

High School Students' Response to Writing Mentor Feedback of "Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circle"

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RESEARCH QUESTION

How do high school writers feel about feedback on their writing drafts from pre-service English teachers, when those drafts are written during a Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles unit?

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study took place at a high school located in a rural area within eastern Kentucky. The study involved a class at this high school that participate in Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles. The student that volunteer to be interviewed for the study, Dawn participated in these literature circles. Dawn was interviewed so the effect of the Writing Mentor's feedback on Dawn could be identified and measured.

METHODS

The methods used to collect data was in the form of a conducted semi-structured, text-based qualitative interviews for a case study of a one student. The student volunteered to participate in the study through a process of signed assent. The student was of legal age to give consent to participate. The high school student was Dawn* who had participated in Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles unit. The data was collected through participant observation and artifact collection. The artifacts consisted of the student's writing samples with Writing Mentor feedback. The observation yielded field notes to provide rich description of the context of the study, particularly the Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles discussions that gave way to the writing samples. Questions were formed in response to Dawn's* draft for the Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles unit along with the feedback provided by the pre-service English teacher that served as Dawn's* Writing Mentor. The interview was recorded using an audio recording device as well as filmed using a video camera. The following is an outline for the interview questions that were asked:

1. (Icebreaker Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? Where are you from? What classes/activities/jobs are you doing this semester? What do you want to do after high school?)
2. Remind them about the purpose of the study
3. Working with the Writing Mentors generally
 1. What was your sense of what the Writing Mentors were supposed to do?
 2. What did you expect them to do or help with?
 3. How did it actually go?
 4. How would you describe yourself as a reader? as a writer?
 5. Pull up the writing assignment (UofL Reflection for Born a Crime)
 4. What was the purpose of this assignment?
 5. Who were you writing to? (Who was the audience?)
 6. How happy were you with it before you submitted it? What did you feel its strengths were; what did you feel uncertain about?
 7. Let's look at your Writing Mentor's comments on your draft.
 1. What stood out about what they wrote?
 2. How did the tone of their response make you feel about your writing?
 3. What did you take away from their feedback that impacted your thinking the most?
 4. Was there certain feedback you found most helpful? Why?
 5. Was there certain feedback you didn't understand? In what ways?
 6. If you could talk to your WM about their feedback, what would you ask them?
 7. What would you have liked your WM to help you with that they didn't?
 8. Did you revise this after seeing the WM feedback?
 1. If yes, what revisions did you make? why?
 2. If no, what revisions might you make, and why?

UofL Reflection for Trevor Noah's *Born A Crime*

Question 1: Introduce yourself to your UofL Writing Mentor

- Tell your mentor about you by answering the following questions in paragraph form in the green box below:
 - What is your favorite TV show or movie?
 - What is your favorite book?
 - What do you do in your free time? Hobbies/activities/sports/clubs/etc.
 - What are your plans for after graduation?

Hello, my name is Dawn*. My favorite tv show is naruto i love my anime and my favorite movie is the blind side. My favorite book(s) are the junie b. Jones series i read them all in elementary and i still love the books to this day. In my free time i like to draw and take walks to clear mind and i like to listen to some elvis and johnny cash, i like my military skills class cause we do all kinds of stuff and we do workouts on tuesdays and wednesdays which is really cool. After i graduate i want to go to college later on down the road for nursing and join in the military (Airforce) as medic cause they are always in need of medics.

Question 2: Reflection on Mirror

- Tell your mentor about a moment of *Born A Crime* that served as a mirror for you by answering the following questions in paragraph form in the orange box below:
 - Provide context of the book. (Remember, your UofL mentor might not have read this text, so explain what is happening).
 - Explain what specifically it was about that part of the book that you related to. Was it a certain event, character, or experience? Why is that something you understood or felt connected to? How were you represented in that moment?

I related to Travor more then any other thing or event or person cause some of the things he went through i also went though, like when he went to school and didnt fit in anywhere and felt alone with no friends i felt that way when i moved here to morehead back my 8th grade year i didnt know anyone or have any friends i felt so alone cause i had no one no friends the only one i had was my sister.

Question 3: Reflection on Window

- Tell your mentor about a moment of *Born A Crime* that served as a window for you by answering the following questions in paragraph form in the purple box below:
 - Provide context of the book. (Remember, your UofL mentor might not have read this text, so explain what is happening).
 - Explain what specifically it was about that part of the book that made you feel like an observer. In what ways was that event, character, or experience something unfamiliar to you? Is there anything you have learned or will take away from reading that part?

When they had the partide i never knew that had happened in africa til i opened and read this book i never knew that actually happened. I didnt know that they had certain places they where allowed to life and places they wherent allowed to and what amazes me is that they all stuck through it and still ended up being successful. Or when his mom would go and tell the cops that she was being abused they wouod turn her away simply cause of her skin color cause she was black and not white and thats messed up big time.

Questions 4 and 5 (this is for the UofL Student to complete)

- Tell your mentee about yourself answering the same questions listed above or responding to what your mentee shared.
- Provide feedback on their writing in the space below or by adding comments on their Google Doc.

Hello Dawn*! My Name is [REDACTED] and I am majoring in Middle/Secondary English Education at the University of Louisville, which means I will be able to teach middle and high school English. It is wonderful to learn about your interests and I found that we have a lot in common. One of my favorite movies is *The Blind Side*, and I also used to read a lot of *Junie B. Jones*! Someone very close to me was in the military for three years and they just returned home. It is an honorable career choice that will lead you down exciting paths. After reading your response to the first question I thought there was no way I wouldn't be working with you on your responses. You did a good job giving me insight on certain aspects of Trevor Noah's *Born A Crime*, which led me to understanding your responses. Pertaining to question two, by the end of the book did Trevor feel different? Did he still feel alone? Now that you have lived in Morehead for a few years do you feel different than when you did in eighth grade? If so, what led to you not feeling alone? You may discover more similarities between yourself and Noah. Also, it is great that you acknowledged how this book taught you about the racial segregation in South Africa, I love when a book is able to give me new perspectives. I agree with you in that it is messed up big time, but maybe try to think of another way to say it is messed up. Below I listed synonyms to "messed up" in the context I believe you are using. If you like any of my suggestions, feel free to use them in place of "messed up big time". If you can come up with some of your own that is great too! I look forward to seeing your responses.

Synonyms:

- Wrong
- Unethical
- Immoral

*You can use words like extremely, immensely, or very previous to the synonyms since you had written "big time," if you still want an emphasis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study stems from a "Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles" Field Experience Project for MSU undergraduate teacher candidates, a collaboration between the English education program at MSU and a local school district. The project title stems from Rudine Sims Bishop's work on expanding reading experiences for students. A "Mirrors, Windows, Doors" approach to Literature Circles means that students meet in student-led, teacher-guided small groups to discuss books by nonwhite authors and about nonwhite characters or people. Using a qualitative case-study analysis approach involving participant observation of a general-education senior English class and a semi-structured interview with one student from the class, we addressed the following research question: How do high school writers feel about feedback on their writing drafts from pre-service English teachers, when those drafts are written during a Mirrors, Windows, Doors Literature Circles unit?

IRB Protocol # 21-10-47 *All names are pseudonyms.

FINDINGS

Preliminary findings from the semi-structured interview indicate that the high school student (Dawn*) felt she received beneficial feedback from her draft from the pre-service English teacher as a Writing Mentor. The student signified that the feedback allowed her to reflect on the purpose of her writing as well as her audience within the Literature Circles unit. Dawn indicated she felt passionate about their own connections to the literary media reflection and desired to share her writing with her peers for their own personal connections.

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