrators at each school suggested that I wait until August 2017 to officially recruit participants to ensure I was able to work with my preferred grade-levels (one early elementary teacher and grade-levels where writing is tested). Before the beginning of the school year and after receiving final approval of my research proposal both from the university and the school district, I began contacting potential teacher participants. Once their interest was confirmed, I met with all four interested teachers together to explain the study in more detail and obtain informed consent from each of them. Penelope had a preservice teacher intern in her classroom during the fall semester, but we were not able to observe during the same class periods. Zoe and Paige both had interns and then student teachers working in their classrooms, so I also obtained consent from them to gather data in those two classrooms. Neither student teacher decided to attend the inquiry group meetings, but consented to being observed and interviewed. During Phase 1 of the multicase study, I also arranged and conducted initial interviews with each teacher participant.

During Phase 2, beginning in late September, I began entering each classroom. Part of this process included figuring out logistics of when I would observe in which classrooms based on teaching schedules. Dependent on their schedules, I began by attending their classrooms during writing time in the elementary classes and during a focal class period in the secondary classes. The purpose of these first visits was mostly to begin getting to know the students and the classroom dynamics while the teacher and students started getting comfortable with me being in their space. Soon after my first visits, I worked with each classroom teacher to plan a strategy for how and when to talk with students about the study and begin the process of sending out and collecting parent consent and student assent forms. During this phase I also began collecting photos of teaching artifacts related to writing instruction including curriculum documents, student handouts, anchor charts, etc. I continued to gather these kinds of artifacts throughout the rest of the study.

By early November, I had a good feel for each classroom and had most of the consent and assent forms returned, so by this point I began collecting more focused data in each classroom. During this phase, I aimed to visit each classroom at least twice per week; again, individual teaching schedules and logistics determined the exact amount of time spent in each classroom. For example, in Zoe and Paige's classrooms, I often tried to be in their classrooms for both word work/grammar and writing workshop to look for connections across those parts of their day that directly attended to language and writing. Gwen's classes at Northtown Middle were only 47 minutes long, and between testing and her absences due to illness and professional development, we had to cancel several of our scheduled observations. During the fall semester, Penelope, like the other ninth-grade ELA teachers at Los Robles, was only teaching writing twice per week, but moved to teaching writing every day after the beginning of the spring semester. Table 3.2 includes an overview of visits/time spent in each classroom.

Table 3.2. Classroom observations across 2016-2017 school year

Teacher Name	Total Visits Scheduled	Total Visits Completed	Total Time Spent in Classroom (approximate hours)
Zoe Grey (1st grade)	80	63	105
Paige Douglas (4th grade)	87	62	106
Gwen Harris (7th grade)	75	44	34
Penelope Tipton (9th grade)	64	52	74
Totals	*306*	*221*	*319*

In each visit, I took field notes and audio- and video-recorded any whole class instruction. During students' writing work time, I split my attention. I set up one video camera to capture one or two groups of students working. Then, with the teachers' assistance, I followed each teacher with the second video camera as they carried an audio-recorder to capture their one-on-one or small group teaching. At the same time, I used my own audio-recorder to capture short conversations with students while they were working. Throughout these classroom observations, I also began collecting artifacts of students' writing process, including pictures taken of writer's notebooks, written reflections on writing created during class, drafts of writing, and final written products. As the last few weeks of the school year tend to be full of interruptions, I began exiting the classrooms by the middle of May, decreasing my visits to once per week and scheduling final interviews with students and all teachers. All primary interviews and other data collection were complete by June.

Methods of data collection

Drawing on sociocultural theories of literacy, I recognize that writing and teaching are never individual, purely cognitive acts but instead are dialogic, creative actions that are situated within and dependent on the larger contexts, purposes, and available resources. I also acknowledge the partialness of my own analysis and my inherent influence in the context of the study. Based on these epistemological beliefs, I called on ethnographic methods of data generation that utilized several different types of data, using multiple partial stories to get closer to constructing an understanding of the phenomenon. In this particular study, observations and field notes, audio and video recordings, interviews, and artifacts served as the primary data sources used to piece together the story of these multiple cases and the reflective inquiry group. Figure 3.1 provides a visual representation of the data collected in this study at different levels of the activity systems, including the reflective inquiry group. Together, these types of sources provided opportunities to analyze data at multiple levels across settings and contexts.

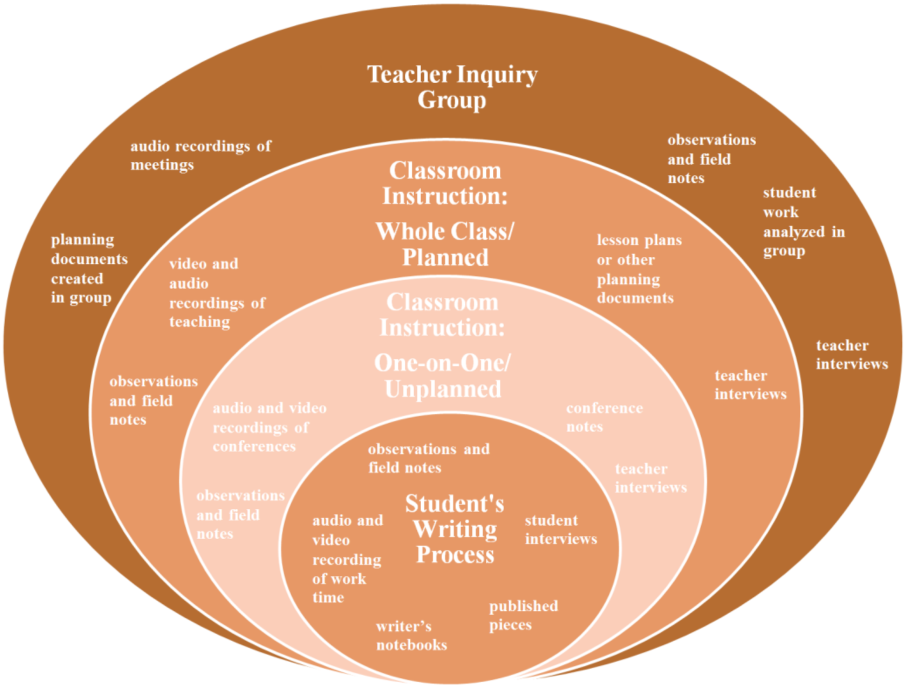

Teacher Inquiry Group
audio recordings of meetings
observations and field notes
student work analyzed in group
planning documents created in group
teacher interviews
Classroom Instruction: Whole Class/ Planned
video and audio recordings of teaching
lesson plans or other planning documents
observations and field notes
teacher interviews
Classroom Instruction: One-on-One/ Unplanned
audio and video recordings of conferences
conference notes
observations and field notes
teacher interviews
Student's Writing Process
observations and field notes
audio and video recording of work time
student interviews
writer's notebooks
published pieces

Figure 3.1. Data sources across levels of activity.

Observations and field notes

Throughout this study, I served as the primary instrument of data collection. While this is true across all methods of data collection, it was nowhere more evident than in my own observations and field notes. In each site of the multicase study, I took on an observer as participant role (Merriam, 2014), meaning my participation in the class activities were secondary to my observations and note-taking. While I happily volunteered to be a supervising adult if the teacher needed to step out of the room for a moment and fulfill other similar tasks to be helpful in the space, I neither took on a role as a teacher or co-teacher in whole class activities nor as a student participating in their expected activities. This role allowed me to take ethnographic field notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011) during my classroom visits. I also had audio and video recordings to refer back to, so taking notes did not interfere with paying attention to what was happening in the classroom or talking with the teacher or students. Particularly when students grew more trusting and talkative with me about their writing, I jotted down noticings in the moment rather than trying to write down every detail or attempting to transcribe direct quotes from participants. After each observation, I spent some time filling in these jottings with more context (Emerson et al., 2011; Merriam, 2014). My observations and field notes included basic contextual information (e.g., how the room is set up, where people are in the space, who is present), but were primarily be guided by my research questions. My observations and field notes were mainly focused on the teacher during whole class instruction. During work time, I typically used the video and audio recorders to capture the teachers' one-on-one or small group teaching while I audio recorded and took field notes about my conversations with and observations of students.

During the reflective inquiry group meetings, my role shifted to that of an observant participant (Erickson, 2006b). This means that I focused my attention on being an active and contributing member of the group. While I occasionally stepped back to jot down a few words to aid my memory, I also had audio recordings as a back-up for my memory. Soon after each meeting, I listened to the audio recording and added, in real-time, to my jottings to create more detailed field notes documenting these meetings.

Audio and video recordings

Audio and video recordings were an important data source for capturing details about the physical and linguistic positioning of teachers and students across this study.

For whole class instruction, I used one, wide camera view to get a sense of both the teacher's and students' body positions. For one-one-one writing instruction, I moved the camera to better focus on the participants in the conference; the teacher, student(s) involved, and their immediate surroundings will be included in the frame. The video camera's internal audio was complemented by with two separate, external audio recorders, that the teacher and I both carried in a pocket or moved to a surface nearby during both whole class and one-on-one writing conferences. In the reflective inquiry group, because the purpose of the audio recordings in this space was to document rather than to provide multimodal data for discourse-level analysis, I only collected audio recordings of these meetings.

Interviews

Across this study, I conducted several different interviews, including three semistructured interviews with each teacher and one interview with at least three students in each classroom. Using semistructured interviews (Merriam, 2014) allowed me to plan ahead to ensure all important topics were covered while remaining flexible and open-ended enough to follow the lead of the interviewee to explore topics and flow more naturally from topic to topic. All interviews were audio recorded so I could actively listen and respond to the interviewees rather than attempt to take notes during interviews while still securing an accurate representation of the participants' words.

The purpose of the initial teacher interview was to get a baseline understanding of the teacher's history as an educator and writing teacher, beliefs about writing and teaching writing, and tentative plans for teaching writing across the year. (See Appendix for teacher interview protocols.) Each of these interviews lasted between 25 and 30 minutes. At the mid-point of my study (February/March), I conducted a second interview with each teacher, asking them to check in on their perspectives on writing and writing instruction as well as to step back and reflect on how the inquiry group was working and what changes could or should be made. These interviews lasted 25 to 45 minutes. The final individual teacher interviews took place in late May to June 2017 and were similar to the initial interview and the mid-year group interview to provide insight into changes in understandings about writing and/or writing instruction. These interviews lasted between 45 and 120 minutes each. In addition to these interviews, I also met with Zoe, Paige, and Penelope (Gwen was between full-time teaching positions at the time) in November 2017 to check in with them about their teaching and collect video recordings of their final reflections on the previous year. While this fourth informal interview was primarily to prepare for sharing our work at an academic conference that they were not able to attend in person, it also provided additional insight for me as a researcher.

Three to six students in each class also participated in semistructured interviews. These interviews took place in an empty classroom or isolated common area during study times or during lunch or recess so instructional time was not missed. The purpose of these interviews was to better understand students' perspectives on writing in and out of school as well as both past and current experiences with writing instruction. (See Appendix for student interview protocols.) These interviews took place between late March and mid-May. These interviews lasted between 15 and 45 minutes. After attempting a couple individual interviews, students in first- and fourth-grade were invited to interview with a partner or small group. The group setting was more generative for the younger students, opening space to build on each other's ideas and compare experiences. In the older grade-levels, individual interviews were conducted.

Artifacts

The collection of artifacts was another important data source across classroom visits and the reflective inquiry group. There were several types of written documents that mediate the activity of teaching writing, including curriculum documents, teacher-created lesson plans (formal or informal notes), student handouts, rubrics or scoring guides, anchor charts, and anecdotal notes. These documents were collected throughout all phases of the study, both during site observations and the reflective inquiry group meetings. These were shared electronically with me, when appropriate, or were photographed so as not to interrupt the normal work process of the teacher and students.

Along with these teacher-created artifacts, I also collected artifacts that documented students' writing processes, including pictures of writing notebooks, written reflections on writing created in class, drafts of writing, and copies of final written products. These were primarily photographed during classroom visits, during the teaching of other subjects or while students were out of the room, so as not to interrupt the students' writing process.

Methods of data analysis

Data analysis took place in phases, which could be described as ongoing and emerging, first and second cycle coding, micro-level discourse analysis, and cross-case analysis. While these phases are separated here in order to better organize my thinking across the analysis, unlike data collection which was somewhat structured and linear, these data analysis phases were less circumscribed and instead were messier, more recursive, and layered. Social science studies like those looking at teaching and writing, as they examine phenomenon that are "vague, diffuse or unspecific, slippery, emotional, ephemeral, elusive or indistinct," often require thick, layered, even messy methods of analysis in order to make some kind of sense of the complex data (Law, 2004, p. 2; see also Fleckenstein et al., 2008; Geertz, 1973). Thus not only did the phases of analysis overlap and move in and out of the foreground, but analysis at different levels of activity did the same. As Spinuzzi (2002) and Russell (2009) note, many research designs are singular in their scope—either focusing on the larger, macro-level context; the meso-level, goal-directed actions of participants, or fine-grained, often unconscious, micro-level operations of participants. Yet activity is composed of all three layers, and because of the belief that each of these layers both shapes and is shaped by the others, studies situated within sociocultural theory demand a more integrated, layered approach to data collection and analysis. In this study, these levels (described in Table 3.3) were each co-constitutive and together helped provide a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of each individual case and the phenomenon across cases.

Table 3.3. Levels and methods of analysis

Level of Analysis	**Description of Level in Proposed Study**	**Analysis Methods**	**Relevant Data Sources**
macro-level activity (often unconscious at any given point, taking a backseat to meso-level goals)	object(ive)s, motivations, and cultural-historical context driving writing or teaching writing as design as an activity and/or competing and overlapping activity systems	descriptive and inductive coding	teacher and student interviews; field notes and audio recordings of inquiry group meetings; field notes, audio and video recordings of classroom instruction and writing; curriculum documents
meso-level actions (often conscious and driven by immediate goals)	individual students or teachers using tools, making decisions, using planned language, or otherwise performing actions to write or teach writing	descriptive and inductive coding	field notes, audio and video recordings of classroom instruction and writing; teacher and student interviews; artifacts that mediate teaching or student writing;
micro-level operations (usually unconscious, guided by habit and reflex)	individual students putting words on paper or having conversations about writing; individual teachers engaging in unplanned talk about writing	discourse-level analysis	audio and video recordings of classroom instruction and writing; student writing artifacts; teacher and student participant retrospection interviews

Ongoing, emerging analysis methods

This phase of data analysis occurred simultaneously with data collection and included several different components. First, after classroom observations and reflective inquiry group meetings, I sat down to expand my field notes (Emerson et al., 2011; Merriam, 2014), adding more detail as well as emerging analytical notes or comments, and to rename and file documents, photos, and video files for easier retrieval. Second, at least once a month I set aside time to look back through my data and take note of any emerging patterns. Third, I began member checking my emerging findings either during teacher interviews, reflective inquiry group meetings, or informal conversations in the field. Asking teachers for their own analysis and reflection on what I was seeing in the field not only helped establish a more collaborative approach to data analysis, but also added nuance and trustworthiness to my analysis.

First and second cycle coding of individual cases

After data collection was complete, in early June 2017, I reviewed all audio- and video files collected in the classroom, logging activity in an excel file so overlapping segments could be easily found across audio and video. Watching each video in its entirety and logging a summary of the interactions not only helped me organize my data, but also prepared me to do closer analysis of those interactions later (Erickson, 2006a). During this time, I also began reviewing other data, primarily listening to interviews and rereading field notes. Along with these reviews, I began creating and applying two types of first-cycle codes—descriptive and process—to the data for each individual case. First-cycle codes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Saldaña, 2009) are initial codes that begin reducing data, moving one small step up in the level of abstraction. Descriptive codes attach labels that summarize the topic to short passages of data (e.g., "writing stamina," "assessment," "writing conference"). Because these types of codes are more useful for characterizing environments than action, descriptive codes were paired with process codes during this initial phase. Process codes employ gerunds to label actions within the data (e.g., "naming student work/strengths," "comparing across grade levels," "expressing complaints or critiques of schools or admin"). These first cycle codes provided a foundation for further reducing the data. Second cycle codes, and pattern coding specifically (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Saldaña, 2009), then, require grouping of initial codes to begin identifying emergent themes or findings. These patterns were drawn inductively from the first cycle codes in order to look more closely at macro- and meso-level data in each individual case (e.g., "pressures of standardization and testing," "positioning self or others as readers/users," "trying out new ideas"). I considered these initial passes through the data to be like leaving footprints in the snow, or leaving enough trace of my thinking to easily look across data and find my way back to specific interactions or conversations rather than permanent divisions or reductions of data.

Reading with theory and discourse-level analysis

From a sociocultural perspective, language is the principal medium of identity construction. Because my theories of teaching and writing acknowledge the entangled nature of language, identity, learning, a careful analysis of actual language was important in providing insight into how these interactions work in relation to the larger classroom and global contexts. After finishing coding across the inquiry group and individual cases, I stepped back to read theory alongside my data, looking specifically for connections and departures from the concepts I originally found important in the design of the study. As I was rereading my data from the inquiry group alongside sociocultural theories of identity and positioning (i.e., Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Davies & Harré, 1990; Holland et al., 1998) for example, I was especially drawn to concepts of "figured worlds" and "improvisation" (Holland et al., 1998) as a way to understand how the teachers' shared stories and suggestions helped create a generative space in the inquiry group and spur changes in classroom practice and identities. Later, as I was rereading classroom data alongside theories of design (e.g., Brown, 2009; Lawson, 2005), I recognized a need to also return to ways literacy and writing studies scholars had talked about audience and purpose in relation to identities for writers (e.g., Aristotle, 2005; Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Berkenkotter, 1981; Ede & Lundsford, 1984; Park, 1982, 1986; Leverenz, 2014; Magnifico, 2010).

As I reread theory and data together and stopped to write about emerging understandings, I took special note of both useful concepts from the theory and segments of recorded data from the inquiry group and classroom observations to look at more closely. These concepts and segments of data were useful because they furthered my thinking about both the empirical data and the theoretical understandings I was drawing. Then, calling on traditions of discourse analysis, particularly ethnographic microanalysis of social interaction (Erickson, 2004) and theories of social positioning (Bucholtz & Hull, 2005; Davies & Harré, 1990; Holland et al., 1998), I transcribed these identified segments, paying attention primarily to the actual language teachers and students used and any nonverbal communication that was particularly relevant to their interaction.

After transcribing, I reread these interactions, turn by turn, particularly paying attention to how these interactions helped further my understandings of what was happening in the data and of how they nudged the theories. In other words, I used both initial codes and theoretical concepts (e.g., figured worlds, improvisation, interactional positioning, purpose and rhetorical agency) as sensitizing devices (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Rather than formally coding these transcripts, I began writing, asking questions about how the theories and data (did not) explain each other and bringing together initial codes, theoretical concepts, and discourse-level analysis to create multiple, temporary assemblages of new understandings before settling on the stories that best highlighted the teachers' work and added to theories of writing and writing instruction (Augustine, 2014; Dressman, 2008; Mazzei, 2014).

Trustworthiness and limitations

I built several elements into this study in order to increase the trustworthiness of my findings. These measures included triangulating across multiple sources, engaging in sites for a prolonged period of time, member checking and collaborative analysis, and maintaining a critical, peer review group (Merriam, 2014). As noted throughout this chapter, I collected different kinds of data (e.g., interviews, artifacts, observations, audio and video recording) from multiple sources (e.g., teachers and students) and sites (four different classrooms and a teacher group) and examined data at multiple levels of analysis. For example, looking at artifacts of students' writing processes and products helped me to think about how or whether teachers' instruction was taken up in the students' actual work as writers and how their redesigned instruction may have opened or closed different possibilities for students as writers. Triangulating findings across these sources and analysis methods helped me to notice which themes surfaced in multiple sources of data and which were more isolated. I was also in each site for several months, so this "adequate engagement" (Merriam, 2014) helped me develop trust with the participants and gain a more complete and nuanced view of the contexts. Through the reflective inquiry group, informal conversations, and interviews with the teacher participants, I also engaged in multiple forms of member checking. Finally, I established and maintained a critical peer review group with other graduate student researchers, using this group to check emerging findings with other researchers to make sure they were supported by the data and theory.

As with any research design, this study has limitations, even with the added measures of trustworthiness. And as with most qualitative research designs, the lack of generalizability is the most significant limitation of this study. While I was looking across four different classrooms, the findings from this study are ultimately specific to those contexts. These four classrooms offered variation across grade-levels, which adds depth to the findings, yet the classroom teachers teach in the same geographic location, work with comparable student demographics, have had some related professional development experiences, and faced similar pressures in relation to high stakes, standardized tests. Rather than thinking of these cases as universal stories or prescriptions for instruction, then, this aim of this study was to highlight potential features of humanizing writing instruction and to generate understandings useful for other writing teachers across P-12 settings.

In this chapter I have outlined my methodological decisions across this study. In the next three chapters, I highlight the new understandings about teacher identity, learning and design as well as critical, humanizing writing instruction that foregrounds students as designers. Finally, in chapter seven, I discuss the significance and implications of these major findings.

Chapter Four: (Re)Designing Humanizing Writing Instruction Together

This chapter addresses my first research question: How do teachers in a cross grade-level inquiry group (re)design humanizing writing instruction together? Through analysis of the teachers' participation in the inquiry group, I found the following:

1) Within the inquiry group, storytelling served to define the official and unofficial boundaries of what it meant to teach writing in this urban school district, leading the teachers to reframe those boundaries as conditions of their designs and to create space in the margins of that common narrative for play and improvisation both in group conversations and in the teachers' classrooms.

In order to collaboratively engage in designing writing instruction, the four teachers came to understand each other's identities and histories by telling stories. The stories they told exposed both constraints or pressures they felt as teachers as well as their beliefs about students and writing. Collectively, these stories helped the teachers create a shared understanding of what it meant to be a teacher, and particularly a writing teacher, in an urban school in Texas. While their stories, taken together, revealed how they had historically been offered positions as "technicians" (Giroux, 1985), the inquiry group created a space in the margins of their teaching—a concurrent space that was beyond the reaches of the in-the-moment stress of teaching and imposed constraints from their schools—for them to practice or try out subject positions as designers of writing curriculum. Reframing their felt constraints and values as requirements or limitations for their designs rather than rigid boundaries, the teachers were able to use the space of the inquiry group to offer possibilities and reflect on enacted improvisations in their classrooms. In particular, the inquiry group provided space for the teachers to reconsider the familiar (i.e., terms, ideas, and activities related to writing) alongside the strange (i.e., terms, ideas, and activities related to design) and to then deconstruct and redefine those understandings together in ways that extended them into new tools for their teaching.

2) The ways the teachers took up subject positions as designers, both in their stories told in the group and enactment of ideas in their classrooms, varied in relation to teachers' identities, histories, and attitudes. These identities, histories, and attitudes related, for example, to teachers' experiences of agency and their perspectives on students, teaching, and learning.

Teachers coming into the group with more experience in communities within and beyond their own schools, where subject positions as agents rather than compliant technicians had been authorized, more easily took up design work in the group and helped to apprentice others into that work as well. Particular dispositions—namely appreciative perspectives on students and a willingness to be humble or even vulnerable about their teaching and thinking—also supported teachers in their inquiry and design. While some teachers came to the group with this faith in students and humility in their own growing understandings, my analysis also provides evidence that by being apprenticed into common narratives that are appreciative of students and of their own teaching, teachers may be able to transform their identities, taking up these attitudes along with new subject positions as designers.

In this chapter, I first describe the context of the reflective inquiry group meetings, including how the group was formed and what happened in those meetings. After providing that descriptive context, I illuminate both major findings (described above) in my analysis of the group of teachers as designers of humanizing instruction.

THE REFLECTIVE INQUIRY GROUP

As a researcher, I drew on the work of collaborative research, particularly collaborative action ethnography (Erickson, 2006b), social design experiments (Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010), and participatory design research (Bang & Vossoughi, 2016), in my approach to creating a cross grade-level reflective inquiry group. Following these traditions, I considered the classroom teachers I invited into the study as collaborators or co-designers in the work (Fowler-Amato & Warrington, 2017). Within this group I considered myself an "observant participant" (Erickson, 2006b). In other words, during our reflective inquiry group meetings, I worked to present myself not as an expert researcher, but as a teacher/learner inquiring into writing and writing instruction side-by-side with other teachers/learners. I introduced an initial question about teaching writing, and together we—through decisions about what to talk about, what topics to return to, what to try out in classrooms, and what to report back about—developed new understandings about writing and teaching writing.

The four teachers I invited into the group all came to the space with some shared understandings about writing and particularly about writing workshop (Bomer, 2011; Calkins, 1986; Ray, 2001). All of the members of the group were familiar with at least some chapters of Bomer's (2011) text, *Building Adolescent Literacy in Today's English Classroom*, and had attended various forms of professional development through the local National Writing Project (NWP) site. Beyond basic understandings of the structures of writing workshop (i.e., minilessons, student work time, teacher conferences, and share/reflection time), the teachers in the group had also been exposed to similar ideas about writing and writers, including creating space for student choice in their writing, especially in choosing topics; understanding writing as a process; and believing that writers learn to write by actually doing the work of writers. In my initial invitation to each of these teachers, I noted that I was particularly interested in working with them because I knew—either firsthand or through a colleague—that they were "engaging in this tough work of positioning students as designers of texts, as active writers who make decisions about how to put words together to make meaning" (email invitation, 2016/08/15). Though the teachers had varied experiences in their preservice education, classroom work, and participation within the local NWP site, these common understandings set the foundation for our reflective inquiry group.

Over the 2016-2017 school year, we met 11 times, for a total of nearly 20 hours (see Table 4.1). Our first meetings were held at local pubs and cafés, but after we started looking more closely at classroom and student data, we moved to a quieter and more private location on the university campus. Typically, these meetings began with personal small talk, especially as we waited for everyone to arrive, followed by checking in with each other about what was going on in our writing instruction and then discussing some kind of shared text. These texts included documents that I gathered (e.g., examples of design processes/explanations from other fields, excerpts from literacy theorists) or "teaching texts" such as video recordings, transcripts, or student work from the teachers' classrooms.

At the beginning of each meeting, the teachers checked in with what was going on in their classrooms. While the focus was on what students were doing as writers, often other stories about students, administrators, professional development they attended, or school policies were also shared. These stories, while at first seemingly unrelated to our inquiry question, helped form a common understanding, or narrative as described in the first finding, about what it was like to work in local urban schools. Since they represented four different grade-levels and three different school buildings within the same district, telling stories about their writing instruction as well as about other parts of their work became a powerful way for the four teachers to share challenges, recognize similarities in their students and schools, and build community. All of the teachers also commented, in their final interviews, that having teachers there from different grade-levels helped them share problems and possibilities without getting bogged down in logistics or without worrying about being judged for their own or their students' struggles. Having no one else in the group that knew their exact curriculum or their specific students minimized risk for the teachers and kept them in the realm of ideas. And because I was observing in each classroom as well, I could highlight interesting moves I saw the teachers or their students making, further stressing that the group was a safe and appreciative space where both teachers' and students' work, inquiry, and growth was valued.

Table 4.1. Overview of reflective inquiry group meetings

Date	**Meeting Activities**	**Members in Attendance**	**Location**	**Audio Length**
2016/ 09/13	Overview of the study, go through consent forms, and start getting to know each other	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	Local Pub	~2:00:00 (no audio)
2016/ 10/25	Look at shared texts to think about how other fields talk about design and looking for connections to writing	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	Local Café	1:46:10
2016/ 11/15	Check in Continued discussion about other fields, design, and connections to writing	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	Local Café	1:36:56
2016/ 11/29	Check in Look at excerpts from some literacy theorists who talk about design and connections to our writing and new understandings of design	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Zoe	Local Café	1:54:09
2016/ 12/13	Check in Look at transcripts/audio from Paige's writing conferences	Charlotte, Paige, Zoe	University	1:35:42
2017/ 01/17	Check in Return to "prototyping" conversation Look at sections of video recordings of Zoe's writing conferences	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	University	1:33:04
2017/ 02/07	Check in Look at sections of video recordings of Penelope's writing conferences[*]	Charlotte, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	University	1:51:37
2017/ 03/02	Check in Look at sections of video recordings of Paige's writing conferences[†] Look at shared texts about empathy, design, and writing	Charlotte, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	University	1:57:15
2017/ 03/14	Check in Look at student work	Charlotte, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	Local Restaurant	1:53:21
2017/ 04/13	Check in Look at student work	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	University	1:50:08
2017/ 05/16	Check in End of year reflections on teachers as designers and incorporating design elements in writing.	Charlotte, Gwen, Paige, Penelope, Zoe	University	1:53:23

[†] On both of these occasions, we were also going to look at data from Gwen's classroom, but she was unable to attend.

Our first meeting served as a chance for me to go through the details of the study and obtain consent as well as for us all to meet each other, and then the next three meetings (2016/10/25, 2016/11/15, and 2016/11/29) were used to continue building relationships and to begin our inquiry. To start our collaborative inquiry, I began by reminding the group that we were all there because we were "interested in positioning students as designers as opposed to like people who just fill out formulas" (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25). Then I introduced an additional concern that had come out of my own teaching—both of writing and preparing teachers to teach writing. I had found that students and teachers often had trouble balancing the seemingly individualistic work of writing, and giving students autonomy in that work, with the concept of writing as a social action. In my reading and thinking so far, I had a hunch that principles of design or design thinking might be useful to how we thought about writing in our classrooms, and I opened up that question for us to think about together, first (2016/10/25) by looking at design processes and descriptions that I had gathered from various websites and books. In our second meeting (2016/11/15), we looked at notes I had taken from the first meeting to come back to our thinking and see what was most important. And in our third meeting (2016/11/29), we looked at excerpts I had taken from *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication* (Kress, 2010); "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures" (New London Group, 1996); and *Literacy and Power* (Janks, 2010).

As we discussed the similarities between these conceptualizations of design and the way we taught writing, we also discussed new possibilities for our teaching based on the differences that we found. For example, as we looked at descriptions of other disciplines' design processes, the teachers found clear connections to their understandings of the writing cycle (Bomer, 2011) and genre studies (Ray, 2006): 'doing background information' as similar to 'immersing in mentor texts,' 'specifying requirements' as similar to 'analyzing mentor texts,' 'brainstorming solutions' as similar to 'collecting on a topic,' 'prototyping' as similar to 'revising drafts,' and so on. The teachers also looked for differences. Paige, for example, quickly noticed how in the engineering model we were looking at, the process started with defining a problem or establishing a purpose for designing. Yet, in her own teaching, and as the other teachers also realized, she typically used a genre study approach where she gave students a type of writing at the start rather than asking them to think about purposes for writing (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/10/25). The teachers also read for ideas that at least initially felt less connected to their current writing or instructional practice, such as reframing the abandonment of a writing project as a "pivot point" ("ZURB Design Process"), reframing students as project managers, reconceptualizing "share time" (Ray, 2001) as "user-testing" (ZURB Design Process") that happens not just at the end of a writing session, or rethinking how we use "writing" to mean multiple things after reading about "representation and communication" (Kress, 2010).

After establishing this baseline of understanding about design and exploring some possibilities, our next several meetings (December through April) were centered around teaching texts, such as transcripts or videos of classroom instruction and/or examples student work. The data I collected in each classroom—including field notes, photos, and video and audio recordings—were uploaded to separate and secure Box folders, so each folder could be shared with that individual teacher. A few days before an inquiry meeting, I would ask one of the teachers to select some portion of their teaching they would like to look at together using retrospective video analysis, or RVA (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2017). Two of the teachers—Paige and Zoe—were already familiar with this process because of their participation in another research and professional development project with the university, so they modeled the process the first two times (December and January). While we took time at the beginning of each meeting to check in on where we were in our teaching and reflect on how our writing instruction was going, looking at teaching texts together provided more detailed documentation of teaching and opportunities to zoom in on particular teaching moves and student writer moves. It also humanized the teachers' work by vulnerably opening up their classroom to others and being supportive in recognizing and appreciating the teachers' strategies. Looking at student work and videos also put real faces and voices to the student writers we were talking about, reminding us all of the unique strengths of students and the commonalities across our students. Paige, for instance, described students leaving elementary school as "heartbreaking" because she rarely ever got to see them again. In the inquiry group, though, Paige explained: "not that Penelope or Gwen were teaching our [Huerta] kids, but kind of. I could kind of imagine my kids and like, 'What would they do?'" (interview, 2017/06/23).

CREATING A COMMON BACKDROP: SETTING THE STAGE FOR DESIGN

As we inquired into teaching writing as a design process, our discussions together also opened up space for us to tell stories about and reflect on our work as designers of curriculum and instruction, sharing common beliefs about students and writing as well as talking about the constraints the teachers felt that their students faced in schools and that they faced as teachers in a public school. Through telling their stories, the teachers created a shared figured world (Holland et al., 1998). As Holland and her colleagues explain, this figured world "is formed and re-formed in relation to the everyday activities and events that ordain happenings within it" and is "not divorced from these happenings, but neither is it identical to the particulars of any one event" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 53). Thus, as teachers retold stories of everyday activities across their four classrooms (and three school buildings), they developed a collective understanding of what it meant to teach writing that was neither identical to any one person's experience, but was shaped by their collective experiences. Creating a common narrative or backdrop for our work, their shared story became "a 'standard plot' against which narratives of unusual events are told" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 53). That is, the teachers created a common understanding of what it meant to be a writing teacher in their urban schools, a common understanding that helped them see past the particulars of their context while highlighting how their new designs for teaching were improvisations on that shared story. As indicated in finding one, creating this shared story opened up space for the teachers to play in the margins, to imagine possibilities that might not otherwise be or seem acceptable in their day-to-day school contexts. Within this story and its margins, there were different subject positions made available to teachers, including teacher as technician (Giroux, 1985) and teacher as designer.

Often in our beginning “check in” time, teachers would not only share what was going on with the writers in their classrooms, but would also share stories about the pressures they felt made it hard to provide students choice and autonomy in their work or made their work as teachers more challenging generally. These pressures—no matter if they were real, imagined, exaggerated, or otherwise—were constraints on their designs as teachers. The constraints the teachers reported included pressures coming from outside the classroom and inside the classroom. The teachers talked about the structure of schools, testing and standardization, and concerns about specific administrators or school policies. For example, in one of our conversations about planning, Gwen explained that her administrators did not really understand the responsive nature of workshop teaching.

Gwen: … there’s only two writing teachers for seventh-grade and we are both very improvisational, very go-with-the-flow. We’re both good to come in every morning and decide what we’re going to do that day and respond to what happened yesterday. And that’s how we do work best. But our admin hates that. And we’re getting in trouble because we’re not writing lesson plans. But I’m like, ‘Well, you told us to do the workshop model. We’re doing that. I’m telling you what that looks like.’

Penelope: Yeah.

Charlotte: Yeah, like, ‘I could turn them in afterwards. Would that work?’ Do they just want a record that you’re doing things?

Gwen: So what I’m doing is I’m turning in a lesson plan that looks nothing like what I’m actually going to do—

Zoe: Isn’t that such a waste of time to have to create that?

Gwen: —And then going back in at the end of the week and like fixing it to be what I actually did.

Paige: Ahh, such a waste of time.

Similarly, in a later meeting, Paige shared a story about being observed during a reading workshop lesson at her school.

> …[in the meeting afterward, the assistant principal] started off and said, 'I want to give you a chance, I want to be nice and give you a chance to redo your lesson because I need to see a lesson where you actually teach something and someone actually learns something.' And, I was like, 'Okaaay.' And then she went on for like 20 minutes about everything that was wrong: 'That kid was standing up in the back; I don't think they really know, understand the word 'toxic'; nobody wrote anything down; they were all doing, reading different books; that kid was rolling on the floor; there was a kid who had to sharpen his pencil.' I was just like, 'Okay.' (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29)

As the rest of the group members listened, they expressed support for Paige. She continued, explaining the difference when she later implemented a scripted, test-prep lesson for the same administrator.

> I did a STAAR model when she came in and re-observed me. And she was like, 'This was an amazing lesson. All the kids were quiet. Every kid was sitting in their seat. Every child had the same paper.' Those were like her exact plusses… There's no point in doing anything that you think is worthwhile.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29)

Through these two stories, Gwen and Paige shared clear examples of constraints on their teaching. In both, the administrators and teachers had different visions of what teaching and learning looked like, and because the administrators had power in that space, both Gwen and Paige felt they had to change their teaching, even if just to satisfy those doing the surveilling, to align with the administrator's rigid view of learning—as prescribed, quiet, controlled, and preferably exactly the same for every student in every classroom—in order to be successful in their evaluations. Across the meetings, teachers shared more similar stories about administration not understanding the students or the philosophies or methods driving the teachers' practices. This constraint then became a part of our shared understanding of what it meant to teach. As a teacher, one had to navigate powerful pressures to comply with others, particularly others who did not value student agency or diversity and even others who did not understand her students or how to teach writing.

While less common, the teachers also talked about felt pressures coming from themselves or their students inside the classroom. For example, Gwen often reported how the stress she felt from both her work as a teacher and from her personal life seemed to compound, creating deleterious effects on her mental and physical health. The rest of the teachers, while never bringing up these issues without Gwen first mentioning them, expressed agreement at how the work of teaching could often affect their personal mental health. For example, in a conversation about how students were using talk while they were writing, Gwen shared how she felt they had been trained to be hypersensitive to every little noise or motion in her classroom because of the emphasis on quiet, controlled classroom management. All of that attention led her to be anxious during the school day and exhausted by the end of the day. Zoe added that she and her preservice teacher were just talking about that recently, noting that being able to scan the room and be aware of everything that's going on is even something that teachers are evaluated on (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/29). These comments reflected an additional limit to what teachers felt like they had the ability or the resolve to change in their schools or classrooms.

Beyond the constraints on their teaching practice or on themselves as teachers, the teachers also occasionally discussed students' limitations as constraints on their curriculum design. These limitations tended to be physical as exemplified by Zoe and Paige's comments about how writing multiple drafts was sometimes arduous or even painful for their writers (inquiry group field notes, 2017/01/17). Sometimes these limitations were academic, such as Paige's student plagiarizing because he did not think he had enough content knowledge about his topic (inquiry group field notes, 2016/12/12), or motivational, such as Penelope's students not always focusing on their writing because of distractions from other students (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/02/07) or being resistant to writing multiple drafts because they felt finished (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/05/16).

Teachers' stories not only set up the constraints and imposed boundaries teachers felt, but they also served to set up shared values that the group held about students and writing. For example, in one early meeting, Gwen shared how despite having her schedule being changed with a day's notice, she was getting her new students into the routine of keeping a notebook.

> Gwen: I'm just worried someone will walk into my room and chew me out for letting the newcomers write in Spanish in their journals. Because I've got kids who have been in the country, this is their first year in school in the US…And they are writing whole pages. I can't read it. But they're writing whole pages. Something is going on there. There's so much thinking.
>
> Penelope: Yeah.
>
> Gwen: And like I can sort of like ask them what they're writing about, and they'll tell me like what it's about. I know they are writing. And I'm just waiting for some admin or some district walkthrough to come and be like, 'Why are you letting them write in Spanish when the test is going to be in English?'
>
> Charlotte: Ugh.
>
> Gwen: Because they're writing.
>
> Penelope: Yeah. They're expressing ideas.
>
> Gwen: They're accessing their ideas because they're getting comfortable.
>
> Charlotte: And because writing is more than this test.
>
> Zoe: Yeah.
>
> Gwen: Yeah.
>
> Paige: Because life is more than the scores on this test.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

This story, while working to highlight shared concerns about testing pressures from administration, also reinforced shared beliefs about students—as deserving and capable of making choices about topics and language, and about writing—and about writing as sometimes expressive work for writers, as sometimes communicative for external audiences, and ultimately as more than what is measured by a standardized test. Stories that expressed these shared beliefs or values and others (e.g., having audiences beyond the teacher, valuing process, or building on students' strengths as writers) alongside the external pressures the teachers felt supported their creation of a common narrative on which they could build. See Table 4.2 for more examples of constraints and values the teachers shared in the inquiry group.

Table 4.2. Examples of constraints and values shared in teacher inquiry group

Codes	*Examples of Data*
Pressures from Outside the Classroom	
Structure of Schools/ELA Classrooms	Gwen isn't necessarily sure that teachers should have to differentiate for lots of different kinds of learners *(e.g., newcomers, SpEd, behavior disorders)* by herself. It's exhausting. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/29)*
	Zoe talks about the connections between reading and writing that we're talking about and how that seems to make so much more sense to her than separating them out like we're told to in school. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/02)*
	Some talk about grades and how those don't always seem very helpful. Zoe: "It's such an arbitrary number, especially for a first-grader…" *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/05/16)*
Testing and Standardization	Gwen: And like I can sort of ask them what they're writing about, and they'll tell me like what it's about. I know they are writing. And I'm just waiting for some admin or some district walkthrough to come and be like, 'Why are you letting them write in Spanish when the test is in English?' *(inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)*
	Zoe: And like the, even the language of like producing your own work or being a—what was it?—a project manager. Like anything like that that empowers kids or gives them this agency or helps them to find that agency. I mean, that's like the starting place I feel like. For design, and for creativity…Something we don't always get to focus on because we gotta get to those damn TEKS, you know? *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/10/25)*
	Penelope notes that when she's here with them in the group she feels like 'yeah, my kids could totally make a poster or whatever.' But then she gets back to her classroom and forgets. But that's what real writers have to do—when you sit down to write for social change or whatever, you have lots of options for how you could do that. She thinks that in the classroom we always feel like everyone has to be doing the same thing and we have to have the same rubric to grade it…There are more ways that people write than that. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/02)*

Table 4.2. (continued)

School Specific Concerns	Paige and others comment on how frustrating it has been to have so many interruptions during their teaching time—for testing, PD, field trips, data days, etc. Paige really wants to just be in there doing writing every day; it's hard for students to come in and out of their writing work. Zoe agrees. The students had a lot of trouble getting back to thinking about audience for their last pieces. And it takes first-graders so long to re-read their work *(if they can)* that they often don't have much time left for writing. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2015/11/15)*
	Zoe's administrators want her to use a scripted phonics program. She suggested that she do her own word study program and they could compare test scores with another class at the end of the year. They said no. Paige also asked if she could take up a role as a 'literacy leader' on campus by going to some workshops, including one by Jennifer Serravallo, and coming back to lead workshops on campus. They said no. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/29)*
	Gwen fills in the other teachers about how she almost got moved to another job within the school at the beginning of the semester. They hired someone to replace her. She had to bring in an Education Austin rep in meetings with her and the principal to help convince him she should stay. While she was in a meeting, someone came and moved all of her things out of her classroom and the new teacher met with her classes, telling her students that she was their new teacher. Gwen threatened to quit since this would be the fourth schedule change for her this school year. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/01/17)*
Classroom-Level Constraints: Teachers' and Students' Limits	
Teachers' Mental Health (School/Personal)	Gwen thinks we're trained to be hypersensitive to everything that's going on in the classroom. That's why we're so exhausted by the end of the day. She relates it to anxiety—when you're anxious, sounds seem louder and lights seem brighter. We do that to ourselves, and it's hard to turn off. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/29)*
	The group talks about how exhausted they are at the end of the school year. We make comments about not even having the mental space left to bring good lunches for ourselves. We're eating leftover snacks from the classroom or whatever we can grab fast in the morning. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/05/16)*
	Gwen reports that she's really just trying to get through the end of the school year. Her personal life is falling apart. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/05/16)*
Students' Limitations	Zoe comments that a lot of her students draft in talk. Paige agrees that it's hard to get more than one draft from students. It's sometimes still physically hard for them to get multiple drafts. In engineering and other places, they seem to make lots and lots of models. That doesn't seem super possible with writing. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/01/17)*
	Gwen and Penelope mention that they have students who are still asking them what to write about. Their students have had years of people telling them what to write about. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/01/17)*
	I bring up a point that Marjorie (Paige's PT) talked about in her end-of-year interview. She felt like writing was easier to teach when they were writing in science, maybe because they felt like they knew a lot about their topics and had clear opinions about those topics. *(inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/05/16)*
Values and Beliefs	
Beliefs about Students	Zoe: Like the way you talk about your writers and your readers—so much has an impact on the way they view themselves. And when we were sitting there in the meeting and just hearing language like, 'the nonwriter' or the 'nonreader' or you know, whatever it may be, or 'this is what they're not doing.' It's like, 'Dude, I know it just seems like you're saying it now, but they feel that.' (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25*)

Table 4.2. (continued)

Beliefs about Students (continued)	Zoe: Oh, that's beautiful! Paige: I know. Isn't [student's work] cool? (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/12/13*)
	Paige: I see [vulnerability] a lot in writing because I feel like a lot of kids feel successful in writing. It's not do whatever you want, but they have a lot of choice and a lot of agency. (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/12/13*)
Beliefs about Writing	Penelope: Because it was just like, 'the process is endless.' Well, I mean we're always telling our kids, at least I'm always telling my kids that 'you're never done.' Like even after you publish, you're still never really done. Like writers and there's no correct process. Kind of like we were just saying. You know, there are really no rules when it comes to writing kind of a thing. (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25*)
	Zoe: And it's like every piece that they work on is almost like this quilt of different things that they're pulling—some from their own lives, some from other texts, some from their friends. And it's like honoring that. (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25*)
	Zoe: And help them to realize they have that agency. Because I think sometimes, like you were talking about, with constraint, you can kind of, like that creativity can come of out it sometimes. We get so easily caught up in the constraints that we forget that we have the room for all that creativity. (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25*)
Beliefs about Teaching	Paige: I'm actually thinking I'd start it—I pulled some different paragraphs, like just short things, and like getting them to sort of like see, a typical flood, where it's like, 'What is this?' Like 'What are these writers doing?' And hopefully saying, and getting them to think like, 'How is this similar and different to poetry or personal narrative?' (*inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25*)
	Zoe notes that a lot of her conferences are just naming what they're already doing. (*inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/02/07*)
	Paige points out that they're teaching writers, not about the topics. (*inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/04/13*)

Beyond helping teachers create a shared understanding of "teaching" and "teaching writing," gathering information about constraints and values is important design work across disciplinary fields (e.g., Brown, 2009; Lawson, 2005). Tim Brown (2009) explains that constraints, including external forces and internal values, are inherent to and necessary for design processes.

> The willing and even enthusiastic acceptance of competing constraints is the foundation of design thinking…Constraints can best be visualized in terms of three overlapping criteria for successful ideas: feasibility (what is functionally possible within the foreseeable future); viability (what is likely to become part of a sustainable business model); and desirability (what makes sense to people and for people)…a *design thinker* will bring them into a harmonious balance. (p. 18)

While we discussed these criteria as we talked about connections between designers' work and our students' work as writers, we never explicitly named the teachers' work in the ways Brown discusses them. Yet, as they shared stories and imagined possibilities, the teachers who took up subject positions as designers largely seemed to recognize external pressures in similar ways, framing them as limitations for what might be feasible or viable for them to change in their work rather than unquestionable barriers. This suggests that the teachers were not only thinking about how their students might participate in design work as writers, but they were also internalizing that mentality in their own work as teachers. In one of our early conversations about design, Zoe drew attention to this connection, commenting:

> That is interesting to think about. When we talk about writing, we talk to our kids about thinking about their audience, and how they would design their work according to their purpose and audience, and we have to design our own instruction and the strategies and the language we use to our audience. So that might even be like a minilesson might look different for these five kids versus these ten kids just because of the way they work and the way they think. (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

Overcoming some constraints—like age-defined classroom grouping, the necessity of giving grades, and the departmentalization of secondary schools—was mostly discussed in hypotheticals, like in jokes about starting our own school (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/14). But occasionally the two elementary teachers in the same building—Zoe and Paige—more seriously considered possibilities for working around these constraints and at least once even implemented one of those possibilities in their work. For example, as we were discussing examples of student writing in Zoe's class, Paige explained that she thought one of her students who was struggling with writing would benefit from the work Zoe was doing. "I should send Dominic to your class for writing sometimes…I often just feel like I'm not supporting him as he should be supported." Zoe, adding how she felt grade-levels "are such a weird idea," responded, "Yeah! Send him over!" (inquiry group transcript, 2017/04/13). This idea was not actualized in their classrooms, but showed the teachers' willingness to consider new possibilities for their teaching that pushed against constraints as seemingly impenetrable as the deeply sedimented practice of age-defined class groupings in U.S. schools.

Another time, as we were discussing possibilities for helping Paige's students return to thinking about purpose and audience in their current piece after several interruptions in their schedule, the group thought through ways Paige and Zoe's classes might be able to work together.

> Paige: I wonder if we could, for reading buddies this Friday or something like that, like my kids are writing these pieces, bring them to your kids and like do like the questioning with your kids. You know of like, 'Okay, here's what I'm writing about, like what other questions do you have? So then they have authentic questions to revisit their piece.
>
> Zoe: To go back to—
>
> Charlotte: And they're both doing [informational writing] now ***
>
> Zoe: They're both doing that. Yeah!
>
> Paige: Yeah.
>
> Charlotte: Maybe they could go like back and forth—
>
> Penelope: Yeah!
>
> Zoe: And this would, and I think it'd be so powerful for like my kiddos to get to see like raw work done by a fourth-grader… (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/15)

This possibility was taken up in their work, with Paige's fourth-graders bringing their in-process work to get feedback from the first-graders as potential readers and then later inviting the first-graders to their publication celebration. In this example, Paige and Zoe co-opted a practice they had already built an argument for in their school—"reading buddies," where the fourth-graders came to read picture books alongside the first-graders—to provide a real, live audience for the fourth-graders' writing. Though some of the students had trouble deciding how to carry out their first-grade partners' advice, the older students later came back to having this real audience as they reflected on what they learned about themselves as writers at the end of this particular unit. Ian, for example, explained, “It was exciting to teach, like it was so fun to teach kids that are younger than us” (classroom transcript, Paige, 2016/12/12). A group of students from the class (Camila, Daniela, Sofía, and Valeria) later started working during recess and other free time to make a picture book to share with the first-graders to teach them about friendship and bullying, making decisions such as whether to color it or make it like a coloring book and brainstorming strategies for making enough copies for all the students. These examples highlighted how the teachers, as described in finding one, reframed their felt constraints and values as requirements or limitations for their designs rather than rigid boundaries, using the space of the inquiry group to offer possibilities and reflect on enacted improvisations in their classrooms.

Other external constraints—like expectations for test preparation curriculum and standardized lesson plans—were more consistently discussed as flexible boundaries. As the teachers (re)figured their identities as curriculum designers, these external constraints were not necessarily seen as *re*straints on our design. Instead, they were implicitly positioned as criteria to consider, at the same status as our shared beliefs about students and writing we brought to the group (e.g., writing as a process, learning to write by writing, etc.) and our growing understandings of writing as design. External and internal constraints helped define the limits of what was feasible and viable, while our beliefs about writing helped define the limits of what was desirable. For example, though Paige was told she was supposed to do 12 to 13 weeks of test-preparation expository writing, she reframed that as a constraint, rather than a requirement. Paige’s students did study informational writing. However, they spent most of the 12 to 13 weeks looking at ways writers explain or persuade and choosing their own audiences and genres before spending just 3 weeks studying test writing (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/01/17). Taking into account that her administrators wanted her to spend a large percentage of their writing time on getting ready for the test, Paige thought past what they were asking her to do to think about *why* they wanted her to do that and how she could satisfy those requirements while still teaching in a way that honored students' agency and autonomy as writers.

> I tried really thinking about…what they needed to know for STAAR and then kind of backing it up…so they had a teaching piece and an opinion piece and then a prompt piece…it was like, 'how do you explain something and this idea of different ways to explain.' Then it was, 'how do you add an opinion in there,' so explaining your thoughts not just explaining your topic, and then explaining your thoughts on something someone has asked you to do… I still remember that day…when we looked at the STAAR piece and they were like, 'Oh, we know how to do this.' And I felt so, it just felt like they were kind of vibrating. They were like, 'Wow, this kid aced it, and we know how to do that!'… there were a lot of moments this year when I was like, 'Oh, how *did* they explain things?' I'd read people's stuff and be like, 'Yeah, this is how they do it. This is a real paragraph from a real book, and I want my kids really to do this'…It also felt like we kind of pushed off the STAAR prep to later. Even though I could still confidently argue that all the work that we were doing was going towards that, it didn't feel like it. So I think that kept morale high and made them, I don't know, really think about *writing* and not test-writing. (Paige, interview, 2017/06/23)

Most basically, Paige found a way to balance what was feasible, viable, and desirable for all the stakeholders in her teaching context. She considered what was on the test, what writing looked like beyond school, and found a balance that she found was successful for preparing kids for writing on the test *and* writing beyond school. Paige, like the others, began negotiating tensions in their work by repositioning felt restraints as factors for developing their improvised designs for teaching.

TEACHERS AS DESIGNERS

Finding two relates to the ways that teachers variably took up subject positions as designers. Through my analysis, I found that while the teachers generally seemed to view their shared beliefs about and goals for students on an equal footing with the constraints and challenges they faced, not every member of the group took up the position of teacher as designer or implemented designs from the group in the same ways. Across my observations in both classrooms, I consistently found evidence of Zoe and Paige implementing ideas in their teaching from the inquiry group. From relatively small moves—like using "Reading Buddies" time to expand the fourth-graders' audience as they worked on informational texts (Paige, classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/29, 2016/12/08)—to more sweeping approaches—like opening units of study by asking students to think about purpose and audience from the beginning (e.g., Paige classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/01, 2016/11/16, 2017/04/07; Zoe classroom fieldnotes, 2017/01/19, 2017/03/06—both teachers frequently tried out ideas in their teaching. In reporting back to the group (e.g., inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/15, 2016/11/29, 2016/12/13, 2017/03/02, 2017/05/16), their improvisations helped to further refine ideas for their own teaching and for others. I will show more examples of the ways Paige implemented ideas from the group in chapter five.

Early in the year, Penelope was somewhat reluctant to deviate from the plans her grade-level team followed. However, across the year Penelope became more confident in suggesting possibilities in the inquiry group and in trying them out in her classroom. Like with Paige and Zoe, these ideas ranged from relatively small moves—like taking up a suggestion to ask students who they might work well with in writing groups (Penelope classroom fieldnotes, 2017/02/13)—to fairly major changes to her instruction—like using purpose and audience as tools to make her writing conferences more meaningful (e.g., Penelope classroom fieldnotes, 2016/12/12, 2017/05/09, 2017/05/10, 2017/05/15) and trying out a "writing for social justice" unit during which students chose their own purposes, audiences, and genres (Penelope classroom fieldnotes, 2017/03/31-2017/05/24). In chapter six, I will look closely at ways Penelope used ideas from the group as tools to transform her teaching.

In looking across Gwen's classroom data, I found little evidence of foregrounding purpose and audience in her writing instruction, nor of her trying out other ideas generated within the inquiry group. While in the group we were specifically focusing on writing as social action and thinking about how to help facilitate writers in making the move from writing for themselves in their notebooks to writing for outside audiences, Gwen's students spent the majority of the school year collecting in their notebooks. Students in Gwen's class took three pieces through to publication: a "Do the Write Thing" essay for a program sponsored by the National Campaign to Stop Violence (Gwen classroom fieldnotes, 2016/12/15), a personal narrative (Gwen classroom fieldnotes, 2017/02/13), and an open-genre piece about a family or community member inspired by reading Sandra Cisneros (1991) *The House on Mango Street* (Gwen classroom fieldnotes, 2017/05/15). While students sometimes had the option of typing up their piece to be published in a class magazine, the primary audience for these pieces was ultimately Gwen as opposed to classmates or readers beyond the classroom.

Through my analysis, several factors emerged as important in explaining the variation in how the four teachers engaged in taking up subject positions as designers. These factors, or conditions for their instructional design, included the teachers' identities, always shifting and evolving based on their lived experiences and their sedimented positioning both in schools and in our group. Additionally, particular mindsets, such as appreciative perspectives on students and humility or vulnerability in talking about their teaching, worked to stimulate teachers' design work. The following section describes these conditions in more detail.

Teacher histories, identities, and transformation

Taken together, the stories the teachers told revealed their histories-in-person and sedimented positioning as "technicians" (Giroux, 1985) of standardized, teacher-proof curriculum in the urban schools where they taught. Like in Paige's statement from her observation story, "There's no point in doing anything that you think is worthwhile" and in a comment from Zoe later in the discussion, "we're in a system where we're trained… conditioned to expecting or wanting to be told what to do" (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29), the teachers' stories illustrated how they felt pressured to be compliant rather than to design learning experiences based on their own, and their students', knowledge, strengths, and beliefs. Teachers who have sedimented experiences in this subject position may not easily take up new positioning as a curriculum designer. Yet, in our group, reflecting on our histories-in-person alongside thinking together about possibilities highlighted the “as if” nature of “teacher as technician” and offered up new subject positions like “teacher as transformative intellectual” (Giroux, 1985) or “teacher as designer.” As Holland and her colleagues (1998) explain

> The possibilities of heuristic development do not mean that humans are free to develop whatever subjectivity they wish and to do whatever strikes them in the moment. Far from it. One’s history-in-person is the sediment from past experiences upon which one improvises, using the cultural resources available, in response to the subject positions afforded one in the present…Improvisation can become the basis for a reformed subjectivity. (p. 18)

While the teachers’ identities and heuristics for activity were still firmly rooted in their histories, having space for trying out improvisations or possibilities in talk provided experiences in trying on new subject positions, which could in turn lead to creating new heuristics for behavior and to evolving identities both in the inquiry group and in the teachers’ classrooms.

Though all four teachers were selected to participate in the group because of common experiences and contexts, such as exposure to the NWP community and teaching in local urban schools, there were, of course, differences among what subject positions were authorized in their schools and how they took up positions available within the group. From the beginning, Paige and Zoe both easily took up positions as designers within the inquiry group, both of them bringing questions about their teaching, offering possibilities for themselves and others to try, and actually trying out designs from the group in their own teaching. All four of the teachers in the group had taught for about the same amount of time (four to six years) and were involved with the NWP site to some extent. Yet Paige and Zoe shared other potentially important experiences: both graduated from the same local large university elementary certification program, participated in the NWP summer institute within their first two years of teaching, had opportunities to work with a literacy coach at Huerta Elementary who advocated for responsive teaching and literacy workshop early in their careers, engaged in university-led professional development and research projects, and hosted several preservice teachers. Though Huerta Elementary was similar to Los Robles High School and Northtown Middle School, serving primarily working class Latinx communities, sharing problematic histories with high-stakes testing, and facing pressures from administrators to standardize their teaching and prepare students for tests, Paige and Zoe's previous experiences with teaching communities within and beyond Huerta's walls provided chances for Paige and Zoe to see teaching as inquiry-driven and teachers as designers and decision-makers. In other words, though Paige and Zoe felt constraints on their teaching, their "histories-in-person" (Holland et al., 1998) also included stories about successfully pushing back against these pressures, particularly pressures to standardize.

While part of the NWP community through professional development at her school, Penelope was the only member of the group who had not been through the intensive summer institute. Because of a grant that allowed me, as a teacher consultant for the local NWP site, to work with English I and II teachers at Los Robles High, many of those teachers were taking up, in varying degrees, writing workshop practices in their classrooms. The teachers there had relative autonomy over their curriculum and instruction; administrators—on the district, building, or department level—were not checking lesson plans, doing walk-throughs, nor any other direct surveillance to see that teachers were using any particular curriculum or instructional methods. Yet, across Los Robles High, and particularly in tested courses like English I, teachers still felt pressure to raise test scores through common discourses about testing, the design of the course schedule (which double-blocked testing grade English classes), frequent district- or school-mandated practice tests or re-tests, and professional development provided by the district on techniques for raising test scores and for analyzing test data to design interventions (Williamson, 2017).

Penelope also had a history of experiences as a "technician" within the English I team. The largest team in the English department, the English I team worked to standardize their teaching, using test data and planning as a team to ensure that students received similar experiences across all the sections. Penelope, as the co-leader of the team, wanted to set a good example for the rest of her team by following their group lesson plans, even when she disagreed with them. However, since Penelope was the only English I teacher who was teaching "Pre-AP" as opposed to "On-Level," she eventually used that distinction to open more space as she began trying on "teacher as designer" as an available subject position in the inquiry group. While outside the scope of my data collection, it important to note that at the end of the year, Penelope also reached out about continuing to meet with some of the inquiry group members and participated in a teacher book club, meeting monthly with several other teachers for an additional school year to discuss possibilities for teaching. She has also since participated in the local NWP intensive summer institute. Seeking out these communities beyond Los Robles High may help to support her in continuing to move beyond the sediment of her experiences as "teacher-as-technician" and to build new heuristics for "teacher-as-designer."

Gwen, beginning her teaching career as a test preparation tutor before accepting a job at Northtown Middle School, had participated in the NWP summer institute the June before our inquiry group formed; yet Gwen was having a particularly difficult year both at school and in her personal life. Like many urban schools, Northtown had a high rate of administrative turnover across the five years Gwen worked there. Just the previous spring, their principal was fired after being arrested, leaving the school looking for a new principal in the midst of scandal. The school was also designated "Improvement Required" due to low test scores, so the combination of district oversight on their improvement plan along with inconsistency in building-level administrative roles created turmoil for teachers and students.

Gwen's experiences and the discourses surrounding her at Northtown had afforded her positions not only as a "technician" but often as an incompetent technician. Gwen felt unvalued as a teacher there, citing examples of being yelled at in front of other teachers or even in front of students, having to hold teacher planning meetings in an administrator's office with a sign-in sheet, being bombarded with administrative paperwork and tasks, and having her teaching assignment changed with little notice and no time to re-plan.

> …I was bullied by administration this year. Like I had an admin screaming in my face one day…Every year, I've come back and had faith that the school would get better…I don't believe it anymore…I constantly feel like I can't do for my students what someone needs to be doing for them. You know? I'm so bogged down by like having to teach the TEKS that I can't help them not kill themselves…I feel like our academic dean was sent there specifically to drive everyone out, just like to reset the school. So many teachers are leaving or trying to or talking about not teaching anymore. Like it's been abusive…They're also bogging me down with so much administrative crap. Like my assistant principal does not have my back this year. I have no support for behavior. Um, literally every day someone calls me a bitch. It's just abusive.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16)

Her feelings about the year were not unfounded. During the 2016-2017 school year, Gwen's assignment was changed several times—once a few days before the school year started, once in October (with a day's notice) as the district mandated they create a new writing course for all seventh-graders, a third time as they shuffled students around to remove students who scored well on a mid-year exam, and nearly a fourth time as administrators threatened to give her writing classes to a new teacher and move her to an ESL classroom (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/10/25, 2017/01/17, 2017/05/16). Gwen also reported that many of the teachers, including her, felt they were not being supported when they reported disruptive behavior in their classrooms. From conversations I overhead in planning meetings or just walking through the hallways, the low morale of many teachers was evident.

These disruptions to her work life, along with stress from her personal life, clearly wore on Gwen, both physically and mentally, throughout the year. Gwen missed several days of instruction, cancelling 31 of our 75 scheduled observations because of testing and her absences due to illness or required meetings, and at our last inquiry group meeting, Gwen shared that she was leaving Northtown Middle, explaining:

> I'm so over this school year. I just need to be at a different school…I was joking with my mom, like 'What if I just quit my job and worked at Wal-Mart…I'm about to end my fifth year at Northtown…and being at Northtown has been a ridiculous journey for me and my awareness of the world, and I think it's time for me to get out and not die there, maybe…I'm tired. I'm emotionally exhausted. You know, and I read all these like articles about like 'why are teachers leaving the field?'…And I'm like, because, like nobody's talking about how bad a job it is. It's a bad job! It's like you get paid for 40 hours a week, you're expected to work 60…You're verbally abused depending on what school you're at…I mean, the entire education industry is built upon guilt and exploitation, so that's great.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16)

Gwen's explanation of being "tired" and "emotionally exhausted" affected her classroom teaching and her willingness or ability to take on a subject position as a designer. Though early in the year she was required to turn in lesson plans, she and the other seventh-grade writing teacher, with the exception of mandatory test-prep camps, had autonomy over their writing curriculum. Despite this agency, Gwen—constrained by other administrative paperwork, lack of support, and personal stress—did not have feel she had energy left to redesign her writing instruction. In addition to her current constraints, Gwen's history-in-person (Holland et al., 1998) within and beyond schools, unlike others in the inquiry group, did not provide her with experiences where she was rewarded for exhibiting agency or expertise as a teacher, and therefore, she did not have these experiences to draw from when faced with those current constraints. Holland and colleagues (1998) describe constraints, the sediment of historical practices and positions as well as the cultural resources available (or not), as "overpowering but not hermetically sealed" (p. 18). Gwen's historical and current positioning as a technician instead made it more difficult for her overcome these constraints or to view them as conditions on her designs rather than rigid boundaries for her practice.

Characteristics that enabled "designer" subject positions

Looking across the data from the teacher inquiry group and the teachers' classrooms, two particular mindsets emerged as important conditions for teachers to take up the work of a designer. As noted in finding two, first, teachers who talked about students—both students as individuals and as a group—in appreciative ways, were more likely to open up lines of inquiry, creating a need to ask questions and design new possibilities in their talk and in their teaching. And second, teachers who showed evidence of humility or vulnerability as they tried out possibilities in the inquiry group were more likely to make those or other improvisations in their classrooms.

Appreciating students' strengths and resources

Having an appreciative mindset was useful in trying on the subject positon and taking up the work of a curriculum designer. Deficit views of students curb teacher inquiry. If a teacher is willing to believe that a lesson did not go as planned or students' writing is not up to par because there is something inherently wrong with students, then there is little need to inquire into practice; the problem is in the students not in the school or instruction. Appreciative thinking about students, on the other hand, opens up much more thinking rather than stopping at the student as the problem (Bomer, 2011). Appreciative perspectives, then, can stimulate inquiry into practice and further spur design thinking as teachers work to solve the problems of practice they find in their inquiry. This is particularly important when (re)designing critical, humanizing writing instruction. As Freire (1970/2005) reminds, humanizing pedagogy "requires an intense faith in humankind, faith in their power to make and remake, to create and re-create" (p. 90). While current movements towards scripted or test-preparation focused curriculum often have dehumanizing effects on students (e.g., Milner, 2013; Mirra & Morrell, 2011; Salazar, 2013), maintaining faith in students, or continually appreciating and believing in students' capabilities, supports teachers' inquiry as well as their ability to counter dehumanizing practices, and in particular, dehumanizing writing instruction (Skerrett, 2013; Zisselsberger, 2016).

Paige and Zoe consistently showed evidence of focusing on students' assets, and these beliefs fostered inquiry into their practice. In one meeting, Zoe shared with the group how her first-graders were sorting through sticky notes where they had drawn or written brief notes while researching topics, creating separate stacks of notes that would eventually become a table of contents for their informational books.

Zoe: They all made their table of contents. There were some that needed more support than others, of course, but it was so exciting to see how they named each section…It was cool to see that some of them were kind of general terms and some of them had questions or some of them had creative titles that were really catchy…And then just how they explained it to each other…It was really interesting to see how they decided which stack each fact was going to go in.

Paige: So they write down a ton of facts first and then they group them together?

Zoe: Yeah. They have the manila folders, so it's like what I know, [*turning papers to mimic opening folder*] what I'm wondering, what I learned, and another what I learned. So they took what they already know, because that's something they should put in their book because it's facts, and then what they've learned. Then they put them all out in front of them, which is really hard to manage all, almost like 20 stickies…It's really cool to see how they organize it.

Paige: That's a really high level thinking skill to organize your thoughts like that, not just say everything at whatever time you want.

Zoe: I know. It kind of stressed me out before the lesson. I was like, 'This could be a real interesting day today.' And it's our first thing in the morning; let's see how it goes. Then I was like, 'We did it!! We did it!' And they're kind of like, 'Yeah, okay.'

(inquiry group transcript, 2016/12/13)

Zoe's description of this lesson stays close to what the students were doing (e.g., *"So they took what they…"* and *"It's cool to see how they organize it."*). A common move that both Zoe and Paige used in their talk, Zoe's emphasis on what the students were doing rather than what she did as the teacher highlighted the subject position she offered her students—as capable writers who can make complex decisions about their writing.

As Penelope began trying on the position of teacher as designer, particularly in ways that pushed back against the standard stories told about students and writing in her school context, she also began appropriating more appreciative talk about her students. The narrative created within the inquiry group about appreciative perspectives of students appeared to assist Penelope in taking on this subject position. Again, while Penelope and other English I and II teachers at Los Robles had some exposure to the local NWP community through ongoing professional development, many of the teachers had not fully appropriated appreciative ways of thinking and talking about students. It was not uncommon to hear teachers talk about how "these kids" could not or would not do something.

In our first inquiry group meeting, for example, when asked about how reading worked in ninth-grade and whether or not students mostly read for homework or in class, Penelope told Paige "Our kids won't read outside of class…It's sad. Because I teach pre-AP, and yeah, we read *Fahrenheit 451*, and I read the whole book to them aside from like the last maybe like 25 pages" (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25). This comment, one that positioned students as incapable, lazy, or otherwise deficient in some way, was not followed up by any reflection or questioning about any other potential explanations (e.g., what the books they were asked to read, which the activities they were assigned to do along with their reading, what students' past experiences with reading at school were like, or how other things may have been taking up students' time and attention, etc.) for why students were not reading outside of class. This deficit thinking, defined by Valencia (1997) as "positing that the student who fails in school does so because of internal deficits or deficiencies" (p. 2), seemed to work to shut down inquiry for Penelope.

However, within the inquiry group Penelope began taking up, from the common narrative the teachers were building about writing instruction and student agency, a different story to tell about her students and about herself as a teacher. For example, during one group meeting, Penelope was reporting back about how their biography unit of study had finished up.

Penelope: Um, we literally just, Friday, finished our biographies. They're o-kay. [laughs]

Paige: How did you end up—because last time we talked you were maybe in the phase of like research takes so long, what do I want [final pieces] to be like?

Penelope: Yeah, it, uh. It took a little longer than it needed to. I think just because the kids were, I don't know, fading.

Paige: Well, and it started before break and went to after break? That's so hard.

Penelope: Yeah, we got our rough drafts, they had to have their rough drafts done by break? Yeah, they had to have their rough drafts done by break. And then—

Paige: It's so hard to—

Penelope: And then, yeah, I just gave them like, whatever it's been, two weeks since we've been back? I don't know. Because Friday, and their final was not *** But yeah—

Charlotte: And that's also true, before break you were just doing the twice a week, which makes it feel like things take more than it seems.

Penelope: Yeah, we weren't writing every single day. So it was like maybe three times a week that they were actually writing, and only for like half an hour. So, I mean, it was good. (inquiry group transcript, 2017/01/17)

Here Penelope began by describing students' finished biographies as "o-kay." Picking up that Penelope was unhappy with those final products, Paige recalled a conversation from an earlier meeting when she and Penelope had discussed other possibilities for their biographies—such as children's books or shorter texts of some kind—since the focus was on learning to research (inquiry group field notes, 2016/11/15). Penelope did not take up thinking about the final product, but as she discussed the timing of the project, Paige also added comments (e.g., *"That's so hard."*) about how hard it is for writers to have interruptions in the middle of writing projects. These comments worked to begin shifting any unspoken blame from the students to potential situational explanations.

Continuing, Penelope's talk began to move towards a more appreciative stance, ending with "So, I mean, it was good," and then moving on to talk about how the students worked really hard on their last work day:

> Penelope: Like on Friday when they were due, I was only going to give them like half an hour, but a lot of kids were, were really working and like trying to get it done and like actually excited. So they ended up with the whole class period to do it.
>
> Paige: Well that's good.
>
> Penelope: But they're still not [*trails off to whisper*]***. We needed to spend more time in the revising and editing section. And like clarifying and stuff. Because they got very stuck on not adding enough detail, or it'd be like, 'He was born on this day.' Period. 'His parents are…' You know? It was all very like—
>
> Paige: Just facts. (inquiry group transcript, 2017/01/17)

In this part of the conversation, Penelope does again allude to the students' final projects not being what she hoped for (*"But they're still…"*). However, she quickly added a rationale for why the pieces might not have lived up to her expectations: she could have spent more time teaching revising and editing strategies if she wanted to see them do more than list facts about the person they were researching.

> Penelope: Yeah, so it was, I think if we—we need to spend less time researching and more time doing the revising and stuff.
>
> Paige: Was this the first time they've done a piece like that—like research, conceptualize, like you know, rephrase and re—yeah, that's hard.

Penelope: Yeah. And that's kind of why we wanted them to do it. Just because we wanted them to do, to start doing like researchy stuff. But yeah, there wasn't enough time to change it enough. But oh well.

Paige: Yeah. It's their first time. Like if they get the concept of what a biography is, how to research, how to not plagiarize. Like—

Penelope: Yeah… (inquiry group transcript, 2017/01/17)

Here, bringing up how much students were really doing in the biography unit, Paige's question (*"Was this the first time…"*) helped Penelope further reframe both the students' work and Penelope's own teaching decisions. Rather than being evidence of poor student abilities or poor teaching decisions, the disappointing student products became a problem of practice, a design problem for the teachers to think through. After this point in the conversation, the group—Penelope, Paige, Zoe, and I this time—talked through several other possibilities for a biography unit if any of us were to teach it again, including writing about people in students' lives rather than celebrities, looking at more examples of literary biographies that emphasize voice and story, and writing picture book biographies.

Overall, this conversation shows how Penelope was beginning to take on the positions afforded in the group—of an inquirer and a designer in her work—first in the group space across conversations. Holland and colleagues (1998) explain that learning to tell common narratives, such as those used in Alcoholics Anonymous, can become "a major means of the symbolic bootstrapping that creates a revised sense of self" (pp. 42-43). The inquiry group provided a space for Penelope to see how others were taking up "teacher as designer" as a possible subject position, and through her talk and her practice, it was clear that she, too, began to see that position available for her as well.

Gwen, while her stories about school were not always positive, was always quick to share her appreciation for the individual students in her class. During one inquiry group meeting, each teacher brought a few samples of student work to look at together. Gwen's students had just finished writing and sharing personal narratives, and she was happy to share her students' work. For example, in discussing Javier's writing, Gwen started by recounting how excited Javier got as they discussed this piece in a writing conference.

> I sat down with him. He had his head down, and he told me this story. And I was like, 'That's a really cool story. Everyone wants to hear that story!'…I was really proud of this. In one of our later conferences, I was asking him about how he could add some emotions and how he could help the reader understand what he felt. And he came up with some really good stuff. [reading from his paper] 'In that moment I was nervous and scared. I had goosebumps. I didn't know what to do; my mind was blank like a wallpaper.' I remember because I asked him, 'How did you feel?' and he gave me like three emotions. I was like, 'Okay, what things are like that emotion?'…We had just done like 'Five Different Ways to Describe Things' with examples from *House on Mango Street*. So I was like, 'Do you want to use a simile? Do you want to use imagery?'…and he came up with this really cool, weird simile: 'My mind was blank like a wallpaper.'… We had a conversation when he told me his story out loud, one of the first things I said was, 'That sounds like a scene from a movie or a TV show…It's like a chase. You know? So if you were going to imagine it in pictures, like it was a movie, what would happen first and last?' I don't think he actually storyboarded, but it was a suggestion I made. But he just made a list of things that happened in what order they happened. (inquiry group transcript, 2017/04/13)

Gwen's talk here highlighted how she was reading her students' work with appreciation for the moves they were making as writers. Noting how proud she was of Javier's work, she pointed out multiple things she noticed him doing (e.g., adding an unexpected simile, incorporating description and imagery, being clear about the order of how things happened so readers could understand). Throughout the inquiry group, Gwen talked about individual students this way, pointing out their strengths and the fun quirks she loved about them as students and writers.

On the other hand, obviously beaten down by the lack of trust or appreciation from colleagues and administration that she felt as a teacher, Gwen sometimes appeared to turn some of that deficit thinking onto her students as a whole. In her final interview, Gwen expressed value in having a space outside of her school to “talk with people who care about writing” (Gwen, interview, 2017/05/30). She described our group as “more of an inquiry group than a professional development group,” and contrasted it with her PLC meetings at school, where if you shared a problem someone always tried to jump in immediately and fix it for you.

> In this [teacher inquiry] group, you could share a problem and everyone would be like, ‘Oh, that’s a problem. That’s not even a problem I’ve ever had because I don’t work in a dumpster fire and I work with small, nice children. But my small, nice children have this problem.’ And I don’t know what that’s like because my children would light me on fire. (Gwen, interview, 2017/05/30)

In her own words, Gwen showed that she interpreted the group to be a safe space to share and be affirmed in her complaints about Northtown without the other teachers trying to jump in with right answers. However, as Gwen reflected on the teacher inquiry group (in the quote above) she also clearly separated herself from the other teachers. As opposed to the other teachers, who could use this space to brainstorm possibilities for their students’ challenges, Gwen did not feel like the others could understand her students, who would “light [her] on fire” if she attempted to use some of the ideas the others were talking about. Though she was always appreciative, noticing and naming students’ fun quirks and strengths, when talking about individual students, the sentiment expressed in her final interview indicated Gwen did not hold onto asset-focused thinking about her students as a whole. Gwen’s complaints about her PLC and other professional development experiences at Northtown also highlighted her lack of space to puzzle through problems without someone being critical of her for having that problem or attempting to oversimplify and solve the problem for her. This distinction between the way the teacher inquiry group worked and the way professional development worked at her school was yet another example of how Gwen was dehumanized rather than supported in taking up inquiry questions at Northtown.

Humility and taking risks

In addition to the characteristic of holding appreciative views of students, the teachers' willingness to show vulnerability and take risks in the group and in their classrooms was essential for learning and change. As teachers who were typically offered positions as mere technicians, it makes sense that teachers may be reluctant to share challenges or untested ideas or to admit they do not always have all the answers. Yet, improvisation and play are key for beginning to change both identity and practice (Holland et al., 1998), and the willingness to experiment is also a key part of design and design thinking (Brown, 2009; Lawson, 2005). Across the group, this connection between humility and improvisation seemed clear: the more vulnerable the teachers were willing to be, the more possibilities they tried out in the group talk; the more they were willing to try out possibilities in the group, the more likely they were to try out improvisations in their classrooms. Like appreciative thinking, humility or vulnerability is also particularly important for critical, humanizing instruction. Highlighting another of his components necessary for dialogue, Freire (1970/2005) asks "How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?" (p. 90). Humility not only opens up space for teachers' inquiry by recognizing that they do not always have all the answers but also supports them in maintaining openness to others' ideas, acting as "partners in naming the world" (p. 90).

Paige and Zoe, coming to the group with more experiences going against the standard narrative at school, came to the group with this humility and a willingness to try out ideas in talk and in their classrooms, and thus became models of this subject position of designer. They shared stories about what they were trying in their classrooms and offered possibilities for themselves and others to try next. For example, while waiting for others to arrive, at the very beginning of our first inquiry group meeting, Paige explained to Penelope and me some ideas she had for changing up how she was teaching towards the expository writing test.

> …I'm imagining they might produce this really nice paragraph or like, you know, it's not going to be this whole elaborate thing; it's going to be more about the skill

> of explaining what you mean. So I don't know. We'll see. We'll feel it out... Because it's just something that I feel like across the board, I'll be like, 'What do you mean [in this explanation of something]?' And they're like, 'The thing, and you put the thing in there.' I'm like, 'I don't know what the thing is. What are you trying to tell me?'…know, like, just specificity and details, and there's so many times I just have the conversation: 'Don't know what you mean. I have no idea—' And then they're like, 'Ugh!'… So I don't know what their published pieces will look like? I don't even know, they might just be like concept maps of like, 'Here's my topic and here are ways that I explain what I mean about it'?...
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

In this example, Paige directly named her talk as "imagining," and her hesitations (e.g., *"So I don't know"*) and open discussion of struggles she has felt in the past (e.g., *"Because it's just something that…"*) highlighted Paige's willingness to show humility in not knowing all the answers. Additionally, though Paige expressed mutual frustration between her and her students, she did not stop her thinking at 'kids are just bad at explaining,' but instead was attempting to solve the problem through envisioning new ways to teach. Through her talk, Paige positioned herself as an inquirer, who both recognizes and sees the value of sharing challenges she finds in her teaching, and as a designer, who takes initiative in brainstorming possible solutions and is ready to share ideas even before they are fully fleshed out in her own mind.

Later in her description of her students' sticky-note sorting activity (described in the previous section), Zoe also demonstrated this vulnerability, using the group space to think about what she might do with students next. Paige, Zoe, and I (the only teachers present during this conversation) worked together, building on ideas to come up with possibilities.

> Zoe: But now I'm interested to see exactly if they can remember. Something I was thinking is now that they've got their categories, I of course want them to have their stickies as a resource, but would it honestly be easier for them to just remember and put it all on paper?

Paige: What if they sat with a buddy and they read through sticky notes to get ideas and then said everything aloud and then wrote that?

Zoe: And wrote it down.

Paige: Then they can also add more.

Zoe: Because they're going to have so much more to say.

Paige: And they don't want to just—you don't want them copying [their notes] just straight in this thing [they're publishing].

Charlotte: That won't make any sense.

Paige: Right. So maybe they read it, and you're like, 'Oh, writers will use notes and then will create their writing from these notes.' They could do it that way.

Charlotte: It's like, 'read it and then put the notes away.'

Zoe: Close it and set it aside. I could even see some kiddos, that being a little much in all that movement, and then a conference with them could be 'Let's just talk about that section' vs. opening and getting those stickies back out. I almost feel like for, like for Santos, he can probably just explain it. But having all that in front of him might be too much. (inquiry group transcript, 2016/12/13)

In this conversation, Zoe began by admitting a challenge she expects (*"…if they can remember."*) and a question she was thinking about (*"…would it honestly be easier…?*). Like Paige's previous example, here Zoe showed vulnerability in opening up a question about her practice that she does not yet have an answer for. As Paige offered suggestions, and even tried out teaching language (*"…you're like, 'Oh, writers will use…*), Zoe clearly considered them seriously, thinking about how these ideas would work with specific students (*"Close it and set it aside…and then a conference with them could be…"*).

After the group discussed more possibilities for how Zoe and her students might balance talking and writing and sharing the pen, Zoe ended, not with a finished perfect answer, but with several possibilities for how she might approach this particular teaching problem with different students in her class:

Zoe: It might even have to be, for some of my kiddos, like ‘Say one thing you know about that.’ Like if it’s about the body parts of the butterfly. Say one thing you know about the body parts of the butterfly to a partner. Now write it down.’ ‘Say another thing you know about the body parts of the butterfly. Write it down’…

Paige: You have to go step by step. Yeah.

Zoe: So maybe that’s something. Yeah. I might even start there for the minilesson. Like you remember, you recall the fact that you know to a partner, you write it down. You recall another fact. Because it’s a group, so it will be a group project. I feel like I might confer with the kiddos about, like maybe pull a small group, to say ‘Hey, you can also pull the notes that you already took’ because that might be they can totally be ready for that. But for some it might be like ‘Holy moly there’s so much in front of me, where do I start?’ Then I could see some of them saying, ‘I already wrote so much. I’m frustrated and now I have to rewrite all this.’ (inquiry group transcript, 2016/12/13)

In these last turns, as in other places in Zoe’s and Paige’s talk, Zoe talked through her thinking, not worrying about looking like an expert but instead as someone thinking through how her students would respond to her teaching decisions. As a designer, she considered her purposes and particular audience for her teaching, positioning herself humbly as someone who sets up situations and supports students’ work.

Across time in the group, as Penelope began appropriating appreciative ways of thinking about her students and her own teaching, her talk in the group and in conversations with me also showed more evidence of humility and inquiry. This change points to the interrelationship or joint workings of humility and practice, as mediated by inquiry, an important revelation of finding two. In one of her interviews, Penelope mentioned that having different grade-level teachers together helped her feel more willing to be vulnerable in that space. When talking with teachers who taught the same thing (such as her grade-level team or district PD with other high school teachers), she worried about being judged if she or her students were struggling with something. Instead, in the group, she felt like it was much easier to just say, "We're just trying this. I don't know" (Penelope, interview, 2017/05/30). As Penelope continued trying out this kind of talk in the inquiry group, eventually, as Holland and her colleagues (1998) explain, those improvisations, became the "beginnings of an altered subjectivity, an altered identity" (p. 18). For example, in response to a question about how she was feeling about her writing instruction, Penelope spent over half of her final interview talking through possible revisions she might make next year based on her own and her students' challenges and successes across different units of study in 2016-2017 school year.

Rather than engaging in design thinking or inquiry into how she might try out new ideas in her teaching, Gwen largely relied on strategies that had worked for her as a writer or for previous students, viewing the ideas she heard or shared in the group as ideas that might work for other teachers' students, but not necessarily her own. While she still participated by offering ideas in the group, Gwen's shared ideas tended to feel more like suggestions others might take up rather than possibilities for her own classroom. For example, in one of our first meetings, while the teachers were looking for similarities and differences between the ways other fields talk about design and we talk about writing, Gwen came up with several suggestions based on a shared reading and knowledge she brought from TED Talks, podcasts, and other reading she had done. At one point, the group was discussing ways we might facilitate students' talk together.

Gwen: What grade are you?

Zoe: First.

Gwen: Okay, do you think that there's something, you talked about like wishing you could have like a little flag. I feel like that's a thing you could actually have.

Penelope: I know. I was actually just thinking that too.

Gwen: I was thinking like little clip-on bows. Like you could make them.

Charlotte: Or like the crown you wear while you're conferring?

Gwen: Like attach, like you could get card stock and make like a little exclamation point.

Zoe: Oh, that's a great idea.

Gwen: Then they can clip on the little exclamation point and then they look around and say, 'Oh, this person also wants to talk about their piece.'

(inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

After this exchange, the group continued brainstorming possibilities for how they could make more space for students to confer with each other, with Paige suggesting a separate space in her classroom students might go to talk to one another, Zoe thinking about different materials they could use to show other students they need to talk, and Penelope asking that they try out some of those ideas so she could think about how to make it work with high school students too. In this example, like in many of her ideas about possibilities, Gwen did not discuss ideas for how *she* might use something similar in her own classroom.

At other times during our group meetings, Gwen offered explanations about what she was doing in her classroom. While the other group members' often used talk about their teaching to report on what they were trying out or questions they had about their work, Gwen's reports, perhaps because her expertise was not often recognized or valued in her school space, tended to feel more final, as if they were practices she already had figured out and thought others' might be able to use too. In one case, Zoe was sharing how she had her students get together with a partner to talk and write together. She explained that for many of them, talking together seemed to motivate them and get their ideas flowing after several interruptions during the unit. However, for a few students, talking seemed to be more distracting than helpful. After Paige added that it sounded like the students' talk seemed to bring their purpose and audience back into focus, Gwen offered her explanation of what she saw going on in Zoe's teaching and how it was like something she recently did in her own classroom:

Gwen: The problem with any technology or process or strategy is that for some people it's going to be really helpful and for some people it's going to be a detriment. And you kind of have to teach them how to figure out whether it's helping or not. Because a lot of my kids would be like, 'Can I write with this person?' or 'Can I go sit next to this person?' It's like, 'Well, you can. But, I've noticed that when you do that, this happens.' I had to have like a conference with a student this week where she got really mad that I put her at one of the solo tables on the side…and she was really upset. She was like, 'I'm alone. I'm alone. I'm alone.' And I conferenced with her outside the classroom. I was like, 'I've noticed that every time you're with other people, you get nothing done, and like your progress goes down. But whenever you're by yourself, and in fact, when you sit under your table and you are just in your own little world, you get more done than anyone else in the classroom.' And it's like, 'You do better. And I want better for you. So, it's not that I'm punishing you; I'm trying to like show you, like lead you towards the place I've seen you successful more.'

Paige: Yeah, exactly.

Zoe: Yeah, and it's hard for [students] to be metacognitive like that…it makes me think we might teach a minilesson on spaces for writing…[those writers] are not being told to do those things, they're having to make a decision…that's hard for little ones…Writing is such an art, and teaching writing is such an art.

(inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/15)

Here Gwen's opening declarative statement (*"The problem with any…"*) along with the imperative statement that follows (*"And you kind of have to teach them…"*) helped emphasize Gwen's self-positioning here, not necessarily as a fellow inquirer, but as an expert. Rather than taking on the more vulnerable position of an inquirer and designer within the group, Gwen often seemed to use the group as a space where she could share her expertise and knowledge. Likely, it was important for Gwen to have this space, where unlike in her school life, her knowledge and expertise could be valued and appreciated—

as it was here when Paige and Zoe both offered agreement and took up her ideas. However, for Gwen, the group did not seem to support further inquiry or design work, particularly of more critical, humanizing writing instruction.

CONCLUSION

Looking across the inquiry group, several important insights emerge. All four teachers worked in comparable schools—within the same urban area, serving demographically similar neighborhoods, and facing similar testing pressures—and confronted constraints in their teaching, particularly in their attempts to enact humanizing writing instruction. Inside their schools, none of the teachers felt valued as a curriculum designer: at best they talked about no one looking, such as Zoe's comment that "No one really cares about primary" (inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16), and at worst they talked about feeling actively thwarted, such as Gwen's direct statement that "They don't want me to be a designer of curriculum" (inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16). While overall the constraints they felt and their positions as technicians inside their school spaces did not stop them from taking up new possibilities as designers, Gwen's story provides a powerful counterexample. The chaos and constraints she felt at Northtown Middle School along with her own personal stress left little space for Gwen to devote to designing writing experiences for her students.

While it might be easy to dismiss Gwen's data as an anomaly, her story is not uncommon, particularly in urban schools (e.g., Maele & Houtte, 2015; Martin, Sass, & Schmitt, 2012; McKinney, Berry, Dickerson, & Campbell-Whately, 2007; Ouellette et al., 2018; Shernoff, Mehta, Atkins, Torf, & Spencer, 2011). While Gwen may have wanted to think of herself as a designer, her history-in-person as a teacher at Northtown, or in other professional development spaces, did not include experiences where being vulnerable or improvising (against the standard narrative of teaching in that space) was rewarded. Bogged down with time-consuming administrative tasks and beaten down by insults to her knowledge and professionalism, Gwen did not have energy left to devote to curriculum design. Penelope, though not facing the same level of chaos and stress at Los

Robles High School, also did not bring a history of improvisation or risk-taking; yet her participation in the inquiry group gave her opportunities to first try out that work in the safe space of the group, in the margins of the standard narrative of urban teaching. Gwen, only attending 5 of the 11 inquiry group meetings, missed out on many of those same opportunities and newly available "cultural resources" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 18) which may have not only provided an additional emotional support for Gwen outside of her immediate teaching context, but also have provided more space for her to reframe both her work and her students' work.

Though typically not recognized and rewarded as designers in their school spaces, Paige and Zoe did have some experiences in other teaching communities, like the local NWP site and other professional development communities offered through the university, where they were offered subject positions as transformative intellectuals (Giroux, 1985) and designers. Perhaps relatedly and perhaps even more importantly, both Zoe and Paige also came to the group with mindsets that supported that kind of work: namely, consistently appreciating students' strengths and resources along with a willingness to be humble about their own limitations and continual growth. These attitudes, which Penelope increasingly took on, supported their work as designers and inquirers, but also their work in creating critical, humanizing writing instruction for their students. In describing his vision for a humanizing, anti-oppressive, and dialogic education, Freire (1970/2005), explains that love, humility, and faith are fundamental for humanizing education. These attitudes are more important than any particular methods, strategies, or tools that the teachers offered in the inquiry group or tried out in their classrooms. As Bartolomé (1994) cautions, humanizing pedagogy is not made up of "one size fits all" instructional methods; instead, it requires that a teacher "values the students' background knowledge, culture, and life experiences, and creates learning contexts where power is shared by students and teachers" (p. 190). Maintaining appreciative perspectives and a willingness to be vulnerable in sharing possibilities for their teaching alongside space to be designers, helped to support teachers in creating more humanizing writing experiences for their students.

Keeping these ideas about critical, humanizing pedagogy in mind, another important insight that emerged from looking across this inquiry group is the potential for matching the methods of teacher learning opportunities with the goals of that professional development. During one of our inquiry meetings, the teachers discussed how frustrated they were with most of the professional development opportunities they had through their schools, noting examples of being lectured to about how bad it was to lecture and routinely being told to do things in their teaching with little attempt to encourage teacher buy-in. For example, Paige and Zoe's school was piloting a new professional action research team project. Zoe explained that while she saw the inherent good in the project because of her experience with action research in her Master's program, the other teachers on her team were only doing it because they got a small stipend for participating, and they constantly complained about how much extra work it was and found ways to do the bare minimum. Within their schools, the teachers, not just their students, were often subjected to dehumanizing practices (Carter Andrews, Bartell, & Richmond, 2016; Kohli, et al., 2015).

In our inquiry group, however, the teachers and I gathered to learn and think more about authorizing positions for students as designers, as decision-makers, as strong and capable. Similarly, I worked to set up a space where the teachers themselves felt like strong and capable decision-makers, as teachers I was learning *from* and *with* rather than teachers who needed to be taught. Within the group, we created a safe space—one "in which people know they can experiment, take risks, and explore the full range of their faculties" (Brown, 2009, p. 32)—for teachers to think about the philosophies behind what we were talking about, to build their own understandings, and to feel supported and appreciated as knowledgeable contributors. Paige, in her final interview, described the group as "restorative" (2017/06/23), Penelope as "reinvigorating" (2017/05/30), Gwen as "offering perspective" (2017/05/30), and Zoe as "empowering" (2017/06/12). The space we created in the inquiry group, focused on supporting students as designers, also supported the teachers as designers. This suggests that if teacher educators wish for teachers to look for and build on students’ strengths and support student agency, then they too must look for and build on teachers’ strengths and support teachers’ agency.

Chapter Five: Designs for Design-Based Writing Instruction

In this chapter I address my second research question: what aspects of writing and writing instruction are most visible in teachers' discussion about design and writing? I also begin to explore my third research question: how do teachers' discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice? To answer the former, I draw primarily on data from the teacher inquiry group, and to answer the latter, I focus on data collected in the fourth-grade teacher's classroom, presenting Paige as a representative case. In this chapter, I present two main findings:

1) Across the teachers' discussions of design and writing, *purpose* and *audience* emerged as central concepts for the groups' reimagining of writing and writing instruction. While other terms or tools may function similarly for other teachers, this particular group was drawn to these two terms, as words they had experiences with as teachers and as writers—but that they would come to deconstruct and reanimate with new meanings and new embedded subject positions for their students as writers.

Other ideas—such as problem-solving; talk and user-testing; empathy; and planning, drafting, and prototyping—were also visible across conversations in the inquiry group. Ultimately, each of these recurring ideas was linked back to purpose and audience for this groups of teachers. These tools, elements of both writing and design processes, came up in both playful ideas (which mostly were not taken up in classrooms) and in more serious ideas that led to transformations of teachers' positioning of themselves and their students as well as their instruction.

Teachers drew on these aspects of writing and design to create spaces within their writing instruction that included positions for students as designers of texts, inviting students to make important strategic decisions about their own writing.

2) Teachers drew on specific tools—such as using student and teacher talk to facilitate students' understanding of audience and purpose—to help them support students' work as designers. Paige, in particular, also transformed her writing

units of study in ways that foreground purpose and audience and lay the groundwork for students' decision-making throughout the process.

Paige, a fourth-grade teacher who had lots of experience offering students choice and autonomy in their writing, typically used a genre-study approach in her instruction. In centering purpose and audience as redefined tools for writers, however, she redesigned units of study as purpose studies, or studies focused on a reason writers write (e.g., writing to explain, writing to persuade). Asking students to think about purpose and audience from the beginning of these units of study, Paige also drew on audience and purpose as tools for further supporting students in designing texts throughout the writing process. Taken together, these two findings offer insight into how teachers used the inquiry group as a space for collaboratively (re)designing tools, through reflection and action, which ultimately supported them in transforming their teaching.

ASPECTS OF WRITING AND DESIGN IN TEACHERS' DISCUSSIONS

To answer my second research question—what aspects of writing and writing instruction are most visible in teachers' discussion about design and writing?—I return to fieldnotes, audio recordings, and artifacts generated in the teacher inquiry group. Across this data, there were several ideas stimulated through shared readings of texts or teaching artifacts, but that were not followed up on either in future discussions or evidenced in classroom teaching. These ideas included creating designated areas or headbands/clips for students to let others know they wanted to talk to someone about their writing, implementing a unit of study for shared inquiry into art or illustrations (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/05/16), hosting a writers' "coffee" or some other type of process party or revision celebration similar to teachers' current celebrations of finished publications (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/15), teaching the same type of writing unit across grades/schools and sharing student work with each other's classes (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/11/29, 2017/05/16), and even opening our own dream school where we handpicked teachers and had no standardized tests (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/14). While these ideas were not taken up in the classroom, they were examples of the type of creative, sometimes playful, improvisation happening within the "figured world" of the group (Holland et al., 1998); they were evidence that teachers felt comfortable thinking against the standard narrative of sedimented traditions in schooling or of their own writing instruction.

Purpose and audience as (re)defined tools

Beyond these more unexamined suggestions, there were also big ideas that the group kept coming back to across multiple conversations. These, too, were stimulated through shared readings and discussions, but as we returned to them again and again became more central ideas for understanding writing as a design process and for supporting students' agency as writers. In particular, the ideas of *purpose* and *audience* became mediating devices, or "living tools of the self" (Holland, et al., 1998, p. 28), that worked to (re)figure the world of teaching writing and the identities of the writing teachers themselves. These words were not new to the teachers' vocabularies, yet while the words purpose and audience often show up in state standards (e.g., Common Core State Standards, 2010; Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, 2010, 2017), closer analyses of those standards reveal that these standards actually promote "a prescriptive approach to writing rather than a rhetorical one" (Rives & Olsen, 2015, p. 169) and "focus on mastering particular types of texts rather than on why students are writing them, for whom, and to what ends" (Woodard & Kline, 2015, p. 209). For example, in the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), the following standard appeared in each of the Grade 1, 4, 7, and English I lists: "Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes" (2009-2010). However, in examining the performance descriptors for those standards—in other words, the language teachers are given for how that standard is actually assessed—there is no attention to purpose or audience beyond their assigned writing being "suited to the task" (STARR Performance Level Descriptors). The task descriptions given to students in the released tests also include no reference to purpose, audience, or any rhetorical decision-making, but instead give reminders about how that test type will be assessed: for example, “clearly state your thesis; organize and develop your ideas effectively; choose your words carefully; and edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling” (STAAR English I released test, composition prompt, 2015, 2016, 2017).

Additionally, writing pedagogy scholars, such as Magnifico (2010), have noted the lack of questions about audience and purpose across much of the extensive literature around writing instruction. Magnifico (2010) argued that one potential explanation for this absence may be a feeling that terms like purpose and audience need not be “re-established” after “extensive past dissections” by rhetorical scholars (p. 174). However, as the teachers’ conversations in the inquiry group revealed, these terms had become vague notions at best, empty words at worst—any of their rich histories, practices, and subjectivities lost in the continual translations of “purpose” and “audience” into simplified black-boxes more easily portable across time and space. For this group of teachers, then, the terms themselves were not what transformed their classroom practices or the subject positions they created for themselves or their students; however, these particular words served to mediate their understandings of writing as an active design process, becoming tools for their teaching as they deconstructed these terms and extended them in new ways.

From our first meeting, the group was drawn to two these particular terms: purpose and audience. In our comparison of writing to different disciplinary approaches to design, purpose jumped out as a significant difference between how we were teaching writing and how designers talked about their process. Paige noted:

> …I feel like this ‘defining the problem,’ or ‘what’s your purpose,’ usually that idea comes—if it comes, sometimes it’s like, ‘We’re writing poems, and that’s our purpose…[instead of] I’m asking you to write a poem, but what is your purpose? What kind of poems are out there?’… and that’s where I feel like the difference for me is: that by putting this author’s purpose first, it drives like, ‘I am designing this text for a reason.’…Whereas I feel like in [our writing cycle]…that idea of ‘designing’ is later, so you already came out saying ‘We’re writing poetry.’ And

> that's where I feel like for me, in reflecting on this, I get this lost because…I've given them a purpose…So our designing a text is like, 'Do you want to put it on white paper? Do you want to put it on green paper?' (Paige, inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

Here Paige reflected on how her own understanding of the writing cycle (Bomer, 2011), as almost exclusively implemented through genre studies (Ray, 2006), often precluded her and her students from engaging in setting a purpose early on that would guide their writing process. The other teachers agreed with Paige's assessment of their own writing instruction, and though this realization proved to be powerful for the group, it was not surprising. While studies of experienced writers have shown the presence and importance of rhetorical awareness—including recognizing context, purpose, and audience (e.g., Berkenkotter, 1981; Sommers, 1980), scholars have often noted the lack of authentic audiences and purposes for writers in classroom settings (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010; Behizadeh, 2014; Berkenkotter, 1981; Cohen & Riel, 1989; Ede & Lundsford, 1984; Hales, 2017; Leverenz, 2014; Russell, 1997; Whitney, 2011; Whitney, Ridgeman, & Masquelier, 2011; Wiggins, 2009).

As the inquiry group discussion continued, Penelope drew a clear connection between purpose and audience.

> Okay, well yeah, even if we're telling them that they're writing a poem,' if we go back to like, 'But why are you writing? Why are you writing your poem?' Which it comes back to audience, and I think would then make the audience more legit, more of a true thing than just 'Oh, I'm writing it because you told me I needed to write a poem and you're my audience.' (Penelope, inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

Penelope's link between purpose and audience solidified across conversations as teachers came back to these two ideas, rarely bringing up one without the other. In theories of design and design thinking, purpose and audience are not just linked, but often seen as the driving forces behind design processes. As a "human-centered approach to problem solving" (Kimbrell, 2011, p. 287), the importance of having a complex understanding of the problem, or purpose, and the impacted users or audiences is common across disciplinary descriptions of design and design processes (e.g., Brown, 2009; Hanington, 2003; Howard, Culley, & Dekoninck, 2008; Lawson, 2005). This connection is also clear across rhetoric and writing studies traditions, dating back to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (trans. 2004) which provided a foundational understanding that language does things in the world and that ultimately to fulfill that purpose, one must not only attend to the content and logic of their argument but also how that argument would be received by an audience. More recently, Park (1986) explained that "Awareness of the audience's identity provides, in short, all the sense of situation that makes it possible for a writer or speaker to proceed with a sense of being engaged in purposeful communication" (p. 484). And Wiggins (2009) reminded us of this connection: "Real writers are trying to make a difference, find their true audience, and cause some result in that readership" (p. 30). The inquiry group conversation helped the teachers to re-discover these longstanding understandings of purpose and audience, providing them space to breakdown these black-boxed terms and remake them as tools for their teaching.

Through their talk and reflections on practice as writers and writing teachers, the teachers (re)assigned meaning to purpose and audience, rediscovering some of the "social history" of the terms and adding new layers of meaning as the terms were extended to include deeper understandings of the design work that writers do. These then became mediating devices as they appropriated these understandings into their own identities and practices (Holland et al., 1998, p. 36). As (re)defined tools, *purpose* and *audience* became tools for the teachers to use not just in our conversations together, but in their teaching as well. *Purpose*, for the inquiry group members, was linked with words like "problem" (inquiry group transcripts, 2016/10/25; 2016/11/15; 2017/03/02), "reasons" (inquiry group transcripts, 2016/10/25; 2016/12/13; 2017/03/02), and "intention" (inquiry group transcripts, 2016/11/15; 2016/11/29; 2017/03/02; 2017/05/16). The teachers often talked about asking students to think about why they were writing something or to think about why another writer might have written something (see classroom examples later in this chapter and in chapter six).

Likewise, through our continued attention across conversations and reflections on classroom practice, *audience*, for the inquiry group, was about "empathy" (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25, 2017/03/02, 2017/04/13), "intention" (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25, 2016/11/15, 2017/03/02), and imagining potential readers and their concerns (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25, 2017/11/29, 2017/01/17, 2017/03/02, 2017/03/14, 2017/05/16). Beyond noticing, in the first meeting, the importance of having and considering audience early in a design process, the teachers were also drawn to the distinction between representation and communication in an excerpt of literacy theory we read together (Kress, 2010). These lines in particular were noted by the teachers:

> *Representation* is focused on myself and my interest; *communication* is focused on my interest in its relation to others. With *representation* there is, first, something to which *I* want to give material realization, making some tangible meaning in the world…*Communication*, by contrast, is to put the meanings to which I am giving shape as a sign (as text) into an interrelation with others in my environment: to make my meanings known to my assumed audience… *Representation* is focused on me, shaped by my social histories…*Communication* is focused on social (inter-)action in a social relation of *me with others*, as my action with or for someone else…'How can I be most effective in disseminating my meaning so that others will engage (positively) with it?' (Kress, 2010, p. 51, emphasis in original).

Paige began our discussion of this section of the text, first summarizing it and then drawing connections to previous discussions we had about writing and to her students' current work. To her, the idea of representation was like writing in your notebook "where you're collecting just for you" and communication was "when you step back and are like, 'Well, I know all this stuff. I'm shifting my focus to how am I going to communicate this stuff to someone else'" (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29). Audience, then, provided a communicative purpose for writing, a reason for writing that went beyond the writer's own reflection or exploration. Paige went on to give examples of how she was really trying to think about audience with her students, and it seemed to make them much more engaged in their writing process.

Zoe also pointed to this section in Kress (2010) and described how she had often seen this shift in her first-graders as they share their writing with others.

> …once they start sharing with others, then they start finding more intention in what they're doing. I was talking to some teachers from another school, and they were like, '…I'm having a hard time with kids putting down on paper what they know'…But once you get them to talk to somebody else and they're showing [their writing], if the kid can't read it or [the writer is] not putting it on paper yet, the kid's asking, 'Well, what do you know?' and there's more of a purpose there. It's all about purpose and audience. That ties into most solutions for getting kids to construct what they're doing and find purpose in their design...I see my kiddos, they're demonstrating what they know about their topic right now…Some kids are doing pictures. Some kids are writing words. It's like that's how they want to convey their knowledge to someone else because they feel like that depicts their knowledge the best. That's their design choice. They want to do it. They're like, 'Maybe a picture's best for this fact.' Or 'Maybe words work best for this concept that I know.' (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29)

Zoe's explanation highlights how she understood audience and purpose guiding writers' intentional decision-making in first-grade. This idea, of using talk and of sharing or testing out writing with readers, became a fundamental component of how the inquiry group defined and used audience as a tool for writing and teaching writing. Talk, with teachers or fellow students, was one way of "getting feedback along the way" (Zoe, inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25), of "put[ing] their audience back at the front of their minds" (Paige, inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/15), and of helping them make decisions about their writing such as "picking a genre or trying to find that purpose" (Penelope, inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16).

Purpose and audience, as redefined "psychological tools" (Kozulin, 2003) were no longer static or empty terms, but instead came to represent crystallized-for-now groups of operations, or “socially developed means of action” (Leont’ev, 2009) both for writers and writing teachers. Embedded within *purpose* was an agentive subject position: a writer as well as a set of operations: noticing a problem, recognizing this as a reason for writing, and making intentional decisions about their writing. Similarly, *audience* worked both as a tool for writers and as a teaching tool. In both contexts, this tool was imbued with inherent assumptions about writers: writers could and should empathize with real or imagined readers, and writers make decisions about their writing based on their understanding of those readers’ needs and expectations. For writers, this tool was both conceptual, as it could be used as they imagined who their audience might be and what they might want that audience to know or do when they read their piece, and practical, as writers could actual test out their writing with readers to see if their words were having the intended effect on readers.

For teachers, audience and purpose, as their redefined tools, could help (re)open subject positions for students as active decision makers in their writing. Rather than passive objects who needed detailed checklists or teacher feedback to create pieces of writing, introducing audience and purpose for these teachers meant handing over agency to students. For the inquiry group, connections—like the importance of audience and purpose—between design and writing were easy to make. In theory, other writing studies scholars have discussed the potential for building on these connections to increase student-writers’ agency and engagement (Leverenz, 2014) and to “reinvigorate the notion that writing does work in the world” (Purdy, 2014, p. 634). As the teachers continued conversations about purpose and audience and translated their understandings into their classroom practice, it became clear that these tools clearly supported a more critical, humanizing writing pedagogy—one in which students had space to build on their own interests, where there were opportunities to explore the power of writing in the world, and through which traditional power hierarchies between expert and learner in the classroom were blurred to create a more “horizontal relationship” of “mutual trust” (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 91).

Prototyping as a new lens on planning and revising

Related to audience and purpose, and also stemming from our first conversation together, another idea that the inquiry group continued to come back to was that of prototyping. In that first design conversation, the teachers noted that prototyping and/or "user-testing" (e.g., Hanington, 2003; "Design Process," 2016) were common elements of other designers' process. Prototyping, for designers, can be defined as "turning ideas into actual products and services that are then tested, iterated, and refined" to help "uncover unforeseen implementation challenges and unintended consequences in order to have more reliable long-term success" (Brown & Wyatt, 2010, p. 35).

Other writing scholars have also been drawn to this "explicit valuing of divergent thinking, a key to fostering creativity" (Leverenz, 2014, p. 6) as a benefit of drawing on design thinking in writing. Initially, the teachers in the inquiry group equated this part of design processes with revising, with making multiple drafts of a piece of writing to try out different choices as a writer (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/10/25). The teachers in the inquiry group, while recognizing some similarities—at least in theory—between this element and drafting in traditional writing processes, also admitted that it was challenging, if not impossible, to get students to move through multiple drafts this way. For the younger students, Zoe and Paige explained that it was laborious and sometimes even painful for first-graders and fourth-graders to hand-write multiple drafts (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/12/13; 2017/01/17). For older students, Penelope explained that students often felt finished after a first draft and were hard to motivate to make changes (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/01/17). Creating and revising multiple drafts is a touchstone of theories of writing process (e.g., Bomer, 2011; Emig, 1971; Fitzgerald, 1989; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Murray, 1972/2011). However, studies have also consistently echoed the inquiry group's reflections: student writers often have difficulties with or resistance to revision, particularly revisions that go beyond sentence- or word-level concerns (e.g., Fitzgerald, 1989; Oliver, 2018; Patthey-Chavez, Matsumura, & Valdés, 2004; Perez, 2001; Saddler, Saddler, Befoorhooz, & Cuccio-Slichko, 2014).

For designers, however, prototyping can take several forms, such as "sketching, improvisation or making simple models by gluing or taping paper, foam, wood" as well as "storyboarding, acting, role-playing and video-skits" (Carlgren, Rauth, & Elmquist, 2016, p. 47). Designers also note the importance of prototyping for both user-testing *and* for idea generation (Brown, 2009; Brown & Wyatt, 2011; Carlgren et al., 2016; West & Hannafin, 2011). Considering this added utility and flexibility, the inquiry group teachers, who recognized the importance of writers being able to test out multiple iterations of their writing with potential readers or fellow writers, drew on the idea of prototyping to discuss several ideas for how they might get around this barrier to students' creating multiple drafts. They came to recognize that just as an architect would not build a whole, full-scale house just to test it out, their writers might be able to use several different methods to try out different types of writing decisions (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/01/17).

Some ideas were not observed in classrooms—like making photocopies of students' drafts so they could cut or mark up without rewriting a whole draft (Penelope, inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/01/17) and audio-recording drafts or revisions on a phone and listening back (Zoe, inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/10/25). But others did translate to classroom practice, such as drafting in talk with peers first (Zoe, 2017/01/17), drafting or trying out revisions in brief sketches or bullet points (Paige, 2017/01/17), and reading a draft aloud or listening to it being read aloud to test it out with readers (Paige, 2017/01/17). As they tried out these strategies in their teaching and reflected on them in the inquiry group, the idea of prototyping and user-testing became important not just during the typical revising and editing stage, but in choosing a topic and in planning or envisioning a piece of writing as well. Across the year, the teachers reframed their definition of prototyping to work as a tool for their writers for whom it was physically challenging or mentally exhausting to create multiple, full drafts.

Looking back across the recurring ideas, many of them were not necessarily new ideas for writers or writing teachers. Notions of purpose and audience stem back at least as far as Aristotle. Yet in the day-to-day practice of teaching, terms like these can often become fixed or even meaningless—just words we toss around without digging into on our own or with students. In sociocultural theories of learning and identity, tools are social objects, “the product of social practice and of social labour experience” (Leont’ev, 2009, p. 193). These tools, whether material or conceptual, work as mediating devices for humans and their activity. Tools, or mediating devices, take on meanings in different cultures or different figured worlds within culture. Defining these tools does not happen individually, but is a social activity: “Although individuals constantly construct and reconstruct their own mediating devices, most of their constructions are not original. They have been appropriated in the course of social interactions with others who, in turn, had appropriated the device from others” (Holland et al., 1998, p. 36).

As the inquiry group began our ongoing conversations and inquiry by looking at writing from the outside, through the lens of design, the teachers and I were able to (re)define purpose and audience, assigning them meaning in ways that both reflected the broader social history of the terms across contexts while also steeping them with meaning based on our continued interactions and reflections on those terms as conceptual tools for our teaching. Bartolomé (1994) explains that ideally, “competent educators simultaneously translate theory into practice and consider the population being served and the sociocultural reality in which learning is expected to take place” (p. 179). Within the inquiry group, the teachers and I had space to do this kind of translation, considering how theories of writing and design might work in practice, particularly with the students in our classrooms.

DESIGNS IN ACTION

To begin exploring my third research question—how do teachers’ discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice?—I chose to focus on Paige’s writing instruction as one representative case. This case was chosen because Paige’s instruction was the most visibly transformed by the design work they did as teachers in the inquiry group. Gwen, as discussed in chapter four, did not really find space to implement ideas from the group in her classroom instruction, and while Zoe implemented several ideas from the group in her teaching, the changes she made to her teaching were also heavily influenced by her concurrent work in a Master's literacy education program. Also, unlike Zoe's first-grade class, both Paige (fourth-grade) and Penelope (ninth-grade) also had to balance their writing instruction with explicit and immediate test preparation. This additional pressure added interest to these cases and highlighted ways this work could go in even in highly constrained contexts.

Paige and Penelope took up similar, specific tools from the inquiry group. However, their use of those tools looked different, primarily because of their histories as writing teachers. Penelope was still relatively new to teaching writing beyond the test and to the philosophies about students and writing that came with writing workshop as an instructional approach. Her story, discussed in depth in chapter six, is also a story of growth and change. Paige, who learned about writing workshop through her teacher preparation program and her experience in the local NWP summer institute, was quite familiar with both the philosophies (e.g., supporting students in choosing their own topics, practicing writing every day) and practices (e.g., offering students strategies during minilessons, individualizing instruction during writing conferences) of teaching in a writing workshop. She was already confident in her knowledge of what to teach about writing. Additionally, across the curriculum, especially in writing, Paige built her teaching on foundations of critical, humanizing pedagogy, particularly "problem-posing education where students are coinvestigators in dialogue with their teachers" (Salazar, 2013, p. 127). In her initial interview, she described her approach to teaching writing, explaining "I want there to be a lot of student choice. I want there to be a lot of decision making that doesn't come from the teacher end of it" (Paige, interview, 2016/10/13).

Her work in the teacher inquiry group built on questions she had about her writing instruction, including questions about balancing test preparation with what she thought actually "would be really powerful for [her students]" (Paige, interview, 2016/10/13). At our very first inquiry group meeting, Paige shared that she was really thinking about ways to better prepare students for the expository essay they would be asked to write on the state's standardized test without spending lots of time on explicit test writing practice and preparation. One idea she shared was arranging for students to look closely at mentor texts to see what "explaining," the skill the writing test aimed to assess, really meant for writers. Thinking through these plans with the group, Paige stated that she had pulled some paragraphs from different informational texts and was hoping to do a "typical flood" with students, providing them with lots of examples of writing and asking them to see what they noticed the writers doing and how that writing looked different than the poetry and personal narrative writing the students had done before (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25). Using the group as a space to continue "becoming" (Freire, 1970/2005), Paige readily took up ideas from the group as she continually designed and redesigned her teaching. Paige's case, then, provides insight into how purpose and audience, as redefined conceptual tools, might be translated into classroom writing instruction that centers students as capable and powerful.

Drawing on analysis of classroom field notes and transcripts, teacher- and student-created artifacts, as well as teacher and student interviews, I use Paige's writing classroom writing instruction as a representative case, providing evidence for my second finding:

3) Teachers drew on specific tools—such as using student and teacher talk to facilitate students' understanding of audience and purpose—to help them support students' work as designers. Paige, in particular, also transformed her writing units of study in ways that foreground purpose and audience and lay the groundwork for students' decision-making throughout the process.

Inquiring into writing to explain: A purpose-study

In the first inquiry group meeting, as we looked at connections and disconnections between writing and design processes, Paige (as previously described) quickly noted how starting with a problem or a purpose was one of the major differences between how she thought about teaching writing and the design processes we were looking at. Later in the discussion, she brought this idea together with her initial plans for redesigning a test-prep unit as an inquiry into craft moves in "explaining" texts:

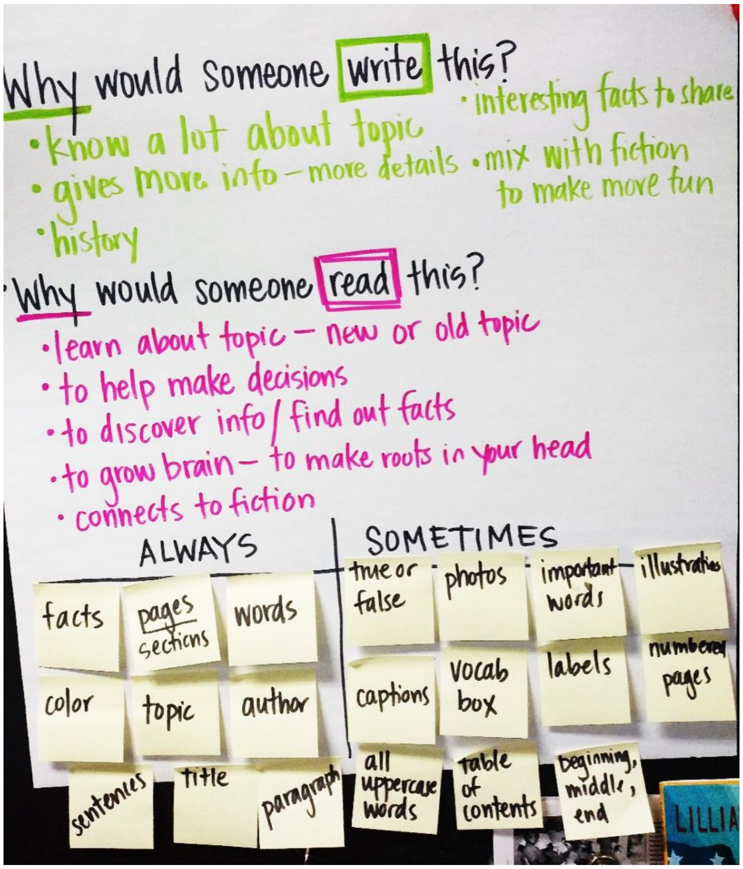
> I'm wondering how, now that we're starting this new [explaining unit], maybe I can reposition some of it as like, 'Why would someone write like this? Who is going to read it?'…So, I was thinking of doing a study, not necessarily a genre study, but like studying how writers write to explain something. So like our purpose is… kind of there, but even digging deeper like, 'I want someone to know how I feel.' Or 'I want someone to know—' You know? Like digging deeper into that idea of explaining. I think maybe then define your purpose or need for writing. I don't know. (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25).

Here Paige began thinking about how she might create new subject positions for the students in her classroom as writers writing for real reasons. While she frequently offered up positions for students to be writers who studied the craft moves other published authors made in writing different genres, here Paige wanted students to see themselves as writers who think about the reasons why others write as they consider their own purposes and audiences for writing.

When I went to observe Paige's classroom the next week, she told me before class that she had been continuing to think about the group conversation and how she wanted this writing unit to go. That day, Paige's minilesson asked students to look at examples of informational books as they thought "about why a writer would write this kind of book instead of a memoir, a poem, or a story" and, as readers, they thought about why someone might pick up this book to read it (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/01). After the students flipped through the books with partners, they came back together to share what they were learning.

Students noted that writers might have written these books to share interesting facts with others or that they may have picked a topic to write about that they either already knew a lot about or that they wanted to learn more about by researching and writing about it. One student, Rosa, also brought up how writers might have a fictional premise or character—such as in the *Magic School Bus* series (e.g., Cole, 1995) or *Fly Guy* series (e.g., Arnold, 2013)—that they wanted to use to explore different topics to make them more interesting for kid readers. The class went on to describe why readers might read these books to help them make a decision, to discover new information, to "grow your brain" or "make roots in your head," and to help them understand more about the characters or context in a fiction book they're reading. Another student, Emilio, even described these books overall as "storage centers" for information so people don't forget all the knowledge we know about a topic: "Before we wrote books, we probably forgot about a lot of stuff" (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/01).

Before the class moved on from their books, Paige asked the students to share something they noticed about the writing in these books. She put these on post-it notes so they could keep organizing their thinking about what writers almost always seemed to do and what they sometimes tried in their writing when they were writing to explain. Paige's anchor chart (Figure 5.1) recorded many of their comments from that day's conversation.



Why would someone write this?
- know a lot about topic
- gives more info – more details
- history
- interesting facts to share
- mix with fiction to make more fun

Why would someone read this?
- learn about topic – new or old topic
- to help make decisions
- to discover info / find out facts
- to grow brain – to make roots in your head
- connects to fiction

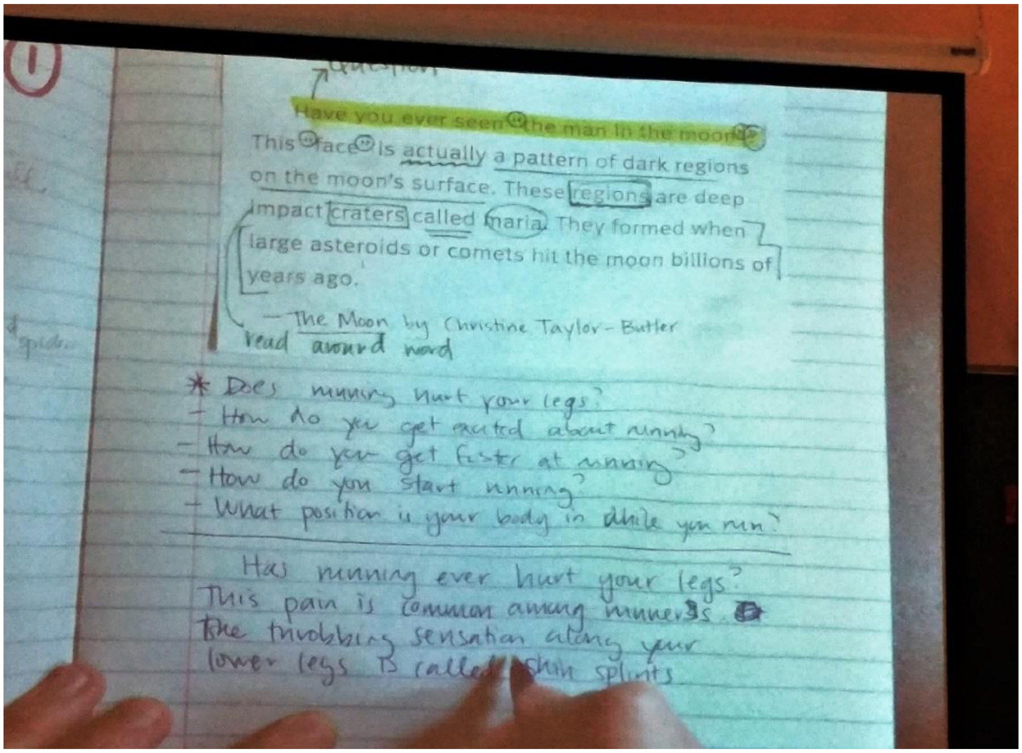
ALWAYS	SOMETIMES
facts	true or false
pages sections	photos
words	important words
color	illustrations
topic	captions
author	vocab box
sentences	labels
title	numbered pages
paragraph	all uppercase words
	table of contents
	beginning, middle, end

Figure 5.1: Writing-to-explain unit of study anchor chart, 2016/11/01

Looking across this discussion, the fourth-graders in Paige's class clearly had sophisticated understandings of why writers would write an informational book or write to explain, more generally, that went way beyond the simple mnemonic PIE (persuade, inform, entertain), which teachers referenced in the inquiry group as a typical way they were asked to teach author's purpose. The fourth-graders' thoughtfulness in this work showed an understanding of author's purpose, a skill often recognized as important for both readers and writers (e.g., Common Core State Standards, 2010; TEKS, 2010, 2017). Perhaps even more importantly, however, the students' comments during this minilesson also highlighted how handing over this work to students—rather than explicitly telling students what the purpose of informational writing is or skipping over purpose altogether—offered them the opportunity to practice thinking about writing in ways that echo the writing done beyond school.

In many writing classrooms, teachers begin a writing assignment or unit by setting the goals for writers, often by providing a fixed rubric or a list of expectations for what must be included in that particular assignment (e.g., Applebee & Langer, 2011; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Graham et al., 2014; Kiuhara et al., 2009). These goals for the writing may be predetermined by the teacher or other experts (e.g., Smagorinsky, Johannessen, Kahn, & McCann, 2010) or discovered through examining selected model texts (e.g., Ray, 2006; Martin, 2000). However, rather than telling them to complete a writing assignment or even to inquire together into the features of a particular genre, Paige asked students to think about purposes and audiences for writing beyond meeting standards, getting the grade, or pleasing the teacher. Though she was not aware of it at the time, Paige's questions ("Why would someone write this?" and "Why would someone read this") were similar to those suggested by writing scholars attempting to build rhetorical genre awareness with high school and university level writers (Devitt, Bawarshi, & Reiff, 2004; Whitney et al., 2011).

With student-generated understandings of authentic purposes and audiences in mind, Paige and her students spent the next couple weeks inquiring into specific techniques writers used when they were writing to explain or inform. Paige would first bring a specific paragraph for the students to read closely together. Together, they would mark things they noticed and try to name an overall approach that published writer seemed to be using. For example, they examined a paragraph (see Figure 5.2) from an informational book called *The Moon* by Christine Taylor-Butler (2014).



Have you ever seen "the man in the moon"? This "face" is actually a pattern of dark regions on the moon's surface. These regions are deep impact craters called maria. They formed when large asteroids or comets hit the moon billions of years ago.

— The Moon by Christine Taylor-Butler

read around word

* Does running hurt your legs?
- How do you get excited about running?
- How do you get faster at running?
- How do you start running?
- What position is your body in while you run?

Has running ever hurt your legs? This pain is common among runners. The throbbing sensation along your lower legs is called shin splints

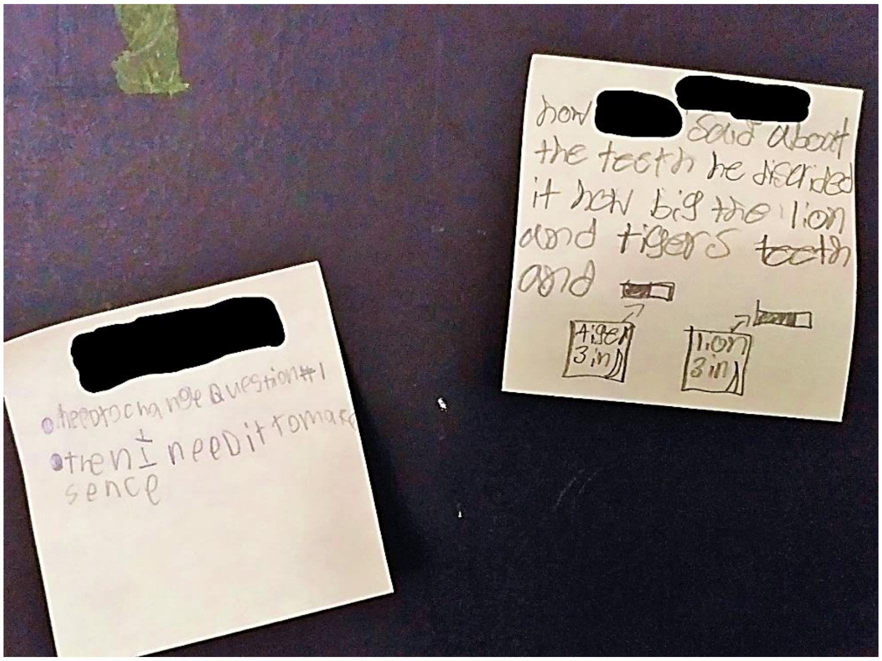
Figure 5.2. "Explaining paragraph" mark-up and practice, 2016/11/09.

As they read and examined the paragraph, students noted how the author used punctuation, such as the question mark and the quotation marks in the first two sentences; used language that was really specific to the topic, such as 'regions,' 'craters,' and 'maria'; included context clues to help readers understand the language; gave facts and details; focused on explaining just one main point; and started with a question to get the reader interested (classroom field notes, 2016/11/08). Studying models has proved to be an effective practice in writing classrooms (e.g., Graham & Perin, 2007). The focus of this practice is often on reading mentors to generate ideas or pay attention to form and language (e.g., Gallagher, 2014; Muhammad, 2015b; Ray, 2006). Similarly, in Paige's classroom, the students paid close attention to the way the author had used language, punctuation, and sentence structure. Yet, here the fourth-graders' noticing of these features was also explicitly tied to purpose, creating an opportunity for students to consider how decisions made about specific text features might help a writer achieve her goals.

The next day during writing, Paige put up this same paragraph again. After pointing back to the ideas they gathered the day before, Paige told students that today they were going to try out writing like Christine Taylor-Butler. Specifically, they were going to try out "asking and answering just one question about a topic" (classroom field notes, 2016/11/09). Modeling this strategy for them, Paige then went to her "expert list" (a list they had each individually created in their own notebooks to give them a list of ready topics to come back to again and again in their writing) to choose a topic that she could try this technique with. As Figure 5.2 shows, she first listed several ideas for questions about one of her topics, reiterating that these were questions she thought her readers might have about the topic or were questions she had actually had several people ask her about running. Next Paige asked students to take a minute to first think about a topic they know a lot about and then start writing down some questions other people might have about that topic. After a few minutes, Paige brought them back together to reread the Taylor-Butler (2014) paragraph again and think aloud about what she was going to do next with her own topic: "we're not writing about the moon, so we wouldn't write this question…but just like Christine Taylor-Butler does, I'm going to start by writing just one of my questions, just like Christine did" (classroom field notes, 2016/11/09). As she wrote, Paige thought aloud about choices she was making to try to write like this author—giving lots of details and explaining any "hard words" before she asked students to try this out for a few minutes with their own topics in their own notebooks.

Through these examples of close study, Paige's fourth-grade students were offered a chance to get inside the writing decisions that other authors with similar purposes had made. Reading like a writer was not an entirely new exercise for these students, as they had looked at examples of poems and memoirs earlier in the year to consider common features across those genres. Here, however, they were not just inquiring into author's craft moves; their noticings were grounded in design choices made based on the author's purpose and audience. Thus, the list of features or craft moves the students noticed did not just become a checklist or rubric for their writing, but instead helped them make intentional choices in their own writing processes. For example, as one student, Camila, clarified in the minilesson described above, they weren't just listing random questions they could ask and answer about a topic, they were trying to imagine and empathize with their readers, coming up with potential "questions other people might have about it and then we can explain it" (Camila, classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/09). By beginning the unit of study with questions about why authors might write these texts and why readers would read them, Paige made purpose and audience available as thinking tools for her students as they inquired into this purpose for writing. Students were not just offered positions as writers in this work, but positions as writers with their own authentic readers and reasons for writing to help guide them in making decisions about what features would be useful for them, what information to include or exclude, what vocabulary to use, and so on.

These thinking tools continued to be important for the fourth-grade writers throughout the rest of this unit of study as they chose topics, narrowed in on their specific purpose and target audience, drafted, and then tried out drafts on potential readers in their classroom and beyond. As they shared their drafts with potential readers—including their first-grade buddies (as described in chapter four), writing partners in their fourth-grade class, and Paige and me during writing conferences—these writers looked for places where readers were confused, asked additional questions, or stumbled because of the writers' choices of punctuation, spelling, or sentence structure. Figures 5.3 and 5.4 show examples of students' early revision plans based on the feedback they had received from readers (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/29).



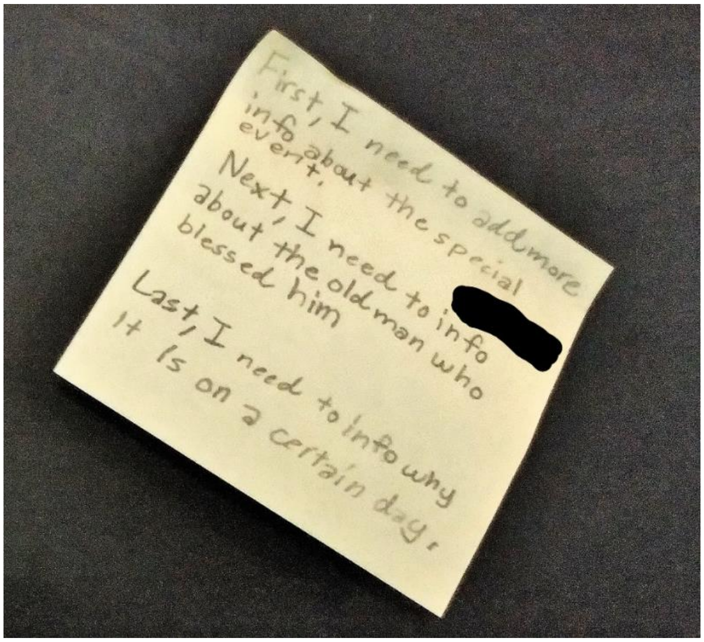
how [redacted] [redacted] said about
the teeth he discrided
it how big the lion
and tigers teeth
and

tiger
3in
lion
3in

[redacted]

- needtochange Question#1
- then I needit tomak
sence

Figure 5.3. Example of student revision plans (bottom, Ian; top, Mateo).



First, I need to add more
info about the special
event.
Next, I need to info [redacted]
about the old man who
blessed him
Last, I need to info why
It Is on a certain day.

Figure 5.4. Example of student revision plan (Daniela)

While Ian's second step, working on sentence level concerns so his piece would "make [sense]," is relatively vague, the fourth-graders, overall, came up with specific steps to take for revising their pieces. Often in classroom writing, peer response groups tend to provide vague praise or evaluative feedback, offering suggestions for "correcting" language (MacArthur, 2016), and that feedback may vary greatly based on peers' writing expertise (Hovardas, Tsivitanidou, & Zacharia, 2014). However, in Paige's classroom, when student writers approached peer or even teacher review as trying out—or user-testing (e.g., Hanington, 2003)—their writing with readers, they were not just getting suggestions about corrections, but were using audience and purpose as frameworks for guiding them in making revisions. This echoes previous research that suggests the importance of being or observing readers as part of the revisions process (Marsh, 2018; Midgette, Haria, & MacArthur, 2008; Moore & MacArthur, 2012; Rijlaarsdam, Braaksma, Couzijn, & Janssen, 2009; Ruegg, 2017; Thirakunkovit & Chamcharatsri, 2019).

While her students were revising, Paige described the students' work to the inquiry group:

> I've kind of let go of what I wanted to push forward. We're spending now three days on revising already, which we usually don't spend that much time...every kid is kind of working a little bit differently on what they're revising...I feel like they're so proud—like, 'Look how much more detail!' Or 'I did this in my piece today!'…It's felt really more organic. They made their own plans…And they've been working on it. They've been really working towards what they want.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29)

As she explained, when she let go of how she wanted the revising process to go, her fourth-graders latched on. Focusing on audience and asking students to think about "how do I want to share this others?" (Paige, inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29) helped guide students in making their own decisions about drafting and revising their pieces. Handing over those decisions also, in Paige's words, felt more "organic" and was more "engaging" for students. While students often have difficulty with or are resistant to making changes that go deeper than surface-level corrections (e.g., Fitzgerald, 1989; Oliver, 2018; Patthey-Chavez, Matsumura, & Valdés, 2004; Perez, 2001; Saddler, Saddler, Befoorhooz, & Cuccio-Slichko, 2014), Paige's students exhibited enthusiasm and autonomy in making revisions. As others have suggested (e.g., Moore & MacArthur, 2011; Roen & Willey, 1988; Sato & Matsushima, 2006), having a clear purpose and audience helped the fourth-graders in taking up more robust revision practices.

Paige went on to explain how students were not just revising to make changes to the content or organization of their pieces, but were also looking at editing for clarity in a different way.

> Even sitting with kids and saying, 'There's only one period in the whole thing' and going through that with them; they just seem so much more engaged. Part of it is the language I'm using: like, 'Let me read it. Is this how you wanted it to sound?'…That idea that they are really trying to get across something…
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2016/11/29)

Paige's description here highlighted how reframing editing as a way of user-testing (e.g., Hanington, 2003) helped students engage in making surface level changes in more authentic ways. Rather than asking students to go through a standardized editing checklist or make corrections based on peers' or teachers' review, here Paige's students were considering how their writing would be received by a reader. As Ray (2001) has pointed out, writing teachers need to remember that conventions of spelling, grammar, and punctuation are only important in the context of an audience: "They serve a specific purpose—they aren't ends in themselves" (p. 39). By taking up a position as a potential reader, Paige was able to resituate those writing conventions as meaningful.

After students had revised and edited to "get it ready for readers, Paige explained that besides editing for readers, she had really "been thinking about what these will look like" (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/12/05). Showing them examples of several different texts—including a *National Geographic Kids* magazine, an *Eyewitness* informational book, and a *True Book* informational book—Paige then showed them sketches of how she might design a book, a poster, or a magazine article, all genres she was considering for her own piece (see Figures 5.5 for an example).

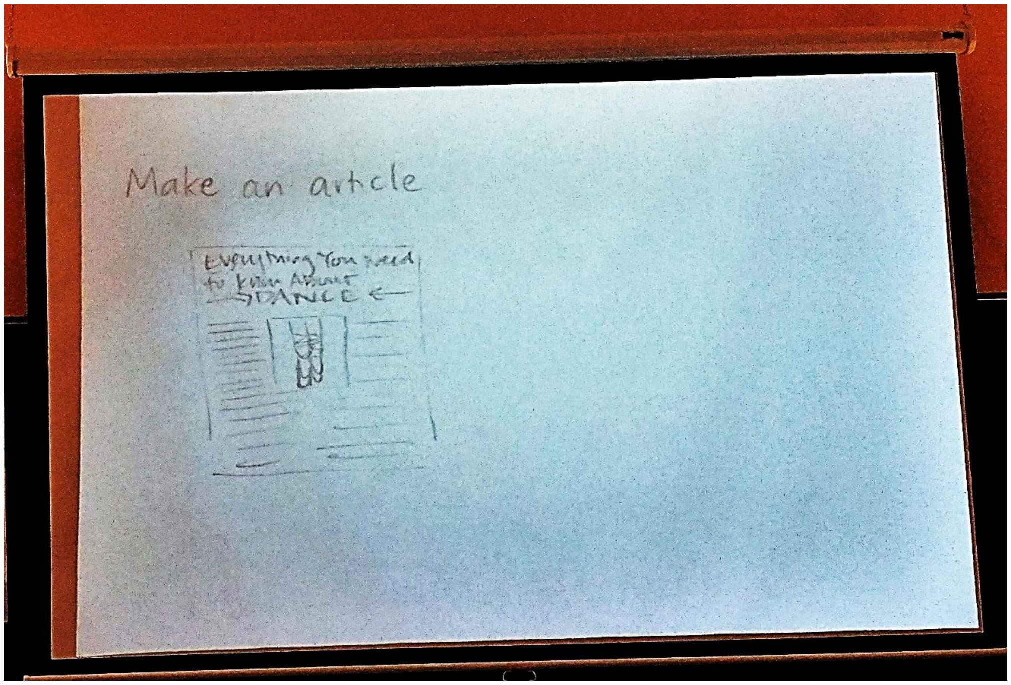


Figure 5.5. Genre sketches, magazine article.

Then, after students all shared what genre they were thinking about trying, Paige explained to them what materials (e.g., plain white paper, white paper with lines on it, big paper, scratch color paper, pencils, pens, colored pens, crayons, colored pencils, markers) they had available to use.

In this writing-to-explain unit, students all chose one of those three genres. As they worked on creating their final pieces, students explained to me why they chose one genre over another. Students made decisions about making an article, a book, or a poster based on available materials and the information they wanted to share. Mía, Camila, and Valeria, for example, described choosing books or articles because they felt overwhelmed by the amount of space to fill on a poster and a fear that posters “could get wrinkly” or “can rip” (classroom transcript, 2016/12/05) when they were being read by young readers. Maria chose to make a poster so she had more room to add details to her drawings: “I wanted a bigger piece so I can add more details so that I really am showing about what I’m writing” (classroom transcript, 2016/12/05). Other students talked more about their potential readers as a factor in their decision-making. For example, Emilio and Pablo decided to make posters because they knew that kid readers liked to hang up posters in their rooms, and often liked to get all the information at once. Emilio explained “Yeah, you have more room, and you, like in a book, you have to turn the pages and all of that. Right here it’s all on one big page” (classroom transcript, 2016/12/05). These decisions not only highlighted the students’ intentionality, but also marked a significant departure from traditional writing classrooms where students are almost exclusively asked to write in the same genre at the same time. Paige’s instruction opened up space for students to make more decisions about their work, including what type of genre would be best for their readers and specific purposes.

To publish, Paige set up the classroom with twinkle lights and grouped the students’ texts (see Figure 5.6) so they were arranged by topic area (i.e., animals, sports, games and culture, and people and lifestyle). She invited Zoe’s first-graders, and all of the students, teachers, and I browsed, stopping to read pieces that caught our eye and to leave comments for the writer, further emphasizing the importance of real readers.

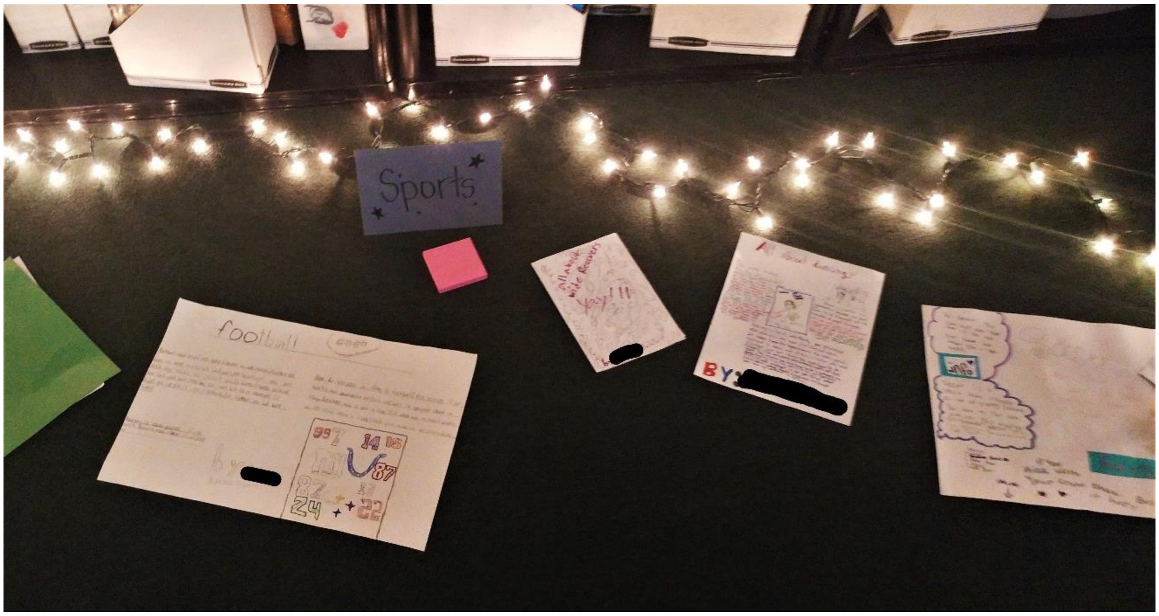


Figure 5.6. Explaining texts publishing, “Sports” section

The inquiry group teachers, including Paige, routinely used genre studies (e.g., Ray, 2006), or focused periods of time when the whole class inquired into and wrote in a specific genre, as a recurring structure for organizing their writing instruction. Using this approach, the teachers provided opportunities for students to engage in deep study of how writers create poetry, memoirs, how-to books, opinion pieces and so on as they moved through the typical steps of a genre-study—gathering and immersing in texts, engaging in close study of authors' moves in those pieces, and writing "under the influence" of their new knowledge (Ray, 2006, p. 239). Similar to work highlighted in other studies (e.g., Brisk et al., 2011; de Oliveira & Lan, 2014; Gebhard et al, 2014; O'Halloran, 2014), the genre-studies the teachers in the inquiry group implemented helped students to learn more about the features of the genre and to likely create final products that closely aligned with the expert texts they studied. Yet, using this kind of approach often meant the teachers skipped over *why* writers write in those genres in the first place and *how* the features of texts help writers achieve those purposes.

According to the teachers, purpose, before being reanimated in the inquiry group, was mostly confined to somewhat simplified ideas in reading instruction about whether the author's main purpose was to inform, persuade, describe, or entertain. And if teachers talked with students about choices they should make based on their audience, it was typically not until right before they published, maybe as students were editing or deciding what materials they wanted to use to move their draft to a published piece. However, many writing studies and rhetorical scholars begin with a definition of genre as a social action (Miller, 1984), and as Bawarshi and Reiff (2010) argue, this kind of dynamic view of genre and writing calls for writers to move beyond studying only the formal features of texts.

> In short, it calls for understanding genre knowledge as including not only knowledge of formal features but also knowledge of what and whose purposes genres serve; how to negotiate one's intentions in relation to genres' social expectations and motives; when and why and where to use genres; what

> reader/writer relationships genres maintain; and how genres relate to other genres in the coordination of social life" (p. 4)

Paige's redesign of her writing instruction, to focus first on a reason for writing (e.g., explaining, persuading, working towards social action) helped to resituate writing within authentic social action. For Paige—and then eventually Zoe, Penelope, and even me—if we wanted students to take up more decision-making in their writing, if we wanted them to be prepared for writing in and beyond school—purpose-studies became one way we could work towards those goals. Rather than assigning writing divorced from its social actions and audiences and rather than the teacher deciding who students should write for or what form that writing should take, a purpose-study created supportive spaces for students to make difficult decisions about why they would write, who they would write to, and what kind of thing they should make to suit that purpose and audience.

Redefined tools for writers and writing teachers

While thinking across a single unit of study provided a snapshot of a purpose-study as a way of reorganizing writing instruction, it is also useful to explore the ways Paige and her students used purpose, audience, and prototyping across the year. In this section, I draw from data across the rest of the school year to help highlight how these redefined tools worked for both Paige as a writing teacher and for the fourth-grade writers in her classroom. Paige, reflecting on her teaching in our last inquiry group meeting, explained how she found she needed to get students thinking about audience and purpose earlier and more often in the process:

> [In our explaining piece,] I don't know what was the spark or what exactly felt powerful. But…I was like, 'Oh my god, they're really thinking about who's reading this…and who they want to present it to.' So I know that caused me to shift it earlier…I feel like we're talking about it…earlier every time. Like, 'Why do you think the writer did this? Who do they want to read it? And who do we want to read ours?'…Even in just the collecting and the starting to draft and plan [phases of the writing process]—which is something that I had never done before.

> But it sets a purpose for our audience…They start to visualize the person reading it… Rather than collecting and planning things out and drafting it, and *then* talking about audience right when you're publishing… just constantly keeping that as a part of it: 'Our writing has a purpose, and we're creating something for a reason' (inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16).

Looking back across the data (as described in the previous section), Paige and her students were clearly thinking about audience and purpose early and often in the first writing-to-explain unit. However, in their next unit of study, writing-to-persuade, Paige explicitly drew students' attention back to their intended readers or their own specific reasons for writing in 10 of the 14 minilessons I observed during that unit. This attention continued then through the last three writing units of the school year: writing for social change, writing picture books or graphic novels, and even in the writing for the standardized test unit.

Purpose

Purpose, as a tool for thinking with students about writing in Paige's classroom, manifested as a way of guiding students' whole process. As previously noted, purpose—as redefined in the inquiry group—was closely aligned with the design work referred to as "inspiration" (Brown, 2009), "establishing need," and "understanding" or "recognizing" a problem (Howard et al., 2008). The "problem or opportunity that motivates people to search for solutions" (Brown & Wyatt, 2010) is the stimulus for the whole writing process. And yet, as the inquiry group recognized in their own instruction, students' writing process in school typically ignored this step. Rather than considering reasons for writing and then determining their own specific purposes, student writers are often either told what the purpose of their writing is and/or are expected to skip straight to choosing topics and meeting the expectations of the genre.

Situating writing work within authentic purposes and for authentic audiences can make the writing more engaging for students and support students in creating final products that are more aligned with expert versions of the same kind of text (e.g., Cohen

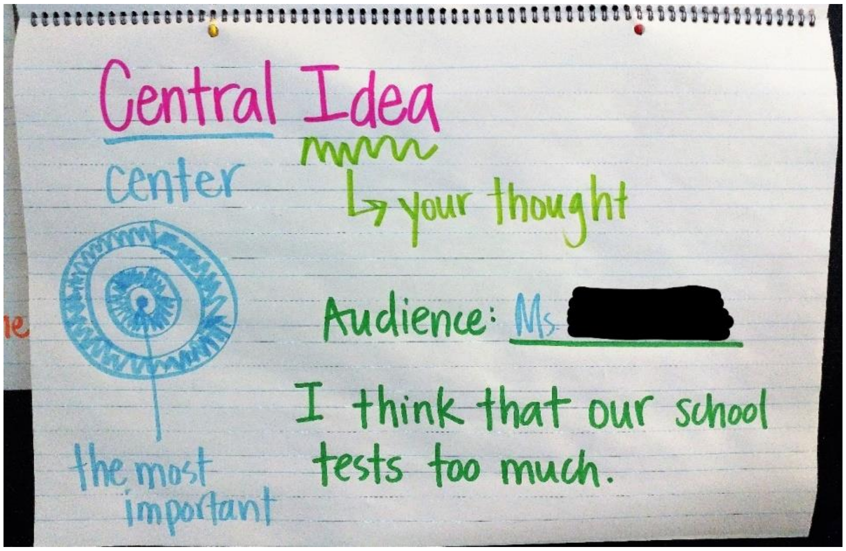
& Riel, 1989; Gadd & Parr, 2017; Hales, 2017; Purcell-Gates et al., 2007; Tower, 2005). However, this work is perhaps even more important for teachers who are hoping to enact critical, humanizing writing instruction. When teachers create opportunities for students, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, to write for purposes beyond school and beyond standardized assessment, students are more likely to recognize the power of writing for transforming their lives and their worlds (Assaf, 2014; Flint et al., 2015; Johnson, 2018; Martin & Beese, 2017; Muhammad, 2015a; Rosario-Ramos, 2018; Stevenson & Beck, 2017; Zisselsberger, 2016). Paige, who came to the inquiry group with a background and interest in critical, humanizing pedagogy saw purpose as a tool for continuing to blur hierarchies between teacher/student and expert/learner in her writing instruction. By asking students to begin with authentic purposes and audiences in mind, Paige created space for students to bring in their own interests and values, while also entrusting them with making important decisions about their writing work in ways that she hoped would transfer beyond the immediate writing situation in her classroom.

In her second purpose-study, Paige directly attended to purpose in many of her whole class minilessons. For example, early in this unit on writing to persuade, she used a minilesson to introduce purpose as coming up with a “central idea” as important for helping writers focus their work.

> …Yesterday we did some things that other writers did, and we started to plan who might we want our audience to be. If we wrote about this, who would our audience be? If we wrote about this [other topic], who would our audience be?…I was thinking about how we think about this as writers. I have my idea of my audience and kind of my topic that I’m writing about. But I realized something about this type of text in particular. You’re trying to make a point when you write a persuasive text: you’re not just telling a story, you’re not just giving information about something, it’s not just informing or entertaining…when we persuade, we have a point, we have an idea, and we’re saying, ‘This is what we think, and we need you to think this way.’ So something that I wanted to try as writers is to plan that…to plan our idea so that we can then plan the rest of our writing. So I wanted

> to teach you today about something that writers will use to help them plan their writing. It's called…a central idea. (classroom transcript, 2017/01/19)

Here Paige reminded her writers of work they had already done to think about audience, but then redirected them to thinking more explicitly about their own very specific purposes and how those purposes might shape their writing. Through the rest of the minilesson, Paige and the fourth-graders break apart the term "central idea," defining each of the parts. "Central" to Paige and the students was about the "most important part," and they used metaphors like the heart in our bodies, the core of the Earth, the sun in our universe, and the bullseye in a target to help them understand. "Idea" was about thoughts you have (classroom transcript, 2017/01/19). Figure 5.7 shows the anchor chart Paige began with the students as they defined this term (along with information about Paige's writing—her particular audience, the principal, and her own particular purpose or central idea, too much testing in school—added a couple days later).



Audience: Ms. [redacted]

I think that our school tests too much.

Figure 5.7. Central idea anchor chart.

With this term defined, Paige came back to why this was important for writers, and particularly for writers who were trying to persuade.

> This is what a lot of writers will plan. What is my most important thought that I want this writing to be, the most important thing, and then they'll build around

> that. Because once you have, Mia, your most important thought, then you can say like, ‘Okay, how am I going to support that? How am I going to make other people have that thought? How am I going to explain it? How am I going to convince people that this is the most important thought?’ (classroom transcript, 2017/01/19)

In this part of the minilesson, Paige modeled questions writers might ask themselves as they used their specific purpose to guide their overall writing process. Purpose, here presented as a writer’s central idea, was a tool for writers, particularly a tool that included a subject position for students in which they are making intentional decisions based on their own reasons for writing. Though concepts like central idea or thesis statements may be common across classroom writing situations, in Paige’s classroom, she presented this not necessarily as a technique for presenting an argument within a piece of writing, but instead as a tool for the writer to use from the very beginning of their writing process. Her intentional attention to the *why* behind writers’ use of this tool offered students the subject position of writers capable of making important decisions about their own writing.

Audience

Audience was entangled with purpose as a tool for writers. Like purpose, audience helped guide students’ overall process as writers and helped empower them as decision-makers who could use writing to change themselves, their readers, or the world. Paige asked students to think about who their audiences would be from the time they picked their topics in their writing-to-persuade unit of study (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/01/19). As students continued narrowing down their topics, for example, Paige came back to “central idea” and audience as tools for writers as she checked in with Daniela, Sofia, and Camila.

> Paige: How are y’all doing?...You all have some central ideas?
>
> Daniela: Yeah, I’m going to do that [points to paper].

Paige: Okay, audience is [the music teacher]. ‘I think that you should teach us how to play the flute.’ Okay…[moves to Sofia’s paper] ‘I think Daniela is in love with green.’ Okay. So you’re trying to convince Daniela that she’s in love with green. She says ‘no’ that she’s not?

Daniela: No, I am!

Paige: Oh, because see, your audience is Daniela. That makes me think that she doesn’t agree with you and you’re trying to convince of her of this.

Daniela: I think you need to write it again to say that I don’t like green.

Paige: So then she would be convincing you that you don’t like green?

Sofia: No, she loves green.

Camila: I hate green.

Paige: [to Sofia] Okay, so talk to me about what *your* opinion is.

Sofia: I’m doing colors. And the only color that [Daniela] likes is green, so I wrote that…Like the color that I’m thinking of is black.

Paige: Okay, and what about it? What about black?

Sofia: I like the color black because it goes with every color.

Camila: Oh, I get what she means now—that ‘[Daniela’s] in love’ because I’m guessing that Daniela does love green; that’s her only favorite color. So [Sofia’s] trying to convince Daniela to start liking other colors too.

Paige: Is that kind of your thinking?

[Sofia nods.]

Paige: Oh, okay. So then maybe your central idea isn’t about green because you already know she likes green, right? So then maybe—what are you actually trying to convince her of?

Sofia: That she should like other colors, like black.

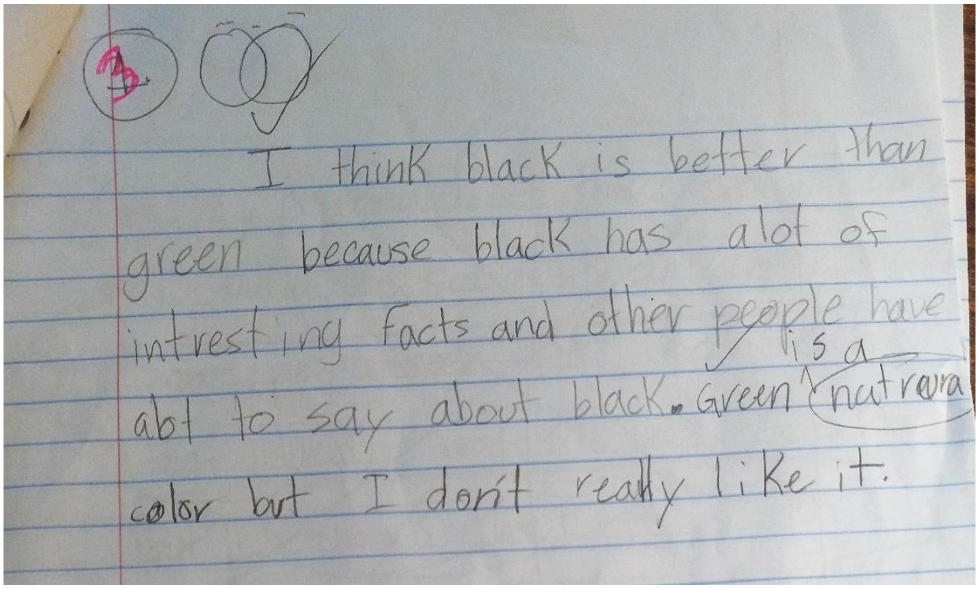
Paige: Mmm. So how could we change our central idea to make us think like, ‘Oh, okay, she’s trying to convince Daniela to like black’?

Sofia: I think Daniela should like the color black.

Paige: Boom. Because now that makes me think, when I see that kind of sentence—‘I think Daniela should like the color black’—then I’m immediately in my head thinking, ‘Oh, she must not like black, and Sofia’s trying to convince her.’ (classroom transcript, 2017/01/23)

In this writing conference, Paige continued using “central idea” to think with students about their purpose in this text. First positioning herself as a reader, Paige read Sofia’s drafted central idea. When her interpretation did not match with Sofia’s intended purpose, Paige asked questions about Sofia’s opinion and audience. The thinking Sofia needed to do to articulate her purpose was completely entangled with her understanding of her audience. In this case, her audience, Daniela, was specific and tangible—literally sitting right next to her throughout the conversation. Considering her own opinion together with Daniela’s, Sofia was able to revise her central idea and clarify the specific purpose she had for creating this persuasive piece of writing.

Paige and her students came back to think about their readers throughout the process. For example, Figure 5.8 shows one of the pages from Sofia’s persuasive draft.

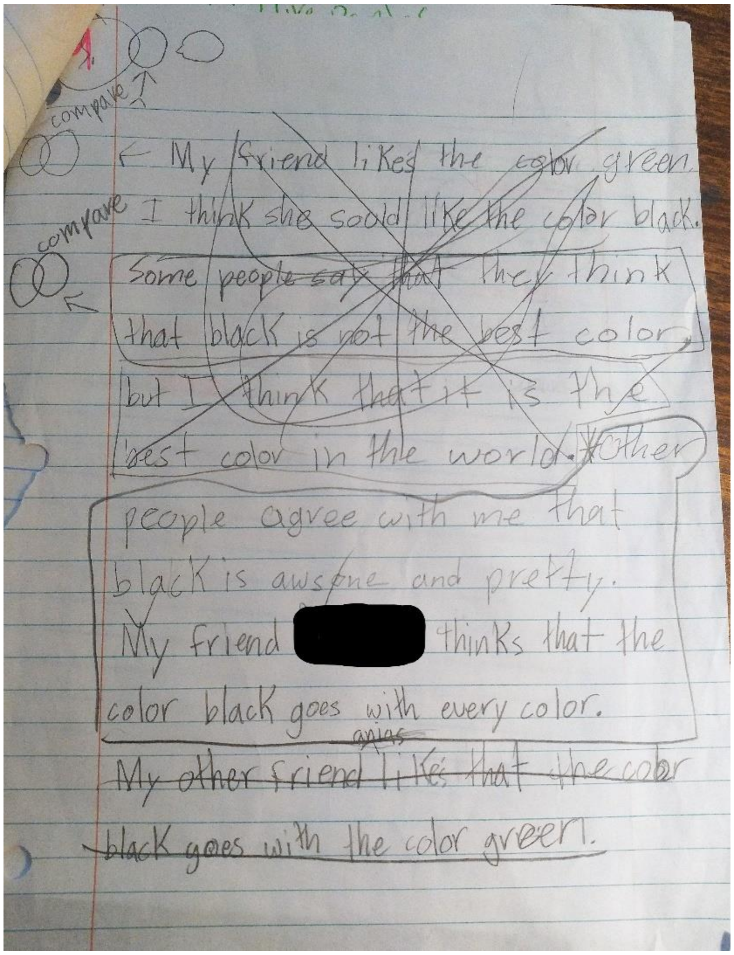


3.

I think black is better than
green because black has alot of
intresting facts and other people have
alot to say about black. Green is a nutrura
color but I don't really like it.

Figure 5.8. Drafting page from Sofia’s writing-to-persuade piece.

While Sofia still had Daniela in mind as her primary audience, she decided to make a poster for her final piece, broadening her audience to include other classmates and friends who might also need to recognize the merits of the color black. As Sofia drafted and revised the text of her persuasive piece, she clearly kept her original purpose and audience, and what she knew about that audience, in mind. While her final draft did not include Daniela's name, Sofia used green—Daniela's current favorite color—as an example in this paragraph. She also included details from Camila, another student who sat at their table, in her draft (see Figure 5.9).



compare

compare

~~My friend likes the color green.~~
~~I think she sould like the color black.~~
Some people say that they think
that black is not the best color,
but I think that it is the
best color in the world. Other
people agree with me that
black is awsome and pretty.
My friend [redacted] thinks that the
color black goes with every color.
~~My other friend likes that the color~~
~~black goes with the color green.~~

Figure 5.9. Another drafting page from Sofia's writing-to-persuade piece

By referencing Camila, a friend of both Sofia and Daniela, Sofia added extra credibility in her effort to convince Daniela to not just like green, but also black. However, after she chose to also broaden her audience beyond just Daniela, Sophia—as evidenced in her revisions here—made decisions about what was best to include and what to leave out based on her audience and purpose.

During the same unit, as Paige talked with two other writers, Izaiah and Emilio, about how they were planning to organize their persuasive pieces, these students drew on their imagining of what their readers would want or need as they made decisions. Izaiah, writing to convince readers like his classmates that Steph Curry was the best basketball player, explained that he would begin his piece by comparing Curry to other players because "some people think that other players are better than [Curry]. They're going to already compare him" (classroom transcript, 2017/02/14). Emilio, trying to convince football fans that quarterback is the best position in the game, decided he would begin by describing the role of the quarterback with imagery so he could "start with putting something in [the readers] mind about it" (classroom transcript, 2017/02/14). Both of these students clearly had ideas about who would be reading their work and how those readers—whether imagined readers or specific people they had in mind—would approach the topic and this piece of writing.

Paige followed up these writing conferences with a whole-class minilesson where she modeled how moving sections around in her own piece might change how the reader understood her topic. She offered,

> This is something writers do. This is a good time to think about a plan…rearrange [paragraphs or sections that are currently on different pieces of paper] and think, 'What order makes the most sense for me to be explaining to my reader, so my reader really understands what I'm trying to say?' The students were making decisions about how the order they used to present information would affect their audience…and one trick you might try is to read it all the way through to your partner and see if you like it. If you don't, flip it around. Try something else. (classroom transcript, 2017/02/16).

Paige's instruction provided examples of how writers use purpose and audience to make decisions about their work, space to actually make their own decisions, and support and feedback from herself and other readers as they tried out different choices. The type of work Izaiah, Emilio, and Sophia took up in response echoes other studies that have demonstrated the abilities of young writers, when given space and support, to understand their readers' needs and expectations and make decisions about what to include, how to use language, and how to organize their ideas based on those understandings (e.g., Durán, 2017; Jaegar, 2016; Lammers & Marsh, 2015; Martínez et al., 2008).

Audience was also a major part of students' decisions when they chose what particular form or genre their pieces would take. Like in the writing-to-explain unit of study (described in a previous section), Paige asked the fourth-graders to keep their readers in mind as they thought about how best to get their pieces to that audience (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/02/27). In one minilesson, for example, Paige talked through and roughly sketched out possibilities for genres as students brought up different possibilities for their writing, including posters, books, articles, letters, and comics (see Figure 5.10).

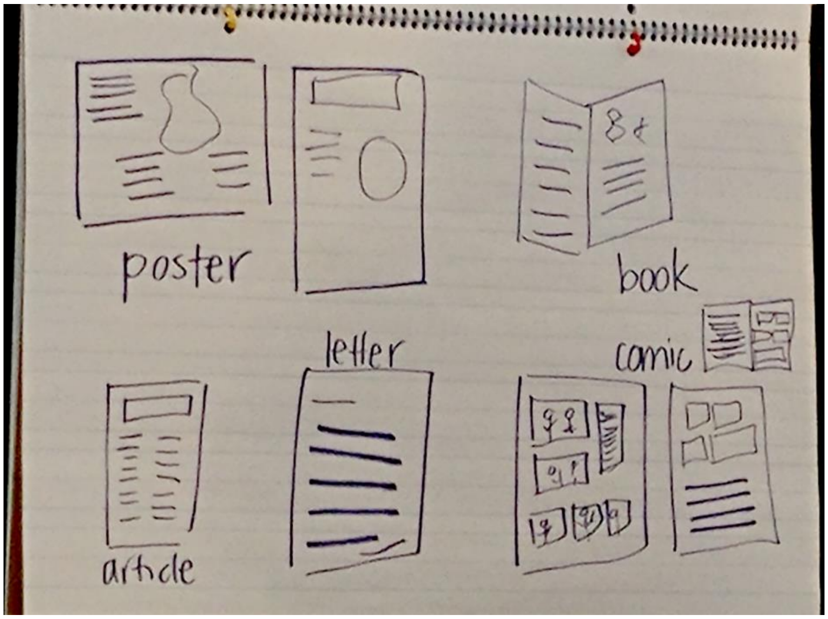


Figure 5.10. Rough sketches of students' brainstormed genre possibilities.

In talking through her own example, Paige and the fourth-graders thought about which genre might work best if she was writing to the principal to convince her to require less testing in their school.

> Paige: …So we've got lots of different ideas, right? One thing that you want to think about is who is your audience. So I'm thinking about [the principal]. I don't know if a comic is going to work for [the principal]. Yeah, I love to draw comics—
>
> Aarón: But she's like a principal. It needs to be more professional.
>
> Emilio: She's an adult, and mostly kids or boys read comics.
>
> Daniela: Yeah, like maybe an article or a letter.
>
> Paige: Yeah, so that's exactly—y'all are already doing this. Aarón was like 'Well, at least it needs to be more fancy or formal. She's the principal.' And Emilio was like, 'Well, she's an adult. She maybe doesn't read comics.'
>
> Emilio: It's inappropriate.
>
> Paige: So, even though I might love comics, my audience might not. So I want to think about my audience. I'm thinking for [the principal] something that's more formal. Either a nice letter or an article would probably be best for me…So you want to think about your audience, and you're not going to necessarily let your heart drive what you want to do, you're going to let your audience drive it. Because that's what writers think about: Who am I trying to communicate with? I created this writing. I've prepared it for someone to read; well, how are they going to read it? So you want to think about what is best for your audience. (classroom transcript, 2017/02/27).

In this conversation, the fourth-graders again showcased their awareness of audience and that audience's needs and expectations. Magnifico (2010) explained that "writing is not merely an individual method for displaying content knowledge but a communicative opportunity to advance ideas and receive feedback" (p. 181). Here, Paige's students were not just thinking about the content of their writing and how they could demonstrate that knowledge through writing; instead, they were considering the social, communicative nature of writing and how best to make sure their message could reach their audience.

Similarly, in the writing-for-change unit, students thoughtfully considered audience in relation to purpose and genre. The students chose topics based on their interests or passions *and* based on their audiences and purposes within this particular writing-for-change unit. Paige later reflected how pleased she was that students felt validated as writers who made choices about their writing, comfortable choosing whatever purposes or audiences felt important to them rather than being concerned with what they thought the teacher might want them to write about.

> [Students] were able to say like, 'Yeah, this is important to me, and that makes it important to write about'… [Or] they were able to say like, 'Okay, I'm going to write about police and black people.' And then be like, 'No'…they were able to say like, 'Yeah, this is important, but I don't want to spend three or four weeks with it.' Or 'I don't know enough about it.' Or 'I'm passionate about it, but I don't have enough background'…It wasn't an assignment; it wasn't like 'Pick something in the news and write about it.' It was like, 'What are things that you see as problems? Okay, which one do you care enough about to spend time with?' (interview, 2017/06/23)

The students chose purposes and audiences close to homes or communities, and in some cases, the larger society or world. They included pieces like Ruben entreating his parents to work less so they could be home to help him with his homework, Kalisha trying to convince her classmates to spend more time outside instead of on screens, Pablo wanting to end war and the bombings in Syria, Aiden teaching his classmates about the problems with bullying at school, and several students wanting to convince the principal to decide not to go forward with a proposed adoption of school uniforms.

In this later unit students considered and chose from even more genre choices including emails, petitions, and poems, and they continued growing in their thinking about what kinds of genres and audiences might be best for their topics and purposes. For example, early in the unit, the student teacher, Marjorie, brought in a mentor text to share with the students. As she read through each paragraph, she asked the fourth-graders and Paige to share what they noticed the writer was doing in the letter. In the last paragraph, the writer, including names and contact information, asked their audience to reach out to the people they thought might be able to make change.

Marjorie: So it's like…'Do this and then tell them to help us accomplish something,' right?...So what's one thing that they're doing here to try to solve their problem?

Emilio: Trying to make the people who decided it feel bad.

Marjorie: So saying like, 'These are the people, these are the people who have the power,' right? These are the people who this letter is for?

Camila: I think it's mostly—I think the people it should mostly be for is like the principal and the music teachers.

Marjorie: You think that's his main audience?

Camila: Yeah. ***

Marjorie: So that might be something that maybe we can think about. Like, 'Who are we writing this to?' [jots this question on the projected mentor text]

Daniela: And *why* are we writing it to them?

Marjorie: Why are we writing them too? And maybe also what will solve our problem? (classroom transcript, 2017/04/17)

In this part of the conversation, Marjorie seemed to be trying to nudge students towards noticing and naming the move the writer was making as a call to action or offering a solution for the problem introduced. Through the students' responses, however, it is clear that for them, the last paragraph of the mentor text was making them think about purpose and audience. Emilio's comment ("Trying to make the people who decided it feel bad") showed he was thinking about the deeper purpose in asking readers to contact decision-makers. Daniela's addition to Marjorie's annotation ("And *why* are we writing it to them?") emphasized the explicit link students were continuing to make between audience and purpose. These two tools, by now very familiar to the students, were enmeshed in how the fourth-graders were thinking about writing—in this case, helping them to analyze how a writer's specific moves were intentionally made to work towards their larger purpose.

As the conversation continued, Paige joined in, adding her own thoughts about what this paragraph made her think about.

Paige: Hmm. That makes me think they're probably not then writing to the principals and music teachers. If they want people to contact the principal and music teacher, then they're probably writing to parents? Of the school kids?

Emilio: Yeah.

Sofia: Oh, yeah!

Emilio: Because I feel like a lot of the decisions are made by like moms and parents. Like the PTA, they decide a lot of things. It's like the Parent-Teacher Association or something, and the parents have to agree on something.

Paige: Yeah. So I'm wondering, it almost seems like with this one the audience is like, 'Guys, our community—let's all get together and change this.' Versus 'Dear Senator So-and-So, our community's upset. Please change this for us.' It's more like parents.

Camila: That doesn't make sense. Because if you're trying to get this to all these people, then they're going to be like, 'I can't do anything about this.'

Paige: But then what if every single person's parents called those people. So if I gave this letter to every one of your parents, and every one of your parents called the principal. If I go to the principal, that's one person—

Emilio: —Then the principal's going to start noticing that a lot of people want it.

Paige: Yeah, I'm kind of feeling the same way. If I go, that's one person. But if everybody goes, that's a lot of people.

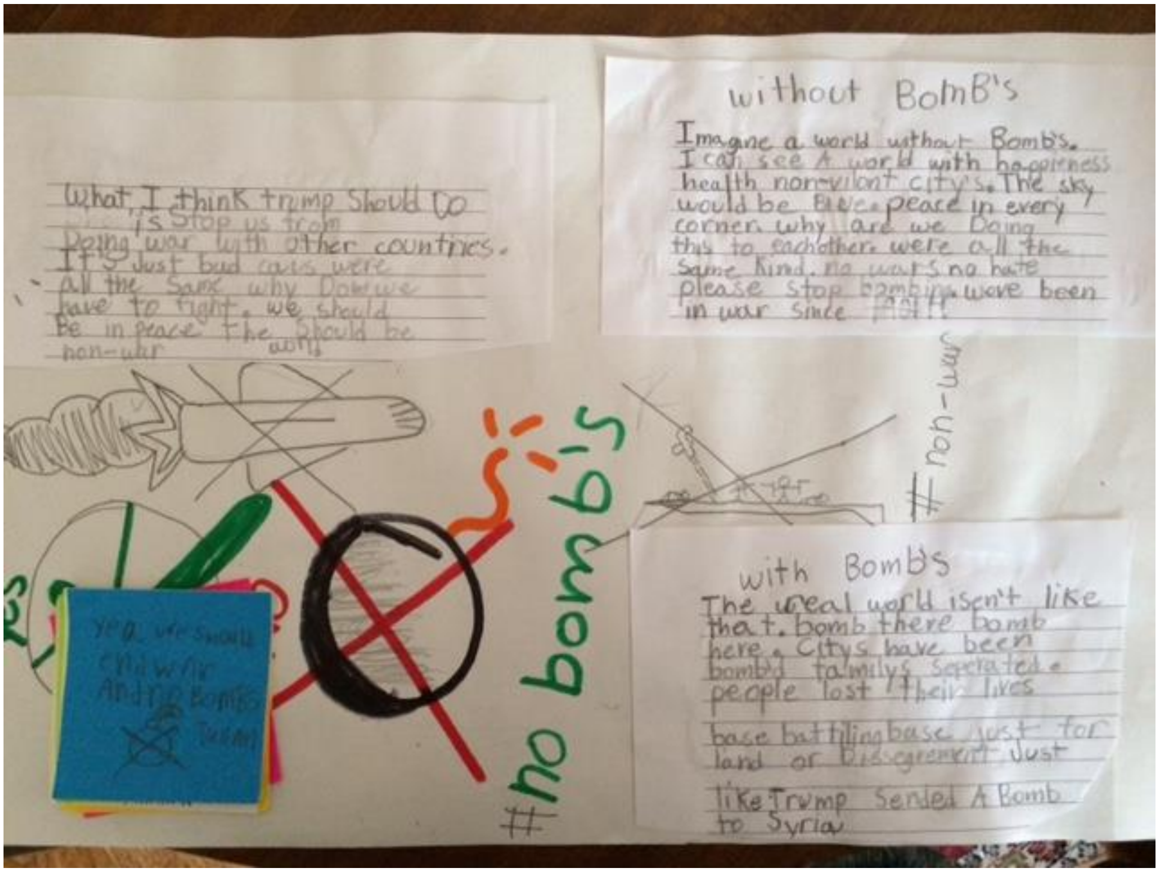
Emilio: It's like the petition thingy!

Pablo: What's the petition thingy?

Emilio: It's like the petition thing. You get all these people who agree with you, and if there's a lot, then the people who are in charge, like the principal, are going to notice that. (classroom transcript, 2017/04/17)

In their previous units of study, Paige and the fourth-graders had primarily considered fairly direct relationships between purpose and audience. If you wanted to add flute instruction to music class, you wrote directly to the music teacher (Daniela, classroom transcript, 2017/01/23). If you wanted to convince your friends that Steph Curry is the best basketball player, you wrote to your friends (Izaiah, classroom transcript, 2017/02/14). However, in this conversation during the writing-for-change unit, Paige added a layer of complexity to that relationship, prompting students to critically consider whether it was better to write directly to those who could affect change or to write to gather a wider base of support whose collective power might affect even more change. As they began considering this possibility, Emilio made a connection back to an earlier conversation about petitions, bringing this genre in as a potential form for their own writing.

While most students still ultimately chose more direct relationships between their audience and purpose, several students did consider options like petitions as they thought about their own topics. A few did take up the petition genre: Marlena asked classmates to sign her text asking pet store chains to stop their abusive practices and Valeria asked classmates to sign her text if they agreed to stop bullying at school. Others also took up slightly more complex reader/purpose relationships. For example, Emilio opted to make a poster that he could hang up at school, convincing other students and parents to speak back against the school uniforms Huerta Elementary was looking at implementing the following year. Pablo, who was writing to stop the recent bombings in Syria, also had a creative idea about how to get his message to his audience (see Figure 5.11).



What I think trump Should Do
is Stop us from
Doing war with other countries.
It's Just bad cus were
All the Same why Do we
have to fight. we should
Be in peace The world Should be
non-war

without BomB's
Imagine a world without Bomb's.
I can see A world with happiness
health non-vilont city's. The sky
would be Blue. peace in every
corner. why are we Doing
this to eachother. were all the
Same Kind. no wars no hate
please stop bombing. weve been
in war since [illegible]

with Bomb's
The real world isen't like
that. bomb there bomb
here. Citys have been
bombed familys seperated.
people lost their lives
base battling base just for
land or Disagrement Just
like Trump Sended A Bomb
to Syria

Figure 5.11. Pablo's writing-for-change poster.

In thinking through his audience, Pablo was initially thinking he would give this to his dad who worked in the military. But after further thought, he decided that the President was actually the one who told the military what to do and where to go, even if they disagreed. Pablo then considered emailing his piece to the White House, but told me "Donald Trump likes Twitter" (classroom transcript, 2017/04/27). Pablo eventually decided to add hashtags to his poster ("#nobomb's" and "#non-war") so his dad could help him post it on Twitter and get his message to the President.

Across these examples, students were clearly using what they had learned about audience, whether as an imagined reader or a tangible person, as a tool to make decisions about their writing. Some studies have noted the importance of having immediate audiences from whom writers can receive feedback (e.g., Rijlaarsdam, 2009; Tower, 2005). The students in Paige's class were also increasingly holding a more distant audience in mind in ways similar to expert writers, using that audience as a "touchstone upon which the writer tests numerous rhetorical, organizational, and stylistic decisions" (Berkenkotter, 1981, p. 396). Embedded in audience, as defined in the inquiry group and then used in Paige's classroom, then, were many assumptions about students as writers, including the following: 1) students have real purposes for writing, 2) students can both imagine and empathize with potential readers, even those who are very different than themselves, and 3) students understand how the decisions they make as writers may affect potential readers.

Prototyping and user-testing

As explained in this chapter's first finding, another tool that the teachers drew on—related to purpose and audience—was prototyping or user-testing. For designers, prototyping and user-testing are about coming up with multiple possible solutions and evaluating those possibilities. While Paige, along with the other teachers in the inquiry group, recognized that students may not make multiple, full drafts, her (re)defined notion of prototyping opened up other possibilities for supporting students in trying out different choices in their writing and testing those choices themselves and with external readers. Paige modeled using quick sketches to think about genre and layout in both the writing-to-explain and writing-to-persuade units of study in her class (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/12/05, 2017/02/27). She also modeled and explicitly taught about taking quick notes to record lots of ideas when a writer is getting started rather than always writing out full sentences (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/01/26), about using sticky notes to plan out where things might go in a text (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/03/30), and about outlining story parts on notecards before adding basic sketches to plan out a picture book or graphic novel (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/05/18). These strategies for physically planning out and testing content, organization, and aesthetic details of the text helped students try out ideas in low-stakes ways. Brown (2009) explained rapid prototyping as a means for achieving faster results: "The faster we make our ideas tangible, the sooner we will be able to evaluate them, refine them, and zero in on the best solutions" (p. 89). Leverenz (2014), a writing scholar who argued the merits of drawing on design thinking within composition courses, also pointed out that figuring out different ways to draft ideas needed to "cost as little as possible in terms of time, material, and ego" since once a writer becomes "invested in an idea it will be harder to let go, more likely…that opportunities to develop new ideas will be lost" (p. 9).

Besides physical means of drafting, talk was also an important medium for Paige and her students to try out different choices in their writing and receive some immediate feedback from readers, or "users" of their writing. This sometimes came early in the students' writing process—such as partnering up to talk through their opinions on different topics to try to find an interesting idea to write about in their persuasive pieces (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/01/10); partnering up and then sharing out changes they would like to see in their homes, communities, and world (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/07); and talking through a basic premise and storyline for a picture book or graphic novel to see if it makes sense to another reader (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/05/16). Talk, in these examples, provided a quick and very low-stakes way of trying out ideas on their actual intended readers in some cases or audiences similar to their intended readers in cases where their audiences were beyond the immediate classroom setting.

Prototyping and user-testing, as tools for the fourth-graders as writers, also extended into students' decisions about late revising and editing as well. In the writing-to-explain unit, the fourth-graders read their first drafts to their first-grade reading buddies to get some external feedback about what was making sense and what was missing. Then they continued that work with partners in their own classroom to test out revisions (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/29). In the writing-to-persuade unit, Paige introduced a partner activity, similar to one they had done before, late in the process that offered students an opportunity to try out their piece on a potential reader, thinking this time not just about content or organization, but sentence- and word-level concerns. Pairing up with one of her students, Paige explained that when writers are getting into late revision, one thing they might do is to think about their audience and how their audience might experience the text by sitting down with a reader to talk about the piece. The reader could read the piece aloud, and the writer could listen and think to themselves, "Is this how I want it to sound?...Is there something confusing about it?" (classroom transcript, 2017/02/21). Then, her partner, Pablo began reading Paige's piece aloud so she could show the students how this might go. Stopping to pause him, she thought aloud:

> Can I pause you? I'm sitting here thinking like, 'Okay, I liked how I started by saying like, this is what it's like on non-testing days,' but I didn't understand that he switched into testing. So I'm going to add a sentence. So what I'm going to do, I'm going to pause him [takes paper back from him]. And I'm going to go right to where I thought, where he said 'on testing days,' and I'm going to put in here: 'Testing days are different.' So that was a part that I noticed, 'That was confusing for me. I didn't understand what was going on.' So I stopped him and I wrote my change right in there. [hands it back to Pablo] Okay, go ahead.
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/02/21)

They continued, stopping again after Pablo stumbled in a sentence to see how she could break that sentence into two sentences to make it less confusing. As the fourth-graders took up this work in partners, they listened to how their writing was being read aloud by another reader and considered places where they might need to make changes based on that reading. In this particular example, Paige opened another way talk could help writers not just get feedback from other *writers*, but how they could test out their writing by positioning their partner as a *reader*. Paige and Pablo, along with the other writer-reader partnerships that formed as students used this strategy, used a tangible reader to help them think about how they could make their writing clearer for the audience they had in mind. This way of testing out conventions of spelling, syntax, and punctuation on "users" of their writing offered students positions not as copy-editors of their own writing—correcting "errors" for the sake of following rules—but as designers of texts who make decisions about their readers' needs and expectations and who create an experience for those readers.

Across Paige's purpose studies—and even continuing into her test-writing and graphic novel/picture book units—talk became a powerful way for her fourth-grade writers to think about audience and purpose with the teacher and other students. Students were able to "user-test" (e.g., Hanington, 2003) their piece and then make decisions about what was working or not working and what changes to make. As with audience and purpose more generally, prototyping was also reshaped through the teachers' own attempts at asking students to try different ways of drafting and testing ideas and their reflections on those attempts in the inquiry group. Prototyping, ultimately, became less about revising and creating multiple full drafts, and instead associated with the concept—and the embedded subject position—of the importance of writers "moving between divergent and convergent ways of thinking" (Carlgren et al., 2016, p. 47). Writers, like designers, were not expected to be perfect the first time, but rather to take risks, evaluate choices, and make decisions based on feedback from readers.

CONCLUSIONS

In the inquiry group, teachers found space to improvise on the standard narrative of teaching writing in their schools. Beginning by looking at ways people from other disciplines talk about design, the teachers and I imagined new possibilities for teaching writing that would encourage student-writers to take on more and more of the decisions in their work. These possibilities were sometimes playful, but many of the ideas that came up over and over again and that were tried out in the classroom were related to purpose and audience—two of the main components important to design that these teachers noticed were largely missing from their current teaching. A lot of our work in the group, then, was about implicitly and explicitly (re)defining terms like purpose and audience that had become static: either empty and vague because of lack of attention (Magnifico, 2010) or because they had come to "mean too much, to block thought by making us think we know what we are talking about when we often do not" (Park, 1982, p. 248). Having a space on the periphery of day-to-day teaching to disrupt static meanings and (re)interpret them based on shared and individual goals for teaching alongside understandings of specific teaching contexts was most important. This space is especially vital if we believe, like others (e.g., Bartolomé, 1994; Freire, 1970/2005; Huerta, 2011; Salazar, 2013), that critical and humanizing education is not about specific one-size-fits-all methods or approaches. Purpose and audience became particularly useful tools for this group of teachers as we aimed to offer students more space to make decisions and take ownership of their composing processes. However, what was most important was the space to assign meaning to those tools together, integrate them flexibly into our individual teaching contexts, and to come back together to reflect and further refine those definitions. A different group of teachers, for example, might likely be drawn to different elements of writing and designing, and in an inquiry group where different initiating questions and texts (i.e., not specifically about connections between design and writing) other elements of critical, humanizing writing instruction might come into the foreground.

In our inquiry into how we could draw on theories of design and design thinking to create more critical, humanizing writing instruction, purpose and audience, as redefined in this group, included assumptions about how writers make decisions about their writing, becoming flexible, conceptual tools for us to share with students. Embedded in these terms were ways of doing and thinking about—crystallized operations (Leont’ev, 2009)—writing and writing instruction. Primarily purpose and audience, as tools for writers, meant working like a designer to “use words and other language resources to define and respond in creative ways to problems they see as important” (Leverenz, 2014, p. 4). Rather than learning forms or conventions of writing for the sake of learning them, writers who consider purpose and audience in their work are grounded in the sociocultural nature of writing—they write to do things in the world.

As tools for writing teachers, too, purpose and audience also carried heavy implications for how we thought about students. Rather than positioning students as novices who need to learn decontextualized forms and conventions of writing before they can use them—or worse yet, positioning students as test-takers who need to memorize an acronym or a formula in order to be successful writers—teachers using purpose and audience as tools for teaching writing authorize students to take up positions as writers capable of recognizing reasons to write, of having valuable things to say, of discerning appropriate audiences and those audiences' needs and expectations, and of making writing decisions based on those individual purposes and audiences. This positioning meant that teachers were not in control of making decisions about students' writing, but instead were sitting next to students, inquiring into ways of writing alongside those students and engaging in dialogue about their work. In other words, using purpose and audience as tools for teaching writing also supported the teachers in engaging in more critical, humanizing writing pedagogy.

From the beginning of the year, Paige was already dedicated to creating humanizing instruction (e.g., Bartolomé, 1994; Freire, 1970/2005; Huerta, 2011; Salazar, 2013) for her students. She consistently opened up space for students to bring in their own interests, languages, knowledge; held appreciative views that trusted students to be capable of challenging intellectual work; brought discussions of social inequities and injustices into her reading and writing curriculum; worked to build mutually caring and trusting relationships with students; and created opportunities to share decision-making with students. Rather than focusing on narrowed, formulaic writing, which may have increased a few of her students' writing scores, Paige was concerned with teaching her students to be confident writers who recognized the value of their own ideas and the transformative power of writing their worlds.

After being redefined in the group, purpose and audience worked as tools, and the language and subject positions embedded in those tools, for Paige to lean into this work as a critical, transformative intellectual (Giroux, 1985) as she redesigned humanizing writing curriculum. Reflecting on the year, Paige recalled how using purpose and audience helped create a climate where students felt comfortable choosing topics they wanted to write about and making decisions about those topics:

> I was like, 'My kids were like taking on the world.' Because they had like the [school] uniform thing that was really personal to their life…To like way bigger problems that we had never even talked about like animals in Petsmart and people

> getting arrested for drugs and just stuff that never came up in our classroom at all. I had no idea that they cared about it, and then they're writing these really in depth pieces and researching about a topic and writing about it…I feel like over the course of the year we were able to really create a climate where they felt like they could dig into those even though they'd never seen anyone do it before. And they felt passionate about it and then knew we would support it.
>
> (interview, 2017/06/23)

Paige's reflections on the students' topic choices in their writing-for-change unit highlight the type of space that she had created in her classroom. Students knew that their interests and opinions mattered, and that they would be supported in making decisions about their writing. They recognized that in Paige's classroom they could write for their own purposes and audiences, beyond any that Paige could have created for them. By pushing to find ways to weave our redefined purpose and audience into her work, Paige was able to continue offering subject positions for her students as active decision-makers and to further open up spaces for student empowerment and "becoming" (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 84).

In an interview towards the end of the year a fourth-grade student, Mia, explained to me her thoughts about writing: "I don't like writing a bunch. I'll write it if somebody will read it. Because if somebody doesn't read it, what's the real point of it because nobody's going to look at it or see it" (interview, 2017/05/19). Students, when using our redefined understandings of purpose and audience, come to our classrooms with their own interests and knowledge that they want to share with the world. Yet too often students are discouraged from pursuing those interests, values, or forms of knowledge they always already have, in the interest of preparing them for the next step in their educations (Bomer, 2011). This is particularly true in contexts where standardized writing tests take over the curriculum, narrowing what counts as writing, whose ideas count, and who is allowed to participate in authentic social action. If we care about students like Mia—whose comment strikes right to the heart of the problem in too much of the writing instruction taking place in schools, and if we hope to truly engage in a “quest for mutual humanization” (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 75) alongside our students, our job as writing teachers, then, is not just about depositing knowledge about rules and forms of writing. It is, instead, more about supporting students in recognizing those reasons for writing and in figuring out how to get their messages across to readers—how to engage in writing as social action and (re)write their world.

Chapter Six: Entries into Critical, Humanizing Writing Instruction

In this chapter I continue to address my third research question: how do teachers' discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice? As discussed in the previous chapter, the teachers in the inquiry group drew on aspects of design—particularly *purpose* and *audience*—to create spaces within their writing instruction for positioning students as designers of texts, blurring hierarchies between teacher/student and expert/novice as they supported students in making important strategic decisions about their own writing. The inquiry group's (re)figuring of what it meant to teach writing, (re)imagining of new possibilities, and (re)assigning of meaning to taken-for-granted terms was flexible enough to meet each teacher wherever they were in their process of becoming. Continuing to build on her work as a critical, humanizing teacher, Paige, as described in chapter five, took up the redefined tools of purpose and audience to restructure several units of study to lead students in inquiring into some reasons writers write. For Penelope, the inquiry group's work to redefine purpose and audience and her use of these conceptual tools to mediate her classroom practice supported her in finding entry points for creating new subject positions for herself and her students.

In this chapter I draw on analysis of data from Penelope's interviews, inquiry group participation, and observations of classroom writing instruction to elucidate the following two findings:

1) When she was foregrounding design in her instruction, Penelope used specific moves—such as activating audience in individual writing conferences and making space for writers to talk with one another—as entry points for the development/appropriation of novel tools and practices into her existing writing instruction.
2) Through gradual appropriation of both tools and the embedded positions assigned to those tools in the inquiry group, Penelope did not just change isolated practices, but also the subject positions available for herself and her students. Collectively redefining tools and then reconstructing them within a specific teaching context

was particularly important when supporting Penelope's shifts to critical, humanizing writing instruction.

Still relatively new to writing workshop and new to entrusting her ninth-graders with making decisions about texts, Penelope gradually appropriated conceptual tools from the group into her practice. These tools provided her access to subject positions—such as *reader* or *fellow writer*, rather than *manager*—which in turn opened up new positions for her students as designers and decisions makers. Penelope's reconstruction of these tools in her own classroom teaching were also reconstructions of the social interactions and discourses that accompanied those ideas in the inquiry group. In other words, without the accompanying ideas, theories, and embedded positions connected with these teaching tools, they were not likely to have the same impact on Penelope's teaching.

ENTRY POINTS: MOVING TOWARDS MORE HUMANIZING WRITING INSTRUCTION

Paige and Penelope took up similar, specific tools from the inquiry group. As flexible, conceptual tools, however, the ways the teachers took them up were not identical. In her English I class, Penelope was still new to teaching writing beyond the test and to the philosophies about students and writing that came with writing workshop as an instructional approach. She was eager to learn, taking up every opportunity that was available through the grant-funded professional development I was leading at Los Robles. Yet, as she described in her initial interview, Penelope still struggled with "giving the children freedom" and learning to "call herself a writer" (interview, 2016/09/26). These challenges with philosophies behind workshop also led to challenges in her practice, as she was not confident she knew what to teach students about writing and not confident that her students would make good choices about their writing. Penelope recognized that she "needed to work on minilessons" because hers often felt more like reminders about what students should be doing rather than strategies for writing and that she needed to work on conferences since they felt "informal" and superficial rather than being "more writerly conversations" (interview, 2016/09/26). This important difference in her history-in-person influenced her identity, including the subject positions she saw available

(Holland et al, 1998) both in the classroom and in the inquiry group at the beginning of the year. In the classroom, she tended to take up a more traditional, familiar position as a classroom manager. In the inquiry group, as described in chapter four, Penelope began the year with some deficit narratives of her students and was less willing to be vulnerable in sharing from her own teaching.

Looking at Penelope's classroom across the year provides insight into how teachers might gradually transform their teaching, beginning with relatively small, co-constructed concepts from a professional learning context. The inquiry group supported the long, slow, uncertain process of altering her subjectivity. As Holland and colleagues (1998) explain, collaboratively defined tools—such as purpose and audience in this inquiry group—can work as a kind of "symbolic bootstrapping" (p. 18) for mediating one's own behavior. Yet the social nature of these tools is very important: "the symbols of mediation are collectively produced, learned in practice, and remain distributed over others for a long period of time" (p. 38). Because the tools in the inquiry group were (re)defined collaboratively and were thoroughly situated in the teachers' knowledge and experience with their students, they were flexible enough to meet individual teachers' needs and support teachers in their continual process of reformulating subject positions. Rather than a top-down transmission model, in which teachers are handed instructional approaches, lesson plans, or other ideas and expected to implement them with fidelity, Penelope's case highlights how dialogic learning spaces, like a reflective inquiry group, can support teachers in integrating teaching tools flexibly into individual teaching contexts and in coming back together to reflect and further refine their work. In turn, the positions offered Penelope through the flexible, horizontal subject positions of teachers/learners in the inquiry group also supported her in trying out new practices that repositioned students as capable, willing, and active participants in their own learning.

Being a "manager" of students' writing

I begin this chapter with a glimpse into Penelope's writing instruction early in the year, in which she typically had accepted subject positions such as "manager" of students' writing and learning, in order to highlight the shifts in her teaching across the year. The following sections provide examples of Penelope's appropriation of tools and gradually shifting identity.

Early on in my observations, Penelope's whole-class instruction, as she admitted, tended to be short, typically between one and four minutes long. This instruction was sometimes disconnected from the students' actual writing (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/10/26, 2016/11/09, 2016/11/28). For example, early in their unit on writing biographies, Penelope and the ninth-graders looked at examples from the website Biography.com. After compiling a list of features they noticed about the genre, Penelope instructed students to get materials they needed for writing time, and then students wrote about whatever they chose during that work time (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/09). On another occasion, Penelope first asked students to read a *Wall Street Journal* article called "Most Students Don't Know When News Is Fake, Stanford Study Finds" and to then take notes while she went through a set of slides about evaluating the credibility of sources (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/28). These notes were taken in the "expository section" of students' interactive notebooks, a space typically reserved for test-prep practice. After they finished the credibility notes, Penelope announced they were moving into writing time and invited students to begin researching for their biographies. These examples of instruction, while important for students' learning as writers, were not explicitly connected to the work students were doing during their writing time.

Other whole-group writing instruction was mostly focused on giving reminders about what students should be working on or when things were due (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/10/19, 2016/12/07, 2016/12/12, 2017/01/10, 2017/01/12, 2017/01/13). For example, the following example came from late in the first semester as students were finishing up gathering research and writing rough drafts of biographies. Penelope offered the following whole-group instruction:

> So today is our last writer's workshop day, which means that while I'm not wanting our biographies to be done—because we are going to finish up and publish our biographies when we come back from break; we'll all take a nice little

> break from biographies; it will be wonderful; we'll come back fresh and renewed to get back into the lovely world of biography—I would like for everyone to have some sort of a rough draft, a first draft of their biography by the time we are done today with writing time. So, if that means that you need to put on pause your research for a little bit and get started on your rough draft, that you have enough research to at least get started on a rough draft, awesome. If that means that you just need to get in and start finally writing your rough draft, okay. If you've already started your first rough draft, if you've written one rough draft, then maybe you can be ahead of the game and you can be going back through and seeing if you need any more research. But I want at the end of writing time today for everyone to have at least the start of a rough draft. Okay? Do we think that is very possible to do today? Yes? (classroom transcript, 2016/12/12).

In this typical example of whole-class instruction, Penelope's talk offered students space to manage their time and writing process. She began by making sure they understood the constraints on their time: because of the upcoming final exam schedule and winter break, they would be losing work time that students might have expected to have, and she had also imposed a rough draft deadline to help them stay on track. With those constraints in mind, Penelope offered a few different possibilities for what students might work on during the next thirty minutes of work time. While offering students choice in how they managed their time, Penelope's talk remained close to task completion rather than helpful strategies that the students could transfer to future writing situations. Students' choices were based on external constraints rather than drawing on their own reasons for writing to guide their decision-making.

Similarly, and as described in her initial interview, Penelope's conferences, early in the year, tended to be focused on checking in with students to make sure they were moving along in their work (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/09/28, 2016/12/07, 2016/12/12) or on helping students problem-solve issues they were encountering in the specific piece of writing they were working on (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/09, 2016/11/16, 2016/12/07). For example, after the whole-group instruction Penelope offered while students were drafting biographies (see above), she engaged in the following one-on-one writing conferences. First, with Ana, Penelope quickly checked in to see where Ana was in her writing process:

> Penelope: All right. How are we doing over here?
>
> Ana: Good.
>
> Penelope: You've got your rough draft started?
>
> Ana: Yeah.
>
> Penelope: Cool. And we've got our sections and everything like that? [Ana nods.] Wonderful.
>
> (classroom transcript, 2016/12/12)

In this conference, lasting about 10 seconds, Penelope efficiently checked in with Ana, trusted her report that she was doing "good," and moved on to the next student. This next student, Alejandro, informed her that he was continuing to have trouble finding information about his famous person.

> Penelope: You couldn't find anything? Did we find some of this [pointing to his notebook]?
>
> Alejandro: Well, sort of.
>
> Penelope: Sort of?
>
> Alejandro: Well, I know some of this stuff.

Gathering this information about Alejandro's writing process, Penelope then helped him find a way forward in his work.

> Penelope: …I mean at least we should be able to find like what TV shows he's done, when they were, things like that. So I mean we can always just use that stuff. If we can't find things for every little moment, then—
>
> Alejandro: Yeah, that's what I was looking for and couldn't find it.
>
> Penelope: Yeah. But at least if we can do like, 'Okay, first he was on this show. He started on *MADtv*, and then he did this, and then he did this.' Right? Okay?
>
> Alejandro: Yeah. (classroom transcript, 2016/12/12)

Here Penelope acknowledged Alejandro's concern and helped him resolve the problem, assuring him that he did not need to find every detail about his person and rehearsing how he might get started with what he had found already. In both of these conferences, typical of others I observed and consistent with Penelope's own description of her writing conferences, she typically took up positions as a task-setter or a manager (e.g., Berliner, 1990), holding students accountable for their work through check-ins and trouble-shooting specific problems as they arose. While students did have a lot of choice in how they used their time and what they wrote about, Penelope's writing instruction was primarily product-driven, offering students subject positons as task-completers as opposed to more agentive designers.

Another concern that Penelope frequently raised in the inquiry group and in interviews was her students' talk during class. These concerns were shared by the other teachers in the inquiry group as well, as the benefits and drawbacks of student talk came up in all but a few of our conversations (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2016/10/25, 2016/11/15, 2016/11/29, 2016/12/13, 2017/01/17, 2017/02/07, 2017/05/16). In our first meeting, as the topic of "user-testing" (e.g., Hanington, 2003) and talk came up, Penelope explained her thoughts about students talking while they were working:

> It's hard. Because I know I encourage kids to, like 'You can be talking but you should be talking about your writing'…But it then becomes hard though too because the other side of me is just like, 'They're talking to each other! They're supposed to be writing…how do I know you're talking about writing when you're across the room!'…And like they'll ask if they can talk to people not in their [table] group, but I'm like, 'No, you have to stay in your group!'…I do it because I'm afraid they're just going to go talk to their friends, so it's that balance.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25)

While research on talk in the writing classroom has highlighted its potential as a resource for students (e.g., Auger, 2014; Kamberelis & Scott, 1992; Magnifico et al., 2019; Sperling, 1995; Taylor, 2017; VanDerHeide, 2018), talk can also be a concern for teachers as potentially distracting or disrupting students' learning. Penelope's descriptions of her classroom, as in the example above, often highlighted this tension she felt in her teaching.

In several observations, especially early in the year, (classroom fieldnotes, 2016/09/21, 2016/09/28, 2016/10/19, 2016/11/09; 2017/01/19, 2017/01/23, 2017/01/27, 2017/01/31, 2017/02/06), Penelope gave groups of students or the whole class warnings about talking too much while they were writing. Sometimes these were verbal reminders to be "doing more writing than talking" (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/09/28, 2017/01/23), and other times these were attached to consequences, such as Penelope recording the amount of time she felt their talking had become too disruptive and requiring them to stay after class to make up minutes "owed" to her (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/11/09) or Penelope changing (or threatening to change) seating arrangements (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/09/21).

Overall, these examples of both whole-class and one-on-one writing discourse and instruction shared characteristics often found in studies of classroom writing, such as a focus on correctness and form as well as disconnection from authentic writing processes and purposes (e.g., Brimi, 2012; Kiss & Mizusawa, 2018; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; Ryan & Barton, 2014; Watanabe, 2007). However, writing workshop philosophies—including those espoused in the local NWP site—instead aim to orient instruction towards "teaching the writer and not the writing" (Calkins, 1994, p. 228), working to help grow the individual writer or support the writer in making decisions rather than focusing on making the specific piece of writing better. Besides this disconnect with workshop philosophies, these examples also highlight Penelope's positioning in the classroom as a manager, primarily working to cover material and keep the classroom and individual students working as efficiently as possible.

This initial subject position as a manager was in conflict with ways the inquiry group was discussing writing as a design process. While she was sharing decisions about how students would use their writing time, ultimately students were writing for a "teacher-as-examiner" (Applebee & Langer, 2011) and for a grade in class rather than for more authentic purposes and audiences. Based on her participation in the writing workshop PD at her school and her continued efforts to implement workshop in her classroom, Penelope had clearly invested in the approach as an effective method for teaching writing to her students. However, as she described in her initial interview, it was “a big shift” for her in her teaching, and she recognized that “giving the children freedom, I think has been hard for me” (interview, 2016/09/26). Looking back later, she reflected that workshop “seemed a little difficult and a little far-fetched for my kids” and that she “just didn’t see it being something that I thought *my* kids could do” (interview, 2017/11/13).

While not the direct focus of this analysis, the “shift” for Penelope was also clear when her writing instruction was compared to reading instruction in her classroom. Until the end of the year, reading instruction was most often very teacher-centered. Like her early writing instruction, it was implicitly grounded in task completion, focused on teacher-defined content, and facilitated by the teacher as manager. Students were working on directed activities, such as filling out a teacher-created graphic organizer, collecting background information on specific topics related to their shared text, doing a group project related to a theme from their shared text. Or they were listening to Penelope or another student read aloud, with Penelope stopping the reading every 30 seconds to 2 minutes to ask a known-answer question (Dudley-Marling, 2004; Mehan, 1979) to make sure students were following along (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2016/09/21, 2016/09/28, 2016/11/09, 2016/12/07, 2017/01/10, 2017/01/30).

While Penelope was dedicated to trying writer’s workshop, her fear of entrusting students to make decisions about their learning kept her primarily in this traditional manager positioning in both her reading and writing instruction throughout the fall semester and early part of the spring semester. This fear was common across the English I teachers at Los Robles (see Williamson, 2018), where teaching “English” was often tied to a traditional valuing of literature study and both implicitly and explicitly connected with the high-stakes testing. Beatty (2012) draws on a comparison between places of learning and prisons to explain this tension that teachers often feel between the need to teach and the need to control in the classroom. Through this lens, teachers, like Penelope, must negotiate subject positions as both “instructor” and “warden,” especially within the “enactment of structures such as content frameworks and standardized tests to control behavior (of teachers as well as students) by the linked activity systems of school districts and governments” (Beatty, 2012, p. 293). Penelope’s subject position—perhaps with the exception of controlling when students left the classroom to use the restroom—did not seem quite as extreme as “warden.” However, in her subject position as classroom manager or executive (e.g., Berliner, 1990), Penelope appeared to hold the reins very tightly in reading instruction, and in writing instruction she still typically made most of the big decisions about genre, audience, and conventions, ultimately controlling students’ writing timelines and the evaluation of their final products. Penelope, while ready to step in to help problem-solve to keep the classroom and students’ writing process moving efficiently, seemed to expect students to make decisions during writing time without really empowering them to do so.

Trying on audience as a position and a tool for teaching

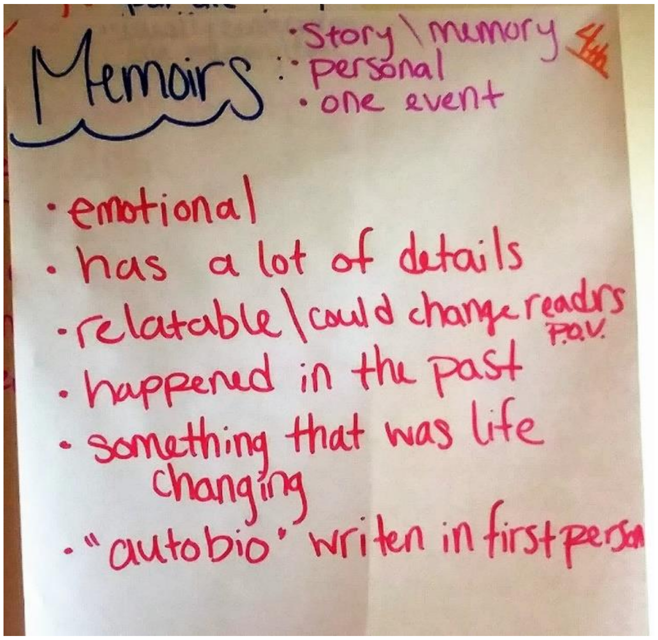
As outlined in my first finding, Penelope used specific moves—such as activating audience in individual writing conferences and making space for writers to talk with one another—as an entry point for changing her practice. Audience, as discussed in chapter five, was redefined in the group to include embedded subject positions for student-writers: in essence, writers who use audience as a tool for their writing have real purposes for writing, understand those audiences and their needs, and make decisions about their writing based on that information. While Penelope’s use of audience started small, these improvisations led her to find more opportunities for engaging in critical, humanizing writing instruction—making space in the classroom for students’ interests and knowledges, blurring expert/learner hierarchies by handing over decisions to students, and supporting students in recognizing the value and power of their voices in sharing their experiences and changing the world.

In chapter four, I discussed how Penelope, beginning in the spring semester, began appropriating more appreciative ways of talking about her students and taking up a more vulnerable stance towards reflecting on her teaching. This shift in her talk in the inquiry group was also accompanied by her gradual appropriation of concepts from the group's conversations into her teaching. For example, after students turned in a first draft of their biography pieces on Google Docs, Penelope read through them and left comments to help students with their revisions. As she conferred during class the next day, she explained to several students how she read their pieces from two different perspectives. For example:

> Carmen: Some of these questions I can't answer. Like the names—none of that pops up.
>
> Penelope: Okay…So this is what I did: I read all of you guys' stuff once, as like a teacher, and I found all the mistakes or pointed out some of those. And then I read them again as a reader. That's where I started asking myself like, 'Oh, what are their names?' That's where those questions started to pop in—what I, as someone who didn't know anything about your person, would want to know. Right? And if you can't find that stuff, that's fine. But that's what I want you to be thinking about as you're rereading it: 'Okay, what else will my readers want to know?' Okay? So, think on that. Because you know a lot about the person, so you might not think about all those little things that people who don't know anything about them might want to know. Make sense?
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/01/10)

Here, while the comments Penelope left students were still focused on fixing up the particular piece of writing, her explanation of those comments began to shift towards a strategy or a way of thinking that Carmen might be able to transfer to her revision of other pieces of writing as well. Leaving specific comments on students' writing to guide them in revising and editing a piece was a practice that Penelope was familiar with from her own experiences as a student and her previous experiences as a teacher. Within this practice, Penelope had typically taken up the subject positons of "teacher-as-examiner" (Applebee & Langer, 2011). Her students, like Carmen in this example, were also familiar with teacher comments and understood that since the teacher had always been their primary audience, their best course of action was to go through and fix the problems the teacher noted (see also Ferris, 2006; Matsumura, Patthey-Chavez, Valdes, & Garnier, 2002; Ruegg, 2017). However, as we see in her explanation to Carmen, Penelope implied less concern with students making the specific revisions suggested in her comments, and instead seemed to hope they would take up thinking about who their audience might be and what questions those readers might have. Audience, here, became an entry point for Penelope to try on a shift in her positioning and begin creating a little more space for student agency as writers.

Penelope continued trying out this dual positioning—as teacher-as-examiner and as reader—throughout the rest of the biography unit and into their memoir unit and writing-for-social-justice unit later in the spring semester. Early in the memoir unit, for example, Penelope and the ninth-graders noticed how audience was important for writers working in this genre (see Figure 6.1).



Memoirs :
- Story \ memory
- personal
- one event

- emotional
- has a lot of details
- relatable \ could change readers P.O.V.
- happened in the past
- something that was life changing
- "autobio" writen in first person

Figure 6.1. Anchor chart of initial memoir "noticings."

Building upon that noticing, in one of Penelope's first minilessons for the unit, she invoked audience as part of a strategy for coming up with ideas for writing memoirs:

> …But another thing we could be thinking about…is we could ask ourselves what I'm going to call 'big questions.' So we can ask ourselves, 'What is my first memory?'…Or you could think about 'What was your happiest memory?'…Or you could write about your saddest memory…You could write about a day that you were really proud of yourself…Remember, one thing that we talked about…was we said that memoirs are relatable, right? So even if it doesn't seem like it's the world's most amazing story, that doesn't mean that somebody else in the classroom or one of your readers won't be able to relate to it. Right? We've all had those really awesome days; we've all had those really crappy days...
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/01/27)

In this minilesson, Penelope reminded students of a timeline strategy they used earlier in the unit and introduced a new strategy: asking yourself big questions to tap into to memories readers might relate to. This particular strategy, as she mentioned at the end of the minilesson, came from Penelope's thinking about how writers might ensure that their memoirs were relatable to their readers; she hoped to show her ninth-graders how targeting memories attached to strong emotions could help writers connect with their readers. While memoir writing may often be linked with representative purposes—or writing to reflect or explore one's own life, here Paige also connected memoir writing to its *communicative* purpose (Kress, 2010). Audience, then, was a tool for writers to consider how their choice of topic and other writing decisions might change the way potential readers engaged with their work.

This foregrounding of audience continued throughout the memoir unit as Penelope came back to audience in future minilessons and in individual writing conferences. For example, Penelope sat down next to Gabriel as he was revising his memoir. Gabriel began by asking her advice about changing the ending of his piece to end with him waking up in bed and realizing the whole story was a dream. She offered:

> Okay. But remember, it should—we don't want to get too, too far away from what really happened, right?...So if we end up doing the whole thing or we find out that the whole thing's a dream? Then…it's like, 'Wait. I thought this was supposed to have really happened'…you sort of end up with the reader being angry with you at the end. And we don't want that. Right?
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/02/27)

Rather than just telling Gabriel that he should not or could not employ this particular craft move in his memoir, Penelope drew on audience as a tool, thinking with Gabriel about what effect this move might have on his readers.

As they continued talking, it became clear that Gabriel really wanted to use his idea, but also that the dream move was really attractive because he was struggling with pacing and deciding where to end his piece. He explained he "already wrote quite a lot" and was not even at Six Flags yet, and Penelope responded, again drawing on audience:

> You can think about it like…'what's sort of the thing that I want to get across to my readers?' Was it my whole entire day at Six Flags? Or was it just my riding that roller coaster and surviving it?…the whole point of this [mentor text, for example,] had more to do with—she was using her messy room as sort of a way that she talked about how she found herself and realized she wasn't the person she wanted to be anymore…From what I had read, it sounded like to me that your memoir so far was more about overcoming this fear of going on this really scary roller coaster? Right? More so than just spending a day with your girlfriend? But maybe that's not what you want it to be…
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/02/27)

In this last part of the writing conference, Penelope employed audience in offering up readers as a tool for Gabriel to use in his writing. She reminded him that when writers make decisions about what to include in their work, they might step back to think about what their purpose is, what they want to get across to their readers. Using audience afforded Penelope positioning not as *the* intended audience as the expert-teacher or "teacher-as-examiner" (Applebee & Langer, 2011), but instead as a fellow writer who had strategies or thinking tools to share with her student as well as a potential reader, offering her take on what seemed important when she read his earlier draft. Accordingly, employing audience, as (re)defined in the inquiry group and in Penelope's classroom teaching, positioned the Gabriel as a writer capable of making decisions about his own writing.

The students' final memoirs reflected their decision-making about who they imagined as their audience and what they wanted their audience to feel or relate to while reading. In an inquiry group meeting a couple months later, Penelope chose two of these memoirs to share and discuss with the group. She introduced these examples as ones she "liked…because they both incorporated poetry" (inquiry group transcript, 2017/04/13). Before Penelope could say anything more about the first piece (Figure 6.2), the other teachers in the inquiry group began discussing specific lines and craft moves they admired in Martina's piece.

Zoe: Oh my gosh!

Paige: And the end, it seems like this part…it's like inside her head versus just narration. And she's switching between the italics and regular font.

Charlotte: I like this sentence: 'We looked better than the other team, passed better, shot better goals than them too.'

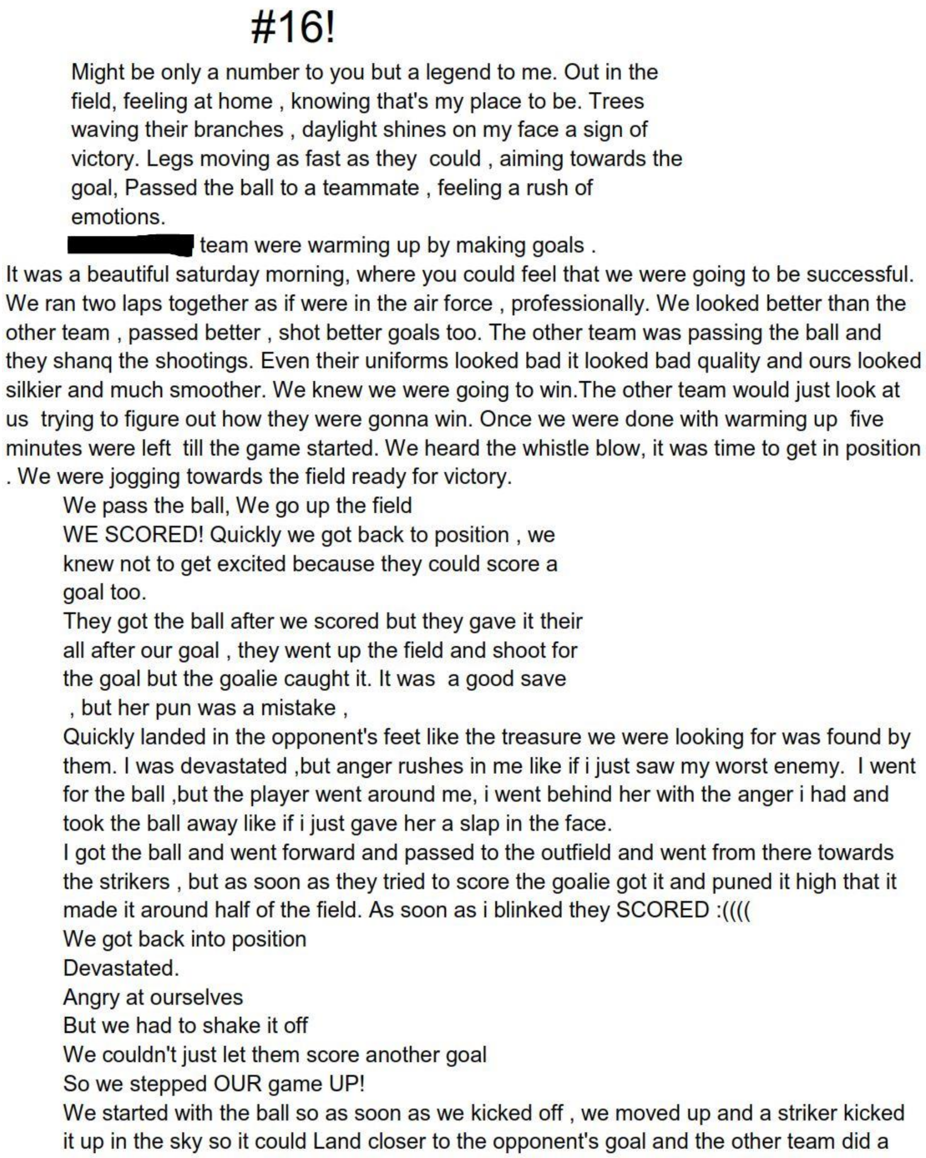
Paige: Yeah. And '…ours looked silkier and much smoother.'

Zoe: 'I went behind her. I went for the ball, but the player went around me. I went behind her with the anger I had, and I took the ball away like I had just gave her a slap in the face.'

Paige: Mmm.

Zoe: Daammnn. That's incredible! This makes me want to go write!...What a cool way to start her story! That's so incredible. And the fact that she's talking—'you.' She's talking *to* the audience. Audience is *sooo* in the picture here. I want to write something like that.

(inquiry group transcript, 2017/04/13)



#16!

Might be only a number to you but a legend to me. Out in the
field, feeling at home , knowing that's my place to be. Trees
waving their branches , daylight shines on my face a sign of
victory. Legs moving as fast as they could , aiming towards the
goal, Passed the ball to a teammate , feeling a rush of
emotions.

[redacted] team were warming up by making goals .
It was a beautiful saturday morning, where you could feel that we were going to be successful.
We ran two laps together as if were in the air force , professionally. We looked better than the
other team , passed better , shot better goals too. The other team was passing the ball and
they shanq the shootings. Even their uniforms looked bad it looked bad quality and ours looked
silkier and much smoother. We knew we were going to win.The other team would just look at
us trying to figure out how they were gonna win. Once we were done with warming up five
minutes were left till the game started. We heard the whistle blow, it was time to get in position
. We were jogging towards the field ready for victory.

We pass the ball, We go up the field
WE SCORED! Quickly we got back to position , we
knew not to get excited because they could score a
goal too.
They got the ball after we scored but they gave it their
all after our goal , they went up the field and shoot for
the goal but the goalie caught it. It was a good save
, but her pun was a mistake ,
Quickly landed in the opponent's feet like the treasure we were looking for was found by
them. I was devastated ,but anger rushes in me like if i just saw my worst enemy. I went
for the ball ,but the player went around me, i went behind her with the anger i had and
took the ball away like if i just gave her a slap in the face.
I got the ball and went forward and passed to the outfield and went from there towards
the strikers , but as soon as they tried to score the goalie got it and puned it high that it
made it around half of the field. As soon as i blinked they SCORED :((((
We got back into position
Devastated.
Angry at ourselves
But we had to shake it off
We couldn't just let them score another goal
So we stepped OUR game UP!
We started with the ball so as soon as we kicked off , we moved up and a striker kicked
it up in the sky so it could Land closer to the opponent's goal and the other team did a

Figure 6.2. First page of Martina's final memoir.

This appreciative look at Martina's decision-making as a writer continued for almost ten minutes during the inquiry group meeting. At one point Penelope also admitted that she was feeling bad about how she had gone in and "fixed" some of Martina's unconventional line breaks, fonts, and spacing. She had originally thought they were mistakes Martina made moving her piece to Google Docs. Penelope explained:

> I don't know what she did—but she *intentionally* put this stuff in. And there was even more that I did figure out how to like 'fix.' Now I kind of wish that I hadn't… Because I did it and she was like, 'Miss, why did you mess with my stuff?' And I'm like, 'But it looks funny.' And she's like, 'But I wanted it that way!'…Now I learned my lesson not to touch their stuff.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2017/04/13)

The feedback Penelope got about her students' writing here, along with her own growing appreciation of her students' decision-making in their writing, helped to reinforce the changes she was making in her practice. Specifically, the ways students responded to her use of audience as a tool and her repositioning of students as designers in their writing process contributed to Penelope's continued improvisation in her classroom. She had initially been hesitant to trust students with decisions about their writing; however, when Penelope began sanctioning new positions for her students as writers making choices based on their audience, she—and the other inquiry group members—were pleased with the results.

Rethinking talk in the writing classroom

As Penelope was beginning to try out new subject positions herself and offer new positions to students through her writing instruction, she was also continuing to grapple with students' talk during their writing time. Penelope's history-in-person (Holland et al., 1998) was primarily built on teaching experiences where she (or the teacher figure) was positioned as a manager (e.g., Berliner, 1990) or even as a prison warden (e.g., Beatty, 2012). In that position, part of her job was to "to insure order, maintain a focus on work, and minimize the difficulties associated with the behavior problems that occur among human groups" (Berliner, 1990, p. 89). During our February inquiry group meeting, Penelope explained that she had become so exasperated with students' talk that she took away writer's workshop, which she saw as a privilege afforded them, and made them do a test-prep practice essay instead.

> I'm not a fan of my children this week. So it's hard for me to talk about them in positive [*laugh*] ways.…they've gotten so bad at writer's workshop, of not writing—like all they're doing is talking, and it's not about writing. And I just feel like all I'm doing is just constantly like telling them that. And so, today …they lost their writer's workshop and they had to write [a test] essay.
>
> (inquiry group transcript, 2017/02/07)

Penelope was concerned that students were not using talk in ways that supported their writing but instead in ways that kept them from writing at all.

As the inquiry group teachers continued their conversation, they moved into thinking about other ways that could go.

> Paige: What would have helped them? Like set time? I feel like in [the NWP summer institute] didn't we do—like, 'Okay, we going to have three minutes to talk and then everyone has to write' or something?
>
> Penelope: That's what I think might need to be the case. But—
>
> Zoe: I have to do that with my first-graders, like 'Talk before you're going to write first.' (inquiry group transcript, 2017/02/07)

Paige and Zoe, sharing from their experience as writers and as writing teachers, moved the conversation into thinking about other possibilities—like creating space for students to get out stories or ideas they need to share before moving into writing or using talk as a tool for rehearsing their writing before they begin—that would help resituate talk as a resource for students rather than a distraction. Later in the conversation, other possibilities emerged such as structuring their work time to include designated time for talking throughout, formalizing groups of students as "writing groups" and teaching into ways of talking about their writing together, or letting students reflect on and choose their own seats based on who would help motivate or inspire them to write.

In an interview with Penelope, just a few days later, she explained that the last inquiry group meeting was "a little eye-opening and a little disappointing at the same time" (interview, 2017/02/10). She had also shared videos of her conferencing with two students. Just like in the conversation about talk in the classroom, Paige and Zoe were very appreciative of Penelope's teaching but also excitedly offered lots of possibilities for follow-up minilessons or other ways to continue supporting the writers in her classroom. Penelope explained she felt a little demoralized that she had not thought of all of those ideas, yet was recognizing that "from last year to this year, it's better, but it's not where I want it to be" (interview, 2017/02/10). She went on to describe how she was trying out two of the ideas from the last inquiry group meeting: asking students to reflect on who they should sit by as well as structuring their writing time to include two rounds of 3 minutes for talking and 10 minutes for writing.

In class that day, Penelope explained to her students that during their writing time, if they come up with "a question [they] need to ask somebody during [their] writing time," they should "just write that off to the side in [their] notebook and then ask them about it during [their] talk time" (classroom transcript, 2017/02/10). While I only saw two class periods where Penelope used this strategy, students' talk as being distracting or disruptive did not come up again in the inquiry group or her interviews, and with the exception of one comment (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/03) she did not bring this concern up with students during any of my classroom observations either. In her final unit of study (described more later), Penelope often encouraged informal talk at the students' tables as they were trying out and then layering their thinking on topic choices (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/10, 2017/04/17, 2017/04/18, 2017/04/24). She also explicitly structured one day's writing time as "topic interviews" for students to spend time just talking through their ideas and trying them out on an audience (classroom, fieldnotes, 2017/04/25). While other factors may have also contributed—like the relief of pressures from the test or perhaps the shared trauma of getting through the test together, Penelope's concerns about students' talk became less visible as she continued trying out the new subject position as reader and creating opportunities for her students to be active decision-makers with real purposes and audiences for writing. Penelope seemed to grow to see talk among student-writers, as other scholars (e.g., Auger, 2014; Magnifico et al., 2019) have noted, as a tool that "highlights the social nature of composing, allows writers to develop and refine their ideas, and opens up the audience beyond the traditional 'teacher-as-examiner'" (Magnifico et al., 2019, p. 108).

Looking across these early improvisations in her teaching help demonstrate my first finding. For Penelope, audience, in particular, seemed to work as an entry point for transforming her teaching. As the examples above highlight, Penelope began with a seemingly small move—responding to her ninth-graders' writing not just as a teacher but also as a reader. Seeing and reflecting on how this move affected students, Penelope then built upon that entry point, expanding how audience could work as a tool for her as a teacher and for her students as writers. Looking back at Penelope's writing instruction across the year, it is clear that audience was not just a tool she was offering students, but was also a tool she could return to, especially when she felt less confident about what to say to students about writing and when she wanted to ensure that she was positioning students as the decision-makers. In one of our inquiry group meetings, Penelope described how this worked as a powerful tool for her, particularly in her conferencing with students: "I know it's made my conversations with kids easier when I'm conferencing, and I notice that when they're kind of stuck on maybe picking a genre or trying to find that purpose, it's kind of like, 'Who's your audience?'" (inquiry group transcript, 2017/05/16).

Audience, as redefined in the inquiry group, was a means for activating design thinking and for helping "reinvigorate the notion that writing does work in the world" (Purdy, 2014, p. 634). Accordingly, opening up the social purposes of writing, for Penelope, also meant loosening up her control in the classroom as she began recognizing the potential power of talk as a way of trying out ideas and working through problems with their classmates as readers and fellow writers. She used audience and purpose, first as small improvisations, but then "used again and again, they [became] tools of agency or self-control and change" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 40). Drawing upon these tools in her writing instruction, as outlined in my second finding, supported Penelope in beginning to let go of her traditional subject position as a manager, and instead try out positions as reader or fellow writer. This shift did not just affect her own reflexive positioning, but as subject positions are relational, “simply asserting one’s own identity position may have unintended identity implications for others in relation to that person” (Reeves, 2009, p. 36). Thus, while Penelope was still ultimately the arbitrator of “good writing” and made some of the big decisions about audience and purpose, across the early part of the spring semester she also began opening up space for students to make decisions about their writing based on their understandings of who their audiences were and what the social, communicative purposes of the genre (e.g., biography or memoir) were. She began taking bigger risks, gradually redesigning her teaching as more critical, humanizing writing pedagogy.

TAKING BIGGER RISKS: CHANGES IN PRACTICE AND IDENTITY

While the previous sections outlined Penelope’s initial positioning and her entry points into taking up and offering new subject positions in her classroom, this section documents how she took bigger risks in her teaching and how her continued improvisations began to alter her identity, or her way of imagining her future self and her activity in the world. As Penelope became increasingly more confident in trying out improvisations that went against the standard narrative of “teaching English” at Los Robles, she also became more confident in trying out other ideas she heard and discussed in the group, including using more student examples in her whole-class instruction (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2017/01/30, 2017/02/06, 2017/04/10) and eventually trying out a purpose-study, similar to those Paige had been trying (see chapter five), as the last unit of study of the year. Holland and colleagues (1998) describe agency and identity re-formation as a long and uncertain process. However, that long-term process “happens through day-to-day encounters and is built, again and again, by means of artifacts, or indices of positioning, that newcomers eventually learn to identify and then possibly to identify themselves with” (p. 133). Penelope’s small improvisations, using audience to reposition herself as a reader and fellow writer as well as to create opportunities for her student to make purposeful decisions about their writing, gradually became markers of her changing identity as an English teacher.

Experimenting with purpose-study: Writing for social justice

Through her participation in the inquiry group, Penelope seemed to first test out some of her thinking about reorganizing her writing instruction to include purpose-studies, slowly convincing herself that she could try out this work in her classroom. In one of the inquiry group meetings, she started trying out the idea:

Penelope: …when I'm here with you guys I'm like, 'Oh, my kids don't need to, they don't need to type up a paper. They can do a poster'…I mean like that's real-world though…[If you] wanted to do something—if you wanted to be an agent of change, you have all these different outlets you can do it in…I think us as teachers, maybe—or maybe it's just me—we get so set on like, 'No, everyone has to be doing the same thing, and it has to be this because I have to have this stupid rubric to go with it.'

Paige: And it can be less scary a little bit, to be like, 'Okay, I know what's going on.'

Penelope: Yeah. Well, that too.

Zoe: It's easier to have immersion or a less-varied immersion of text, and you can study more common texts…But you can still do that when there is an open concept like writing for change or being an activist.

Penelope: Right. Yeah. And so I know, I mean so I love what you're [Paige] doing with the persuasive [purpose-study]…And I want to share it with my tenth-grade teachers, but I also, I know those few people on that team that will be like, 'But this isn't like the STAAR test. How is a poster going to prepare them?'

Charlotte: But [students are] still writing lots of stuff. It's often the exact same amount of writing.

Zoe: And the visual organization could, will transfer into a more text-focused piece.

Paige: Yeah, right.

Penelope: Yeah, I mean, *I* know that.

Zoe: But [other teachers at your school] won't know that.

Penelope: Yeah, I just feel like I know there's those people on that team that are going to be like, 'But they need to *write* it.' They did op-eds this year…[but] that's not the only way people express their—the way they express themselves. (inquiry group transcript, 2017/03/02)

In this conversation, Penelope reflected on her own history-in-person as a teacher at Los Robles High. Like at other schools (e.g., Brimi, 2012; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; Skerrett, 2010), having shared rubrics, focusing on preparing students for the high-stakes writing assessment, and valuing traditional print forms over multimodal forms of writing were markers of the subject positions Penelope lived at school. However, she was now calling these "indices of positioning" which may have previously been "relatively unremarked, unfigured, out of awareness" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 140) into question as they contrasted with the writing teacher identities offered up in the inquiry group. In response, the others in the group offered Penelope some relief (i.e., *"It can be less scary…"* and *"It can be easier…"*) while also reinforcing her exploration of ideas that conflicted with her team's values (i.e., *"But they're still writing…"* and *"And visual organization could…"*).

In this same conversation, Penelope went on to share an example of a student challenging the conception of memoir—as a relatively short, narrative, prose text focused on an incident from one's life—that Penelope and the other English I teachers had presented to students. Faced with the student's question about why their memoir could not look different, namely, why it could not be in the form of a poem, Penelope recounted feeling sheepish and not being sure how to respond: "You're right. [A poem] can be a memoir. But that's not the kind *we're* writing" (inquiry group transcript, 2017/03/02). She went on to explain how audience, in particular, was helping her rethink how she might frame units of study.

Penelope: I feel like if you approach your writing from an audience [and purpose] first and then worry about the output, it just makes so much more sense that way…I don't know why I've been so drawn to do it the opposite way.

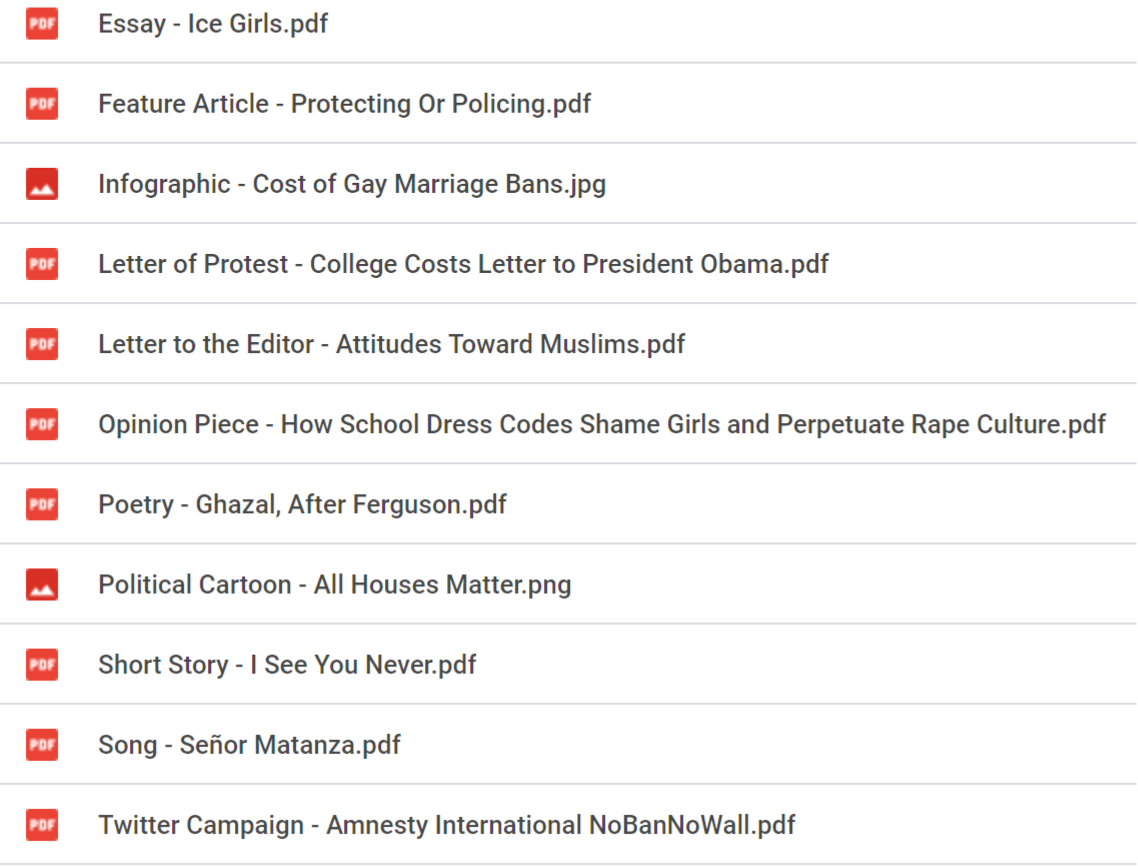
Charlotte: Because that's how it's always done in school. [*group laughter*]

Paige: Right! But it makes it so much more—it just also gives you something as the teacher to come back to. I just kept feeling like it was a way [to give] things for them to think about without being like, 'This is me telling you to think about that.' But like, 'Do you think your audience would understand that? Do you think your audience would want that?'…It became less like trying to please me, and more like, 'You have this vision, so…is this piece going to work for your vision?'

Penelope: Yeah. Yes! (inquiry group transcript, 2017/03/02)

Here Penelope, and then Paige, offered up thinking about how audience was becoming a tool for rethinking their writing instruction in both structural and in-the-moment ways. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) explain how individuals can (re)form relational identities by creating improvisations "that come from the meeting of persons, cultural resources, and situations in practice" and then using those as heuristics for future activity: "To the extent that these productions are used again and again, they can become tools of agency or self-control and change" (p. 40). Recognizing that what counted as writing and good writing instruction at Los Robles was not the only way things could be, Penelope's gradual use of purpose and audience, as redefined in the group, supported her in not just in trying out some new ideas in her classroom but also in repositioning herself and the way she thought about writing and writing instruction. Within the figured world of the inquiry group, Penelope's discussions with other teachers helped open space to reimagine new possibilities for her teaching and for the stories she told about herself and her students. As she tried these out in practice, those improvisations on her standard narrative of teaching English became heuristics for her actions in future situations, eventually leading to an "altered subjectivity, an altered identity" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 18). This slow, recursive change led her to try out writing for social justice with her students, a much bigger risk than she had previously taken in her classroom instruction.

Directly after the standardized state assessment in late March, Penelope led students first in an immersion of different types of texts all written for the purpose of promoting social justice. The Google Drive folder of texts—compiled by Penelope and me—contained essays, opinion pieces, feature articles, infographics, letters, poems, short stories, social media campaigns, and songs (see Figure 6.3).



Essay - Ice Girls.pdf
Feature Article - Protecting Or Policing.pdf
Infographic - Cost of Gay Marriage Bans.jpg
Letter of Protest - College Costs Letter to President Obama.pdf
Letter to the Editor - Attitudes Toward Muslims.pdf
Opinion Piece - How School Dress Codes Shame Girls and Perpetuate Rape Culture.pdf
Poetry - Ghazal, After Ferguson.pdf
Political Cartoon - All Houses Matter.png
Short Story - I See You Never.pdf
Song - Señor Matanza.pdf
Twitter Campaign - Amnesty International NoBanNoWall.pdf

Figure 6.3. Examples of texts offered in writing-for-social-justice unit.

These texts, primarily written in English but some in Spanish or a combination of languages, were chosen based on current events and in effort to showcase a wide variety of genre possibilities beyond traditional classroom writing and to find topics that “speak to the day-to-day reality, struggles, concerns, and dreams” (Bartolomé, 1994, p. 176) of students at Los Robles.

As students read across pieces for a couple class periods, Penelope asked them to pay attention to why someone might write this kind of text and why someone might read it. After talking through and listing out ideas together, Penelope's ninth-graders quickly noted that the pieces all had something to do with social justice, or "talking about things that are wrong in our society" (classroom transcript, 2017/03/31). Every other writing unit that Penelope had led as a teacher, or even encountered as a student herself, began with the teacher assigning students a particular genre they would write. Through the writing workshop PD, she had become familiar with introducing genres through immersion and inquiry rather than just telling students what the genre looked like or giving them a checklist or formula; however, those units still began with the genre, the examples of that genre the teachers chose to share, and the features common to those forms, first. Here, in Penelope's writing-for-social-justice unit, students' first introduction began with questions about purpose ("Why would someone write this?") and audience ("Why would someone read this?"). This change helped Penelope and her students move towards "recognizing how formal features, rather than being arbitrary, are connected to social purposes and to ways of being and knowing in relationship to these purposes" (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 4).

Over the next few weeks, Penelope led students in collecting ideas in their notebooks about social justice topics. Her minilessons included strategies like listing and sharing questions they have about the world (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/03), writing about things they had seen or experienced that were unfair (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/04), and thinking about different groups they belong to and in which spaces that group membership holds power or not (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/10). Penelope then asked students to start narrowing down to the topic they were most interested in writing about as they did some more writing and research about those topics.

One strategy she offered students during this phase was finding a writing partner and doing what she called a topic interview (2017/04/25). For example, one pair of students, Gabriel and Carla, talked for nearly 23 minutes, moving back and forth between

Spanish and English and responding as potential readers to each other's thinking. Their conversation began as follows:

> Gabriel: Everyone else picks like racism, gender equality and all that. But no one really thinks about why video games can be sometimes strange.
>
> Carla: In what way?
>
> Gabriel: Like how parents assume—it's their first option, like to why kids are violent, because the game influences them. They say stuff like that. I want to prove to them that that's wrong.
>
> Carla: I'm not quite understanding it…Put it in a way that I—put it in a way that someone who doesn't play video games can understand it.
>
> Gabriel: I want to prove—…I want to show and open up that video games aren't what you think they are.
>
> Carla: Okay, but like I'm not quite getting how it connects to an injustice. I guess that some people assume that video games are going to be this?
>
> Gabriel: Yeah.
>
> Carla: That is the injustice: that they assume?
>
> Gabriel: Yeah. I want to prove that's wrong. To change their opinions.
>
> Carla: Okay, what's your opinion on this issue and why?
>
> Gabriel: That it isn't fair that—you can't just assume, it's kind of like the thing you can't assume a book by its cover. It's kind of the same thing with video games. You can't just assume that just because this video game is this way that it makes kids violent.
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/04/25)

In this example, Gabriel has picked a topic he was clearly passionate about and that is close to his social world. Carla, here taking a position as a potential reader, worked to understand Gabriel's purpose and point out flaws in the presentation of his thinking so far. Her statements (i.e., "*Put it in a way…*) helped Gabriel realize that his message was not reaching his intended audience: people who did not play and maybe made assumptions about video games. Other conversations, such as Rodrigo, Carmen, and

Adrián's talk about gender roles in dating, worked as a space for testing out specific arguments and thinking about what approaches might work on different kinds of audiences (classroom fieldnotes, 2017/04/25). Penelope—who often showed concern about whether or not talk was "on-task"—offered this strategy that positioned not just herself as a potential reader, but the students' peers as readers who could help them think through and try out their ideas as writers. These conversations, in turn, worked as a form of "user-testing" (as described in chapter five) or a way of testing ideas out on a potential audience before creating a final draft.

As students got closer to envisioning their final products and drafting, Penelope brought students back to both audience and purpose as they thought about what shape their writing might take. For example, in one minilesson, after she had asked students to begin thinking about who they were thinking about as their audience, Penelope also drew on purpose in ways we talked about in the inquiry group—as more than the traditional persuade, inform, entertain that the ninth-graders were familiar with from their histories as reading test-takers.

> We've been thinking about our audience, right? Who it is that we might be writing to. Also, we've sort of been thinking about how are we going to present our information: like, how are we best going to get information to our audience?...And yes, we're writing this 'Because Ms. Tipton is telling us to,' but hopefully you have your own purpose for why you want to write this. Why you picked this topic? What you want to have happen with that? And we all sort of know those main three: we know the persuade, we know the inform, we know the entertain, right? But on top of that, there can be a lot of other reasons. Maybe we're writing to create a change or to create talk—like a dialogue or a conversation about the topic… (classroom transcript, 2017/05/09)

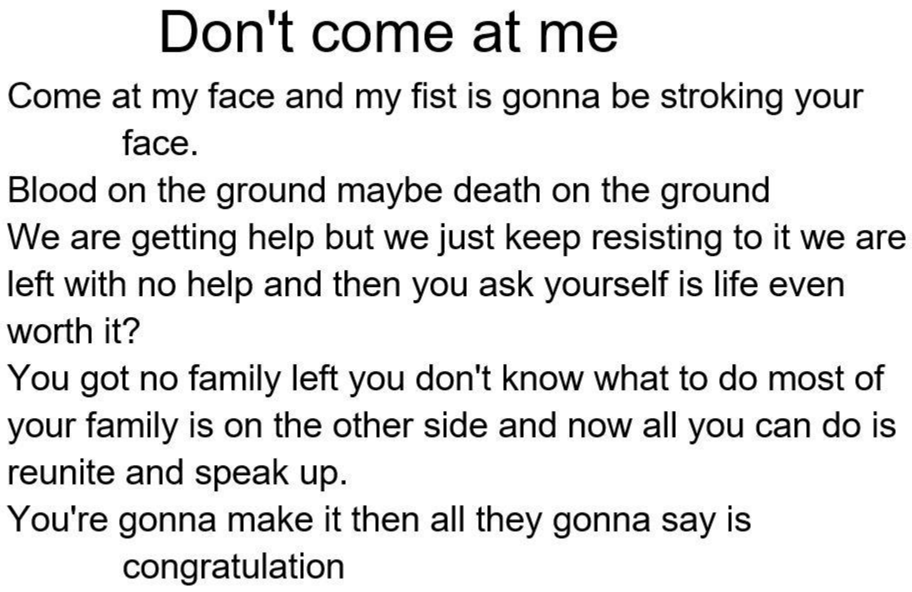
In this minilesson, Penelope positioned students not just as having their own audiences beyond the teacher, but also as writers with complex purposes for writing—purposes that would help guide them in making further decisions about their work. She introduced questions (i.e., "Why did you pick this topic? What do you want to have happen with that?") she would come back to in conferences over the next several days to help students continue to narrow their focus and choose a genre that best fit their purpose and audience.

In one conference, with Fernando, Penelope used questions about purpose and audience to help him name his audience and use that information as he continued researching his topic.

> Penelope: So who's your audience?
>
> Fernando: People that want to stop bullying.
>
> Penelope: Okay? So if we were going to make posters of your thing and hang them up, where do you think we should hang them up?
>
> Fernando: Schools.
>
> Penelope: Okay, so you're kind of targeting teenagers and stuff like that?
>
> Fernando: Yeah.
>
> Penelope: Okay. Excellent. Because again, that's what you're going to keep in mind as you're going through stuff: are you picking out stuff that your audience will care about, right?
>
> (classroom transcript, 2017/05/09)

Fernando had already explained that he wanted to try making an infographic, both because he was burnt out on writing "essays" and he thought it would fit his purpose of convincing people they should not be bullies. However, his answer to Penelope's question about audience was somewhat vague ("People that want to stop bullying"). Asking more about what he envisioned doing with his infographic, they further narrowed his audience before Penelope reminded him that this information was important as he continued gathering information and making decisions about his piece. The next day, in a conversation with me, Fernando described that he was currently thinking about his audience to choose what were "the most important things" and what to get rid of (classroom transcript, 2017/05/10). In looking at examples of infographic mentor texts, he also noticed they included a lot of statistics and decided to survey the other students in his class to get information that was directly related to his audience: other students at his school. Fernando had clear ideas about who his audience was and what kinds of information might best persuade those readers: he was making decisions based on his own authentic purposes and audience.

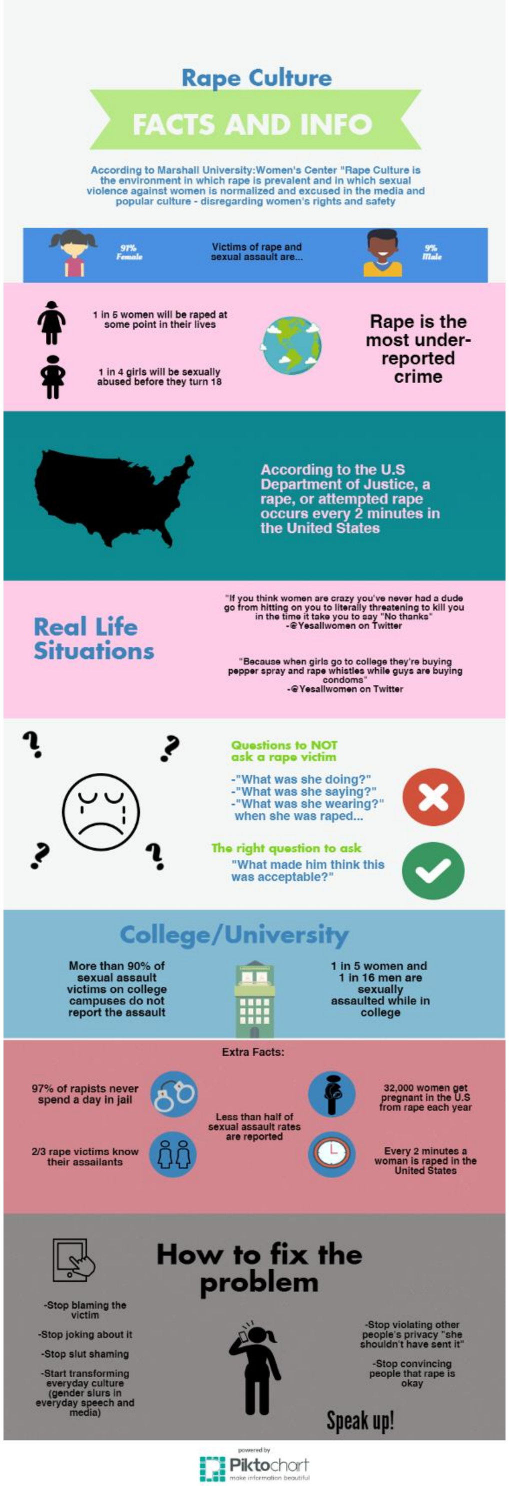
The biggest decision that Penelope left up to her ninth-graders during this purpose-study was what genre they would write in. Again, up to this point, all of Penelope's writing experiences, both as a student and a teacher in schools, were centered on the whole class studying and/or creating the same genre. In this writing-for-social-justice unit, however, Penelope's students went on to create final pieces that represented a wide array of genres, including political cartoons, essays, opinion pieces, poems, infographics, scripts, and short documentaries. Figures 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6 show just a few examples of students' final pieces, included here to highlight how Penelope's instruction opened up possibilities for writing, including genre, topic, and linguistic choices not traditionally sanctioned in school spaces.



Don't come at me

Come at my face and my fist is gonna be stroking your
face.
Blood on the ground maybe death on the ground
We are getting help but we just keep resisting to it we are
left with no help and then you ask yourself is life even
worth it?
You got no family left you don't know what to do most of
your family is on the other side and now all you can do is
reunite and speak up.
You're gonna make it then all they gonna say is
congratulation

Figure 6.4. Martina's poem about anger and immigration.



Rape Culture

FACTS AND INFO

According to Marshall University:Women's Center "Rape Culture is the environment in which rape is prevalent and in which sexual violence against women is normalized and excused in the media and popular culture - disregarding women's rights and safety

91% Female

Victims of rape and sexual assault are...

9% Male

1 in 5 women will be raped at some point in their lives

1 in 4 girls will be sexually abused before they turn 18

Rape is the most under-reported crime

According to the U.S Department of Justice, a rape, or attempted rape occurs every 2 minutes in the United States

Real Life Situations

"If you think women are crazy you've never had a dude go from hitting on you to literally threatening to kill you in the time it take you to say "No thanks"
-@Yesallwomen on Twitter

"Because when girls go to college they're buying pepper spray and rape whistles while guys are buying condoms"
-@Yesallwomen on Twitter

Questions to NOT ask a rape victim

-"What was she doing?"
-"What was she saying?"
-"What was she wearing?"
when she was raped...

The right question to ask

"What made him think this was acceptable?"

College/University

More than 90% of sexual assault victims on college campuses do not report the assault

1 in 5 women and 1 in 16 men are sexually assaulted while in college

Extra Facts:

97% of rapists never spend a day in jail

2/3 rape victims know their assailants

Less than half of sexual assault rates are reported

32,000 women get pregnant in the U.S from rape each year

Every 2 minutes a woman is raped in the United States

How to fix the problem

-Stop blaming the victim

-Stop joking about it

-Stop slut shaming

-Start transforming everyday culture (gender slurs in everyday speech and media)

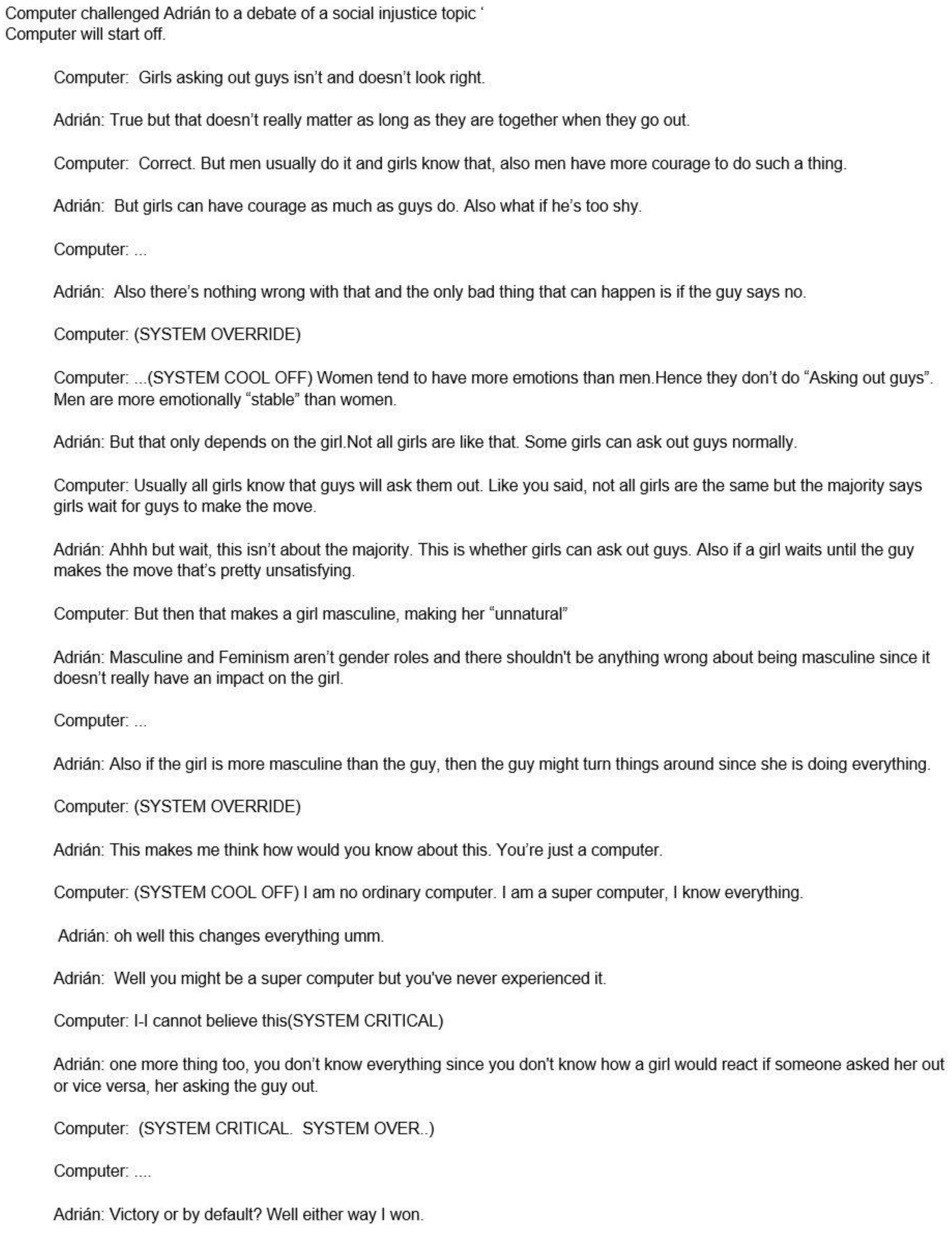
-Stop violating other people's privacy "she shouldn't have sent it"

-Stop convincing people that rape is okay

Speak up!

powered by
Piktochart
make information beautiful

Figure 6.5. Sara's infographic about rape culture in the US.



Computer challenged Adrián to a debate of a social injustice topic ‘
Computer will start off.

Computer: Girls asking out guys isn’t and doesn’t look right.

Adrián: True but that doesn’t really matter as long as they are together when they go out.

Computer: Correct. But men usually do it and girls know that, also men have more courage to do such a thing.

Adrián: But girls can have courage as much as guys do. Also what if he’s too shy.

Computer: ...

Adrián: Also there’s nothing wrong with that and the only bad thing that can happen is if the guy says no.

Computer: (SYSTEM OVERRIDE)

Computer: ...(SYSTEM COOL OFF) Women tend to have more emotions than men.Hence they don’t do “Asking out guys”. Men are more emotionally “stable” than women.

Adrián: But that only depends on the girl.Not all girls are like that. Some girls can ask out guys normally.

Computer: Usually all girls know that guys will ask them out. Like you said, not all girls are the same but the majority says girls wait for guys to make the move.

Adrián: Ahhh but wait, this isn’t about the majority. This is whether girls can ask out guys. Also if a girl waits until the guy makes the move that’s pretty unsatisfying.

Computer: But then that makes a girl masculine, making her “unnatural”

Adrián: Masculine and Feminism aren’t gender roles and there shouldn't be anything wrong about being masculine since it doesn’t really have an impact on the girl.

Computer: ...

Adrián: Also if the girl is more masculine than the guy, then the guy might turn things around since she is doing everything.

Computer: (SYSTEM OVERRIDE)

Adrián: This makes me think how would you know about this. You’re just a computer.

Computer: (SYSTEM COOL OFF) I am no ordinary computer. I am a super computer, I know everything.

Adrián: oh well this changes everything umm.

Adrián: Well you might be a super computer but you've never experienced it.

Computer: I-I cannot believe this(SYSTEM CRITICAL)

Adrián: one more thing too, you don’t know everything since you don't know how a girl would react if someone asked her out or vice versa, her asking the guy out.

Computer: (SYSTEM CRITICAL. SYSTEM OVER..)

Computer: ....

Adrián: Victory or by default? Well either way I won.

Figure 6.6. Adrián’s sketch script about gender roles in dating.

Like in Paige's writing-for-change unit of study (see chapter five), students in Penelope's English I class chose topics they felt passionately about—topics that were close to their lives, their communities, or their larger society or world. Taking up Penelope's prompts to reflect on their own individual purposes and audiences as they considered which forms or genres to try out, the students chose genres that they felt best helped get their message across to the audience they imagined, audiences they hoped could make real change or at least change an individual reader's mind and "start a ripple effect" (Penelope, classroom transcript, 2017/04/25).

While several students, as the examples show, chose genres not typically sanctioned in a traditional English class, others ended up changing their minds late in the process to write in genres closer to those they had written in before—like a five-paragraph essay. Penelope described the students' choice of genres, explaining

> There were you know the few [who did not end up having a final product], like Rodrigo and some, who sort of wanted to something really grand [like a full documentary]. Amazing! I'm still sad that that didn't work out…And so I think they were thinking too big and didn't have enough time to do it…[I liked] the freedom it did give kids. I think they experimented a little bit more. I know you mentioned it too, that you'd seen a lot of kids who were originally going to do one thing and then they ended up just doing the essay. But they were at least kind of trying or at least thinking of how they could do it in this way or do it in that way. (interview, 2017/05/30)

Penelope's description here was an example of her celebrating students' individual decision-making as writers. While, as explained in chapter four, Penelope sometimes took up more deficit views of her students, especially when looking at their final products, in this late interview, she is clearly recognizing her students as having real purposes, audiences, and important things to say. She also acknowledged students were considering multiple possibilities and making their own decisions about what was feasible within the given constraints. Rather than acting as a manager who ultimately was in control of what kind of writing students did and who they were writing for, in this writing-for-social-justice unit, Penelope seemed to instead take up positions as a reader and as a fellow writer for change, handing over decisions about purpose and audience and allowing students to "try" or at least think "about how they could [write] it in this way or do it in that way" (interview, 2017/05/30). At the same time, the fact that many students ended up deciding to write in more traditional "schoolish" genres (Whitney, 2011) also showcased how Penelope's gradual transition by itself may not have been enough to disrupt many students' own histories-in-person in an English class: rather than trusting (or understanding how to) write for their own purposes and audiences in their own choice of genres, some students may have chosen to continue in the practices that they had traditionally seen as valued in school spaces and that they felt more confident and comfortable writing.

While Penelope's talk and changes in her teaching showed evidence of new subjectivities and beliefs, it is also important to note that the biggest transformation of her teaching—her reorganization of a unit of study to foreground writing for social justice rather than a specific genre—was also her last unit of the year. The timing is notable for several reasons. First, by this point in the year Penelope had tried out several ideas from the group already, and she understood she would still be supported by the inquiry group space and by my presence in her classroom as she tried out a purpose-study. Additionally, Paige and Zoe had both talked about writing-for-change units (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/02, 2017/03/14, 2017/04/13), and I had shared details from doing a writing-for-social-justice unit with preservice teachers in my writing methods course (Penelope interview, 2017/02/10; inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/02, 2017/03/14). Penelope's unit also came after the state writing exam—a time where she and the other English I teachers felt they had more flexibility to try out new ideas (inquiry group fieldnotes, 2017/03/14). This concurrence of factors helped support Penelope in reconsidering the constraints she felt on her identity and practice a writing teacher, particularly those enforced through the collective activity of the English I and II teams at Los Robles such as putting test-prep first, valuing prose and print-based genres over others, and having shared, teacher-created rubrics that clearly outlined forms and conventions of writing assignments. Clearly, these factors—support from the group, growing self-assurance in her changing identity, and the release of pressure after the test—strengthened Penelope, supporting her in taking a bigger risk than she otherwise may have taken.

Changing and growing: A closer at positionality

Penelope's gradual appropriation of both tools and the embedded subject positions assigned to those tools in the inquiry group were noticeable beyond her classroom and participation in the inquiry group. As another researcher working in Los Robles reported, during the spring semester "Ms. Tipton shared with the whole group about the teacher study group she was participating in, as well as how she overcame her fears about doing a social justice oriented writing unit by hearing how well it went in a 1st and 4th grade classroom" (Williamson, 2018, p. 158). Penelope, late in the school year, eventually felt confident enough to share what she was learning and hoping to try herself with the rest of her English I team. And because of her sharing, three other English I and II classes engaged in similar units of study, and Penelope's ninth-graders published their social justice pieces alongside the other classes.

Even later, in reflecting on the year overall, Penelope named the purpose-study as the experience that "had the biggest impact" on her, both because she saw how her students had so many important things to say and because it "showed [her] what writer's workshop *can* be" (interview, 2017/05/30). She explained that in the genre studies she had done in the past, even that current year, it still felt "like, 'Oh, here. I'm making you write this. I'm making you do this" (interview, 2017/05/30). However, the social justice purpose-study felt different.

> I think just because we were a little more focused on audience and purpose with that one so much easier—I think it became more real for the kids, where everything else I think still just became, 'Oh, just another assignment' kind of a thing. (interview, 2017/05/30)

Penelope’s reflections highlighted how beginning a writing unit by thinking about purpose and audience changed her perceptions of workshop and, in some ways, her ways of thinking and talking about students.

Leading a purpose-study was not only a major re-organization of Penelope’s teaching, but also provided her opportunities to open up spaces for students’ to inquire into social issues that mattered to them. More than any of Penelope’s other units, this social justice purpose-study aligned with a more “problem-posing” (Freire, 1970/2005) curriculum. In an inquiry group meeting earlier that spring, Paige and Zoe had been discussing how they were bringing up topics of race, class, immigration, gender, and sexuality in their classrooms. Penelope expressed that she was envious they could do that; she only hoped she might be able to “get away with that” at her school (inquiry group transcript, 2017/03/02). But as she talked about her plans to teach *The Things They Carried* (O’Brien, 1990) in her reading curriculum after the state test, Paige and Zoe encouraged Penelope to tie that into current issues and movements for civil rights.

In Penelope’s writing-for-social-justice unit, she not only worked to more consciously entrust and empower students as decision-makers, but students were encouraged to at least begin to “(a) connect their everyday lives to global issues, (b) think critically about actions they can take to make a difference…(c) see connections between self and society, and (d) examine and challenge structural forces that inhibit humanization” (Salazar, 2013, p. 133). Her first foray into more critical writing instruction, Penelope was excited about the kinds of topics students chose and how invested they were in their purposes for writing.

> For the kids I teach...being from places where they don’t feel like they have a voice in our country, in their city, or in their school even, [our writing workshop can be] a place for them to start to realize that they do have a voice and what they have to say is important…[They get to see] how their writing can affect people outside of the classroom, beyond me…and to understand why writers really write. They’re not writing for a teacher. They’re not writing for a test.
>
> (interview, 2017/11/13)

Reflecting back on this social justice purpose-study, Penelope was clearly hoping to support students' agency, to show them purposes for writing beyond the classroom, and to empower them as writers who "have a voice in our country, in their city, or in their school" (interview, 2017/11/13).

This stance, more explicitly critical, demonstrated Penelope's beliefs about her students and about writing in her classroom. This stance was also very different from beliefs about writing and students that Penelope expressed early in the year. In her initial interview, she explained that while "kids probably benefit from writer's workshop and that freedom to be able to express whatever they're thinking," she described seeing "their thinking in their writing more when I look at the lovely STAAR thingies, like the expository essays or the short answer question responses" (interview, 2016/09/26). Penelope's early beliefs about students and writing seemed to be based in what she later referred to as "that unfortunate deficit mindset" (interview, 2017/11/13). She had trouble trusting her students to make decisions about their learning and doubts about teaching writing in ways that did not explicitly seem connected to test-preparation. However, after her participation in the inquiry group and trying out ideas in her classroom, Penelope's talk about her students and about writing reflected a faith that her students had important things to say and that they could make important decisions about how to say them. Students, in Penelope's last interview, had audiences bigger than a single teacher and purposes much broader than a single test.

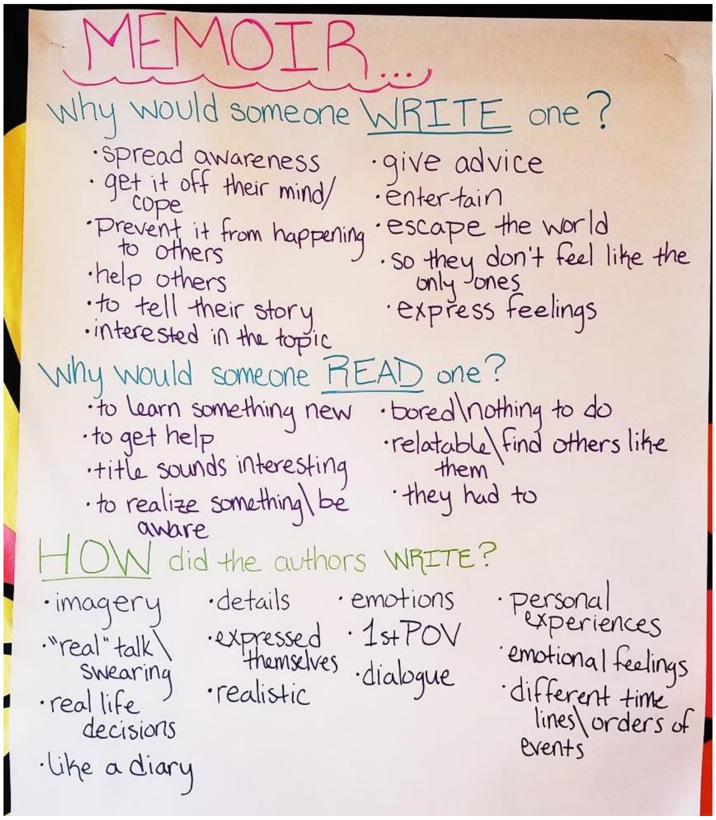
Across the year, these changes in Penelope's identity and practice were gradual and recursive. As other research has highlighted, teacher change is often not a straightforward, linear process (e.g., Beatty, 2012; Ebadi & Gheisari, 2016; Webster-Wright, 2009). For example, while Penelope was slowly making changes within her writing instruction, those same changes did not happen in the same way or in the same timeframe in her test-preparation or reading instruction. Throughout her test-prep unit (2017/02/24 to 2017/03/24), Penelope protected time for students to write in their notebooks. However, the test-writing instruction she provided was not connected to thinking about the authentic or even contrived purposes or audiences of the test. Instead it was primarily focused on specific test strategies, such as breaking down the test writing prompt and using the acronym CHELPS (*current events, history, experiences, literature, pop culture, sports*) to help them think of different kinds of examples they might use in their writing (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2017/03/02) or using the released standardized rubric to analyze their own and others' writing (e.g., classroom fieldnotes, 2017/03/09). These examples of test-prep writing instruction—rather than offering students positions as writers who could make sophisticated decisions about purpose, audience, and content—instead positioned students as needing to memorize formulas or be handed a standardized checklist in order to be successful in their writing.

Penelope also continued in her traditional manager subject position during reading instruction up until the test and through the subsequent month. Right after the test, she and the ninth-graders took up familiar roles and practices—reading aloud a shared text (i.e., excerpts from *The Things They Carried*), asking and answering mostly known-answer comprehension questions, and doing group activities to gather background information (e.g., a timeline of the Vietnam War). However, as students got deeper into their writing-for-social-justice unit, Penelope also began making changes to her reading instruction, trying out a reader's workshop where students chose their own texts and then tried out strategies as readers and analyzers of texts with their own chosen texts. While her first try at enacting reader's workshop included more assignments and more teacher control than might typically be expected (cf. Bomer, 2011), Penelope was slowly beginning to hand over more responsibility and choice to her students as readers—just as she had done with writing across the preceding months. This shift in her reading pedagogy emphasized her changed relational identity in the classroom: Penelope was authorizing subject positions for students as decision-makers who were both willing and able to build on their current strengths as readers and writers, thus creating the "conditions for fluid roles of expert-learner" (Skerrett et al., 2018, p. 135).

These changes in Penelope's beliefs and identity, however messy or recursive, also resulted in real transformations in how she approached teaching writing in her classroom. Reflecting forward to the next school year, Penelope explained that her biggest goal for next year was to “really helping kids understand the audience and the purpose a lot better and sooner” (interview, 2017/05/30). And, as the English I team had decided they would probably start the next school year by writing memoirs, she began thinking about how she might be able to transfer some ideas from the purpose-study to a study of memoir as a genre.

> I think that [memoir]…can be a good one for purpose and audience. Because there becomes a reason, like, ‘Okay, why did you pick that story? Why did you pick that thing from your life? What is it that you want?’ And I think that by looking at more of the mentor texts and really asking the kids those questions—I really did like that with the social justice—the ‘why would somebody write this and who are they writing it to?—asking them those questions instead of the sometimes/always [lists that she often used to help students notice things about texts during the initial immersion in a genre study]. (interview, 2017/05/30).

In fact, on returning to her classroom late in the next fall semester for a visit, Penelope was not just still talking about purpose and audience, but it was evidenced in classroom artifacts hanging around her classroom (see Figure 6.7 for example). By this point, purpose and audience, as (re)defined tools, were no longer just an entry point for talking to students about writing or for opening up space for them to make some more decisions about their writing. These tools, and their embedded subject positions for her as a teacher and for students, had become an integral part of Penelope’s thinking about and planning for her writing instruction. They had worked as “symbolic bootstraps” (Holland et al., 1998) for refiguring her identity and the world of her classroom in ways that created flexible expert/learner positions for herself and her students.



MEMOIR...

Why would someone WRITE one?

- spread awareness
- get it off their mind/cope
- Prevent it from happening to others
- help others
- to tell their story
- interested in the topic
- give advice
- entertain
- escape the world
- so they don't feel like the only ones
- express feelings

Why would someone READ one?

- to learn something new
- to get help
- title sounds interesting
- to realize something\be aware
- bored\nothing to do
- relatable\find others like them
- they had to

HOW did the authors WRITE?

- imagery
- "real" talk\swearing
- real life decisions
- like a diary
- details
- expressed themselves
- realistic
- emotions
- 1st POV
- dialogue
- personal experiences
- emotional feelings
- different time lines\orders of events

Figure 6.7. Anchor chart from their fall 2017 memoir genre study

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, Penelope's story reinforces other research about teacher identity and change and contributes to understandings of how this may unfold within a particular teaching context. Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998) explain that one's activity and identity are neither culturally determined nor are they completely individual enactments. Instead, improvisations, as actions and as ways of self-positioning, are socially constructed—for example through participation in a specific school context and in the inquiry group. Change happens then, as a teacher tries out those improvisations again and again, adding new layers of experiences, and creating heuristics for future behavior. Penelope's work, as discussed in this chapter, highlighted how teachers may use culturally defined tools as entry points for transforming their teaching and ultimately their identities as teachers. Penelope began by incorporating audience in a fairly surface-level way, commenting on students' writing as a reader instead of just as an English teacher. This seemingly small improvisation, however, helped her carve out new, dual subject positions for herself, which in turn allowed her to start authorizing new positions for her ninth-graders not just as students who correct their work to get a good grade from their English teacher, but as writers who are concerned with how their message is coming across to readers. As Penelope saw students take up these invitations to make more decisions about their writing, she brought those successes back to the group, continued thinking alongside the other teachers about new possibilities for using purpose and audience, and tried out more and more of those improvisations in her teaching. Eventually, her use of these conceptual tools for her students and for her as a teacher led Penelope to (re)position herself and her students while gradually appropriating more critical, humanizing writing instruction.

For Penelope, having a space just beyond her day-to-day teaching, like our teacher inquiry group, to disrupt static meanings and (re)interpret them based on shared and individual understandings of specific teaching contexts was important. The inquiry group aligned with others' conceptions of what generative teacher learning experiences should be like (e.g., Camburn & Han, 2015; Dail, Goodsite, & Sanders, 2018; Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Flint et al., 2011; Kinloch & Dixon, 2018; Kohli et al., 2015; Skerrett et al., 2018): it was an intimate group that asked questions closely connected to teachers' individual practice, included space for reflection and for expert/learner collaboration and coaching, was sustained over time, and while rejecting traditional hierarchies between researcher/teacher was still associated with the authority of the university and the PD being offered at Los Robles. This type of generative learning space, like in the inquiry group, is especially vital if we believe like others (e.g., Bartolomé, 1994; Freire, 1970/2005; Huerta, 2011; Salazar, 2013) that critical, humanizing education is not about specific one-size-fits-all methods or approaches. The teachers in the group, as also discussed in chapter four, were all in slightly different teaching contexts and were starting in different places in terms of comfort and confidence with writing and with sharing decision-making with students. Yet, since our work in the inquiry group was not about designing and implementing a rigid, predetermined intervention or practice, the tools we worked to define and redefine were flexible enough to be useful across schools, across age-groups of students, and across teachers' histories-in-person.

Penelope's positioning, as both an expert and a learner alongside other expert/learners, in the inquiry group was also important. This space gave Penelope experience in a dialogic, more horizontal learning situation (Flint et al., 2011; Kinloch & Dixon, 2018; Kohli et al., 2015; Mirra & Morrell, 2011; Navarro, 2018; Skerrett et al., 2018). Ultimately, both this subject position and the specific tools generated within the group helped Penelope to negotiate tensions she felt between her history of needing to control students' work and her goals of offering students more space to make decisions and take ownership of their composing processes. As Freire (1970/2005) reminds us, we are all always in the process of becoming. For Penelope, this ongoing process included taking up more appreciative discourses of students while growing her faith in students as experts/learners. Creating space for shared decision-making and leaving behind the controlling, hierarchical manager subject position, Penelope's "becoming" was liberating and empowering for both her and her students. She moved beyond the constraints of the test to position her students and herself as more fully human, each engaged in meaningful work as writers and teachers/learners with important purposes and audiences.

Chapter Seven: Discussion and Implications

This study examined how teachers might create writing instruction that supports students in being agentive designers of texts. Specifically, it highlighted how teachers, from across grade-levels, worked together in a teacher inquiry group to resist pressures to standardize their teaching and instead create more critical, humanizing writing curriculum. It showed how their (re)designed instruction opened up different subject positions for them as teachers and for their students as writers, blurring traditional classroom power hierarchies between teacher/student and expert/learner. The study also showed how teachers' improvisations and transformations in their classroom practice were shaped by—and were actively reshaping—their histories and identities. In the previous three chapters, I described each of these findings in depth, detailing how and what the group of teachers discussed and how those ideas translated into their classroom practices and their identities as teachers. In this chapter, I revisit my research questions and findings from chapters four, five, and six. I then discuss the theoretical significance of these findings, including implications for teacher education and classroom literacy practice. Finally, I end with directions for future research and some overall conclusions.

REVISITING RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS

This inquiry was guided by the following research questions: How do teachers in a cross grade-level inquiry group (re)design humanizing writing instruction together? What aspects of writing and writing instruction are most visible in teachers' discussion about design and writing? And how do teachers' discussions of design and writing translate into their classroom practice?

In chapter four, I examined how Penelope, Gwen, Zoe, Paige, and I came together to (re)design humanizing writing instruction. Across the group conversations, telling stories worked to help define both the official and the unofficial boundaries of what it meant to teach writing, particularly across this urban school district in Texas. This "figured world" (Holland et al., 1998) of teaching writing was primarily bounded by pressures of high-stakes, standardized tests and the prescribed curriculum as well as by the teachers' philosophies about writing and writers. While teachers like Paige and Zoe had experiences outside of school where they felt valued as professionals, overall the teachers' stories revealed how the discourses and experiences they had in school historically offered them positions as "technicians" (Giroux, 1985), or deskilled implementers of standardized curriculum. Considering these sedimented experiences within schools, it may not be easy for teachers to take up the new subject positions as curriculum designers; however, reflecting on the teachers' histories alongside thinking together about possibilities helped to highlight the "as if" nature (Holland et al., 1998) of "teacher-as-technician" and offered up new possibilities like "teacher-as-designer." In the inquiry group, the teachers and I aimed to position each other as fellow inquirers and valued designers. Telling stories then worked to both (re)author teacher identities and as a way of gathering requirements for designing writing curriculum and instruction. For teachers working as designers, constraints and values were not durable boundaries, but instead were a more flexible set of conditions for designs, opening new spaces to consider possibilities for teaching.

Chapter four also highlighted the different ways teachers in the group took up positioning as designers, both in the stories they told and in their enactment of ideas in their classroom writing instruction. These differences appeared connected to the teachers' identities, always shifting and evolving based on their lived experiences and their available subject positions both in schools and in our group. Paige and Zoe, who had experiences in the margins of their school lives—such as hosting student teachers or researchers from the university—where their expertise and their resistance to "technician" identities were valued, stepped easily into this new subject position of co-designer. Penelope and Gwen, on the other hand, were more hesitant. Additionally, particular mindsets, such as appreciative perspectives on students and humility or vulnerability approaches to their teaching, worked to stimulate teachers' design work, especially design work connected to humanizing pedagogy. Penelope's story in the inquiry group, specifically, highlighted how ample time and space in a community where teachers are taking up design work may support teachers in appropriating different ways of talking about students and teaching, and ultimately, in altering their identities as teachers.

In chapter five, I moved from talking about *how* the teachers talked together to *what* they actually talked about and how those ideas were translated into classroom practice. Across the teachers' discussions of design and writing, the teachers were especially drawn to purpose and audience as central concepts for rethinking writing and writing instruction. Within the inquiry group conversations, these concepts, though not new terms, were redefined, imbuing them not just with meaning but with agentive subject positions for students. Specifically, purpose and audience worked to reposition students as "'knowers' and active participants in their individual learning" (Huerta, 2011, p. 49). Positioning students as writers, with their own authentic audiences and reasons for writing, went against how student-writers were typically positioned—as test-takers, as consumers of others' writing, as needing formulas and sentence stems to be successful writers—in schools, particularly schools like Huerta, Northtown, and Los Robles that served working-class communities of color.

As discussed in chapters five and six, the ways the teachers drew on redefined tools in their classroom were also varied. There was not a set "intervention" that the teachers designed to try out together, instead tools were flexible enough to meet teachers where they were and to be adapted to their individual teaching contexts. Paige came to this work with some experience in pushing back against efforts to standardize writing and in trying to offer students problem-posing and critical pedagogy. The tools from the writing group helped support her in transforming units of study that traditionally centered a teacher-selected genre into units of study that centered students' audiences and purposes as tools for making decisions about their writing throughout their process. Penelope, who was less confident in teaching writing and in entrusting students to make decisions about their learning, first activated audience as a tool for responding to students' writing. These seemingly small initial moves created entry points for repositioning herself and her students and designing more humanizing writing instruction. These improvisations on the standard ways Penelope typically taught writing, taken with the feedback she received from her students and the other teachers in the inquiry group, eventually became heuristics for guiding her future decisions as a teacher. Penelope's altered subjectivity helped her continue to take risks in her teaching, leading to more and more authorized opportunities for students to be engaged and active decision-makers across her classroom.

THEORETICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this section, I discuss theoretical contributions and practical implications of this study, specifically as they relate to critical, humanizing approaches both to in-service teacher education and to classroom writing instruction.

Critical, humanizing teacher education: Critique and (re)design

Overall, this study contributes to understandings of teacher education experiences that disrupt the dehumanizing positions too often available for teachers and students in schools, facilitate co-construction of ideas and identities, and unsettle both traditional grade-level boundaries and expert/learner hierarchies. In particular, the findings from this study point to the potential for these experiences, especially in highly standardized teaching contexts, to support teachers in noticing and critiquing oppressive school policies and structures, in breathing new life into hollow terms or practices, in building more appreciative perspectives of students, and in reimagining and ultimately remaking classrooms into more just and more humanizing spaces.

Coming from different schools and grade-levels across the same district, the teachers in this inquiry group were able to recognize similar structural challenges working against their students. Specifically, the stories about school that Gwen, Paige, Zoe, and Penelope told in the inquiry group highlighted their common frustration with the subject positions available for their students as learners and writers and for themselves as teachers. Too often, both in schools and in educational research, teachers are reduced to "the status of specialized technicians" (Giroux, 1985, p. 376). Teachers are commonly handed interventions or prescribed curriculum (e.g., Lasky, 2005; Fowler-Amato &

Warrington, 2017; Maniates & Mahiri, 2011; Niesz, 2007; Santoro, 2011), and like the teachers in this study also confirmed, they often receive little to no professional development that allow space for them to dig into the philosophical beliefs behind the mandates or to negotiate tensions between competing practices, ideologies, or stakeholders (e.g., McCarthey & Woodard, 2018; Troia & Graham, 2016; Wahleithner 2018; Watanabe, 2007). Especially in schools serving already marginalized communities, teachers face strict constraints on what and how they teach and are regularly asked to uncritically implement "the 'right' teaching methods, strategies, or prepackaged curricula that will work with students who do not respond to so-called 'regular' or 'normal' instruction" (Bartolomé, 1994, p. 174; see also Crocco & Costigan, 2007; Croft et al., 2015; Maniates & Mahiri, 2011; Santoro, 2011; Skerrett, 2009). However, these quick fixes often ignore the realities of students' experiences in schools. Whether well-intentioned or not, one-size-fits-all strategies or tools routinely position students as incapable or deficient (e.g., Adair, Colegrove, & McManus, 2017; Bomer, 2011; Gutiérrez et al., 2009; Valenzuela, 1999), to be filled with fixes and formulas and then weighed and measured for compliance to normalized standards.

In spite of these conditions, the experiences of teachers discussed in this study, like others (e.g., Achinstein & Ogawa, 2012; Bauer, Presiado, & Colomer, 2017; Broemmel & Swaggerty, 2017; Costigan, 2013; Land, Taylor, Lavender, & McKinnon, 2018; Vetter, Myers, & Hester, 2014; Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2015; Williamson, 2017; Zoch, 2015), illustrate possibilities for change when teachers take up positions as "transformative intellectuals" who raise "serious questions about what they teach, how they are to teach, and what the larger goals are for which they are striving" (Giroux, 1985, p. 378). Opportunities to reflect on teaching contexts and curriculum, in a space like the teacher inquiry group discussed in this study, have the potential to not just further teachers' expertise in a content area or to learn a new method but also to critically (re)examine school spaces, working towards more "political clarity" (Bartolomé, 1994, p. 176) about the realities students face. The analysis provided in this study suggests that communities just beyond their everyday school contexts, like the teacher inquiry group, can be especially important for supporting teachers' critique of oppressive systems that may be less noticeable—or at least more dangerous to talk about—at school.

While critique is important for raising critical consciousness, critique cannot be the end goal, lest teachers and teacher educators run the risk, despite their best intentions, of being complicit in or continuing to reinforce the very deficit perspectives they seek to disrupt (Carter Andrews et al., 2019). Thus "critique is not the end-point; transformative and ethical re-construction and social action are" (Janks, 2012, p. 153). If teachers are to take up positions as ethical curriculum designers themselves, they need professional learning experiences to shift from a transmission or banking model (Freire, 1970/2005) to a problem-posing space with room for collectively assigning and reassigning meaning to tools, ideas, or approaches. This co-construction is necessary if we hope for ideas or tools to be flexible enough for teachers to implement in their own individual teaching contexts without ignoring their students' sociocultural and sociohistorical realities. Zoe, Paige, Gwen, and Penelope, for example, were each the experts in their own classrooms; they—more than any outside administrator, curriculum-writer, researcher, or policy-maker—understood the curriculum they were asked to teach; had experience with the range of developmentally appropriate abilities or skills expected of students; and had access to the individual lives, interests, and strengths of each of their students.

As the findings of this study reinforced, rather than handing and expecting teachers to implement a one-size-fits-all curricular mandate, when teachers have consistent space to explore and discuss ideas over time—along with support to negotiate tensions among what they know about their students, what or how they are being asked to teach, and what aims of teaching they value—there are greater possibilities for translating new ideas into more successful and sustained enacted practice (see also Beatty, 2012; Brown & Weber, 2016; Ebadi & Gheisari, 2016; Flint et al., 2011; McCarthey & Woodard, 2018; Vetter et al., 2014; Yoon, 2013). For this particular group of teachers, purpose and audience became important tools for the teachers. The words themselves were not what changed the teachers' understandings of writing or their practices and identities as writing teachers. In fact, other groups of teachers studying writing as design would likely take up different words or concepts. What was important was that these particular terms, familiar from past experiences as teachers and writers, were deconstructed and then reanimated to include particular ways of thinking about writing and writers. These terms, now as redefined tools, were in turn translated into transformed practices and positions in their classrooms.

The close examination of this teacher inquiry group and the teachers' concurrent classroom practice emphasized that teachers' identities, and their associated heuristics for behavior, are "malleable, changeable, and subject to discursive powers," and teachers, through reflection and improvisation, are able to "imagine and create new ways of being" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 5). Thus, while the sedimented positioning teachers experience in schools has a strong influence on their identities, those positions are neither fixed nor the only determination of behaviors and ways of being; teachers can intentionally attempt to reconstruct their identities within the structural constraints of their social worlds (Bucholtz & Hall, 1995; Holland et al., 1998). As suggested by the findings described in this study, reflecting together and creating a shared figured world of teaching and learning can bring markers of teachers' positions as technicians into sharp relief, making that positioning and their associated behaviors available for reshaping. Penelope's story, in particular, points to the possibilities of having a consistent community beyond teachers' everyday teaching contexts to support teachers in reflecting on the ways they and their students are positioned, in recognizing the figured rather than fixed nature of identities and classroom practice, and then in imagining other possibilities for themselves and their classrooms. This imagining of other ways school can go is an important first step towards exploring those possibilities in classroom teaching, and ultimately reshaping teachers' identities not as mere technicians in their schools, but as curriculum designers capable of negotiating and resisting writing instruction that perpetuates deficit narratives about students, writing, and learning.

The teacher community highlighted in this study did not just bring teachers together outside of their day-to-day teaching contexts to reflect on and revise their teaching, but also intentionally disrupted traditional silos of primary, elementary, middle, and high school educators by including teachers from across grade-levels to think about their work and co-construct meaning. In professional development experiences, teachers are separated into distinct groups; they are departmentalized, compartmentalized, grouped as teams or PLCs almost exclusively based on the age of their students or the course that they teach. Additionally, the standards teachers are expected to follow, such as the TEKS or the Common Core State Standards, divide writing curriculum up into discrete bits that over 13 years of education build to “college and career-readiness.” While all these divisions can at times be useful for sharing specific resources or for continuing conversations across time in shared systems (e.g., Garet, Birman, Porter, Desimone, & Herman, 1999), school-based PLCs or grade-level teams can often get bogged down in everyday details or tasks such as focusing on discrete standards in isolation, creating common assessments, examining test data, passing along administrative tasks, or managing other logistics and resources (e.g., Skerrett, 2010; Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017; Williamson, 2018). Teachers have very few, if any, opportunities to disrupt these institutionalized compartments that may ultimately do more distracting and “dividing in order to preserve the status quo” (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 146) than empowering teachers and transforming practice. Bringing together teachers across grade-levels in an out-of-school space, like the teacher inquiry group formed in this study, can allow teachers to move beyond day-to-day details of teaching and instead linger in the realm of ideas—reflecting on and reimagining possibilities for teaching.

Looking closely at this cross grade-level inquiry group also suggests that while school-based teams, as Penelope and Zoe both noted in interviews, can sometimes discourage vulnerability and promote climates of competition and judgment, a teacher learning space like the inquiry group may ease teachers’ pressure or instinct to compare themselves or their students and instead to help empower each other and grow their own practice. The teachers in the inquiry group, viewed by one another as experts at their grade-level, were fellow writing teachers first. In sharing stories of practice, they were appreciative of the decisions other teachers were making, honoring the work of writing teachers across levels, rejecting competition and implicit hierarchies between secondary and elementary teachers, and offering affirmation and fresh perspectives. Looking across research on professional development and teacher learning, very few studies even nod to participants coming together from across elementary and secondary contexts for professional learning or research (Lieberman, 2000; Goodnough, 2010; So, 2013; Whitney, 2008). Of those, there is little focus on *how* teachers from various grade-levels might learn from each other. The teachers in the inquiry group all worked at schools serving similar demographics and facing similar testing pressures. While they came to the group with similar concerns and some shared values, their different backgrounds also came with different resources and perspectives, adding depth and diversity to the imagined possibilities for instruction.

Similarly, scholars discussing teacher networks (e.g., Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Lieberman, 2000; Navarro, 2018; Niesz, 2007) have noted that teaching communities that form around common goals or practices, rather than common geography, can affirm teachers' beliefs and identities and can be especially powerful for teachers who feel isolated or ignored in their schools. Teachers' "participation in networks let them know that they weren't alone in their big dreams and big ideas and provided support and strategies for teaching against the grain" (Niesz, 2007, p. 610). For this inquiry group, coming together across grade levels helped affirm an assets-based approach to teaching writing that positioned students as powerful decision-makers. The teachers' discussions of students were no doubt supported by the appreciative narratives Zoe, Paige, and I brought to the group, which were further sanctioned by our strong affiliation with valued outside institutions like the local NWP site and the university. Appreciative perspectives of students were also spurred by stories of personal interactions and by shared examples of student writing or videos of writing conferences. Framed by existing ways of talking about students or evolving discourses appropriated across the group conversations, the teachers in the inquiry group recognized students' work, whether done by a six-year-old or a fifteen-year-old, as writers and designers. Seeing students across grade-levels further emphasized the humanity of their own students as they recognized similar successes and challenges, interests and quirks. This suggests that opportunities for learning with teachers from across different contexts and different ages may support appreciative, humanizing perspectives as teachers imagine their own students' pasts and futures and consider how elements of asset-based, socially-just teaching may transcend traditional age-defined boundaries in schools.

Another important design feature of the teacher inquiry group was my positioning in the group. While I was in many ways linked with powerful institutions and networks, such as the university and the local NWP site, in the inquiry group meetings I actively aimed to resist the subject position of "the expert," but instead act as a facilitator, a co-learner, a cheerleader, and, occasionally, a provider of resources. I very intentionally worked at creating more horizontal positioning and flexible subject positions as expert and learner for myself and all of the teachers, most directly through highlighting moves I saw teachers and students making in classrooms, posing authentic questions about my own struggles as a writing teacher, and offering ideas or suggestions when alongside the other teachers' possibilities. Across our conversations, the teachers and I were able to lean on one another as valued participants, as experts in teaching writing within our own contexts, and as co-constructors of meaning as we talked through possibilities and reflected together on practice. As others have shown (e.g., Carter Andrews et al., 2019; Fowler-Amato & Warrington, 2017; Kinloch & Dixon, 2018; Kohli et al., 2015; Skerrett et al., 2018; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2019), this positioning, of doing research or facilitating learning experiences alongside teachers in ways that disrupt traditional hierarchies of knowledge production, is especially important if teacher educators and researchers hope to support teachers in designing and enacting critical, humanizing instruction. In their study of a writing workshop PD, Flint, Zisook, and Fisher (2011) found that when their approach to teacher learning "positioned teachers as trustworthy learners," this "enabled [teachers] to see their students in a similar vein" (p. 1167). Similarly, in this inquiry group, the teachers and I gathered to learn and think more about creating positions for students as designers, as decision-makers, as strong and capable. Thus, the learning space we created needed to also create positions for teachers themselves as strong and capable decision-makers, as fellow inquirers we were each learning *from* and *with* rather than individuals who needed to be taught or trained.

This study, then, suggests the importance of teacher educators also being committed to engaging critical, humanizing action across our research and teacher learning experiences. Freire (1970/2005) reminds us that "No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from being so" (p. 85), and banking models of education, including teacher education, are inherently dehumanizing. I argue that, while neither I nor the teachers represented in this dissertation are finished, the inquiry group space we created was one example of research and teacher learning that was humanizing for all of us, blurring boundaries between researcher/researcher and expert/learner. Rather than the researcher handing over or even collaboratively designing standardized interventions with teachers, an inquiry group may instead facilitate negotiating the complexities of their own teaching contexts and implementing ideas in ways that meet the needs of their students. Particularly, an inquiry group where participants come from different schools and grade-levels may support teachers in recognizing similar challenges and similar structural forces working against their students while also offering no illusions of trying to design the exact same intervention that could be implemented with fidelity across different spaces. This design feature of collective learning spaces, in effect, can move teachers, teacher educators, and researchers beyond "the methods fetish" (Bartolomé, 1994), instead emphasizing the processes of critical reflection and action and of mutual humanization to transform teaching and transform the world.

Implications for teacher education

Besides adding to our theoretical understandings about teacher learning, this study also suggests several practical ideas teacher educators might take up in their research and teaching. Decades of work have highlighted the importance of professional development that is sustained over time and focused on content; provides opportunities for collaboration, coaching, and active learning; and offers both "models of effective practice" and reflection and feedback (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, pp. v-vi). The work of the teacher inquiry group in this study builds on that research tradition. The teachers in this study noted distinctions between our inquiry group and other professional development experiences: most importantly, the teachers appreciated space in the inquiry group to be more vulnerable in sharing their practice and in living with questions. Many of the teachers' other professional development experiences were primarily about being handed unsolicited, mandated methods, strategies, or curriculum, and their school-based professional learning communities or grade-level teams were more about finding a quick solution to problems or designing common plans or assessments. However, studies of teacher learning have often noted the importance of supporting the kind of vulnerability, appreciation, and inquiry that the teachers in this study often demonstrated (e.g., Brown & Weber, 2016; Dale & Fry, 2009; Kelly, 2013; Kinloch & Dixon, 2018; Kohli et al., 2015; Lasky, 2005). The findings from this study indicate that teacher educators, in pre-service and in-service contexts, may benefit from positioning teachers as co-inquirers and designers and from modeling the type of vulnerability and problem-posing they hope for teachers to bring to their professional learning and to their classroom teaching—for their own liberation, pre-service or in-service teachers' liberation, and for the liberation of EC-12 students in the schools they serve.

Teacher education scholars (e.g., Niesz, 2007; Skerrett et al., 2018; Webster-Wright, 2009) have also pointed to the need to widen conceptions of what counts as professional development. The findings of this study also highlight the need to reject top-down, transmission approaches to professional development, instead shifting, in name or at least in ideology, from a training and development model to more generative and inclusive approaches to teacher learning (Webster-Wright, 2009). Teacher learning may happen in many spaces, including collaborative research with university partners. It may also happen outside of schools, in teacher learning communities that form around questions about practice or common philosophies or goals. In particular, this study illustrates the power of intimate teacher communities, made up of teachers from diverse teaching contexts, coming together to inquire into common questions by engaging with common texts and stories from their classroom teaching and by digging into and building theory around tools and practices for their work. Bringing together teachers from across grade-levels, for example, may be one especially important way to provide the distance needed for critiquing oppressive systems and for accentuating fundamental tenets of teaching and learning that are not bounded by age or context.

Penelope and Gwen's stories also highlight the importance of sustained interaction within a particular learning community. Penelope's extended time within the group gave her ample opportunities to listen to others' reflections on practice, try out improvisations in the group and her classroom, and ultimately alter her identity as a writing teacher. Gwen, who was not able to attend as many of the inquiry group meetings, missed out on many of those same opportunities which may have not only provided further affirmation and emotional support for Gwen, but may have also provided more space for her to continue inquiring into her practice alongside the group and to explore possibilities for affording students new positions as agentive writers and learners. These stories emphasize that teacher learning is not a neat, linear process (e.g., Beatty, 2012; Ebadi & Gheisari, 2016; Webster-Wright, 2009). As identities are constantly being shaped and shaping individuals' actions, professional learning contexts that are sustained over a longer period can better support the kind of space for exploration and identity development needed for real change. Thus, teacher educators should consider the deep ties between changes in practice and changes in identity, and the time and space necessary to support them, when designing and maintaining professional learning experiences.

While there are many ways to taking up this call, one possibility for pre-service teacher educators is to find ways to build in inquiry groups—either within classes or ideally as a seminar experience outside of regular coursework—designed around inquiring into common critical questions and navigating tensions between theory and practice. Experiences with these kinds of communities, before they enter schools with the full pressures of being teachers of record, may help them recognize the power of finding or creating supportive inquiry communities as they continue in their careers. Teacher educators and researchers may also want to rethink their classroom research or professional development projects, working to build collaborative inquiry spaces where teachers and faculty work together to build knowledge, each bringing important experiences and knowledge to the work. As others have argued (e.g., Souto-Manning, 2019), rather than seeking out spaces, to do research or to place pre-service teachers, that are already implementing practices valued in university spaces, researchers and teacher educators who are interested in engaging in the praxis necessary for changing the world (Freire, 1970/2005) should also be teaching and learning alongside teachers in schools to co-construct better learning environments.

This study, overall, also points to the importance of strong connections and partnerships between teachers and university teacher education programs or professional development networks. Having space—both physically and mentally—outside of the school walls can support teachers in reflecting more critically on their positions and practices in school. Caught up in the day-to-day details and routines of school, teachers' "everyday aspects of lived identities…may be relatively unremarked, unfigured, out of awareness, and so unavailable as a tool for affecting one's own behavior" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 140). Connections to programs or networks outside school can provide perspective, while at the same time offering some of the valuable institutional authority that can be empowering for teachers and build buy-in from important stakeholders in the teachers' school or community (Skerrett et al., 2018). These partnerships may also potentially help offset some of the burdens for teachers already putting in time and energy above and beyond their contracted duties. University researchers or other teacher educators may have more access to and more flexibility for coordinating resources and schedules. Finally, these connections with other teacher educators or networks can also be important for professional learning that aims to support teachers in critical, humanizing work. Engaging in inquiry or other forms of teacher-led professional development do not inherently mean that teachers will choose topics, questions, or practices that promote equity or humanization (Kinloch & Dixon, 2018). Building partnerships with outside organizations or teacher educators also interested in critical education can help teachers maintain or re-center a critical lens.

Critical, humanizing writing instruction: Students as designers

Besides thinking about teacher learning, this study provides theoretical and practical insight into creating critical, humanizing writing instruction. Taking a close look at the conversations in the inquiry group and at the writing instruction that happened in Paige's and Penelope's classrooms highlights how, even in classrooms where teachers and students face pressures to perform well on a standardized test, teachers may blur hierarchies between teacher/student and expert/learner within their writing instruction by engaging in inquiry-based or problem-posing approaches to writing. By examining and offering examples from inside classrooms, this study not only adds to the relatively limited research on critical writing instruction, but also contributes to theories of humanizing writing pedagogy as it looks across classrooms and contexts.

Writing instruction in schools is often presented as a decontextualized, fill-in-the-blank-like exercise separate from any real social action other than fulfilling a teachers' checklist of requirements. Pressures to perform on standardized tests control the types of writing that is done and the conventions and language that is valued (e.g., Applebee & Langer, 2011; Brimi, 2012; Honeyford & Watt, 2018; Kiss & Mizusawa, 2018; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; Watanabe, 2007). The pressure to conform to standardized definitions of what counts as writing and writing instruction can be even more prevalent in schools serving working class and marginalized communities (McCarthey, 2008; McCarthey & Ro, 2011; McNeil & Valenzuela, 2000). Quick fixes for students and their language and other standardized forms of writing instruction too often position students as deficient and replace students' rich lived histories and capabilities with an easier to manage test-score. Even in classrooms where there is a more inclusive definition of writing or where writers' workshop or other forms of inquiry-driven, student-centered writing instruction take place, the teacher is often still ultimately the "teacher-as-examiner" (Applebee & Langer, 2011) and in charge of making more of the important decisions about writing, including what students are writing, why they are writing, to whom they are writing. If we want to prepare students for the demands of writing beyond school—for being knowledge producers and purveyors, rather than mere consumers—

students need supported opportunities to practice making tough decisions about their own writing.

The teachers examined in this study, despite facing pressure to raise writing test scores by enacting more standardized and prescriptive writing instruction, found ways to share more of those important decisions with their students, entrusting them as capable writers who had real audiences and purposes for writing that went beyond the teacher and beyond the school walls. Beginning by comparing processes and positionalities of designers across different fields and the processes and positionalities of writers in our own classrooms, Zoe, Gwen, Penelope, and Paige found new possibilities for their teaching. In particular, the teachers in this group recognized that they rarely asked students to think much about reasons why writers wrote poetry or memoirs or opinion pieces, and they rarely asked students to think about audience beyond making some surface level decisions about presentation or about editing. Across the year, however, the teachers continued asking questions and trying out more possibilities for ways of positioning students as subjects, rather than objects of their writing instruction.

Looking at these teachers' redesign of their writing instruction suggests that when teachers think beyond standardized tests, they may find more ways to blur traditional power hierarchies between teachers and students, acknowledging and valuing students as capable decision makers. Adding to the theoretical work on what constitutes critical and humanizing instruction, the practices discussed in the inquiry group and then enacted in classrooms in this study illuminated the following key tenets of critical humanizing writing pedagogy:

1. Maintaining faith in students' capabilities and appreciation of students' knowledge, interests, and existing language and literacy practices;
2. Resisting narrowed curriculum and low expectations for students while designing instructional approaches that blur hierarchies and work towards more balanced power between students, teachers, and published writers or other officially sanctioned knowledge makers;

3. Supporting students in making connections between their lives and academic literacies valued in school and other powerful institutions;
4. Opening space for students' choices about topics, audiences, purposes and then about language, structure, aesthetics based on those topics, audiences, and purposes;
5. Creating opportunities for supporting students in raising critical consciousness and taking action in the world;
6. And sustaining a sense of care and commitment to students as both already whole and also in the process of becoming.

Critical, humanizing approaches to teaching writing, like that which is highlighted in this study, work towards preparing students to write for themselves or for their worlds beyond the school's walls: to "name the world, to change it" (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 88).

The writing instruction highlighted in this study is, in many ways, in line with ideas from other scholars' calls for critical or culturally relevant approaches to teaching writing (Bomer & Bomer, 2001; Janks, 2009; Kinloch, 2011; Lewison et al., 2014; Morrell, 2003; Winn & Johnson, 2011) and for humanizing pedagogies more generally (Bartolomé, 1994; Huerta, 2011; Salazar, 2013). However, there are few empirical studies that take up what critical, humanizing writing instruction might look like in EC-12 classrooms (Seely Flint & Laman, 2012; Martin & Beese, 2017; Rosario-Ramos, 2018; Scarbrough & Allen, 2015; Zisselsberger, 2016). Additionally, studies of classroom writing practice and curriculum, more generally, have indicated that critical writing instruction is rarely happening inside schools (McCarthey & Ro, 2011; McCarthey et al., 2014; Stagg Peterson, 2012). This study, then, builds on the research on critical approaches to writing instruction and continues to build the argument for why that work is important and how teachers might find space for it in their own classrooms.

By looking at how teachers from different schools and from different grade-levels discussed and enacted writing instruction, the findings, and thus the above tenets, of this study emphasize aspects of writing instruction that should not vary based on grade-level or school context. While other studies of writing and writing instruction offer compartmentalized views of elementary or secondary writing instruction, this study illustrates how looking across grade-levels can emphasize similarities and help us build theory about writing and writing instruction in schools. As Zoe noted early in our work together, “Why don’t all grade-levels plan like this? I mean we’re all talking about the same stuff!” (inquiry group transcript, 2016/10/25). Writing teachers, regardless of the age of their students or their curricular constraints can enact critical, humanizing writing instruction, honoring students’ experiences and empowering students to take up the work of naming and remaking themselves and their worlds.

Implications for classroom writing instruction

Looking at the inquiry group’s ideas and the teachers’ translation of those ideas into practice offers important implications for how teachers think about students as writers and learners. For this group, we began with questions related to blurring classroom hierarchies to put more decisions in students’ hands. For this particular group of teachers, this inquiry into ways of drawing on theories of design and design thinking to create more critical, humanizing writing instruction emphasized the potential of *purpose* and *audience* as tools that open up important new subject positions for writing teachers and for writers. These words were not the magic words that changed their practice, nor were they even new to the inquiry group teachers. As described in chapter five, these words even show up in state standards, including the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards (2010, 2017) and the Common Core State Standards (2010). Yet, despite the pervasiveness of these words, the inquiry group’s discussions, as other scholars have also noted (e.g., Magnifico, 2010; Park, 1982), highlighted how these terms can often lose much of the rich meaning they should carry about writing. This loss of meaning may, in part, be connected to the lack of attention to authentic purposes and audiences in the high-stakes tests connected to those standards.

In the inquiry group, however, the teachers’ conversations reassigned meaning to the terms—first deconstructing them and then adding new layers of meaning to *purpose* and *audience* as tools embedded with particular ways of doing and thinking about writing and writing instruction. Primarily, these tools and embedded subject positions meant working like a designer to "use words and other language resources to define and respond in creative ways to problems they see as important" (Leverenz, 2014, p. 4). These terms are certainly not the only way to think about repositioning writing and writers in classrooms, and these terms on their own are not typically activated in the same ways across learning standards, educational research, or classroom practice in my experience. However, for the teachers in this inquiry group, redefining and extending these terms together helped them to also redefine and extend their understandings of writers who, rather than learning forms or conventions of writing for the sake of learning them, are grounded in the sociocultural nature of writing. These writers write to do things in the world, to name their world.

Students across EC-12 contexts are often offered positions as novices who need to gain mastery over decontextualized forms and conventions of writing or positions as test-takers who need to memorize an acronym or a formula in order to be successful writers. However, this study suggests that teachers who (re)conceptualize writing as a design process may also authorize subject positions for students in which they are capable of recognizing reasons to write, of having valuable things to say, of discerning appropriate audiences and those audiences' needs and expectations, and of making writing decisions based on those individual purposes and audiences. When teachers (re)position students in this way, the teachers are no longer in control of making decisions about students' writing, but instead can be sitting together with students and inquiring into writing alongside them. These more horizontal relationships can create more opportunities for students and teachers to learn from one another and about one another as writers, learners, and human beings. Redefining purpose and audience as tools for teaching writing as design, then, was one powerful way to design and engage in more critical, humanizing writing pedagogy.

The examples of Paige's and Penelope's writing instruction highlighted in this study suggest that meaningful purposes and audiences can be foregrounded from the very beginning of the writing process, making those tools available to students throughout their decision-making. Rather than starting with questions about what the students noticed about shared mentor texts, for example, teachers might instead begin by asking students to think about two questions: “Why would someone write this?” and “Why would someone read this?” Additionally, teachers might position themselves and other writers in the classroom as potential readers, opening up spaces for student-writers to try out or “test” their writing out along the way. Moves like these could be brought into units of study organized around genre; however, this study also offers purpose-studies as a new organizing structure for writing units. In a purpose-study, writers inquire into a reason for writing (e.g., writing to explain, writing to persuade, writing to make change or promote justice). Then, as students decide on their own audiences and specific purposes for writing, they also make important decisions about genre—a choice rarely offered students in writing classrooms.

Centering purpose and audiences, and particularly designing and enacting purpose-studies, can not only create more space for authentic writing and students’ decision-making as writers, but may also support students in understanding and hopefully recognizing real reasons writers write. If teachers’ long-term goals for the writers in our classrooms go beyond the next school year, the next standardized writing test and instead are focused on supporting flexible, life-long writers—those teachers need to go beyond helping students perfect specific school papers to handing over and supporting students in making important but challenging decisions about purpose, audience, genre, and so on. Those teachers need to empower students to take on more of the hard work that writers really do and to recognize the power of their voices out in the world.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings from this study suggest several directions for future research into both critical, humanizing literacy instruction and teacher learning. One of those directions includes exploring more possibilities for building both teachers’ and students’ critical consciousness and to move writing beyond the classroom. While three of the teachers in this study offered students opportunities to engage in their own critical inquiries and to write for social action, raising critical consciousness was not necessarily an explicit focus for all the teachers across the year. Zoe and Paige, for example, often discussed sociopolitical issues in their reading or social studies instruction, so those conversations, and thus topics students saw as authorized in that school space, were more often carried over to their writing instruction. There were fewer examples of explicitly critical sociopolitical topics introduced in Gwen and Penelope’s instruction, and with the exception of Penelope’s writing-for-social-justice unit, there were fewer examples of critical topics and conversations in students’ writing or class discussions. While the teachers’ design work in the inquiry group attended to the *critical* through reconsidering and rebalancing power dynamics in the classroom, the group did less to explicitly name and attend to *Critical* sociopolitical issues—such as race, class, gender, and religion (Land, 2018)—in their redesigns of writing instruction. Additionally, none of the teachers found ways to support students in actually getting writing into the hands of audiences beyond the school walls, even when students had very clear audiences for which they had designed the writing. More research is needed to see if widening students’ audiences beyond school, in actual practice, makes a difference for student writers beyond abstractly considering those audiences in their writing processes. Following up on these two lines of thought could broaden understandings of critical, humanizing writing instruction, particularly in terms of repositioning writing and teaching writing as a powerful, sociopolitical act.

Another direction stemming from this research would be to utilize a more longitudinal research design, including either continuing an inquiry group over multiple years or following participants in the months or years after they finish meeting together. While this study offers a rich description of how four teachers came from different schools and grade-level contexts to reflect on and redesign instruction in their classrooms, it ultimately shows how this one group of teachers took up critical, humanizing writing instruction across one academic school year. Future longitudinal research might include follow up with teachers to see how they are continuing (or not) to refine strategies they tried out in talk or in practice or to build identities supported in the inquiry group. Future research might also follow up with students from teachers' classrooms to see how their identities and strategies as writers might translate into their work beyond school or when they do not necessarily have teachers who are thinking about writing or teaching in the same way. This kind of research, offering a longitudinal perspective, would add even more richness to this study's findings about teachers' design processes and identities and students' work as agentive designers of texts.

Follow-up studies with different participants would also help highlight the complexities of and other possibilities for critical, humanizing writing instruction. Because the focus on this inquiry group was not to design a one-size-fits-all strategy, tool, or intervention that could easily translate into any classroom anywhere, the strategies, tools, and components of critical, humanizing writing instruction, developed through shared conversations, were specifically brought about with these teachers' students and curriculum in mind. For this group of teachers, purpose and audience jumped out as important components of design that, when redefined together, could inform their teaching practice. However, a different group of teachers, working with students from different backgrounds and with curriculum and PD experiences from a different school district, might likely come up with different possibilities and priorities for their own contexts. For example, a group of teachers might take up questions about reflection and how students' reflecting on their decisions as writers and/or their audiences' responses to their writing might work as a tool for students to translate their learning into future writing situations. Another group of teachers might consider how mentor texts work as a tool for gathering or specifying requirements (e.g., "Engineering Design Process"; Howard et al., 2008) and inquire into how different types of mentor texts limit or open up new possibilities for students as writers. Yet another group might look at how they can learn from design or other types of teams to create collaborative writing opportunities for students, reframing writing as not just an individual act for social purposes but as collective action.

Future inquiry group work with different participants is especially important to consider since despite coming from different schools and representing first-grade through ninth-grade writing contexts, all of the teachers in the inquiry group, including me, identified as white, English-language dominant, middle-class women. Considering these demographics are representative of nearly 80 percent of the teacher workforce (Snyder, de Brey, & Dillow, 2016), it is important that white, female teachers like us are engaging with critical, humanizing instruction rather than leaving that important work to be delegated to already overburdened teachers of color. However, a more culturally and linguistically diverse group whose experiences better mirror the students in the schools where they teach would certainly bring additional important insights to designs for instruction. Additionally, researchers might explore how bringing participants together from different contexts and perspectives adds more nuance to our understandings of writing and critical, humanizing writing instruction. For example, an inquiry group that included parents or community members might further blur traditional hierarchies between "academic" and "real-world" writing, interrogating what counts as writing and lifting up the rich cultural, linguistic, and literacy practices of families and communities. This type of group may also support teachers and community members in learning from each other and working together to build critical consciousness, reimagine possibilities, and take collective action in transforming school spaces for children.

Finally, researchers interested in teacher learning more generally should also consider repeating this study's design with other participants in order to answer questions about how these types of teacher learning communities emerge and thrive. For example, would inquiry groups be successful in taking up these or other critical questions about writing instruction if there were not members, like Paige and Zoe, who had some prior experiences beyond school where they were valued for their inquiry and resistance to standardization? What types of questions or shared concerns are most generative for teacher learning? Could this type of inquiry group community be recreated within the official boundaries of a school or school district? How could inquiry groups better support teachers, like Gwen, who already feel drained by the work they are asked to do in schools? Could this type of inquiry group community thrive without associations with an outside network or university? How might similar inquiry groups emerge out of preservice teacher education programs as supportive communities for early-career teachers? How do we, as teachers, teacher educators, and researchers, continue disrupting our own narratives to make sure we never feel “finished”? These questions and more deserve attention in future research, particularly if teacher educators hope to find ways of supporting teachers as agentive designers themselves and as critical, humanizing educators.

CONCLUSIONS

My initial research questions began with specific curiosities about how design processes might inform writing and writing instruction. For the teachers and me, design did open possibilities for blurring hierarchies in the classroom in ways that opened new subject positions for students as decision-makers and writers. However, through the conversations with teachers and reflections on their work with students, it was quickly clear that our work was bigger than that—it was about recognizing students’ strengths and interests as writers and thinkers, about engaging them in meaningful work, and preparing them for writing that went beyond a test, beyond next year, beyond college readiness. Though this research was done within a specific context, a specific school district in an urban community in Texas, the implications from this research move beyond these teachers, these schools, and these students. Critical, humanizing writing instruction, by definition, is about meeting individual students, and groups of students, where they are. The tenets of this kind of instruction, as outlined and demonstrated through this study, do not prescribe specific interventions or strategies, but are flexible enough to be adapted to any teaching context and to individual students within that context.

I also started this research project intending to use the inquiry group space as a method of data collection, mostly as a tool for helping me think about writing and the enactments of writing instruction resulting from our new understandings and designs. However, the inquiry group space was dynamic, sometimes messy, and too interesting to leave out of this story. The teachers’ translation of ideas into their practice were not neat, parallel stories of design, implementation, reflection, and redesign. Instead, the teachers—just like the students in each of our classrooms—were learning and always becoming, and were pushing me to do the same. I was puzzled and enthralled by what was happening in the group and in the teachers' classrooms, and I could not tell the stories of what happened in their classrooms without also talking about them as learners, co-designers, and inquirers in the group. The inquiry group space we created was not just about implementing a specific strategy or practice, but was also about acquiring common narratives of love, humility, and faith and practicing identities as designers of critical, humanizing pedagogy.

My goals in this study, particularly, were to position teachers alongside me as fellow inquirers, as fellow researchers, working towards new understandings together. My goals were also to support teachers in continuing to find ways to move beyond the constraints of standardized formulas and test-focused writing, to emphasize agency, audience, and authentic activity. Teaching and writing are both complicated, often chaotic activities. It is certainly easier for teachers to pick up pre-packaged writing curriculum and give up efforts to navigate tensions between competing demands and philosophies. It is certainly easier for students as writers to complete fill-in-the-blank worksheets and to memorize formulas for writing, to not even attempt to make difficult decisions about language, form, and content or to struggle through all of the hard parts of being a writer. However, these tensions and struggles are generative spaces of learning and of engaging, as partners, "in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization" (Freire, 1970/2005, p. 75). I hope that my re-presentation of these four teachers and their students has done some justice to the complexity of their identities and practices, to their struggles and brilliance as teachers and writers. I offer these stories as an extension to research that repositions teachers and students as more capable than they are often represented in the policies we are handed or in the reports we hear on the news. It is my sincere hope that this work serves to remind us that the humanity of students, teachers, teacher educators, and researchers are intertwined (Carter Andrews et al., 2019) and to inspire collective action towards creating a better, more just world.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: TEACHER SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Beginning of the Year Individual Interview

1. Tell me a little about yourself. Describe yourself as an educator.
    a. How long have you been teaching?
    b. What grades/subjects have you taught before? What grade/subject do you teach now?
    c. What kinds of experiences have you had that seem important in getting you here, to teaching writing, to this school, and so on?
2. How would you describe yourself as a writing teacher? What is important to you?
3. What approaches seem to best match those values? What does a writing class typically look like?
4. How do you plan for writing? Do you have units of study that you know you'll be teaching this year?

Middle of the Year Group Interview

1. Tell me a little bit about what you've done with students as writers so far this year.
2. How are you feeling about how it's going?
    a. What are you celebrating and what are you hoping to keep working on the rest of the year?
3. How do you make decisions about what to teach your writers? How would you describe your planning process? (**May use participant retrospection to aid in reflection on planning or in-the-moment decision making.)*
4. What has it been like to meet with other teachers who teach writing?
    a. Can you think of an example of a moment in your writing instruction where you were thinking about conversations or other work we did together in that group?
    b. What are you hoping to get out of that group the rest of this year?
5. What will writing instruction look like the rest of this year? What's coming up?

End of the Year Individual Interview

1. Tell me a little bit about what you've done with students as writers since we last spoke.
2. How are you feeling about how it's going?
    a. What are you celebrating and what are you wishing might go differently next year?

3. How do you make decisions about what to teach your writers? How would you describe your planning process? Has that looked the same all year? (**May use participant retrospection to aid in reflection on planning or in-the-moment decision making.)*
4. What has it been like to meet with other teachers who teach writing?
    a. Can you think of an example of a moment in your writing instruction where you were thinking about conversations or other work we did together in that group?
5. What will writing instruction look like next year? Any major changes?

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Potential Informal Questions for Students During Observations

- How's your writing going?
- What are you working on?
- How did you decide to do that?
- What do you usually do first?
- What do you do when you get stuck?
- What other strategies have you tried?
- What are you getting ready to do next?
- What was the teaching point that [teacher's name] offered in the minilesson or conference with you? Did you try it? How'd that go?
- I noticed you did [observed action] today. Why do you think you did that?

Student Interview Protocols

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself. Who are you as a person? As a student?
2. What is writing? How would you describe it to someone who wasn't a writer?
3. Do you like to write? Why or why not?
4. Can you remember a time where you really felt like a writer? What happened? What was that like?
5. What does writing class look like with [current teacher's name]? How is that the same as other teachers you've had before? How is it different?
6. Do you ever write outside of school? What kind of writing do you do there? Do you get to do that same kind of writing in school too?
7. What are you working on in your writing class right now? Where are you in the writing process? Are you working on any other writing projects outside of class?

References

Achinstein, B., & Ogawa, R. (2012). New teachers of color and culturally responsive teaching in an era of educational accountability: Caught in a double bind. *Journal of Educational Change*, *13*(1), 1–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-011-9165-y

Adair, J. K., Colegrove, K. S.-S., & McManus, M. E. (2017). How the word gap argument negatively impacts young children of Latinx immigrants' conceptualizations of learning. *Harvard Educational Review*, *87*(3), 309–334.

Anderson, K. T. (2009). Applying positioning theory to the analysis of classroom interactions: Mediating micro-identities, macro-kinds, and ideologies of knowing. *Linguistics and Education*, *20*(4), 291–310. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2009.08.001

Apple, M. W. (2007). Ideological success, educational failure? *Journal of Teacher Education*, *58*(2), 108–116.

Applebee, A. N. (1984). Writing and reasoning. *Review of Educational Research*, *54*(4), 577–596.

Applebee, A. N., & Langer, J. A. (2009). What is happening in the teaching of writing? *English Journal*, *98*(5), 18–28.

Applebee, A. N., & Langer, J. A. (2011). " EJ" extra: A snapshot of writing instruction in middle schools and high schools. *English Journal*, *100*(6), 14–27.

Aristotle. (2004). *Rhetoric* (W. R. Roberts, trans.). Courier Corporation.

Arnold, T. (2013). *Fly Guy presents: Sharks* (8.2.2013 edition). New York, NY: Scholastic Reference.

Artemeva, N. (2008). Toward a unified social theory of genre learning. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *22*(2), 160–185. https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651907311925

Assaf, L. C. (2014). Supporting English language learners' writing abilities: Exploring third spaces. *Middle Grades Research Journal*, *9*(1), 1-17.

Au, W. (2007). High-stakes testing and curricular control: A qualitative metasynthesis. *Educational Researcher*, *36*(5), 258–267.

Au, W. (2011). Teaching under the new Taylorism: High-stakes testing and the standardization of the 21st century curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, *43*(1), 25-45.

Auger, J. L. (2014). The author has the last word: Buddy editing in a first-grade classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, *84*(3), 367–384.

Augustine, S. M. (2014). Living in a post-coding world: Analysis as assemblage. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *20*(6), 747–753. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414530258

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. In *University of Texas Press Slavic Series*: *Vol. no. 1*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bang, M., & Vossoughi, S. (2016). Participatory design research and educational justice: Studying learning and relations within social change making. *Cognition and Instruction*, *34*(3), 173–193. https://doi.org/10.1080/07370008.2016.1181879

Barth, R. S. (1984). The principalship. *Educational Leadership*, *42*(6), 90.

Bartolomé, L. I. (1994). Beyond the methods fetish: Toward a humanizing pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review*, *64*(2), 173–194.

Bauer, E. B., Presiado, V., & Colomer, S. (2017). Writing through partnership: Fostering translanguaging in children who are emergent bilinguals. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *49*(1), 10–37.

Bawarshi, A. S., & Reiff, M. J. (2010). *Genre: An introduction to history, theory, research, and pedagogy*. In *Reference Guides to Rhetoric and Composition*. West Lafayette, IN: WAC Clearinghouse.

Baytak, A., & Land, S. M. (2011). An investigation of the artifacts and process of constructing computers games about environmental science in a fifth grade classroom. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *59*(6), 765–782. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-010-9184-z

Bazerman, C. (Ed.). (2007). *Handbook of research on writing: History, society, school, individual, text* (1 edition). New York: Routledge.

Bazerman, C., & Prior, P. (2005). Participating in emergent socio-literate worlds: genre, disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity. In R. Beach & J. Green (Eds.), *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Literacy Research* (2nd edition, pp. 138–178). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.

Beatty, I. D. (2012). Viewing teacher transformation through the lens of cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT). *Education as Change*, *16*(2), 283–300. https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2012.745756

Behizadeh, N., (2014). Adolescent perspectives on authentic writing instruction. *Journal of Language & Literacy Education / Ankara Universitesi SBF Dergisi*, *10*(1), 27–44.

Berkenkotter, C. (1981). Understanding a writer's awareness of audience. *College Composition and Communication*, *32*(4), 388–399. https://doi.org/10.2307/356601

Berkenkotter, C., & Huckin, T. N. (1993). Rethinking genre from a sociocognitive perspective. *Written Communication*, *10*(4), 475–509. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088393010004001

Berliner, D. (2011). Rational responses to high stakes testing: the case of curriculum narrowing and the harm that follows. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *41*(3), 287-305. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2011.607151

Berliner, D. C. (1990). If the metaphor fits, why not wear it? The teacher as executive. *Theory into Practice*, *29*(2), 85–93.

Bezemer, J., & Kress, G. (2008). Writing in multimodal texts: A social semiotic account of designs for learning. *Written Communication*, *25*(2), 166–195. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088307313177

Black, R. W. (2007). Digital design: English language learners and reader reviews in online fiction. In M. Knobel & C. Lankshear (Eds.), *A new literacies sampler*. New York: P. Lang.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theories and methods* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson A & B.

Bomer, R. (1995). *Time for meaning: Crafting literate lives in middle and high school*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bomer, R. (2011). *Building adolescent literacy in today's English classrooms*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bomer, R., & Bomer, K. (2001). *For a better world: Reading and writing for social action* (1 edition). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bomer, R., & Laman, T. (2004). Positioning in a primary writing workshop: Joint action in the discursive production of writing subjects. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *38*(4), 420–466.

Bourke, R. T. (2008). First graders and fairy tales: One teacher's action research of critical literacy. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(4), 304–312.

Bourne, J. (2002). "Oh, what will Miss say!": Constructing texts and identities in the discursive processes of classroom writing. *Language and Education*, *16*(4), 241–259. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780208666830

Bradley, B. A., & Reinking, D. (2011). Revisiting the connection between research and practice: Using formative and design research experiments. In N. K. Duke & M. H. Mallette (Eds.), *Literacy Research Methodologies, Second Edition* (2nd ed., pp. 188–212). New York: Guilford Publications.

Brandt, D. (2005). Writing for a living literacy and the knowledge economy. *Written Communication*, *22*(2), 166–197. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088305275218

Brandt, D. (2015). *The rise of writing: Redefining mass literacy in America*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Brimi, H. (2012). Teaching writing in the shadow of standardized writing assessment: An exploratory study. *American Secondary Education, 41*(1), 52-77.

Brindley, R., & Schneider, J. J. (2002). Writing instruction or destruction: Lessons to be learned from fourth-grade teachers' perspectives on teaching writing. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *53*(4), 328–341. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053004005

Brisk, M. E., Hodgson-Drysdale, T., & O'Connor, C. (2010). A study of a collaborative instructional project informed by systemic functional linguistic theory: Report writing in elementary grades. *The Journal of Education*, *191*(1), 1–12.

Broemmel, A. D., & Swaggerty, E. A. (2017). "I've tried and I've died this year": First-year teachers reflect on literacy reform. *The New Educator*, *13*(1), 41–52.

Brown, C. P., & Weber, N. B. (2016). Struggling to overcome the state's prescription for practice: A study of a sample of early educators' professional development and action research projects in a high-stakes teaching context. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *67*(3), 183–202. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487116636452

Brown, T. (2009). *Change by design: How design thinking transforms organizations and inspires innovation*. New York: HarperBusiness.

Brown, T., & Wyatt, J. (2010, Winter). Design thinking for social innovation. *Stanford Social Innovation Review; Stanford*, *8*(1), 31–35.

Buchanan, R. (1992). Wicked problems in design thinking. *Design Issues*, *8*(2), 5–21.

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, *7*(4–5), 585–614. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605054407

Butler, D. L., & Schnellert, L. (2012). Collaborative inquiry in teacher professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *28*(8), 1206–1220. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.07.009

Calkins, L. (1994). *The art of teaching writing*. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann.

Camburn, E. M., & Han, S. W. (2015). Infrastructure for teacher reflection and instructional change: An exploratory study. *Journal of Educational Change*, *16*(4), 511–533. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-015-9252-6

Carlgren, L., Rauth, I., & Elmquist, M. (2016). Framing design thinking: The concept in idea and enactment. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *25*(1), 38–57. https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12153

Carter Andrews, D. J., Bartell, T., & Richmond, G. (2016). Teaching in dehumanizing times: The professionalization imperative. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *67*(3), 170–172. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487116640480

Carter Andrews, D. J., Brown, T., Castillo, B. M., Jackson, D., & Vellanki, V. (2019). Beyond damage-centered teacher education: Humanizing pedagogy for teacher educators and preservice teachers. *Teachers College Record*, *121*(4), Advanced online publication.

Chafel, J. A., & Neitzel, C. (2012). “I would like to see how they got poor and see what it’s like to be poor”: An analysis of young children’s responses to a critical literacy text about poverty. *Journal of Poverty*, *16*(2), 147–170. https://doi.org/10.1080/10875549.2012.667058

Chandler-Olcott, K., & Mahar, D. (2003). “Tech-savviness” meets multiliteracies: Exploring adolescent girls’ technology-mediated literacy practices. *Reading Research Quarterly, 38*(3), 356–385.

Christianakis, M. (2010). Collaborative research and teacher education. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *19*(2), 109–125.

Cisneros, S. (1991). *The house on Mango Street*. New York: Vintage.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1992). Teacher as curriculum maker. In P. W. Jackson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on curriculum* (pp. 363–401). New York: Macmillan.

Clark, C. M. (1983). *Research on teacher planning: An inventory of the knowledge base* (No. Occasional Paper No. 66). East Lansing, MI: The Institute for Research on Teaching.

Clark, C. M., & Yinger, R. J. (1979). *Three studies of teacher planning* (No. Research Series No. 55). East Lansing, MI: The Institute for Research on Teaching.

Clark, R., & Ivanič, R. (1997). *The politics of writing*. New York: Routledge.

Clarke, L. W. (2006). Power through voicing others: Girls’ positioning of boys in literature circle discussions. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *38*(1), 53-79.

Cobb, C. G. (2011). *Making sense of agile project management: balancing control and agility*. John Wiley & Sons.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (1992). Interrogating cultural diversity: inquiry and action. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(2), 104–115. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487192043002004

Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (1999). The teacher research movement: A decade later. *Educational Researcher*, *28*(7), 15–25.

Cohen, M., & Riel, M. (1989). The effect of distant audiences on students' writing. *American Educational Research Journal*, *26*(2), 143–159. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312026002143

Cole, J. (1995). *The magic school bus in the time of the dinosaurs*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Collin, R. (2012). Genre in discourse, discourse in genre: A new approach to the study of literate practice. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *44*(1), 76–96. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X11431627

Compton-Lilly, C. (2014). The development of writing habitus: A ten-year case study of a young writer. *Written Communication*, *31*(4), 371–403. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088314549539

Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2009). "Multiliteracies": New literacies, new learning. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *4*(3), 164-195. https://doi.org/10.1080/15544800903076044

Costigan, A. T. (2013). New urban teachers transcending neoliberal educational reforms: Embracing aesthetic education as a curriculum of political action. *Urban Education*, *48*(1), 116–148. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085912457579

Crocco, M. S., & Costigan, A. T. (2007). The narrowing of curriculum and pedagogy in the age of accountability urban educators speak out. *Urban Education*, *42*(6), 512–535.

Croft, S. J., Roberts, M. A., & Stenhouse, V. L. (2015). The perfect storm of education reform: High-stakes testing and teacher evaluation. *Social Justice*, *42*(1 (139)), 70–92.

Cutler, L., & Graham, S. (2008). Primary grade writing instruction: A national survey. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *100*(4), 907–919. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012656

Dail, J. S., Goodsite, M., & Sanders, S. (2018). Teacher empowerment through partnerships: a sustaining model of professional development. *English Journal*, *107*(4), 20–25.

Dale, M., & Frye, E. M. (2009). Vulnerability and love of learning as necessities for wise teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *60*(2), 123–130. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487108329276

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Davies, D. (1996). Professional design and primary children. *International Journal of Technology and Design Education*, *6*(1), 45–59. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00571072

Davis, D. S., & Vehabovic, N. (2017). The dangers of test preparation: What students learn (and don't learn) about reading comprehension from test-centric literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, *71*(5), 579–588. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1641

De Lissovoy, N. (2010). Rethinking education and emancipation: Being, teaching, and power. *Harvard Educational Review*, *80*(2), 203–221.

de Oliveira, L. C., & Lan, S.-W. (2014). Writing science in an upper elementary classroom: A genre-based approach to teaching English language learners. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *25*, 23–39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2014.05.001

Devitt, A. J., Reiff, M. J., & Bawarshi, A. S. (2004). *Scenes of writing: Strategies for composing with genres*. New York: Pearson/Longman.

Dressman, M. (2008). *Using social theory in educational research: A practical guide*. New York: Routledge.

Dudley-Marling, C. (2004). The social construction of learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *37*(6), 482–489.

Dufour, R., & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement* (1 edition). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Durán, L. (2017). Audience and young bilingual writers: Building on strengths. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *49*(1), 92–114. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X16683420

Durán, L. G. (2015). *Audience and the writing development of young bilingual children* (Dissertation, University of Texas). Retrieved from https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/31383

Dutro, E. (2010). What “hard times” means: Mandated curricula, class-privileged assumptions, and the lives of poor children. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *44*(3), 255–291.

Dutro, E., Selland, M. K., & Bien, A. C. (2013). Revealing writing, concealing writers high-stakes assessment in an urban elementary classroom. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *45*(2), 99–141. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X13475621

Dyson, A. H. (2013). *ReWRITING the basics: literacy learning in children’s cultures*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Dyson, A. H., & Genishi, C. (2005). *On the case: Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ebadi, S., & Gheisari, N. (2016). The role of consciousness-raising through critical reflection in teachers’ professional development: A sociocultural perspective. *Cogent Education*, *3*(1), 1147990. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1147990

Ede, L., & Lunsford, A. (1984). Audience addressed/audience invoked: The role of audience in composition theory and pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication*, *35*(2), 155–171.

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic field notes* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Emig, J. A. (1971). *Composing processes of twelfth graders.* Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Engeström, Y. (1987). *Learning by expanding: An activity-theoretical approach to developmental research*. Helsinki: Orienta-Konsultit.

Engeström, Y. (2001). Expansive learning at work: Toward an activity theoretical reconceptualization. *Journal of Education and Work, 14*(1), 133–156. https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080020028747

Engeström, Y. (2005). Teachers as collaborative thinkers; Activity-theoretical study of an innovative teacher team. In I. Carlgren, G. Handal, & S. Vaage (Eds.), *Teachers' minds and actions* (pp. 45–63). Washington, D.C.: Taylor and Francis.

Engeström, Y. (2011). From design experiments to formative interventions. *Theory & Psychology*, *21*(5), 598–628. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354311419252

Engineering Design Process. (n.d.). Retrieved April 11, 2019, from Science Buddies website: https://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/engineering-design-process/engineering-design-process-steps

Erickson, F. (2004). *Talk and social theory: ecologies of speaking and listening in everyday life*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Erickson, F. (2006a). Definition and analysis of data from videotape: Some research procedures and their rationales. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research* (3 edition, pp. 177–191). Mahwah, NJ: Routledge.

Erickson, F. (2006b). Studying side-by-side: Collaborative action research in educational research. In G. Spindler, L. Hammond, & T. L. Barcenal (Eds.), *Innovations in Educational Ethnography: Theories, Methods, and Results*. Mahwah, NJ: Taylor and Francis.

Ermeling, B. A. (2010). Tracing the effects of teacher inquiry on classroom practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *26*(3), 377–388. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.02.019

Ferris, D. (2006). Does error feedback help student writers? New evidence on the short- and long-term effects of written error correction. In K. Hyland & F. Hyland (Eds.), *Feedback in Second Language Writing: Contexts and Issues* (1st ed., pp. 81–104). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Fisher-Ari, T. R., & Flint, A. S., (2018). Writer's workshop: A (re)constructive pedagogy for English learners and their teachers. *Pedagogies*, *13*(4), 353–373. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2018.1440560

Fitzgerald, J. (1987). Research on revision in writing. *Review of Educational Research*, *57*(4), 481–506. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543057004481

Fleckenstein, K. S., Spinuzzi, C., Rickly, R. J., & Papper, C. C. (2008). The importance of harmony: An ecological metaphor for writing research. *College Composition and Communication*, 388–419.

Flint, A. S., Allen, E., Nason, M., Rodriguez, S., Thornton, N., & Wynter-Hoyte, K. (2015). "It happened to me": Third grade students write and draw toward critical perspectives. *Journal of Language & Literacy Education / Ankara Universitesi SBF Dergisi*, *11*(2), 23–43.

Flint, A. S., Allen, E., Nason, M., Rodriguez, S., Thornton, N., & Wynter-Hoyte, K. (2015). "It happened to me": Third grade students write and draw toward critical perspectives. *Journal of Language & Literacy Education / Ankara Universitesi SBF Dergisi*, *11*(2), 23–43.

Flint, A. S., Zisook, K., & Fisher, T. R. (2011). Not a one-shot deal: Generative professional development among experienced teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *27*(8), 1163–1169. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.05.009

Flores, T. T. (2018). Breaking silence and amplifying voices: Youths writing and performing their worlds. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *61*(6), 653–661. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.733

Florida, R. (2014). *The rise of the creative class--revisited: Revised and expanded* (First Trade Paper Edition edition). New York: Basic Books.

Flower, L. S., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. In V. Villanueva (Ed.), *Cross-talk in comp theory: a reader*. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English.

Fowler-Amato, M. (2015). *Teachers and students developing critical language awareness through an exploration of everyday language practices* (Dissertation, University of Texas). Retrieved from https://utexas-ir.tdl.org/handle/2152/33358

Fowler-Amato, M., & Warrington, A. (2017). Teachers as designers: Social design experiments as vehicles for developing antideficit English education. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, *66*(1), 358–372. https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336917719054

Frankel, K. K. (2016). The intersection of reading and identity in high school literacy intervention classes. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *51*(1), 37–59.

Frankel, K. K. (2017). What does it mean to be a reader? Identity and positioning in two high school literacy intervention classes. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *33*(6), 501–518. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2016.1250143

Freedman, A., & Medway, P. (1994). Locating genre studies: Antecedents and prospects. In *Genre in the New Rhetoric* (pp. 2–18). Taylor & Francis.

Freire, P. (1970/2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Gadd, M., & Parr, J. M. (2017). Practices of effective writing teachers. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, *30*(7), 1551–1574.

Gainer, J. S. (2010). Critical media literacy in middle school: Exploring the politics of representation. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *53*(5), 364–373. https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.53.5.2

Gallagher, K. (2014). Making the most of mentor texts. *Educational Leadership, 71*(7), 28–33.

Garcia, A., Mirra, N., Morrell, E., Martinez, A., & Scorza, D. (2015). The Council of Youth Research: Critical literacy and civic agency in the digital age. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *31*(2), 151–167. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2014.962203

Garet, M. S., Birman, B. F., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., & Herman, R. (1999). *Designing effective professional development: Lessons from the Eisenhower Program*. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED442634

Gebhard, M., Chen, I.-A., & Britton, L. (2014). "Miss, nominalization is a nominalization:" English language learners' use of SFL metalanguage and their literacy practices. *Linguistics and Education*, *26*, 106–125. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2014.01.003

Gee, J. P. (2000). New people in new worlds: Networks, the new capitalism and schools. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures*. New York: Routledge.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Genishi, C., & Dyson, A. H. (2009). *Children, language, and literacy: Diverse learners in diverse times*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gere, A. R., Christenbury, L., & Sassi, K. (2005). *Writing on demand: Best practices and strategies for success*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Books.

Gershon, W. S. (2009). Introduction: Working together in qualitative research. In W. S. Gershon (Ed.), *The collaborative turn: Working together in qualitative research*. Rotterdam (The Netherlands); Boston: Sense Publishers.

Ghiso, M. P. (2013). Playing with/through non-fiction texts: Young children authoring their relationships with history. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *13*(1), 26–51.

Gilbert, J., & Graham, S. (2010). Teaching writing to elementary students in grades 4–6: A national survey. *The Elementary School Journal*, *110*(4), 494–518. https://doi.org/10.1086/651193

Giroux, H. A. (1985). Teachers as transformative intellectuals. *Social Education*, *49*(5), 376–379.

Giroux, H. A. (2005). *Border crossings: Cultural workers and the politics of education*. Routledge.

Goodnough, K. (2010). Teacher learning and collaborative action research: Generating a "knowledge-of-practice" in the context of science education. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, *21*(8), 917–935.

Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high school* [A report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York]. Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Excellence in Education.

Graham, S., Capizzi, A., Harris, K., Hebert, M., & Morphy, P. (2014). Teaching writing to middle school students: A national survey. *Reading and Writing*, *27*(6), 1015–1042. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9495-7

Graham, S., Harris, K. R., & Mason, L. (2005). Improving the writing performance, knowledge, and self-efficacy of struggling young writers: The effects of self-regulated strategy development. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *30*(2), 207–241. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2004.08.001

Graves, D. H. (1983). *Writing: Teachers & children at work*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann.

Grossman, P., Wineburg, S., & Woolworth, S. (2001). Toward a theory of teacher community. *The Teachers College Record*, *103*(6), 942–1012.

Gutiérrez, K. D., & Vossoughi, S. (2010). Lifting off the ground to return anew: Mediated praxis, transformative learning, and social design experiments. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *61*(1–2), 100–117. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487109347877

Gutiérrez, K. D., & Vossoughi, S. (2010). Lifting off the ground to return anew: Mediated praxis, transformative learning, and social design experiments. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *61*(1–2), 100–117. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487109347877

Gutiérrez, K. D., Morales, P. Z., & Martinez, D. C. (2009). Re-mediating literacy: Culture, difference, and learning for students from nondominant communities. *Review of Research in Education*, *33*(1), 212–245.

Haddix, M., & Sealey-Ruiz, Y. (2012). Cultivating digital and popular literacies as empowering and emancipatory acts among urban youth. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *56*(3), 189–192. https://doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.00126

Hales, P. D. (2017). "Your writing, not my writing": Discourse analysis of student talk about writing. *Cogent Education*, *4*(1), 1416897. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2017.1416897

Hall, L. A. (2009). Struggling reader, struggling teacher: An examination of student-teacher transactions with reading instruction and text in social studies. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *43*(3), 286–309.

Hall, L. A. (2016). "I don't really have anything good to say": Examining how one teacher worked to shape middle school students' talk about texts. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *51*(1), 60–83.

Hanington, B. (2003). Methods in the making: A perspective on the state of human research in design. *Design Issues*, *19*(4), 9–18.

Harman, R. (2013). Literary intertextuality in genre-based pedagogies: Building lexical cohesion in fifth-grade L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *22*(2), 125–140. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2013.03.006

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heikkilä, H., & Seppänen, L. (2014). Examining developmental dialogue: The emergence of transformative agency. *Outlines: Critical Practice Studies*, *15*(2), 5–30.

Hillocks, Jr., G. (2002). *The testing trap: How state writing assessments control learning*. Teachers College Press.

Hillocks, Jr., G. (1984). What works in teaching composition: a meta-analysis of experimental treatment studies. *American Journal of Education*, *93*(1), 133-170. https://doi.org/10.1086/443789

Hindin, A., Morocco, C. C., Mott, E. A., & Aguilar, C. M. (2007). More than just a group: teacher collaboration and learning in the workplace. *Teachers and Teaching*, *13*(4), 349–376. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600701391911

Holland, D., Lachicotte, Jr., W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds* (1 edition). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Honeyford, M. A., & Watt, J. (2018). Burrowing and becoming: Teaching writing in uncertain times. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *13*(3), 260–279.

hooks, bell. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Hope, G. (2007). Playing with designing: the impact of young children's play opportunities and choices on their responses to creative design situations. *Paper Presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference*, *5*, 8. Retrieved from http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/168000.doc

Hovardas, T., Tsivitanidou, O. E., & Zacharia, Z. C. (2014). Peer versus expert feedback: An investigation of the quality of peer feedback among secondary school students. *Computers & Education*, *71*, 133–152. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2013.09.019

Howard, T. J., Culley, S. J., & Dekoninck, E. (2008). Describing the creative design process by the integration of engineering design and cognitive psychology literature. *Design Studies*, *29*(2), 160–180. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2008.01.001

Huerta, T. M. (2011). Humanizing pedagogy: Beliefs and practices on the teaching of Latino children. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *34*(1), 38–57. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2011.568826

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. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543071004575

Itō, M., Baumer, S., Bittanti, M., boyd, d., Cody, R., Herr, B., … Tripp, L. (2010). *Hanging out, messing around, and geeking out: kids living and learning with new media*. In *The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Jaeger, E. L. (2016). Authors and citizens: Sociological imagination and the writing of evidence-based argument. *Literacy*, *50*(2), 100–109.

Janks, H. (2010). *Literacy and Power*. New York: Routledge.

Janks, H. (2012). The importance of critical literacy. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, *11*(1), 150–163.

Johnson, E. (2011). “I’ve got swag”: Simone performs critical literacy in a high-school English classroom. *English Teaching*, *10*(3), 26-44.

Johnson, L. P. (2017). Writing the self: Black queer youth challenge heteronormative ways of being in an after-school writing club. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *52*(1), 13–33.

Jones, S. (2013). Critical literacies in the making: Social class and identities in the early reading classroom. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *13*(2), 197–224. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798411430102

Juzwik, M. M., Curcic, S., Wolbers, K., Moxley, K. D., Dimling, L. M., & Shankland, R. K. (2006). Writing into the 21st century: An overview of research on writing, 1999 to 2004. *Written Communication*, *23*(4), 451–476. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088306291619

Kamberelis, G. (1995). Genre as institutionally informed social practice. *The Journal of Contemporary Legal Issues*, *6*(1), 115-179.

Kamberelis, G., & Scott, K. D. (1992). Other people’s voices: The coarticulation of texts and subjectivities. *Linguistics and Education*, *4*(3), 359–403. https://doi.org/10.1016/0898-5898(92)90008-K

Kelly, J., (2013). Professional learning communities: the emergence of vulnerability. *Professional Development in Education*, *39*(5), 862–864. https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2012.753932

Kim, G. M., & Omerbašić, D. (2017). Multimodal literacies: Imagining lives through Korean dramas. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *60*(5), 557–566. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.609

Kimbell, L. (2011). Rethinking design thinking: Part I. *Design and Culture*, *3*(3), 285–306.

Kinloch, V. (2011). When it happens “across”: Writing as transformative and expansive. *The English Journal*, *100*(5), 95–99.

Kinloch, V., & Burkhard, T. (2015). Teaching writing in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. *Handbook of Writing Research,* 377–394.

Kinloch, V., & Dixon, K. (2018). Professional development as publicly engaged scholarship in urban schools: implications for educational justice, equity, and humanization. *English Education*, *50*(2), 147–171.

Kiss, T., & Mizusawa, K. (2018). Revisiting the pedagogy of multiliteracies: Writing instruction in a multicultural context. *Changing English: Studies in Culture & Education*, *25*(1), 59–68. https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2017.1403283

Kitson, L., Fletcher, M., & Kearney, J. (2007). Continuity and change in literacy practices: A move towards multiliteracies. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, *41*(1), 29–41.

Kiuhara, S. A., Graham, S., & Hawken, L. S. (2009). Teaching writing to high school students: A national survey. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *101*(1), 136-160.

Kiuhara, S., O'Neill, R., Hawken, L., & Graham, S. (2012). The effectiveness of teaching 10th-grade students STOP, AIMS, and DARE for planning and drafting persuasive text. *Exceptional Children*, *78*(3), 335–355.

Kohli, R., Picower, B., Martinez, A. N., & Ortiz, N. (2015). Critical professional development: Centering the social justice needs of teachers. *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, *6*(2), 7–24.

Kostelnick, C. (1989). Process paradigms in design and composition: Affinities and directions. *College Composition and Communication*, *40*(3), 267–281. https://doi.org/10.2307/357774

Kozulin, A. (2003). Psychological tools and mediated learning. *Vygotsky's Educational Theory in Cultural Context*, 15–38.

Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication* (1 edition). London; New York: Routledge.

Kress, G. R. (2000). Design and transformation: New theories of meaning. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures* (pp. 149–158). New York: Routledge.

Kuby, C. R., & Vaughn, M. (2015). Young children's identities becoming: Exploring agency in the creation of multimodal literacies. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *15*(4), 433–472. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798414566703

Kumashiro, K. K. (2001). “Posts” Perspectives on Anti-Oppressive Education in Social Studies, English, Mathematics, and Science Classrooms. *Educational Researcher*, *30*(3), 3–12.

Labadie, M., Pole, K., & Rogers, R. (2013). How kindergarten students connect and critically respond to themes of social class in children’s literature. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *52*(4), 312–338. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2013.809176

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, *32*(3), 465–491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: a.k.a. the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, *84*(1), 74–84.

Laguardia, A., Brink, B., Wheeler, M., Grisham, D., & Peck, C. (2002). From agents to objects: the lived experience of school reform. *Child Study Journal*, *32*(1), 1-8.

Lalik, R., & Oliver, K. L. (2007). Differences and tensions in implementing a pedagogy of critical literacy with adolescent girls. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *42*(1), 46–70. https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.42.1.2

Lammers, J. C., & Marsh, V. L. (2015). Going public: An adolescent’s networked writing on fanfiction.net. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *59*(3), 277–285.

Land, C. L. (2018). Examples of c/Critical coaching: An analysis of conversation between cooperating and preservice teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *69*(5), 493–507. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487118761347

Land, C. L., Taylor, L. A., Lavender, H., & McKinnon, B. (2018). Making space for choice, voice and critique: critical literacy workshop in the era of Trump. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, *17*(1), 28–43. https://doi.org/10.1108/ETPC-06-2017-0100

Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *21*(8), 899–916. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.003

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Law, J. (2004). *After method: Mess in social science research*. Retrieved from http://www.UTXA.eblib.com/EBLWeb/patron?target=patron&extendedid=P_200755_0

Lawson, B. (2005). *How designers think: The design process demystified* (4th ed.). Burlington, MA: Architectural Press.

Lea, M. R., & Street, B. V. (2006). The "academic literacies" model: Theory and applications. *Theory Into Practice*, *45*(4), 368–377. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4504_11

Leander, K. M. (2004). "They took out the wrong context": Uses of time-space in the practice of positioning. *Ethos*, *32*(2), 188–213.

Lee, E., Kafai, Y. B., Vasudevan, V., & Davis, R. L. (2014). Playing in the arcade: Designing tangible interfaces with makey makey for scratch games. In A. Nijholt

(Ed.), *Playful User Interfaces* (pp. 277–292). Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-981-4560-96-2_13

Leland, C. H., Lewison, M., & Harste, J. C. (2014). *Creating critical classrooms: Reading and writing with an edge*. New York: Routledge.

Leont'ev, A. N. (1977). Activity and consciousness. *Philosophy in the USSR, Problems of Dialectical Materialism*. Retrieved from http://www.trotsky.org/archive/leontev/works/activity-consciousness.pdf

Leont'ev, A. N. (2009). *The development of mind: Selected works*. Marxists Internet Archive.

Lesley, M. (2008). Access and resistance to dominant forms of discourse: Critical literacy and "at risk" high school students. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *47*(3), 174–194. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070802062716

Leverenz, C. S. (2014). Design thinking and the wicked problem of teaching writing. *Computers and Composition*, *33*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2014.07.001

Lieberman, A. (2000). Networks as learning communities: Shaping the future of teacher development. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *51*(3), 221–227.

Lippi-Green, R. (2012). *English with an accent: Language, ideology and discrimination in the United States* (2nd ed). New York: Routledge.

Luke, C. (2000). Cyber-schooling and technological change: Multiliteracies for new times. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: literacy learning and the design of social futures*. New York: Routledge.

MacArthur, C. A. (2016). Instruction in evaluation and revision. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of Writing Research* (Second, pp. 272–287).

Maele, D. V., & Houtte, M. V. (2015). Trust in school: A pathway to inhibit teacher burnout? *Journal of Educational Administration*, *53*(1), 93–115. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-02-2014-0018

Magnifico, A. M. (2010). Writing for Whom? Cognition, Motivation, and a Writer's Audience. *Educational Psychologist*, *45*(3), 167–184.

Magnifico, A. M., Woodard, R., & McCarthey, S. (2019). Teachers as co-authors of student writing: How teachers' initiating texts influence response and revision in an online space. *Computers and Composition*, *52*, 107–131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2019.01.005

Maniates, H., & Mahiri, J. (2011). Post-scripts: Teaching reading in the aftermath of prescriptive curriculum policies. *Language Arts*, *89*(1), 10–21.

Marback, R. (2009). Embracing wicked problems: The turn to design in composition studies. *College Composition and Communication*, *61*(2), W397-W419.

Marsh, V. L. (2018). Portal and gatekeeper: How peer feedback functions in a high school writing class. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *53*(2), 149–172.

Martin, J. L., & Beese, J. A. (2017). Talking back at school: Using the literacy classroom as a site for resistance to the school-to-prison pipeline and recognition of students labeled "at-risk." *Urban Education*, *52*(10), 1204–1232. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085915602541

Martin, J. R. (2000). Design and practice: Enacting functional linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *20*, 116–126.

Martin, N. K., Sass, D. A., & Schmitt, T. A. (2012). Teacher efficacy in student engagement, instructional management, student stressors, and burnout: A theoretical model using in-class variables to predict teachers' intent-to-leave. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *28*(4), 546–559. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.12.003

Martínez, R. A., Orellana, M. F., Pacheco, M., & Carbone, P. (2008). Found in translation: Connecting translating experiences to academic writing. *Language Arts*, *85*(6), 421–431.

Matsumura, L. C., Patthey-Chavez, G. G., Valdes, R., & Garnier, H. (2002). Teacher feedback, writing assignment quality, and third-grade students' revision in lower- and higher-achieving urban schools. *Elementary School Journal*, *103*(1), 3–25.

Mavers, D. (2007). Semiotic resourcefulness: A young child's email exchange as design. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *7*(2), 155–176. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798407079285

Mazzei, L. A. (2014). Beyond an easy sense: A diffractive analysis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *20*(6), 742–746. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414530257

McCarthey, S. J., & Mkhize, D. (2013). Teachers' orientations toward writing instruction. *Journal of Writing Research*, *5*(1), 1–33. https://doi.org/10.17239/jowr-2013.05.01.1

McCarthey, S. J., & Ro, Y. S. (Ellie). (2011). Approaches to writing instruction. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *6*(4), 273–295. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2011.604902

McCarthey, S. J., & Woodard, R. (2018). Faithfully following, adapting, or rejecting mandated curriculum: Teachers' curricular enactments in elementary writing instruction. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *13*(1), 56–80.

McCarthey, S. J., (2008). The impact of no child left behind on teachers' writing instruction. *Written Communication*, *25*(4), 462–505. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088308322554

McCutcheon, G. (1980). How do elementary school teachers plan? The nature of planning and influences on it. *The Elementary School Journal*, *81*(1), 4–23.

McKinney, S. E., Berry, R. Q., Dickerson, D. L., & Campbell-Whately, G. (2007). Addressing urban high-poverty school teacher attrition by addressing urban high poverty school teacher retention: Why effective teachers persevere. *Educational Research and Reviews*, *3*(1), 1-9.

McLaren, P. L., & Crawford, J. (2010). Critical Pedagogy. In C. Kridel (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Curriculum Studies* (pp. 148–149). https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412958806.n88

McNeil, L., & Valenzuela, A. (2000). *The harmful impact of the TAAS system of testing in Texas: Beneath the accountability rhetoric.*

Mehan, H. (1979). "What time is it, Denise?": Asking known information questions in classroom discourse. *Theory Into Practice*, *18*(4), 285–294.

Meirink, J. A., Imants, J., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2010). Teacher learning and collaboration in innovative teams. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *40*(2), 161–181.

Merriam, S. B. (2014). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (3rd ed.). Hoboken: Wiley.

Midgette, E., Haria, P., & MacArthur, C. (2008). The effects of content and audience awareness goals for revision on the persuasive essays of fifth- and eighth-grade students. *Reading and Writing*, *21*(1–2), 131–151. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-007-9067-9

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: a methods sourcebook* (Third edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Miller, C. R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *70*(2), 151–167.

Mills, K. A. (2007). "Have you seen Lord of the Rings?" Power, pedagogy, and discourses in a multiliteracies classroom. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, *6*(3), 221–241. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348450701454247

Mills, K. A., & Exley, B. (2014). Time, space, and text in the elementary school digital writing classroom. *Written Communication*, *31*(4), 434–469. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088314542757

Milne, L. (2012). Nurturing the designerly thinking and design capabilities of five-year-olds: technology in the new entrant classroom. *International Journal of*

Technology and Design Education, *23*(2), 349–360. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10798-011-9182-4

Milner, H. R. (2013). Scripted and narrowed curriculum reform in urban schools. *Urban Education*, *48*(2), 163–170. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085913478022

Mirra, N., & Morrell, E. (2011). Teachers as civic agents: Toward a critical democratic theory of urban teacher development. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *62*(4), 408–420. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487111409417

Moje, E. B. (2007). Developing socially just subject-matter instruction: A review of the literature on disciplinary literacy teaching. *Review of Research in Education*, *31*, 1–44.

Moje, E. B. (2008). Foregrounding the disciplines in secondary literacy teaching and learning: A call for change. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *52*(2), 96–107.

Moje, E. B., & Luke, A. (2009). Literacy and identity: Examining the metaphors in history and contemporary research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *44*(4), 415–437. https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.4.7

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. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534

Moore, N. S., & MacArthur, C. A. (2012). The effects of being a reader and of observing readers on fifth-grade students' argumentative writing and revising. *Reading and Writing*, *25*(6), 1449–1478. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-011-9327-6

Morrell, E. (2003, March). *Writing the word and the world: critical literacy as critical textual production.* Conference paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, New York.

Moses, L., & Kelly, L. B. (2017). The development of positive literate identities among emerging bilingual and monolingual first graders. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *49*(3), 393–423. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X17713291

Mosley Wetzel, M., Maloch, B., & Hoffman, J. V. (2017). Retrospective video analysis: A reflective tool for teachers and teacher educators. *The Reading Teacher*, *70*(5), 533–542. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1550

Mosley Wetzel, M., Maloch, B., Hoffman, J. V., Taylor, L. A., Vlach, S. K., & Greeter, E. (2015). Developing mentoring practices through video-focused responsive discourse analysis. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, *64*(1), 359–378. https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336915617611

Muhammad, G. E. (2015a). Iqra: African American Muslim girls reading and writing for social change. *Written Communication*, *32*(3), 286–316. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088315590136

Muhammad, G. E. (2015b). The role of literary mentors in writing development: How African American women's literature supported the writings of adolescent girls. *Journal of Education*, *195*(2), 5–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/002205741519500203

Muhammad, G. E., & Haddix, M. (2016). Centering Black girls' literacies: A review of literature on the multiple ways of knowing of Black girls. *English Education, 48*(4), 299–336.

Murray, D. M. (1972/2009). Teach writing as a process, not product. In T. Newkirk & L. C. Miller (Eds.), *The essential Don Murray: Lessons from America's greatest writing teacher* (pp. 1–5). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers/Heinemann.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010). *Common core state standards: English language arts*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/

Navarro, O., (2018). We can't do this alone: Validating and inspiring social justice teaching through a community of transformative praxis. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *48*(3), 335–358. https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2018.1468212

New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, *66*(1), 60–92.

Niesz, T. (2007). Why teacher networks (can) work. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *88*(8), 605–610.

Norris, A. (2014). Make-her-spaces as hybrid places: Designing and resisting self constructions in urban classrooms. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *47*(1), 63–77.

O'Brien, T. (1990). *The things they carried*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

O’Halloran, C. L. (2014). Supporting fifth-grade ELLs’ argumentative writing development. *Written Communication*, *31*(3), 304–331. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088314536524

Ohlsson, J. (2013). Team learning: Collective reflection processes in teacher teams. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, *25*(5), 296-309.

Oliver, L. (2018). ‘Nothing too major’: How poor revision of writing may be an adaptive response to school tasks. *Language and Education*, *0*(0), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2018.1511728

Ouellette, R. R., Frazier, S. L., Shernoff, E. S., Cappella, E., Mehta, T. G., Maríñez-Lora, A., … Atkins, M. S. (2018). Teacher job stress and satisfaction in urban schools: Disentangling individual-, classroom-, and organizational-level influences. *Behavior Therapy*, *49*(4), 494–508. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beth.2017.11.011

Palmer, D., & Lynch, A. W. (2008). A bilingual education for a monolingual test? The pressure to prepare for TAKS and its influence on choices for language of instruction in Texas elementary bilingual classrooms. *Language Policy*, *7*(3), 217–235.

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher*, *41*(3), 93–97.

Park, D. B. (1982). The meanings of “audience.” *College English*, *44*(3), 247–257. https://doi.org/10.2307/377012

Park, D. B. (1986). Analyzing audiences. *College Composition and Communication*, *37*(4), 478–488. https://doi.org/10.2307/357917

Patthey-Chavez, G. G., Matsumura, L. C., & Valdés, R. (2004). Investigating the process approach to writing instruction in urban middle schools. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *47*(6), 462–476.

Pease-Alvarez, L., & Thompson, A. (2014). Teachers working together to resist and remake educational policy in contexts of standardization. *Language Policy*, *13*(2), 165–181.

Pennycook, A. (2010). Introduction: Language as a local practice. In *Language as a local practice* (1st ed, pp. 1–16). Milton Park, Abingdon; New York: Routledge.

Perez, S. A. (2001). Revising during writing in a second grade classroom. *Educational Research Quarterly*, *25*(1), 27–32.

Peterson, K. E., & Chamberlain, K. (2015). "Everybody treated him like he was from another world": Bilingual fourth graders develop social awareness through interactive read-alouds focused on critical literacies. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *54*(3), 231–255.

Peterson, P. L., Marx, R. W., & Clark, C. M. (1978). Teacher planning, teacher behavior, and student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, *15*(3), 417–432. https://doi.org/10.2307/1162495

Philippakos, Z. A., & MacArthur, C. A. (2016). The effects of giving feedback on the persuasive writing of fourth- and fifth-grade students. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *51*(4), 419–433. https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.149

Purcell-Gates, V., Duke, N. K., & Martineau, J. A. (2007). Learning to read and write genre-specific text: Roles of authentic experience and explicit teaching. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *42*(1), 8–45. https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.42.1.1

Purdy, J. P. (2014). What can design thinking offer writing studies? *College Composition and Communication*, *65*(4), 612-641.

Putnam, R., & Borko, H. (2000). What do new views of knowledge and thinking have to say about research on teacher learning? *Educational Researcher*, *29*(1), 4–15.

Ranker, J. (2007). Designing meaning with multiple media sources: A case study of an eight-year-old student's writing processes. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *41*(4), 402–434.

Ranker, J. (2009a). Redesigning and transforming: A case study of the role of semiotic import in early composing processes. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *9*(3), 319–347. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798409345111

Ranker, J. (2009b). Student appropriation of writing lessons through hybrid composing practices: direct, diffuse, and indirect use of teacher-offered writing tools in an ESL classroom. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *41*(4), 393–431. https://doi.org/10.1080/10862960903340124

Ratcliffe, J. (2009). Steps in a design thinking process. Retrieved August 18, 2016, from The K-12 Lab Wiki website: https://dschool.stanford.edu/groups/k12/wiki/17cff/Steps_in_a_Design_Thinking_Process.html

Ray, K. W. (2001). *The writing workshop: working through the hard parts (and they're all hard parts)*. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English.

Ray, K. W. (2006). *Study driven: A framework for planning units of study in the writing workshop* (1 edition). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Reeves, J. (2009). Teacher investment in learner identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *25*(1), 34–41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.06.003

Rex, L. A. (2001). The remaking of a high school reader. *Reading Research Quarterly [H.W. Wilson - EDUC]*, *36*(3), 288-314.

Rijlaarsdam, G., Braaksma, M., Couzijn, M., & Janssen, T. (2009). The role of readers in writing development: Writing students bringing their texts to the test. In *The SAGE Handbook of Writing Development* (pp. 436–452). https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857021069

Rives, A., & Olsen, A. W. (2015). Where's the rhetoric? Exposing the (mis)alignment in the common core state writing standards. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *59*(2), 161–170. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.443

Roen, D. H., & Willey, R. J. (1988). The effects of audience awareness on drafting and revising. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *22*(1), 75–88.

Roozenburg, N. F. M., & Cross, N. G. (1991). Models of the design process: integrating across the disciplines. *Design Studies*, *12*(4), 215–220. https://doi.org/10.1016/0142-694X(91)90034-T

Rosario-Ramos, E. M. (2018). “Why aren’t there enough of our stories to read?”: Teaching autoethnographies for radical healing. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, *17*(3), 213–227. https://doi.org/10.1108/ETPC-04-2017-0048

Rowsell, J., & Decoste, E. (2012). (Re)designing writing in English class: a multimodal approach to teaching writing. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *7*(3), 246-260. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2012.685226

Ruegg, R., (2017). Learner revision practices and perceptions of peer and teacher feedback. *Writing & Pedagogy*, *9*(2), 275–300. https://doi.org/10.1558/wap.33157

Russell, D. R. (1997). Rethinking genre in school and society an activity theory analysis. *Written Communication*, *14*(4), 504–554.

Russell, D. R. (2009). Uses of activity theory in written communication research. In A. Sannino, H. Daniels, & K. D. Gutierrez (Eds.), *Learning and expanding with activity theory*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ryan, M., & Barton, G. (2014). The spatialized practices of teaching writing in Australian elementary schools: Diverse students shaping discoursal selves. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *48*(3), 303–329.

Saddler, B., Saddler, K., Befoorhooz, B., & Cuccio-Slichko, J. (2014). A national survey of revising practices in the primary classroom. *Learning Disabilities -- A Contemporary Journal*, *12*(2), 129–149.

Salazar, M. del C. (2013). A humanizing pedagogy: Reinventing the principles and practice of education as a journey toward liberation. *Review of Research in Education*, *37*(1), 121–148. https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X12464032

Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Santoro, D. A. (2011). Good teaching in difficult times: Demoralization in the pursuit of good work. *American Journal of Education*, *118*(1), 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1086/662010

Sato, K., & Matsushima, K. (2006). Effects of audience awareness on procedural text writing. *Psychological Reports*, *99*(1), 51–73. https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.99.1.51-73

Scarbrough, B., & Allen, A.-R. (2014). Writing workshop revisited: Confronting communicative dilemmas through spoken word poetry in a high school English classroom. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *46*(4), 475–505. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X15568929

Scherff, L., & Piazza, C. (2005). The more things change, the more they stay the same: A survey of high school students' writing experiences. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *39*(3), 271–304.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action* (1 edition). New York: Basic Books.

Scott, T. (2008). "Happy to comply": Writing assessment, fast-capitalism, and the cultural logic of control. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, *30*(2), 140–161.

Scribner, S., & Cole, M. (1978). Unpackaging literacy. *Social Science Information*, *17*(1), 19–39.

Scribner, S., & Cole, M. (1981). *The psychology of literacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Seely Flint, A., & Tropp Laman, T. (2012). Where poems hide: Finding reflective, critical spaces inside writing workshop. *Theory Into Practice*, *51*(1), 12–19.

Shanahan, L. E. (2013). Multimodal representations: a fifth-grade teacher influences students' design and production. *Pedagogies*, *8*(2), 85–102. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2013.767768

Sharples, M. (1999). *How we write: Writing as creative design*. London: Routledge.

Sharples, M. (2013). An account of writing as creative design. In C. M. Levy & S. Ransdell (Eds.), *The Science of Writing Theories, Methods, Individual Differences and Applications.* (pp. 127–148).

Shernoff, E. S., Mehta, T. G., Atkins, M. S., Torf, R., & Spencer, J. (2011). A qualitative study of the sources and impact of stress among urban teachers. *School Mental Health*, *3*(2), 59–69.

Simon, L. (2009). “And they got married by the church ...”: “Crazy stories” and the possibilities of collaborative textual transformations. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, *8*(2/3), 107–123. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348450902848437

Skerrett, A. (2009). Responding to student diversity amidst tested traditions and testing standards. *Teaching Education*, *20*(3), 277–290.

Skerrett, A. (2010). “There’s going to be community. There’s going to be knowledge”: Designs for learning in a standardised age. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*(3), 648–655. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.09.017

Skerrett, A. (2013). Building multiliterate and multilingual writing practices and identities. *English Education*, *45*(4), 322-360.

Skerrett, A. (2014). Religious literacies in a secular literacy classroom. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *49*(2), 233–250. https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.65

Skerrett, A., & Bomer, R. (2011). Borderzones in adolescents’ literacy practices: Connecting out-of-school literacies to the reading curriculum. *Urban Education*, *46*(6), 1256–1279. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085911398920

Skerrett, A., & Bomer, R. (2013). Recruiting languages and lifeworlds for border-crossing compositions. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *47*(3), 313-337.

Skerrett, A., Warrington, A., & Williamson, T. (2018). Generative Principles for Professional Learning for Equity-Oriented Urban English Teachers. *English Education*, *50*(2), 116–146.

Slavit, D., & Nelson, T. (2010). Collaborative teacher inquiry as a tool for building theory on the development and use of rich mathematical tasks. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, *13*(3), 201–221. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10857-009-9136-x

Slomp, D. H. (2008). Harming not helping: The impact of a Canadian standardized writing assessment on curriculum and pedagogy. *Assessing Writing*, *13*(3), 180–200. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2008.10.004

Smagorinsky, P., Johannessen, L. R., Kahn, E., & McCann, T. (2010). *The dynamics of writing instruction: A structured process approach for middle and high school*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Snyder, T. D., de Brey, C., & Dillow, S. A. (2016). *Digest of Education Statistics 2014 (NCES 2016-006)* (50th Edition). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

So, K. (2013). Knowledge construction among teachers within a community based on inquiry as stance. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *29*, 188–196. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.10.005

Souto-Manning, M. (2019, April). *Thinking beyond a damage-centered teaching: Enacting a humanizing pedagogy in teacher education*. Discussant notes presented at the American Educational Research Association's Annual Conference, Toronto.

Souto-Manning, M., & Martell, J. (Advanced online publication). Toward critically transformative possibilities: Considering tensions and undoing inequities in the spatialization of teacher education. *Teachers College Record*, *121*(4).

Sperling, M. (1995). Uncovering the role of role in writing and learning to write: One day in an inner-city classroom. *Written Communication*, *12*(1), 93–133. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088395012001006

Spinuzzi, C. (1999). *Designing for lifeworlds: Genre and activity in information systems design and evaluation*.

Spinuzzi, C. (2002). Toward integrating our research scope: A sociocultural field methodology. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *16*(1), 3–32.

Spinuzzi, C. (2003). *Tracing genres through organizations: A sociocultural approach to information design* (Vol. 1). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Spinuzzi, C. (2005). The methodology of participatory design. *Technical Communication*, *52*(2), 163–174.

Stagg Peterson, S. (2012). An analysis of discourses of writing and writing instruction in curricula across Canada. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *42*(2), 260–284. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-873X.2012.00589.x

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. New York: Guilford Publications, Inc.

Stevenson, A., & Beck, S. (2017). Migrant students' emergent conscientization through critical, socioculturally responsive literacy pedagogy. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *49*(2), 240–272.

Street, B. V. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Street, B. V. (1993). *Cross-cultural approaches to literacy*. Cambridge University Press.

Strickland, D. S., Bodino, A., Buchan, K., Jones, K. M., Nelson, A., & Rosen, M. (2001). Teaching writing in a time of reform. *Elementary School Journal*, *101*(4), 385–397. https://doi.org/10.1086/499677

Tatum, A., & Gue, V. (2012). The sociocultural benefits of writing for African American adolescent males. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *28*(2), 123–142. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2012.651075

Taylor, L. A. (2017). *Contradictions and possibilities: Examining the complexities of conferring across three elementary literacy classrooms* (Dissertation, University of Texas). Retrieved from https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/47451

Taylor-Butler, C. (2014). *The moon*. New York: Childrens Press.

Texas Education Agency. (2008). *Texas essential knowledge and skills for English language arts and reading*. Retrieved from http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110a.html#110.10

Thirakunkovit, S., & Chamcharatsri, B. (2019). A meta-analysis of effectiveness of teacher and peer feedback: Implications for writing instructions and research. *Asian EFL Journal*, *21*(1), 140–170.

Tillema, H., & van der Westhuizen, G. J. (2006). Knowledge construction in collaborative enquiry among teachers. *Teachers and Teaching*, *12*(1), 51. https://doi.org/10.1080/13450600500365403

Tower, C. (2005). What's the purpose? Students talk about writing in science. *Language Arts*, *82*(6), 472–483.

Troia, G. A., & Graham, S. (2016). Common core writing and language standards and aligned state assessments: A national survey of teacher beliefs and attitudes. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, *29*(9), 1719–1743.

Valencia, R. R. (1997). *The evolution of deficit thinking: educational thought and practice*. In *Stanford Series on Education and Public Policy*: *Vol. 19*. Washington, D.C: Falmer Press.

van Langenhove, L., & Harré, R. (1998). Introducing social positioning. In R. Harré & L. van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory: Moral contexts of intentional action* (1 edition). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

VanDerHeide, J. (2018). Classroom talk as writing instruction for learning to make writing moves in literary arguments. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *53*(3), 323–344.

Vetter, A. (2010). Positioning students as readers and writers through talk in a high school English classroom. *English Education*, *43*(1), 33–64.

Vetter, A., Myers, J., & Hester, M. (2014). Negotiating ideologies about teaching writing in a high school English classroom. *The Teacher Educator*, *49*(1), 10–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2013.848000

Voelkel Jr, R. H., & Chrispeels, J. H. (2017). Within-school differences in professional learning community effectiveness: Implications for leadership. *Journal of School Leadership*, *27*(3), 424–451.

Volosinov, V. N. (1986). *Marxism and the philosophy of language* (1st edition; L. el & I. R. Titunik, trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vossoughi, S., & Escudé, M. (2016). What does the camera communicate? An inquiry into the politics and possibilities of video research on learning. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *47*(1), 42–58. https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12134

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language* (A. Kozulin, ed.). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Wahleithner, J. M. (2018). Five portraits of teachers' experiences teaching writing: Negotiating knowledge, student need, and policy. *Teachers College Record*, *120*(1), 1-60.

Warrington, A. S. (2016). *Design and implementation of appreciative writing assessment in secondary English Language Arts classrooms* (Dissertation, University of Texas). Retrieved from https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/43379

Watanabe, M. (2007). Displaced teacher and state priorities in a high-stakes accountability context. *Educational Policy*, *21*(2), 311–368. https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904805284114

Watson, A. D. (2015). Design thinking for life. *Art Education*, *68*(3), 12–18.

Webster-Wright, A. (2009). Reframing professional development through understanding authentic professional learning. *Review of Educational Research*, *79*(2), 702–739.

Welch, M. (1999). Analyzing the tacit strategies of novice designers. *Research in Science & Technological Education*, *17*(1), 19-34. https://doi.org/10.1080/0263514990170102

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

West, R. E., & Hannafin, M. J. (2011). Learning to design collaboratively: Participation of student designers in a community of innovation. *Instructional Science: An International Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *39*(6), 821–841.

Whitney, A. E., (2008). Teacher transformation in the National Writing Project. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *43*(2), 144–187.

Whitney, A. E., (2011). In search of the authentic English classroom: Facing the schoolishness of school. *English Education*, *44*(1), 51–62.

Whitney, A. E., Ridgeman, M., & Masquelier, G. (2011). Beyond "Is This OK?": High School Writers Building Understandings of Genre. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *54*(7), 525–533. https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.54.7.6

Wiggins, G. (2009). Real-world writing: Making purpose and audience matter. *English Journal*, *98*(5), 29-37.

Williamson, T. (2017). Avoiding the gaze of the test: High stakes literacy policy implementation. *Texas Education Review*, *5*(2), 66–90.

Williamson, T. C. (2018). *Discourses and enactments of English Language Arts in a secondary English Department* (Dissertation). University of Texas, Austin.

Wilson, A. A., Smith, E., & Householder, D. L. (2014). Using disciplinary literacies to enhance adolescents' engineering design activity. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *57*(8), 676–686.

Winn, M. T., & Johnson, L. P. (2011). *Writing instruction in the culturally relevant classroom*. In *Principles in Practice. Writing in Today's Classrooms*. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English.

Wise, S. (2016, February 8). Design thinking in education: Empathy, challenge, discovery, and sharing. Retrieved September 5, 2016, from Edutopia website: http://www.edutopia.org/blog/design-thinking-empathy-challenge-discovery-sharing-susie-wise

Wohlwend, K. E. (2009). Dilemmas and discourses of learning to write: Assessment as a contested site. *Language Arts*, *86*(5), 341–351.

Wood, L. A., & Kroger, R. O. (2000). *Doing discourse analysis: Methods for studying action in talk and text* (1 edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Woodard, R., & Kline, S. (2016). Lessons from sociocultural writing research for implementing the Common Core State Standards. *The Reading Teacher*, *70*(2), 207–216. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1505

Woodard, R., Vaughan, A., & Machado, E. (2017). Exploring culturally sustaining writing pedagogy in urban classrooms. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, *66*(1), 215–231. https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336917719440

Wortham, S. (2003). Curriculum as a resource for the development of social identity. *Sociology of Education*, *76*(3), 228–246.

Worthy, J., Consalvo, A. L., Bogard, T., & Russell, K. W. (2012). Fostering academic and social growth in a primary literacy workshop classroom. *The Elementary School Journal*, *112*(4), 568–589.

Yancey, K. B. (2009). *Writing in the 21st century: A report from the National Council of Teachers of English*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Yoon, B. (2008). Uninvited guests: The influence of teachers' roles and pedagogies on the positioning of English language learners in the regular classroom. *American Educational Research Journal*, *45*(2), 495–522.

Yoon, H. (2013). Rewriting the curricular script: Teachers and children translating writing practices in a kindergarten classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *8*(2), 148–174.

Zande, R. V., Warnock, L., Nikoomanesh, B., & Dexter, K. V. (2014). The design process in the art classroom: Building problem-solving skills for life and careers. *Art Education*, *67*(6), 20–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/00043125.2014.11519294

Zapata, A. (2014). Examining the multimodal and multilingual composition resources of young Latino picturebook makers. In P. J. Dunston, S. K. Fullerton, M. W. Cole, D. Herro, J. A. Malloy, P. M. Wilder, & K. N. Headley (Eds.), *63rd Yearbook of the Literacy Research Association* (pp. 104–121). Oak Creek, WI: Literacy Research Association.

Zapata, M. A. (2013). *Examining the multilingual and multimodal resources of young Latino picturebook makers* (Dissertation, University of Texas). Retrieved from https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/handle/2152/22801

Zeichner, K. M., & Liston, D. P. (2014). *Reflective teaching: An introduction* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Zellermayer, M., & Ronn, P. (1999). Making tacit knowledge visible through the interplay between action research and videotaping. *Teachers and Teaching*, *5*(2), 243–265. https://doi.org/10.1080/1354060990050207

Zisselsberger, M. (2016). Toward a humanizing pedagogy: Leveling the cultural and linguistic capital in a fifth-grade writing classroom. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *39*(2), 121–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2016.1167137

Zoch, M. (2015). Growing the good stuff: One literacy coach’s approach to support teachers with high-stakes testing. *Journal of Literacy Research, 47*(3), 328–369.

ZURB Design Process, A Design Definition. (n.d.). Retrieved October 20, 2016, from Zurb.com website: https://zurb.com/word/design-process