

**MAKING MEANING WITH MULTIMEDIA IN SECONDARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:
A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY**

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Kerrigan Rose Mahoney

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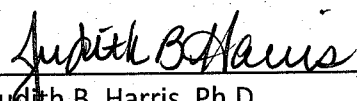
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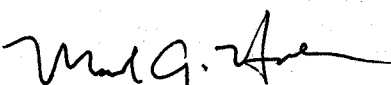
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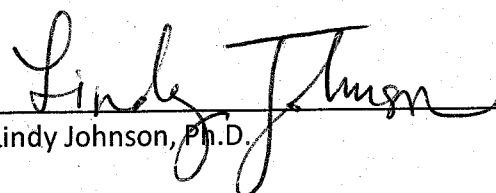
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Abstract

The purpose of this multiple case study was to learn about how secondary English language arts (ELA) teachers help students to make meaning with multimedia. The study focused on how and why teachers plan and implement meaning-making learning experiences. The cases represent the experiences and perspectives of five ELA teachers who use digital and non-digital multimedia texts to help their students develop skills in meaning making. The results of this study define a set of principles that the teachers use to guide planning and implementation processes that focus on authentic, student-centered learning. The teachers value learning that has relevance to the students' interests, goals, and lived experiences outside of the classroom. Adaptable planning, a focus on the needs of students, mitigating barriers through accessing outside resources, and setting learning goals that go beyond content-area standards characterize the teachers' approaches to helping students make meaning. Multimedia texts were an embedded and pervasive aspect of students' learning experiences.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I have spent my life immersed in the texts around me: picture books, radio programs, novels, newspapers, advertisements, musical compositions, and theater productions. These have shaped my understanding of the world and myself; just as my understanding of the world and myself has shaped my understanding of the texts that I encountered. From my first days of learning to be a teacher to my years in the secondary English language arts (ELA) classroom, I considered the breadth and depth of all kinds of texts. I sought out video, images, short stories, poems, and audio recordings of all kinds to share with my students. I never watched a movie, read a book, or encountered any text the same way again after becoming a teacher: I was thinking about which student might be interested in this or what lesson it could help enhance. My purpose for reading, in its broadest sense, had changed, and so had the meanings that I made from many texts.

Change in Purpose, Change in Meaning

I was aware of the changes in my experience of reading, and I reflected on the impact of purpose in reading. I noticed that putting texts in different contexts changed how I viewed them. Reading *The Great Gatsby* with a teacher's eye was very different from when I first read it for pleasure and then as a student. Similarly, my experience of talking about the same text with different students led to very different results. I gained

richer understandings of texts as I learned from my students and the experiences they brought to the texts they read. I never had two students read the same text in the exact same way. This led to much discussion in my classroom as my students asked questions of each other and of the text, shared their thinking about the texts, and debated different ways of interpreting a text. They brought their own experiences, identity, values, and culture to the texts and the discussions. The students learned about themselves and each other as they learned about each other's personal experiences, values, and ideas and how they related to the text. I celebrated the diversity of perspectives and the collaborative processes of meaning making that occurred in my classroom through discussion.

Tension in the Practice of ELA

The state standards and tests that drove my instruction did not seem to conceptualize or value meaning making in the same ways that I did. I witnessed students with rich literacies in their daily lives being measured against narrow definitions of reading and writing. I knew from my own undergraduate experience and by watching my friends' career trajectories and responsibilities outside of education that these limited notions of reading and writing were not fully preparing students for their academic, civic, and professional lives after secondary school.

As I began to speak with other ELA teachers, I found this tension repeated, albeit through different manifestations: for example, some colleagues felt compelled to privilege canonical texts over the 'chaos' of text messaging. Several supplemented reading instruction with movie versions of district-mandated novels as a way to

maximize students' exposure to the content of literature. Other teachers used YouTube videos to motivate students or had them create graphic representations of meaning to scaffold essay writing.

The teachers I encountered in professional development, at conferences, in graduate classes, and online were thinking about texts, whether rejecting, embracing, or puzzling over multimedia versions. There was a sense that we were and are in the midst of change in how we define literacy in ELA content and pedagogy, and at equal pace, there was and is a sense that reading and literacy remain central to our mission as ELA teachers.

Literacy in the 21st Century

Terms like media literacy, visual literacy, critical literacy, and digital literacy have taken root to account for skills that are valued in academics and research but are not included in traditional notions of literacy. There remains no single accepted definition of literacy. New definitions attempt to account for the ways in which people use literacy in their everyday lives (literacy as social practice), psycholinguistic and cognitive perspectives on literacy, and the roles of power, agency and identity in literacy (Perry, 2012).

The work by The New London Group (1996) to create a pedagogy of multiliteracies sought to define some of the changing conceptualizations of literacy in terms of instructional practice. The Group argued that literacy pedagogy must account for the culturally and linguistically diverse and interrelated worlds in which literacies are situated and the wide variety of text forms made possible by modern technology (The

New London Group, 1996). Two of the members of The New London Group (Cope and Kalantzis) further explicated the nature of literacy as it has transformed into a plurality.

They describe facets of literacies as:

1. making meaning from an unfamiliar *kind* of text,
2. recognizing how a particular text works within its own frame of rules,
3. identifying the context and purposes of the text,
4. recognizing that literacies are about ways of seeing, thinking about, and communicating messages, and
5. being able to "[approach] communication in an unfamiliar context and learning from your successes and mis-steps as you navigate new social spaces and encounter new social languages." (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p. 6-7)

Considering literacies rather than a single literacy opens opportunities for valuing new kinds of texts and the diverse experiences of students. It shifts the essence of literacy from being able to read and write in the present to preparing students to be able to contend with new and expanded forms of reading, writing, seeing, and thinking about new kinds of texts, messages, and languages in the future. I found through my own experiences in education that ELA teachers are often stymied by creating meaning-making learning experiences that integrate the ever-increasing types of texts that are available to students and teaching students how to transfer their skills in meaning making from one type of text to another. Yet, these are the challenges that ELA teachers must contend with in order to prepare our students to be able to communicate and participate in our global society.

Making Meaning with Multimedia: An Expression of Literacy

As notions of literacy have been changing, researchers and educators have been asking questions regarding the nature of reading and meaning making. Underlying any definition of literacy is an implied understanding of meaning: how it is made and who is making it. The process of meaning making is how we, as readers, viewers, and listeners, express our literacies by engaging in a transaction with the text. This transaction is the “to-and-fro, spiraling, nonlinear, continuously reciprocal influence of reader and text in the making of meaning. The meaning – the poem – ‘happens’ during the transaction between the reader and the signs on the page” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. xvi). Meaning is not intrinsic to the text itself, but resides in the transaction, equally, between the reader and the text within the greater context of the surrounding culture and environment. Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of reading describes the nature of the transaction between the reader and the text that occurs during the process of reading. She placed the reader in a position of power to make meaning from a text that is socially situated and contextual (Rosenblatt, 1946). The reader must assimilate the social and cultural meanings of language and signs with the private meanings that come from her own experiences and emotions to make meaning with the text (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c).

Meaning making is also influenced by the reader’s stance or purpose for the transaction. Rosenblatt (1995) explains that readers have varying levels of cognitive and affective processes occurring during a transaction with a text, depending on their purpose. Sometimes they may rely more on the cognitive, or efferent, reading that focuses on the information that the reader hopes to carry with them after reading.

Other times the reader may rely more heavily on the aesthetic stance to focus on the “the moods, scenes, situations being created during the transaction” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. xvii). These stances – efferent and aesthetic – influence the meaning the reader makes during the transaction with the text. It is the reader, not the text, who decides where along the efferent/ aesthetic continuum the reader’s purpose resides, and as a result, the same texts will have different meanings for readers with different purposes. The reader’s purpose for reading, the social situation in which she reads it, and the knowledge of language and symbols she brings to the text all influence the meaning that she makes during the transaction with the text (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c).

Rosenblatt originally published her transactional theory of reading in the first edition of *Literature as Exploration* in 1938 with a focus on making meaning with literary texts, and this theory has been widely influential in reading instruction. However, in her preface to the fifth edition of her book in 1995, she acknowledged the relevance of her theory to the increasing occurrence of new types of texts. She explains:

The process of reflection on our linguistic transactions that I have described could serve all the arts. That, incidentally, is my reply to those who dismiss the printed word as soon to be obsolete. Even if this debatable prediction were to come true, the efferent-aesthetic continuum simply describes the two main ways we look at the world, and the transactional process would still apply to transactions with whatever media prevail (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. xviii).

The printed word is certainly not obsolete two decades after Rosenblatt’s observation; however, the affordances of digital technologies have influenced the types and

frequency of the multiple forms of media that are prevalent today. Multimedia are simultaneously more complex than traditional static print text found in books and have the potential to assist the readers in making meaning with texts that include combinations of visual, written, gestural, and aural messages. Multimedia are “more layered, interactive, and complex. As such, text and pictures often convey more meaning when juxtaposed. This effect is further intensified with digital video, where motion, design, and interactivity are added to the mix.” (Young & Kajder, 2009, p. 38). The applicability of Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of reading to multimedia may help educators to understand the roles of multimedia in ELA classrooms as an expansion of reading instruction, which is necessary for preparing students to be able to make meaning from any text they encounter. Students need to be able to transact with multimedia texts for different purposes and in different contexts, just as they do with static print texts, in order to develop new literacies.

Making Meaning with Multimedia in Secondary ELA

Secondary ELA teachers are faced with the complex tasks of conceptualizing, using, advocating, modeling, and assessing their students’ literacies. They are charged by administrators, students, parents, and communities to be the primary facilitators of literacy learning in secondary schools. Multimedia are included in one of six tenets of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2013) position statement on 21st century of literacies, which defines the literacies ELA teachers need to help their students develop as a “collection of cultural and communicative practices” that are “inextricably linked with particular histories, life possibilities, and social trajectories of

individuals and groups” (para. 1). They frame literacies as a set of actions, and specifically refer to multimedia by stating, “active, successful participants in this 21st century global society must be able to create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multimedia texts” (para. 1). Even though the NCTE position statement positions multimedia as central to literacy instruction, the specific meaning-making learning experiences with multimedia that students need in ELA are not yet well established or defined. This presents a great challenge to teachers who are striving to help develop their students’ literacies. The majority (77%) of ELA teachers perceive that “technologies provided literacy practices their students needed outside the classroom” and that “new media added new or greater dimension into lessons.” However, they are only moderately (45.16%) or minimally (20.97%) integrating it into their classes due to barriers such as lack of support from administration, lack of professional learning and pedagogical knowledge for effective implementation, and lack of tools and infrastructure that give students sufficient access to appropriate tools (Ajayi, 2013, p. 179).

Current uses of multimedia in the ELA classroom may limit potentially robust meaning-making learning experiences. ELA teachers who use multimedia in their classrooms often use it to build relationships with students, motivate students, or to lead them to written texts that are more highly valued in the classroom (Rowse & Casey, 2009). In these cases, the use of multimedia is relegated to the sidelines of ELA instruction, which limits students’ opportunities to practice developing and applying meaning-making processes to multimedia texts. Many learning experiences in ELA that are centered on helping students to make meaning foster students’ ability to discuss,

analyze, and critique texts that are relevant to their own lives. For example, in a lesson plan published by *Read Write Think* for secondary ELA, students are asked to consider different ways ideas are expressed with the multimedia they encounter in their own lives outside of school, and then create and share a collection of those texts (Gardner, 2015). In this lesson, the students bring to the class the literacies and texts that they engage with out-of-school in authentic meaning-making experiences. This lesson emphasizes the reciprocity that is possible between in- and out-of-school meaning-making experiences.

Current examples of research about and practice of using multimedia in ELA classrooms are limited and present very different manifestations in each ELA classroom (Curwood & Cowell, 2011; McClenaghan & Doecke, 2010; Sewell & Denton, 2011). While important in emphasizing the broad educational possibilities that multimedia presents, these examples do not give a clear explanation for how teachers plan and implement instruction to help students make meaning with multimedia. Descriptions of learning experiences in meaning making with multimedia are needed to inform teachers' professional learning and pedagogical knowledge in order to help them to prepare students to be able to apply their literacies to any type of multimedia text, now or in the future.

Purpose of Study

There are very few examples in extant literature of the specific ways in which ELA teachers plan and implement lessons on making meaning with multimedia. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to delve deeply into specific cases in which ELA

teachers are using multimedia in secondary ELA classrooms to help students to make meaning with texts. This is an area in which many other ELA teachers are struggling due to lack of professional learning opportunities, access, and/or support (Ajayi, 2013), so cases in which teachers have found ways to overcome these barriers are of particular interest. This study will focus on how teachers who are integrating multimedia into instruction in secondary ELA are making sense of the complex concepts of meaning making, and applying them to students' learning.

Rationale and Research Questions

Secondary ELA teachers must contend with the types of texts that their students will encounter both in- and out-of-school. They must help students to build literacy skills that they can apply to new contexts and types of texts. There is no current common pedagogical practice for teaching meaning making with multimedia or guidelines for which multimedia can be used in ELA classrooms. Therefore, it is teachers' own conceptualizations of planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences that are determining how this aspect of literacies is valued, operationalized, and practiced in classrooms.

Therefore, this study seeks to explore the following research questions:

- How do secondary ELA teachers help students to make meaning with multiple forms of media?
- Why and how do they design these meaning-making learning experiences?
- Why and how do they implement these meaning-making learning experiences?

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Students' literacy needs are a driving force behind much of the policy, instruction, and testing in English language arts (ELA) education in the U.S.A. From civic engagement to fiscal responsibility to career and practical skills, students need to be literate, and it is the responsibility of schools to help students meet this goal (Dede, 2010). However, the definition of literacy is not static or concrete. New technology, new types of college and career paths, and new expectations for testing and instruction all play roles in changing how literacy instruction is operationalized in schools, with a considerable impact on ELA curriculum and instruction (Kajder, 2010; The James R. Squire Office of Policy Research, 2007; The New London Group, 1996). In many classrooms, ELA content, purpose, and methods have been adapted, changed, and expanded to meet the students' changing literacy needs and greater access to multimedia content and tools within the classroom (Doering, Beach, & Brien, 2007). Understanding the changing nature of literacy in secondary ELA is important so that educators can make informed decisions about how to best meet students' literacy needs.

Traditionally, literacy has had a simple definition: the ability to read and write. If students could decode basic alphabetic, written texts and communicate in alphabetic, written form, they were literate. However, this traditional definition is severely limiting:

It focused on textual formalities such as 'correct' spelling and grammar. It privileged a particular form of speech and writing in the national language that was held up as unquestioned 'standard' or 'educated' form. It had students read to appreciate the style of 'good writing', first in school 'readers' and later in canonical texts considered to be of 'literary' value. Reading meant 'comprehension' of meanings that were thought, in a straightforward way, to be intrinsic to texts and as intended by their authors. (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p.3)

The traditional notion of literacy not only privileges certain types of written texts; it also minimizes the experience, knowledge, and perspective of the student. It perpetuates the lines of power that put knowledge in the hands of teachers who must dole it out to students who are assumed to not have the agency to do so for themselves. It assumes that meaning is “static and intrinsic” to the text itself, as if only the student or reader who has the key to the code can unlock meaning (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p. 180). This conceptualization of literacy limits the ability of students to be literate members of society who must continue to develop their literacy skills throughout their lives. It also devalues the role of students’ experiences, identity, and culture in the meaning-making experience and ignores the literacies that students use in their lives outside of school. For example, as literacy environments and types of texts are constantly changing and adapting, students need literacy skills they can transfer and apply to situations and settings far beyond those they encounter in school, including those that have not yet been invented.

Currently, many students are challenged by the literacies that they are expected to have to participate fully in society. Gee (2012) explains that the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress reveals that although the majority of young adults are literate in the sense that they can decode basic text and fill out forms, many fewer can do more sophisticated literacy tasks. Gee includes the following as examples of sophisticated literacy tasks which up to 30% of young adults cannot successfully complete:

Consider tasks like the following: locating and matching information from a page of text on the basis of three features, producing a letter stating that an error has been made in a department store bill, interpreting the instructions from an appliance warranty in order to select the most appropriate description of a malfunction, or generating a theme from the text of a poem containing numerous allusions to a familiar theme. (p. 31)

Many texts that are common in digital environments are even more complex than those listed by Gee. A single webpage is often filled with a combination of visual, written, hyperlinked, and video texts that are designed to work in combination with each other as parts of a single page or article, but there also may be an equal or greater number of videos, images, and links that are irrelevant to the main topic of the page.

Within the current discourse on literacies, there is a consistent acknowledgement that digital technology and multimedia are and will continue to play a role in how students make meaning from texts and the literacies they need to do this skillfully (e.g., Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Gee, 2012; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012; Kress, 2003;

The New London Group, 1996). The following section will elaborate on the theories that address the nature of meaning making, meaning making as an expression of literacy, and how meaning making occurs with multimedia.

Making Meaning and Multimedia

In order to make informed decisions in response to the changing nature of literacy, ELA educators must have understanding of the multiple literacies needed for making meaning across multimedia and pedagogical strategies and implications for teaching these skills. This starts with the nature of meaning making.

What Does It Mean to Make Meaning?

When students read a print text, they use a set of skills to make meaning through engagement with the text. Rosenblatt (1994/2005c) describes the process of making meaning as a transaction between the reader and the text: the text is the mark or symbol on the page, which becomes meaningful when the reader views it. In the moment when the reader and text meet, a transaction of meaning occurs. So, transacting with the text refers to what happens when a person and a text meet: “the ‘meaning’ does not reside ready-made ‘in’ the text or ‘in’ the reader but happens or comes into being during the transaction between reader and text” (p. 7). Gee (2012) further explains the role of meaning making in contrast to notions of traditional literacy:

Meaning is not a thing that sits fixed in the mind (as a ‘concept’ with fixed boundaries, for example). It is not something that sits in dictionaries. Nor does it reside in the minds of experts and ‘well-educated’ people to the exclusion of others. Rather meaning is primarily the result of social interactions, negotiations,

contestations, and agreements among people. It is inherently variable and social.

(p. 21)

Neither the text nor the reader is static in the process: “meaning – whether scientific or aesthetic, whether a poem or a scientific report – happens during the interplay between particular signs and a particular reader at a particular time and place” (Rosenblatt, 2005a, p. x). The term transaction is important because in it “the knower, the knowing, and the known” are on equal footing in the process (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 3).

Rosenblatt describes the process of transactional reading in a series of intertwined levels, which include language itself, the reader, pedagogical practice, and the social construction of meaning in dialogue with others. This helps us to understand reading not as a series of independent skills but as a cognitive, purposeful, cultural, social, and contextual transaction between the reader(s) and the text. Rosenblatt was influenced by the work of Dewey and the field of semiotics as she explains: “we ‘make sense’ of a new situation or transaction and make new meanings by applying, reorganizing, revising, or extending public and private elements selected from our personal linguistic-experiential reservoirs.” (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 5). The meaning is made through this linguistic transaction between the reader and the text: “speech, writing, and reading share the same basic process – transacting through a text” (p. 6).

The meaning that is made during the transaction is dependent on the purpose with which the reader approaches the text. Rosenblatt refers to this as the “reader’s stance” in which the reader navigates the text through a series of choices based on the selected purpose for reading: “the reader adopts a selective attitude or stance, bringing

certain aspects into the center of attention and pushing others into the fringes of consciousness” (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 10). The reader’s implicit or explicit purpose drives what they focus on in the text and the starting point for this purpose falls along the “efferent – aesthetic continuum” (p. 11). Efferent refers to reading for the purpose of pulling out specific knowledge or information with the goal of remembering and/or acting on it later, and aesthetic refers to how “the reader adopts an attitude of readiness to focus attention on what is being lived through during the reading event” (p. 11). Efferent and aesthetic purposes for reading are on a non-hierarchical continuum because readers use both in different proportions, for different texts, and in different contexts. Rosenblatt argues that pedagogical practice must value both to help students to make meaning with texts (1994/2005c). The aesthetic is largely missing when reading is broken down into independent skills (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institute of Health, & National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). By approaching reading as a continuum, educators may be able to see a fuller process of reading (and making meaning) that is left out when the focus is solely on the efferent.

During the process of transaction, readers rely on their prior knowledge and experience of the language they encounter. The meanings of words or symbols are not simple, precise, or concrete. Instead readers have drawn from multiple public and private meanings of words and symbols to make meaning. Public refers to dictionary definitions and common usages developed and used by groups of people in practice and that are acquired by individuals. Private meanings are those developed by an individual

that may or may not align with the meanings of the group (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c).

The private and public meanings come together for an individual as they transact with the text for a specific purpose: “the language is that part, or set of features, of the public system that has been internalized through that person’s experience with words in life situations” (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 5).

Meaning making does not happen solely as an individual pursuit. Readers also make meaning through “collaborative interchange,” which Rosenblatt explains as part of the process of making meaning as well as a pedagogical approach to teaching students how to make meaning with texts (p. 28). Meaning is constructed in the social interactions people have with the texts. Meaning is tested and expanded during these social interactions as different readers draw from the different prior knowledge, private and public definitions of language, and purposes for reading. In the classroom, social interactions among students “can foster growth and cross-fertilization in both the reading and writing processes. Such discussion can help students develop insights concerning transactions with texts as well as metalinguistic understanding of skills and conventions in meaningful contexts” (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 28). When students have access and exposure to diverse perspectives on a text, they have the opportunity to deepen their meaning of the text through the process of testing and negotiating meaning with each other through discussion. Gee (2012) further explains that the nature of socially constructed meaning is negotiated over and shared within and among cultures and people: “two people don't need to "share a culture" to communicate. They need to negotiate and seek common ground on the spot of the here and now of social

interaction and communication" (p. 24). The social construction of meaning is a fundamental part of making meaning with texts and deepening students' reading skills and experience.

Transactional reading theory is not limited to print, static text and readers, but happens through speech and during the process of creating new text as well (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). Rosenblatt did not extend her theory specifically to multimedia as much of the multimedia we use today postdates her career, but her broad definition of text and where and when the meaning-making transaction happens has helped educational researchers apply her work to multimedia. In fact, in the forward to her 5th edition of her seminal text, *Literature as Exploration*, Wayne Booth calls on researchers and educators to consider the transactional theory of reading in light of the cultural changes and technological advancements:

Can we hope that some young reader of her work will take it in, fully, and then be tempted to address its diverse and complex implications for our TV and video generations? Some have done this already, but far too few. Can we hope that Rosenblatt's plea that we treat reading as a transaction between two great kinds of stuff – literary works and living persons – will be extended more aggressively to the treatment of *viewing* as transactional in the same sense: not just providing for the new superficial kinds of technological feedback but for the creation of truly critical viewers? Can we hope for a generation of viewers who engage fully in thinking through their emotional responses, moving toward deeper self-knowledge? Can we hope for teachers who will educate students to

resist passive absorption and develop active *transaction*?” (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. xiii)

TV and video may be terms that are much too narrow to describe what generations of students and readers encounter today, yet they, along with books, are still relevant forms of multimedia. Booth’s hopes for the future remain relevant and timely as transactional theory continues to help educators and researchers make sense of the complexities of reading and text. In the most recent (2013) edition of *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*, first published in 1970, the editors conducted a national survey of literacy researchers and educators to determine reading theories from previous editions that needed to be retained. Transactional theory remains in the text as a key theoretical model for reading today (Alvermann, Unrau, & Ruddell, 2013). Kern (2010) provides an overview of how transactional reading theory is being applied in current ELA classrooms. His examples are teachers’ use of drama as active meaning making, reading young adult literature with a critical lens, and reading and responding to literature online. Kern argues that Rosenblatt’s work on the nature of reading as a transaction between the reader and the text that is socially and contextually situated is relevant to researching the use of multimedia in ELA classrooms today. Specific examples of how current researchers have used transactional theory in research in ELA and multimedia are further explained later.

Making meaning as an expression of traditional literacy. Rosenblatt’s work helps to provide the context and purpose within which literacies are practiced and developed. Students develop and internalize these skills over time through instruction,

collaboration, and practice in- and out-of-school. Students are making meaning successfully when they put these internalized skills into practice successfully—with context and purpose. Educators rely on clear definitions of skills for specific aspects of literacy to drive their instruction. The following two sections I explicate ways in which traditional literacies can be delineated and expressed to drive classroom instruction.

The four-resource model. The four-resource model looks at the process of literacies in terms of 4 competencies: “code breaker (coding competence), meaning maker (semantic competence), text user (pragmatic competence), and text critic (critical competence)” (Luke & Freebody, 1999, para 1). Each of these competencies relates to the transactional theory of reading and helps us to understand it in terms of literacy skills that a reader uses during the transaction with the text. The four-resource model defines specific skills that are embedded in reading for a purpose, the role of prior knowledge, and the social context of reading. For example, coding competence relates to semiotics and understanding the signs and symbols that are fundamental to language and communication including alphabetic notations, phonemes, and structural patterns in texts. Semantic competence is the ability of the reader to make meaning from the structure of the text in terms of what is explicitly stated and what can be inferred from the social and cultural context of the text. Pragmatic competence includes the social activities that drive the purpose for reading, for example reading a text for school versus reading it for pleasure. Finally critical competence refers to what is often called critical reading or understanding the influence of the positionality of the reader and the text in terms of power, culture, and ideology on meaning (Freebody, 2002; Luke & Freebody,

1999). By setting up pragmatic competence, partially, as a dichotomy between in- and out-of-school reading, Freebody acknowledges that the social activities that drive meaning making in school are directed and constrained by the teacher. In classroom practice, “even for questions which apparently call upon personal or subjective responses to material that has been read, the student needs to provide an answer in the form that is appropriate to the teacher’s goals in discussion” (Freebody, 2002, sec. “Learning your role as a text-user”). By developing these competencies tempered in juxtaposition to Rosenblatt’s transactional reading theory, teachers can identify specific areas in which to address instruction and learning activities within the wider understanding of how meaning is made.

Motivating students to read. In the field of adolescent literacy, motivation is vital to student reading in school and in bridging reading skills to out-of-school, self-directed reading. Cambria and Guthrie (2010) explained the difference between skill and motivation: “A student with skill may be capable, but without will, she cannot become a reader. It is her will-power that determines whether she reads widely and frequently and grows into a student who enjoys and benefits from literacy” (p. 16). They define motivation as the “values, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding reading for an individual” in terms of the students’ “interest, dedication, and confidence” in reading (p. 16). Additionally, motivation refers to students’ commitment to learning from and enjoying the reading experience. It gives “energy and direction” to the reading experience (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004, p. 329). Implementing classroom practices that account for

factors that help to motivate students to read will have an impact on their literacy skills and motivation.

In a meta-analysis of twenty-two experimental studies on increasing student motivation to read, Guthrie and Humenick (2004) identified four factors of motivational classroom practice, which had significant effect sizes for increasing students' reading motivation and achievement. The four factors are knowledge goals, student choices, interesting texts, and collaboration. Knowledge goals are the first factor and refer to goals or purposes for reading that "enable students to become deeply immersed in and intrigued by the content" of the text (p. 333). This may take the form of a conceptual theme studied with multiple texts over a period of time with the goal of the students becoming experts in the content or by directing the students to read with the goal of being able to teach their peers about the text. Knowledge goals can be determined by the student, the teacher, or collaboratively.

The remaining factors that impact students' motivation to read address students' choice, interests, and opportunity to work with their peers. Student choice refers to "which book to read; where to do the reading within the classroom; how to respond (in writing or drawing); whether to read alone or with a partner; and especially which genre and authors to follow" (p. 339 – 340). The third factor that contributes to students' motivation to read is interesting texts, which are texts that students report as interesting and enjoyable to read and that they are willing to continue to read in their free time. Interesting texts tend to be ones that students have background knowledge on, are visually appealing, are relevant to the students' purpose for reading, or are

connected to an activity or experience in which the students participated. Finally, students who collaborate during the reading process are more likely to be motivated to read than those who work individually throughout the entire reading process, including goal setting and discussion. These four factors that contribute to motivating students to read can work in conjunction with one another in classroom practice (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004).

Expanding on Guthrie and Humenick (2004), Gambrell (2011) determined seven key ways to motivate students to read. Gambrell (2011) does not include content goals as one of her factors for motivating students to read, but generally states that the purpose for helping students to become intrinsically motivated to read is so they will be able to “read for a variety of personal goals, [and be] strategic in their reading behaviors, knowledgeable in their construction of new understandings from text, and socially interactive about the text” (p. 173). Gambrell (2011) states that students are more motivated to read when

- the reading tasks and activities are relevant to their lives
- they have access to a wide range of reading materials
- they have ample opportunities to engage in sustained reading
- they have opportunities to make choices about what they read and how they engage in and complete literacy tasks
- they have opportunities to socially interact with others about the text they are reading
- they have opportunities to be successful with challenging texts

- classroom incentives reflect the value and importance of reading (p. 173 – 176)

Each of these key classroom practices will help to motivate students to read and foster learning environments in which students can express their literacies. They contribute to meaning making through transactions with texts that offer different purposes for reading, value social collaboration, and consider the needs and interests of the students and the relevancy of the texts to the students' personal lives and experiences.

Gambrell (2011) broadly included multimedia as a part of the reading materials in her examples though her main focus was on traditional print texts. Guthrie and Humenick (2004) also focus on traditional print texts while emphasizing the importance of student interest. Multimedia texts may help teachers to provide students with more choices of texts that are interesting, relevant, and motivating to the students. In the following section, I will discuss the role of multimedia in the process of making meaning.

Making Meaning with Multimedia

Much of the text people encounter in their everyday lives are multimedia: advertisements with words and pictures, books with photographs and tables, websites with embedded hyperlinks and videos. Digital applications allow for multimedia and print texts to coincide in ever more complex ways: "digital texts both imitate and expand existing print forms" (Swenson, Young, Mcgrail, Rozema, & Whitin, 2006, p. 354). Multimedia refers to the combination of a wide array of types of texts including (but not limited to) print, graphics, video, animation and audio that are supported by the creators and users of these final products. Multimedia is a broad term used in business, education, and public settings (Lauer, 2009). The NCTE uses the term multimedia in their

publications directed to audiences of teachers and community members, although they do not define it explicitly. The term multimodal also refers to the wide array of texts as its final outcome, but this term has greater focus on how different modes, or forms of meaning, are utilized and juxtaposed through the process of composing text. The terms in some contexts can be used interchangeably, but multimodal is often more appropriate for more nuanced definitions based in composition and limited to the fields of composition and rhetoric (Lauer, 2009). I will primarily employ the term multimedia because of its use by the NCTE and because of its focus on how the user transacts with multimedia products, rather than compositional processes.

Kalantzis and Cope (2012) call for literacies pedagogy to account for the use of multimedia in the classroom; they help to explain how definitions of text have changed by saying: “written modes of meaning can be complemented by, or replaced by other ways of crossing time and distance, such as recordings and transmissions of oral, visual, audio, gestural and other patterns of meaning,” especially as made possible by digital media (p. 2). The change in how current teachers and researchers define text to include multimedia has supported the relevance of Rosenblatt’s work in understanding reading (Kern, 2010).

Making meaning with multimedia relates to Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of reading by expanding the concept of text to include more than lines of text upon a page. For example, Begoray, Higgins, Harrison, and Collins-Emery (2013) used a combination of Rosenblatt’s transactional model of reading with positioning theory from marketing research to show how adolescents interact with advertisements to make informed

decisions. The authors argue that the combination of these two theories will help to develop "reading/viewing pedagogy useful for helping adolescents take a questioning stance when they interact with texts such as advertising" (p. 122). They explain that Rosenblatt's work lends important insight into the importance of context and purpose in teaching students to critically analyze advertisements. Rosenblatt's emphasis on the idea that creators and readers of a text each bring their own knowledge, values, and experience to the text is important in helping students to consider the ways that advertisers work to manipulate their audience with their text. The results of this study showed that students might still be influenced by advertisers despite knowledge of the advertiser's use of persuasive techniques. Students need to be able to see themselves as powerful agents in the transaction between reader and text in order to critically examine its influence (Begoray et al., 2013).

Although transactional reading theory was developed prior to many of the digital technologies that make multimedia possible today, it continues to have the potential to help students and educators to understand the process by which they make meaning, whether that is in advertising or any of the variety of multimedia they encounter. In the following sections, I will detail the connections between making meaning with multimedia, literacies, reading instruction, and the tensions between literacy skills and struggling readers. Any student can become a struggling reader when they encounter a text that is new or unfamiliar (Beers, 2003). Multimedia, current and future, need to be accounted for in ELA to help all students to develop their literacies through the

definition of literacies, the practice of reading instruction and, by acknowledging the literacies students develop outside of school.

Making meaning with multimedia as an expansion of reading literacy. Making meaning with multimedia does not privilege print text; instead it elucidates how literacies work simultaneously and with reciprocity as forms of making meaning (Albers & Harste, 2007; Jewitt, 2006; Kress, 2003). Making meaning with multimedia ties back to the roots of transactional theory because of its basis in social construction of meaning, semiotics, and a broad understanding of literacy. Students need to be able to draw from their multifaceted literacies in order to make meaning with texts that construct messages in complex ways through multimedia. In and out of classrooms, students are engaged in meaning making with the texts they encounter: “Students who are engaged with multimodal texts in the classrooms are not interpreting images in isolation of writing, or digital medium texts from print texts. They are engaged in the task of interpretation in a multimodal and multimedia environment” (Jewitt, 2006, p. 135). Educators need to account for the types of multimedia that students will encounter in- and out-of-school, now and in the future, as they design instruction to address literacies. Addressing multimedia in school does not replace the need for traditional reading literacy. ELA teachers make connections between print and multimedia in order to address students’ learning needs by considering “how digital and print texts complement each other, as their conjunction and juxtaposition offer new meanings and enriched experiences for readers” (Swenson et al., 2006, p. 358). Teachers can expand literacy learning experiences to include multimedia texts and the literacies that students

need to make meaning from them. These literacies include skills in making meaning from visual, written, and auditory text as well as texts that use multiple modes simultaneously and in juxtaposition with each other.

Teaching with multimedia is informed by the idea that language is just one of the modes of meaning making. The background experiences and identities of the students play a part in this meaning-making process. The need to achieve a new understanding of multimodality may “necessitate a shift in thinking about literacy as more than just a move from a verbal or written expression to a visual expression, but also a consideration of how identities get positioned in such representations” (Albers & Harste, 2007, p. 15). The field of semiotics—the study of meaning making from signs and symbols—influenced Rosenblatt as she developed transactional reading theory (Karolides, 1999/2005). Semiotics includes and expands reading to encompass new literacies and multimodalities that do not privilege alphabetic texts. This is all a form of meaning making (Kress, 2003). Kress helps to explain the connection between the process of meaning making, signs and symbols, and reading from static printed texts to an expanded definition of text to include everything from images to the world:

The signs that are made by readers in their reading draw on what there is to be read. They draw on the shape of the cultural world of representation, and on the reader's prior training in how and what to read. New forms of reading, when texts show the world rather than tell the world have consequences for the relations between makers and re-makers of meaning (writers and readers, image-makers and viewers). (p. 140)

Students who engage in this type of making meaning are relying on cognitive and social processes in which they are consumers of multimedia that they assemble through individual navigation decisions, build collaboratively through social interactions, and construct through the creation of their own original multimedia productions. Making meaning happens in a dynamic process between the student and the multimedia.

The processes of making meaning during ELA class learning experiences are the primary foci of this investigation. These interactions occur in online environments where print is dynamic and includes multiple modalities. The interactions also occur in physical classroom spaces with the teacher and other students, and with access to instructional materials that include books, computers, mobile devices, and other forms of digital and non-digital tools. Students make meaning through transaction with texts in online environments. Understanding the processes that happen in the online environment may help teachers to better understand literacies in terms of reading online and multimedia and to help them create and implement learning experiences to help students to develop these skills.

Making meaning with multimedia and the process of reading online. According to the Pew Research Center “Teens and Technology 2013” report, 95% of teenagers are online and 75% are online using mobile devices (Madden, Lenhart, Duggan, Cortesi, & Gasser, 2013). Teenagers engage in navigation and social construction in the process of making meaning from multimedia during the time they spend online. As the process of reading expands to include print text and multimedia, the environment in which the reading takes place also changes and impacts the reading process.

Understanding the process of reading online texts helps to broaden the foundation of what is known about reading to the online environment. One study shows some of the strategies that students use when they successfully read digital texts online. This is important because it highlights the complexity of these processes and the ways that students have adapted comprehension strategies to online reading in complex ways. Students who read well online "(a) flexibly draw from at least four knowledge sources, (b) regularly make forward inferences, and (c) self-regulate the relevancy and efficiency of one's self-directed pathways through Internet text" (Coiro & Dobler, 2007, p. 243). The participants in this study were students who were already identified as strong readers and were able to articulate the processes by which they worked to read online. These results underscore the connections between reading comprehension strategies in online and offline reading as well as the complex prerequisite skills and knowledge students must have to make the transition successfully. ELA teachers need to consider the reciprocity between online and offline reading strategies as they consider learning experiences that students need to help them make smooth transitions between making meaning with different types of texts, including multimedia.

Online reading comprehension theory. Online reading comprehension theory describes several of these complexities in the recursive practices that differ from print based reading, including purpose, actions, and outcomes of the process of making meaning. This is a shift from the traditional assumption that making meaning with print texts occurs in a linear, prearranged sequence of reading. In online reading, the reader constructs both meaning and text during the process in which sequencing changes

between readers and so reading (and meaning) become a collaborative process (Leu et al., 2007, 2011).

According to online reading comprehension theory, there are three primary differences between the process of online and print reading. 1. "Online reading is self-directed, text-construction process" in terms of both meaning making and physical construction of piecing together what parts of text or texts are read. 2. Each reader follows a different path online (sequencing) and the same text is often read to solve different problems. 3. Reading online is a collaborative process (Leu et al., 2011, p. 8). The purposes for which people read online also differ from the purposes for reading print text. Changing the purpose for reading impacts how and what meaning is made from the text (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). Online reading comprehension theory posits that problem-based inquiry drives the purpose of much online reading and requires an adaption of reading skills. It claims common purposes for reading online are "(a) reading online to identify important questions (b) reading online to locate information, (c) reading online to critically evaluate information, (d) reading online to synthesize information, (e) and reading online to communicate information" (Leu et al., 2011, p. 7). Online reading comprehension theory does not account for potential aesthetic purposes for reading online.

The four-resource model updated. Serafini (2012a, 2012b) also approaches making meaning with multimedia as an expanded and adapted approach to reading. He bases his theoretical model upon the Four Resource Model of Reading, describing students as 'reader-viewers' who navigate, interpret, design, and interrogate during the

complex process of making meaning that occurs across multimedia rather than solely print based texts. For example, the basic reading skill of decoding is now subsumed under 'navigation,' which now includes navigating the "compositions and structures of design elements and visual images" of the text, and the concept of design expands to include both producer of texts and "active construction of meaning potentials during a reader's transaction with these texts" (Serafini, 2012b, p. 28). The added complexities and demands of reading online require students who are adept at multiple and interwoven literacy skills in order to make meaning with texts. This places additional concern for students who may already be struggling to be successful and teachers who are responsible for all students' literacy learning.

Tension between making meaning with multimedia and struggling readers. In traditional reading education, students are assumed to have mastered basic skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency by 4th grade, and in 4th – 12th grade there is a focus on vocabulary and comprehension instruction. However, this assumption is not true for many students who continue to struggle with basic reading of print well beyond fourth grade, which impacts their ability to comprehend print texts (Sedita, 2011). Currently, standardized reading assessments focus on print based literacy: The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that only 36% of 8th graders are reading at a proficient level (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, & National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). The label of proficient or not proficient on these assessments do not account for students' ability in making meaning with multimedia and gives educators limited information on which to build appropriate

literacy learning activities. When students are tested on their online reading skills, and the results are compared to standard off-line print reading comprehension, the results show reciprocity between the two scores cannot be assumed:

Indeed, the most striking aspect of these cases is that we find a low-achieving offline reader, one who has been formally identified because of reading difficulty, performing at a high level during online reading. This reader achieved scores in the upper quartile of all online readers, a somewhat surprising outcome.

Conversely, we saw how one of the highest achieving offline readers was unable to perform the online reading task at the same level as this learning-disabled reader. (Leu et al., 2007, p. 57)

Different forms of literacy skills are not reciprocal and dependent, so educators need to be aware of students' prior knowledge, learning goals for a particular activity, and underlying literacy skills that are embedded in the learning activities. An exclusive focus on print texts may inhibit students whose literacy struggles stem from print text.

The process of reading becomes more complex as it moves online, and some strong readers are able to adapt their reading skills to meet the demands of making meaning in a different environment (Coiro & Dobler, 2007). However, not all students are able to adapt and expand their comprehension skills effectively to meet the demands of making meaning from multimedia or reading online, conversely, some students may be able to overcome struggles with reading print and have stronger skills in making meaning from multimedia that do not demand decoding skills in the same ways. Students' actual literacy skills are not necessarily accurately measured when they

receive labels of struggling reader through measures focused on print text and traditional literacy skills (Alvermann et al., 2007; O'Brien, 2012).

When students are given access and opportunity to engage with multimedia, they have the potential to demonstrate and develop literacy skills that may not otherwise be measured or valued. A study about students who are considered struggling readers and at risk of dropping out of school investigated the students' out-of-school, everyday literacy practices with an emphasis on how they define themselves as literate. Students who took part in a weekly media club read more of some types of texts including Internet sites, song lyrics, electronic games, directions, and billboard advertisements than their counterparts who did not participate. Many more students in the club than in the comparison group reported reading because they had heard about something that sounded interesting. This finding is noteworthy because it emphasizes the potential impact of how the teacher designs the learning experience to allow for students to interact with other people who are involved in literacy activities and to have choices and access to multimedia texts and relevant technology tools (Alvermann et al., 2007). O'Brien (2012) emphasizes the strong integration of traditional and new literacies so as to avoid the detrimental impact the label of "struggling" can have on a students' self-identity.

When teachers account for assumptions about literacy and students' abilities, students can find success in building literacy skills. For example, students in a "remedial" 12th grade English class were successful when engaged in a unit of study that included multimedia when the teacher facilitated the process of making meaning. The researcher

found that even though these students supposedly had limited literacy competence, they could make meaning with texts when given the opportunity for purposeful engagement in literacy practices that were meaningful to the students (Xu, 2008). Although the use of digital technology or access to online reading was very limited in this unit, it offers an authentic look at what is happening currently in a classroom where the teacher is addressing multimedia (despite the lack of digital technology). The students studied the novel *Speak* and TV program *Survivor: Africa* and worked to make meaning through intertextual comparisons. Greater depth was given to the analyses and comparisons through other nonfiction background resources that were provided to the students. At the conclusion of this study, the researcher noted: "The question is not whether struggling students lack an ability to make sense out of a text, but whether multiple opportunities for engagement in purposeful and meaningful literacy practices are available to them" (Xu, 2008, p. 54). The teacher in this study accounted for the students' literacy skills that were not measured by traditional tests and labels, and her students were able to engage in meaningful literacy learning activities. Teachers who are familiar with multiple literacies may be able to help students overcome labels and build literacy skills through multimedia.

Questioning assumptions about students' literacies. Just as teachers should not make assumptions regarding the multimedia related literacy skills of students labeled as struggling readers, it is also erroneous to assume that all students know how to navigate multimedia in digital environments or that they can even transition smoothly from print to simply print text on a screen (Evans & Po, 2007; Kajder, 2010). Despite the ubiquitous

use of computers and mobile devices for use of the Internet, students may struggle with the literacy skills needed to make meaning with multimedia. Kajder (2010) describes a scene that may be familiar to teachers:

When I walk into the lab and carefully watch all of my students work online, the majority still move from screen to screen, unable to filter between the sites and information they want and can use and those that won't push or lead their thinking further. (Kajder, 2010, p. 50)

Interacting online for personal purposes and interests outside of school may be very different from the demands of using online texts and multimedia for academic purposes (Evans & Po, 2007). In a study of online collaborative reading of 16-18 year olds, the students researched a topic online and then wrote a joint essay on the topic. The researchers investigated how pairs of students worked together and used the online reading practices to co-construct meaning. They found that students used collaborative reading strategies and applied them to online reading. However, students spent the majority of their time on content processing and locating information, but these percentages varied widely: content processing ranged from 31.5% to 89.4 % and locating information from 4.1% to 52.3%. This finding is noteworthy because being able to locate important and relevant information "may be a gatekeeping online reading practice, increasing opportunities to engage in content processing" (Kiili, Laurinen, Marttunen, & Leu, 2012, p. 471). If students cannot locate information with ease, they do not have the time to process it efficiently.

Students' prior experience with online texts may not be sufficient in allowing them to be able to transition the literacy skills to academic work. Students will not be able to make meaning with multimedia or comprehend online texts if they do not have the computer, navigational, or evaluative skills to expediently locate texts that are appropriate to their topic and purpose. Teachers need to consider how they plan and implement learning experiences that take into account the literacies of online reading, like navigation, that may impede students' ability to make meaning with online multimedia texts. An additional challenge for the teacher is the wide range of experience and ability students in a single class may have with reading and multimedia (Kiili et al., 2012).

As teachers create and implement learning experiences that foster the development of students' literacies, they are faced with the complexities of the changing nature of literacy and text, the expanding skills that students need to make meaning with multimedia, and the uncertainty of students' prior knowledge, access, and skills in the expanding domain of reading as detailed above. The next sections will address why ELA teachers need to create learning experiences on meaning making that include multimedia texts using appropriate pedagogical approaches in order to meet the literacy needs of all students.

Making Meaning with Multimedia: Adoption for Practice in Secondary ELA

Secondary ELA teachers need to account for the expanded definitions of literacy and multimedia texts to design and implement appropriate learning experiences that will help students to make meaning with multimedia. Gee (2001) argues for a broad

definition of reading: "reading and writing cannot be separated from speaking, listening, and interacting, on the one hand, or using language to think about and act on the world, on the other" (p. 714). A potentially useful way to consider instructional uses of text is to put multimedia and print on even ground to democratize the use of media and text in the classroom (Siegel, 2006). Secondary English teachers face a challenge in understanding the complex literacy needs and abilities of their students while designing and implementing appropriate instruction for all students. The NCTE has adopted a position statement on 21st century literacies to help to define new literacies for ELA teachers. It is a broad definition characterized by the complex needs, backgrounds, and experiences of students and the changing nature of literacy. The NCTE (2013) posits: "the 21st century demands that a literate person possess a wide range of abilities and competencies, many literacies. These literacies are multiple, dynamic, and malleable" (para. 1). They put forth a six-point definition of the skills students need to develop as literate members of our global society:

- Develop proficiency and fluency with the tools of technology;
- Build intentional cross-cultural connections and relationships with others so to pose and solve problems collaboratively and strengthen independent thought;
- Design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes;
- Manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information;

- Create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multimedia texts;
- Attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex environments. (The National Council of Teachers of English, 2013, para. 2)

The NCTE position statement forms a foundation of common understanding of literacy that guides secondary English teachers to understand multiple literacies and address them in the learning activities they design and implement to meet students' literacy needs.

Addressing the literacy needs of all students. In 2000, The National Reading Panel reported on the techniques that should be used to teach students how to read that continue to drive literacy based instructional practices throughout grades K-12 and are limited to print texts: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, oral reading, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services et al., 2000). Expanding the definition of literacy to include multimedia does not detract from the findings of the National Reading Panel, rather educators and researchers can consider how to expand their findings to account for how students must learn to make meaning beyond print texts. For example, if teachers develop the connection between reading comprehension and multimedia, students who do not have other reading skills will be able to practice comprehension:

Limited language decoding skills may hamper a child in demonstrating comprehension skills or, worse, in acquiring and practicing comprehension skills...By avoiding or reducing the need to rely on these skills [by using

multimedia], the door opens for the child to test and develop his or her

comprehension strategies. (van der Broek, Kendeou, & White, 2009, p. 69)

In Serafini's (2012a) approach to online reading, comprehension gets subsumed under "reader as interpreter," in which readers must synthesize their perceptions of the multimedia with understanding of production, design, and context within a community of other readers. In contrast, The National Reading Panel recommends teaching story structure as one way to build comprehension (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services et al., 2000); but story structure is only one type of production or design, which is limiting to teachers who are using multimedia in their classrooms and may ultimately inhibit students' growth.

Changing literacy learning experiences in ELA. The NCTE policy brief on adolescent literacy argues for literacy as a semiotic, multimodal process that includes non-digitized and digital multimedia. They emphasize that students' out-of-school literacy skills are valuable and not being currently recognized by traditional in-school literacy expectations (The James R. Squire Office of Policy Research, 2007). In order to meet the current literacy needs of students, ELA education standards, policy, curriculum, and lessons need to take into account the expanded definitions of literacy. Kajder (2010) explains: "My job as a teacher is to help students engage as critical readers of literary texts but also help them unpack, examine, and engage in literacy practices that new media make possible" (p. 20). Currently, there is information in research and practice regarding how students can create multimedia texts or express their learning with multimedia, but expressing learning is just one aspect of literacy (Anderson, 2010;

Kajder, 2010; Young & Kajder, 2009). There needs to also be focus on how students make meaning with multimedia in terms of the transactional reading process.

Secondary ELA and Meaning Making

Secondary ELA teachers have as their central goal to help students build literacy skills, and as our understanding of literacy has changed, so has secondary ELA. However, students may be provided with very different opportunities for building their literacy skills depending on their school and teacher (The James R. Squire Office of Policy Research, 2007). As teachers consider learning activities that help students increase literacy skills, it is important to question assumptions about students' prior skills and knowledge and the potential level of challenge in making meaning with multimedia.

A case study on pedagogical changes in secondary ELA focusing on helping students to actively make meaning demonstrated that even though students were engaged in activities that called for critical thinking and synthesis to make meaning with multimedia, they could only analyze and evaluate at a basic level. The students had high technological literacy skills, but struggled with making meaning when faced with completing the task. The researchers found that even though student engagement and motivation increased and students were able to demonstrate surface level understanding of the information, students "showed little evidence of a more in-depth critical analysis of the underlying meaning of the media messages" (Cooper, Lockyer, & Brown, 2013, p. 100). The researchers call for explicit instruction in these practices to guide students to being able to engage in these tasks more independently. Even when students are engaged in activities that could help them to make meaning across

multimedia, they may not be able to do so if they have not had prior instruction and practice in similar contexts. Teachers must consider that providing the opportunity to use multimedia and giving an assignment that calls for utilization of skills to make meaning across multimedia may not be enough to ensure learning (Cooper et al., 2013).

Secondary ELA teachers use multimedia in their classrooms in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes. The following three ELA classroom examples demonstrate some of the variety of ways in which teachers plan and implement lessons that ask students to make meaning with multimedia: (a) with online multimedia; (b) by juxtaposing digital and non-digital texts; and (c) through a focus on collaborative interchange and personal reflection in digital and physical learning spaces. The first two examples of classroom learning experiences are from lesson plans published by *Read Write Think*. They each demonstrate the ways in which teachers design lessons with multimedia and engage students in making meaning in collaborative and authentic contexts, but they approach the use of multimedia and text differently.

In the lesson plan, “Exploring Disability Using Multimedia and the B-D-A Reading Strategy” (Carroll, 2014), the teacher helps the students to apply a before-during-after reading strategy in order to synthesize meaning from several different multimedia online sources with the learning goal of creating understanding of disability. The students “read, view, and listen to information from a multimedia website” and work in collaborative groups (Carroll, 2014, sec. “Student objectives”). The students also conduct their own surveys and reflect on their personal background knowledge and experience as part of the process of creating their understanding of disability. Here the

teacher is facilitating her students' application of reading comprehension strategies traditionally used with print texts to multimedia. The students are engaged in co-constructing meaning in their collaborative groups and are asked to integrate their own background knowledge and experience to reach the learning goal.

In contrast, the lesson plan "I Have a Dream: Exploring Nonviolence in Young Adult Texts" does not focus on websites or online reading, but on bringing together texts on related topics across different forms of media. The lesson plan calls for a poem, picture book, music video, video, and online glossary as the primary multimedia texts. The learning goal is to help students to draw connections between multiple texts in different mediums and apply the connections to build understanding of the Six Kingian Principles of Nonviolence (Lisi, 2014).

The learning goals of both of these lesson plans focused on students building understanding of a specific concept and multimedia was presented as the venue to reach these ends. The implications for the process of making meaning with multimedia are not explicitly addressed in either lesson, even though students will engage in transactions with texts to complete the learning activities and meet the lesson goals as outlined by the teachers.

The third ELA example shows that lessons and activities that utilize multimedia can be built from the needs and perspectives of the students, rather than content area topic or thematic perspective. In a study with urban adolescents, students were engaged in "autobiographical explorations and collective meaning-making through the arts and literacies with each other and with adults" in order to develop understandings

of their own stories as lived realities of urban adolescents (Wissman & Vasudevan, 2012, p. 160). The students made meaning through transactions with multiple genres of autobiography and in dialogue with each other in a educational environment which nurtured co-construction of meaning of self for different audiences through multimedia: “the collective built on the individual narratives to form a rich, layered, fluid, and dynamic representation of experiences and identities” (p. 178). As teachers develop multimedia focused literacy lesson plans, the way that the teacher defines and operationalizes the learning goal can allow for many different pathways for student learning with different outcomes for meaning making and literacy.

Taken together, these three examples of multimedia in the secondary ELA classroom highlight the diverse approaches that teachers can take in creating learning experiences with multimedia for their students. Each of these examples demonstrates a strong focus on engaging students in developing literacies that are applicable to the students’ lives in and out of the classroom. These learning experiences help students apply strategies for meaning making to different types of multimedia for different purposes and audiences. The transaction between the students and multimedia in a collaborative learning experience is central to each of these lessons.

Intention in the Use of Multimedia for Literacy Learning in Secondary ELA

Learning activities currently happening in secondary ELA classrooms sometimes incorporate multimedia, technology, and traditional literacies. The multimedia may be in a supporting role (for motivation) or used with the goal of enhancing traditional literacy skills, not building meaning-making skills across multimedia. This may cause or

perpetuate gaps in students' literacy skills because they are not being accounted for either in learning activities or assessments. There are examples of classroom practice in which virtual worlds or multimedia are used to support novel studies focused on leveraging digital technology or multimedia for the purpose of enhancing traditional print literacy skills (e.g., Burns, 2012; Day, 2010; Ostenson & Gleason-Sutton, 2011). However, these approaches do not substitute for using multimedia to build literacy skills in making meaning with multimedia.

A multiple case study of secondary ELA teachers found that multimodal activities were often used as "a pathway back to monomodal activities and texts, which, while not always privileged by [the participants], remained dominant in the school cultures in which both worked" (Rowse & Casey, 2009, p. 317-8). The researchers found that the participants often used multimodality to engage students, and to a lesser extent to build relationships with students as well as to meet curricular goals. The participants valued the multimodal skills that the students brought with them to the classroom and their affordances for real world application; however, they struggled with balancing students' interests, strengths, and needs while preparing them for high-stakes tests and "competing definitions of what 'counts' as literacy competence" (Rowse & Casey, 2009, p. 323).

In contrast, Bailey (2013) traced a teacher's journey in learning about new literacies and the impact that her learning had on her instructional approach to integrating new literacies in her 9th grade ELA classroom instruction. The teacher in this case began the school year by using popular songs, television programs, and by having

students perform and create videos, but after two weeks, she transitioned to traditional methods of ELA instruction using worksheets, teacher-centered discussion, and focusing on factual knowledge. The teacher described her use of media and technology as a way to “hook” students in the hopes that they would continue to be engaged in the content once the media and technology were gone, but this did not prove successful as the students quickly became disengaged (p. 48).

The teacher then enrolled in graduate class on new literacies and learned about using multimedia and technology to impact her students’ literacy learning and strategies for implementing them in the classroom. The teacher used her learning about new literacies and began to create lesson plans “using a systemic approach to new literacies as the core of classroom teaching” (Bailey, 2013, p. 48), which increased student engagement in literacy learning with multimedia texts embedded throughout the rest of the year. At the end of the school year, the teacher reported that “students’ scores on the end of the year district English 9 exam were, overall, the best that she had ever seen from her classes” (p. 59). The shift in this teacher’s purpose in using multimedia and technology created major change in the types of learning experiences she facilitated for her students, the texts used for classroom instruction, and the students’ learning outcomes. Intentional uses of multimedia that directly address literacies are needed for students to make meaning across multimedia so students have full access to literacy education.

Learning Activities and Multimedia Literacy

Current research on ELA classroom practice that explicitly or implicitly addresses making meaning with multimedia has very different manifestations across schools and classrooms. These range from using multiple modalities to synthesize and express ideas on a digital poetry unit (Curwood & Cowell, 2011) to bridging students' in- and out-of-school literacies with a focus on building background knowledge and individual choice (McClenaghan & Doecke, 2010; Sewell & Denton, 2011). These examples help to demonstrate the variety in the types of learning activities with multimedia implemented in secondary ELA and how these different manifestations have an impact on the type of student learning that occurs.

Multimedia can facilitate student learning on a single genre of text. A case study on an ELA learning experience using digital poetry "examined how students' engagement with digital poetry can facilitate identity expression and multimodal composition." The researchers found that through the process of "exploring and expressing" digital poetry and self-identity across multiple modes, students "recognized and used dynamic patterns of interconnection within and between modalities" (Curwood & Cowell, 2011, p. 111). Although these learning activities were focused on one genre of text, poetry, the students learning happened with multimedia.

Multimedia is also used in ELA units that are based around an essential question or theme. Linked text sets are a way for ELA teachers to connect different types and genre of text to help students to access texts that connect meaningfully to their own lives. They are also designed to help students to build skills in understanding and evaluating different types of evidence, using technology and media, and understanding

different cultures and perspectives (Elish-Piper, Wold, & Schwingendorf, 2014; Wold, Elish-Piper, & Schultz, 2010). Linked text sets give teachers a method for connecting multimedia and required books in ways that promotes student engagement and meaning making. Linked text sets are described as “including a range of print and media, from music lyrics and movie clips to poetry, short stories, picture books, informational texts, adolescent literature, and canonical texts” (Elish-Piper et al., 2014, p. 567). The steps in implementing a linked text sets unit include selecting a complex, required text for students, identifying an essential question and related themes, identifying related text including multimedia texts, having students explore the themes using various types of related texts, and allowing students to create a final synthesis project on the essential question using their choice of multimodal compositions.

Linked text sets are a process by which teachers can successfully integrate multimedia with required texts. The students in a linked text sets teaching-case classroom informally reported feeling engaged and interested in the unit in which multimedia texts were used in conjunction with the required text, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Elish-Piper et al., 2014). Linked text sets offer a way of including culturally relevant and engaging texts into the high school ELA classroom that connects required novels and multimedia in ways that are relevant to student learning and engagement (Elish-Piper et al., 2014; Tatum, Wold, & Elish-Piper, 2009; Wold et al., 2010).

Another example of classroom practice centers on the role of student choice and the changing role of the teacher when integrating multimedia in secondary ELA. The teachers in this case study see multimedia as a product of student choice, bridging in-

and out-of-school literacies, a teacher who does not have all the answers, and multiple paths to making meaning. They explain,

The product of this joint exploration of the possibilities for meaning-making is opened up by multimedia texts. It shows how the students not only draw on the semiotic resources provided by the texts they encounter outside of school (in Kate's case, the music video clip, *Psycho* and other horror movies) but the texts they themselves create. (McClenaghan & Doecke, 2010, p. 233)

The students had choice in the media they navigated to make meaning for their own purposes and based on their own interests, then moved into the process of making meaning through creative expression of their own learning. By tying these two processes together (rather than having a sole focus on making meaning with multimedia through composition), students have greater opportunity to develop related literacy skills.

Another type of learning activity with multimedia centers on authentic problem solving. In one case, teachers facilitated the use of multiple media format in authentic problems embedded in the units and tied this to state standards. The intended purpose of the multimedia in these classes was to "build background and draw on previous knowledge to make connections with new learning." The teachers reported 'anchored media instruction' in their secondary ELA courses raised test scores: students' average test scores raised from 62% to 80% (Sewell & Denton, 2011, p. 62).

Whether teachers create learning experiences that focus on genre, activating or building knowledge, self-identity, or choice, students who have access and opportunity

to make meaning from multimedia can find much success in building the literacy skills these activities allow. The roles of the teachers in these cases highlight how meaning is co-constructed as the knowledge and experience that students bring with them to the texts and the classroom are valued in the design and implementation of the learning activities.

Co-construction of meaning in physical and virtual spaces. In addition to changes in the content and purpose of the learning activities, some teachers are experimenting with different approaches to the process of making meaning itself through student collaboration both in physical and virtual spaces to facilitate the co-construction of meaning, increase engagement, and build community (Gomez, Schieble, Curwood, & Hassett, 2010; Ivey, 2012; Larson, 2009). In describing the applicability of transactional reading theory to classroom practice, Rosenblatt (1994/2005c) emphasizes the need for “collaborative interchange” for students to be able to grow in their ability to make meaning from texts:

When students share responses to transactions with the same text, they can learn how their evocations from the same signs differ, can return to the text to discover their own habits of selection and synthesis, and can become aware of, and critical of, their own processes as readers... such metalinguistic awareness is valuable to students as both readers and writers. (p. 28)

Access to digital technology can facilitate the co-construction of meaning as students have the time and opportunity to interact with each other and with texts in spaces beyond the constraints of the classroom. Virtual spaces for these learning activities

foster the bridge between literacies limited to print text and new literacies as the texts themselves and the ways meaning is formed with them transcend the place in which they happen. In a study of collaborative interaction between pre-service teachers and secondary ELA students focused on a young adult novel, Moodle was the online venue for the participants to interact in a variety of ways: posting to discussion boards, viewing videos, and engaging in online research. The researchers found that the virtual space helped to facilitate “critical dialogue” and engage the students in “meaning-making activities with text writ large” (Gomez et al., 2010, p. 24). The online space became the catalyst from print text to multimedia for the students to push the conversations forward.

Discussion boards can also be a space for students to build a sense of community among each other and express themselves using language that is representative of their own style and voice outside of school. In a study of discussion boards, the researcher used Rosenblatt’s transactional theory to better understand how students utilize new literacies and technology to co-construct knowledge. The virtual space of discussion boards allows the interchange of ideas about texts where students’ thought of their peers as the direct audience for their writing, not teachers. Students were clearly able to understand each other and valued their own voices and those of their peers in informal use of language. This helped to facilitate building the students’ sense of community in the virtual space and their confidence in sharing ideas as they co-constructed meaning from texts. The researchers recommend that the use of informal language in these settings not be stifled by expectations of more formal writing (Larson, 2009).

Virtual reality worlds offer a potentially more immersive experience for students to engage in the interchange of ideas to make meaning from texts. A high school English teacher described her experience of setting up and implementing an online virtual world for students to use to study a class novel. In this virtual reality world, students worked cooperatively and independently to role-play and discuss the novel in order to bridge traditional and new literacies and print and digital texts. The teacher reflected on how this experience helped to increase literacy learning because of the use of a different environment, which fostered interaction differently than in the physical classroom:

When my ninth-grade students ventured into this online world, they remembered their experience there with the book, more than if we just had discussions, questions, and vocabulary in a conventional fashion. The virtual world opened up new ways to work together as a team. Inevitably, students drew connections between their lives and those of the characters they read about. (Arver, 2007, p. 41)

For this teacher, the virtual space led the students naturally to making meaning by bridging the physical and virtual; their own lives and the lives of the characters. These rich uses of multimedia for meaning making in ELA require teachers to make complex decisions regarding instructional planning that take into account their students and their context.

Planning for Technology and Multimedia Integration

Planning is an important part of the process in which teachers design multimedia infused learning experiences for their students. Teachers integrate technology by

making connections between the learning objectives, pedagogy, and appropriate tools: “the process involves asking how technology can support and expand effective teaching and learning within the discipline, while simultaneously adjusting to the changes in content and pedagogy that technology by its very nature brings about” (Swenson et al., 2006, p. 357). The nature of the planning process teachers’ use lends insight into how they create these experiences within the context of the affordances and constraints of the multimedia resources available to them. The previous section demonstrated that the examples of multimedia infused learning experiences currently being implemented in secondary ELA classrooms vary widely among types of activities, content being addressed, digital technology, and types of multimedia that the teachers facilitated. Understanding how teachers create these learning experiences demonstrates why some of this variability occurs and highlights the complexity of the decisions teachers must make to create these learning experiences. Although barriers to designing and implementing meaning-making learning experiences are discussed briefly as part of the planning process here, they will be addressed more thoroughly in the following section.

Currently, insight into the planning process for using digital technology in secondary ELA relies primarily on theories for how teachers can effectively plan for technology integration, which makes much of the multimedia content accessible for the learning experience. In this section, I will first share a case study regarding how two secondary ELA teachers plan for technology integration, then I will overview three specific theoretical processes for teachers planning for technology integration. These processes help to illustrate how teachers can design learning experiences for their

students that address content area learning goals and literacy with the support of digital technology. Each of these processes describes the considerations for how teachers can integrate technology into their classroom.

Case study for technology integration in secondary ELA. A case study of two secondary ELA teachers (one novice and one experienced) focusing on the use of technology in their classrooms explored how the teachers considered technology in planning instruction, how they used the technology during their instruction, and the factors and beliefs that contributed to planning for and using technology (Flanagan & Shoffner, 2013). When using digital technology, both teachers included multimedia elements into their learning activities by planning audio recordings of class novels or showing pictures or videos of related content on their SmartBoards. The results of the study showed that the two teachers planned for technology integration very differently from each other.

The differences in these planning approaches impacted the amount and type of technology used and the types of learning activities in which the technology was embedded. The experienced teacher put the content area learning goals first and then considered whether there was any digital technology available that could enhance the learning experience. She identified the lack of access to resources as a major barrier to even considering technology options and primarily "saw technology as an enhancement to her instruction, preferring to use no technology if 'there was no clear or compelling reason to use it'" (Flanagan & Shoffner, 2013, p. 252). The novice teacher started with the resources available and then planned the learning activities around them. The

researchers noted that the novice teacher took this technology first approach in order to better manage her time and preemptively address potential problems in implementation. She saw technology as having a primary role in her classroom and used either the SmartBoard or audio speakers to play recordings of class novels regularly in her classroom.

The study showed that the more experienced teacher had more limited, but more seamless use of technology in her classroom. The novice teacher used technology more frequently, but she faced more difficulties with students who were "off-task during transitions between technology and while using it. As she moved between the SmartBoard and class discussion, for example, students would begin talking to each other or lose attention with the task at hand" (Flanagan & Shoffner, 2013, p. 253). The researchers noted that the greatest challenge to any technology usage in the classroom by these two teachers was simply a lack of training... Both teachers explained that what they knew about using any technology during instruction typically came from trial-and-error usage or another colleague's expertise" (p. 252). In the following descriptions of planning processes, all of the theories recommend starting with learning goals and addressing the integration of technology later in the process. In this specific case, putting the learning goals first led to less use of technology and multimedia. More research is needed to understanding how planning processes manifest for other secondary ELA teachers and how the contextual factors, like access to resources and professional learning, impact the design of multimedia infused learning activities.

A pedagogical framework for technology in ELA. Young and Bush (2004)

developed a pedagogical framework for technology in ELA that is based on the belief that the use of technology in ELA should be based on filling a need in addressing the instructional goal for the lesson and students' literacy needs. They explain, "the power of the pedagogy must drive the technology being implemented, so that instruction, skills, content, or literacy is enhanced in some meaningful way" (p. 8). Their pedagogical framework was designed to "guide teachers in planning their use of technologies" for ELA (p. 9) and consists of five steps for teachers to consider in the process:

1. teachers' conceptions of ELA and classroom goals
2. additional important contextual factors
3. available technology tools/ resources
4. technology skills of teacher
5. other issues (ex., students, teachers, parents, community as technology resources)

The goal of technology integration in ELA according to this framework is that the role of technology is "thoughtful and informed use of technology; purposeful use of technology; supports and/or enhances instruction; supports and/or enhances content; does not overshadow or complicate instruction; appropriate; reasoned" (p. 9). The next theory builds on the pedagogical framework in order to more directly address the specific actions that teachers take in the planning process and types of learning activities used in ELA, rather than just the order of ideas for them to consider.

Grounded technology integration in ELA. Young, Hofer, and Harris (2010, 2011)

suggest a process for planning for technology integration in ELA that is “grounded” in content specific learning activities and the learning goal for each activity. They take an approach to planning for technology in ELA that addresses the question: "How can technology integration efforts focus on the ELA curriculum-based learning needs of students while leveraging the benefits of particular tools and resources?" (p. 28). The grounded technology integration process has identified 65 ELA learning activity types divided into the five categories of reading, writing, language, oral speaking/performance, and listening/ watching with suggestions for types of digital technologies that may support these learning activities (Harris & Hofer, 2010). The planning process that they recommend has five steps for the teacher to follow:

1. choose learning goals
2. make pedagogical decisions
3. select activities types to combine
4. select assessment strategies
5. select tools/ resources

Although presented here sequentially, steps 2-4 can be rearranged according to the needs of the teacher. This process for technology integration "is predicated upon teacher ownership of the planning and implementation process to ensure long-term use" (Harris & Hofer, 2009, p. 23). The next process for planning for technology integration in ELA continues to build upon the learning goal first sequence, but applies it to specific challenges of new literacies and multimedia in addition to learning activities.

A planning cycle for technology in literacy instruction. Hutchison and Woodward (2014) describe the technology integration planning cycle for literacy and language arts based on the importance of digital technologies and media in literacy learning "through the consumption, production, and presentation of multimodal texts" (p. 457). They believe that their recursive planning cycle will help teachers address the challenges of technology and multiple literacies. The authors state that their model is similar to Harris and Hofer (2009) in terms of technology choices being based on "learning standards and pedagogical approach to the lesson or unit" but differs in that teachers need to:

1. "specifically outline how digital tools contribute to their instruction and to the development of digital literacy skills" and offer the choice of using non-digital technology
2. "consider the constraints of the tools they select, how they might overcome potential constraints, or how they use those considerations to inform their instruction."
3. "consider the ways that the integration of digital tools will influence the classroom environment or routines."
4. "consider whether their planned instruction contributes to both digital and non-digital literacy development"
5. "is situated within teacher reflective practices" (p. 458).

In the example that the authors share in this article, the teacher's learning goal is to have students identify the main idea and details in a text. The teacher chooses video,

photographs and print texts to use in the learning activity so that students have the opportunity to learn a traditional literacy skill but expand on this skill to apply it to multimedia texts. In this case, the students must also be able to navigate and use the appropriate iPad app in order to access these texts - a core component of online reading comprehension (Leu et al., 2011). In choosing this app (tool) the teacher must justify how it contributes to meeting the instructional goal.

The learning goal and activity first approach to planning for technology integration in ELA is aligned in each of these three planning processes and relates to the approach of the experienced teacher in Flanagan and Shoffner's (2013) case study. However, the novice teacher took an approach in which she first considered technology, then planned the instructional activities and developed appropriate learning goals. There is not a planning model specifically related to ELA or literacy instruction that addresses or recommends this approach, but the more general guidelines for instructional planning in technology enhanced learning environments (TELE) recommends a planning process that is nonlinear and non-sequential and relies on the teacher to start the planning process based on their perceptions of the problems of practice in their context (Lim & Chai, 2008; Lim, 2009). Given the great variation in which multimedia are currently being used in secondary ELA (addressed in previous sections), this theoretical process for planning may help to account for some of the variation in the use of technology and multimedia in ELA.

In ELA, learning goals and activities are not tied to specific texts, and teachers often have some discretion in choosing instructional materials for their students.

Therefore, it is important to note that the teacher needs to choose the texts being studied in addition to the technology tools during the planning process. The NCTE Guidelines for Selection of Materials in ELA Programs (2014) recommend that school policies should consider a wide range of print and digital materials for whole class, small group, and individual study including materials purchased, available online, and generated by teachers and students. The guidelines state that school policy,

Should not unwittingly stifle spontaneity and creativity in teachers by requiring a formal selection process for all materials used for instructional purposes.

Sometimes the most effective learning experiences are those that make use of unanticipated instructional materials: a letter to the editor, a blog or tweet. (The National Council of Teachers of English, 2014, para. 5)

As teachers consider the technology tools they include in learning activities, they may simultaneously be considering students' access to different multimedia, which may require additional considerations for alignment with learning goals and activities.

As the definitions of literacy expand and change, so must the types of learning activities that secondary ELA teacher design and implement to help students build skills in making meaning. Educators must question how and for what purpose they use multimedia in ELA classes in addition to the what, when, and where in order to take into account some of the challenges in changing the content, skills, and instructional approaches. There needs to be a clear connection between learning activities that utilize multimedia, and the ways in which they address students' literacy skills. To meet these student needs, teacher must have access to digital and multimedia resources in their

classrooms, support from students, administrators, parents, and community members, and the opportunity to build their own knowledge base of new literacies, digital tools, and appropriate pedagogical strategies to help students foster this learning. The next section will detail the nature of these challenges.

Challenges for Secondary ELA Teachers in Incorporating Multimedia Learning

Experiences

Secondary ELA teachers may face barriers that prevent them from teaching making meaning with multimedia. Teachers may lack access to the resources, support and knowledge of multimedia to successfully bridge research to practice to enhance literacy skills that are needed to support literacy learning for all students.

Resources and support. Teachers who are motivated to utilize multimedia and digital technology in their classrooms may have to overcome hurdles and find alternative means when access is limited in their schools. One teacher shared strategies he used to compensate for the lack of access due to the absence of mandatory standards and assessment for digital literacy skills. He worked outside of the school resources to utilize Wikispaces and Google apps with his students for online book discussions and peer editing (St. John & Von Slomski, 2012). However, school culture or protocols may not foster an environment for teachers to step outside of the school mandates.

A case study found that teachers were rather ambivalent about using technology in their ELA classes due to “organizational problems, pedagogical concerns, ethical dilemmas, as well as personal struggles in relationships with technology-literate

students and school administration" (McGrail, 2005, p. 19). Even though the teachers in this case believed that the concept of literacy is changing and that students need to develop these skills, many of them felt "either unqualified or just not ready for teaching such competencies in their classrooms" (McGrail, 2005, p.15).

Another case study in which context prevented successful application of multimedia literacy learning, the teacher strongly believed in the research and pedagogical justifications for integrating this learning but had to abandon lessons due to a lack of supportive school culture and problems with classroom management (Costello, 2010). In this case, the teacher attempted to utilize multimedia through a combination of reading a whole class young adult novel and creating digital video projects in two sections of 8th grade ELA. Only one of the classes ended up seeing the unit through. The researcher explained the complex challenges that the teacher faced in implementing a media centered unit:

In interviews, Dylan 'talks the talk' of a culturally sensitive educator. His actions in the classroom, however, reveal an adherence to the traditional mindset that learning through multimodality is a privilege rather than an integral component of an English curriculum. The dichotomy Dylan presents, the disparity between what he says (and appears to truly believe) about the nature of teaching and learning and what he does, sometimes, in the tensions and realities of the classroom setting, is striking... It should be recognized that when teachers like Dylan take steps in the direction of embracing 21st century literacies in their

curricula, doing so may go against everything that surrounds them, influences them, and directs them in their daily lives. (Costello, 2010, p. 247-8)

Seeming ambivalence or small uses of basic technology tools may mask much more complex barriers in resources and support for teachers who see the literacy needs of their students changing at odds with powerful cultural norms and institutional values and represent much effort on the part of teachers. These challenges can be compounded by teachers' knowledge of multimedia and literacy pedagogy and understanding the role of their own and their students' literacies as applicable to classroom learning experiences.

Teacher knowledge. Teachers need knowledge and training about how to appropriately leverage digital tools and multimedia to support making meaning. Otherwise, teachers who have access to these resources often use them as motivational tools or as add-ons rather than central components of literacy learning. Teachers may have technology skills and personal experience with multimedia, but they do not automatically translate into classroom practice (Hughes & Robertson, 2010). In an analysis of the lesson plans of teachers who were directed to incorporate multimedia with the purpose of reading and synthesizing meaning from multimedia texts, for example, a researcher found that online resources were not used effectively to meet learning goals across the majority of lesson plans: "the web resources frequently seemed to be added haphazardly and were either not explicitly related to the lesson's goals and activities, or simply did not relate in any comprehensible way to other classroom activities" (Ruzich, 2012, p. 199). This emphasizes teachers' desire to meet

the literacy needs of students by incorporating multimedia, but a lack of knowledge on how to build lessons to successfully meet these needs.

When teachers have access and opportunity to learn about multiple literacies and pedagogy, they will have the knowledge foundation to teach these literacy skills effectively. A case study about an ELA teacher who engaged in a course to learn about multimedia found that the teacher made significant changes in her approach. She went from using multimedia as add-on activities prior to taking the course to making multimedia an integral part of her secondary ELA class based on her new learning. Her understanding of the theory and instructional principals that support new literacies helped her to better be able to instruct her students (Bailey, 2009). The researcher in this case found that effective implementation of literacy learning required more than using multimedia: teachers need a strong understanding of literacy as a "social and cultural practice shaped by multiple sign systems, and students must have opportunities to use their situated, local knowledge, as well as dialogue and inquiry, to transform their participation and activity into learning and identity building." (Bailey, 2009, p. 229). Teachers knowledge of literacies can include awareness of their own literacy practices, pedagogy and classroom resources, and can extend to and understanding of the literacies of their students in their every day lives.

Teacher knowledge of students' outside-of-school literacies. Students are making meaning in their own ways outside of school for personal purposes and in personal contexts on a regular basis. Students between the ages of 8 and 10 spend 7.5 hours per day on average using media (television, computers, and audio devices) for out

of school purposes, and students between the ages of 12 and 17 send and receive an average of 100 text messages per day (The Office of Adolescent Health, 2013). The ways in which adolescents engage in their time using media can vary greatly; the amount of time or number of texts does not equate consistently to levels of engagement, purposes, types of topics or tasks, or the nature of relationships with other users. Ito et al. (2008) describe three “genres of participation” among students who use new media technology: “hanging out” refers to the time adolescents spend together in peer and friend groups that has transcended physical spaces to virtual ones where students spend time together sharing interests and ideas with popular culture media; “messaging around” is focused on an interest in the media itself as students begin to play with the digital content and technology tools to search, experiment, or play; “geeking out” increases the intensity of engagement with the media and technology that requires ongoing access and is characterized by self-directed learning based on interests and is supported by social networks of people with similar interests. The types of knowledge, experience and literacies that students develop will vary greatly depending how and for what purpose they are engaged with digital technology and media.

Acknowledging and meeting the needs of the students who do not have background experience or access to digital technology and media is an important part of understanding students’ out-of- school literacies. The results of broad survey data may mask students without access and experience in building new literacy skills, and it is important for educators to be able to identify the specific needs of all students:

Some adolescents remain on the periphery of available social networks, whether due to discrimination related to race, ethnicity, economics, disability, a confluence of other social circumstances, or by choice. Others, including youth who emigrate with their families to resume schooling in a new corner of the world or become part of a transnational community, are at the very center of government- and life- changing events, but without the literacy skills needed to mediate those events. (Alvermann & Hinchman, 2012, p. xiii - xiv)

Students need to be able to transition their out-of-school experience with multimedia to a different context and purpose when they make meaning with multimedia for academic purposes in school, and those students without access to digital technologies out of school need appropriate learning experiences to address their literacy needs. The context, purpose, and experience of the reader as well as the text are part of the transaction that occurs as students make meaning (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). When the context and purpose changes from out-of-school to in-school, so does the meaning of a text, and students need opportunities to learn how to navigate different types of literacy experiences both in and outside of school (Alvermann & Xu, 2003; Hinchman, Alvermann, Boyd, Brozo, & Vacca, 2004).

Teachers are challenged to facilitate this transition by drawing on their students' background knowledge of multimedia and the new literacy skills they employ out-of-school to make the transition to in-school practices. Institutional contexts that define what counts as literacy in limited ways may be a barrier for teachers to gain this knowledge of their students: institutional context may lead to the belief that digital

texts are distracting, not relevant to in-school literacy, build tension and distrust between teachers and students regarding their place in school, and/or the teacher may be aware that these skills exist, but they do not act on them due to lack of access or support (Alvermann, 2011). This may prevent teachers from effectively teaching (and students from learning) literacy skills related to multimedia.

Conclusion

The methods and results of this study address the connection between how students make meaning with multimedia and how teachers are fostering literacies in the secondary ELA classrooms. Teacher knowledge and perceptions about the nature of meaning making and the roles of multimedia in literacy learning are important pieces in understanding current practice in ELA and how to fill gaps in knowledge, resources, or support to create effective learning with multimedia. Learning experiences that honor students' role in the meaning-making process and that value the multimedia texts are necessary in ELA classes. With this study, I address some of the complexities of how teachers who currently use multimedia in their classrooms are navigating barriers, addressing students' needs, and creating meaningful meaning-making learning experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

English language arts (ELA) teachers are facilitators of literacy learning, but the definition of literacy has changed (The National Council of Teachers of English, 2013). Students now need to be able to make meaning with texts in a variety of different multimedia forms. This is a complex task that includes understanding how the different modes work independently and in conjunction with each other and how purpose and context influence meaning-making with all forms of multimedia, as I have described in Chapter 2. ELA teachers are charged with creating learning experiences for students to build the literacies needed to engage in complex meaning-making tasks. ELA teachers must make decisions about the texts, activities, learning goals, resources, and assessments in which the students participate during class. Many teachers report that there are substantial barriers to including multimedia texts, despite believing in its importance in ELA classes. These barriers include lack of support, professional learning, and resources (Ajayi, 2013).

A qualitative multiple case study approach guided my research into how ELA teachers have helped students to make meaning with multimedia, including the types of learning experiences the teachers plan and implement. A qualitative approach was especially appropriate for this study of the nature of meaning making with multimedia in ELA classes as “qualitative research inquires into, documents, and interprets the

meaning-making process” (Patton, 2014, sec. “Illuminating meanings”). Qualitative interpretation is the study of how people make meaning, and it is the role of the researcher to generate knowledge as part of the meaning-making process through the acts of generating and analyzing data. These acts involve generating and interpreting “interviews, observations, and documents – the data of qualitative inquiry – to find substantially meaningful patterns and themes” (Patton, 2014, sec. “Qualitative interpretation as meaning making”). I identified patterns and themes to illuminate how teachers design and implement learning experiences for their students. The multiple case study approach allowed me to consider the similarities and differences among the teachers to highlight their diverse perspectives, experiences, and actions, even while seeking patterns within the diversity (Patton, 2014).

The specific cases I pursued in this study will purposefully include teachers who currently use multimedia in their classes in order to explore the breadth and depth of meaning-making experiences in real classrooms. The case study approach helped me “to study the experience of real cases operating in real situations,” honoring the complexities and variation among cases, as well as concepts that bind the cases together (Stake, 2006, p. 3). The following sections outline the methodological approach that I used to conduct this study. I kept the guiding principle of *planned flexibility* in mind as I implemented the research study. Bazeley (2013) recommended planned flexibility as a way to balance the need for the research to be purposeful and practical while making it possible to make necessary adjustments of “specific questions and methods as required on the basis of field experience” (p. 33). The methodological

decisions, research framework, and theoretical lens for this study rely on planned flexibility and value real cases.

Research Framework: Interpretive

A research framework exposes the ways in which a researcher approaches making sense of actions, knowledge, and the world. Interpretivists know the world as complex with multiple meanings. Each person creates multiple meanings as they subscribe their own meaning to actions and to the world around them. Each action is meaningful; each actor interprets each action differently. Therefore, individual people construct meaning uniquely in their own social and personal contexts, and reality is subjective to the person living that experience and taking those actions (Creswell, 2013; Rallis & Rossman, 2012). People, then, construct reality through their attempts to interpret the world (Scott & Morrison, 2007). It is these interpretations that I seek to study.

Interpretivism is a lens on the world that allows me, as the researcher, to interpret, or make sense of, the teachers' perspectives and actions as individually valuable and complex. The complexity of each participant's view will be represented through a collaborative process between the researcher and participant to understand and construct meaning. In the process of generating data with the teachers, I encouraged them to consider and articulate how they interpret their own actions and the sense that they make of the world around them. I then analyzed the data to understand their interpretations within the theoretical framework (see below) and literature that informed the focus of this study (Schwandt, 2001). It is the pursuit of the

researcher to describe and reconstruct the ways in which the participants have interpreted reality through the stories, perceptions, and beliefs that they convey as significant to their lives (Scott & Morrison, 2007). In sum, by focusing on the lived experiences of the participants and their perceptions on meaning making and multimedia, I am able to describe the participants' actions while honoring their perceptions of their own experiences. The multiple case study research approach allowed me to work with the participants to engage in these interpretive processes to address the research questions for this study.

Research Approach: Multiple Case Study

There is currently little research on the ways that ELA teachers design and implement learning experiences that focus on making meaning with multimedia, and the examples that are present demonstrate divergent approaches and purposes for using multimedia (e.g., Carroll, 2014; Cooper et al., 2013; Curwood & Cowell, 2011; Gomez et al., 2010; Lisi, 2014; Rowsell & Casey, 2009; Wissman & Vasudevan, 2012). The diversity of these classroom-based practices made the multiple case study design appropriate for this study. The multiple case study design allowed for connections to be made among the cases while honoring the differences in the ways and purposes for which each teacher plans and implements meaning-making learning experiences in her classroom. The similarities among the cases included in a multiple case study are purposeful. It is these similarities that bind the individual cases together into the collection that makes up the multiple case study (Stake, 2006). In this study, the teacher

participants are bound together in their use of multimedia and as high school ELA teachers.

The multiple case study approach helped me to be able to emphasize the complexity of meaning-making and multimedia learning experiences in the particular cases chosen for this study. By researching them as a collection of cases, I analyzed patterns across the cases, as balanced with findings from the individual cases. Findings from the individual cases and a cross-case analysis are included in Chapter 4 of this study (Stake, 2006). The case and cross-case analyses and findings were interpreted through the theoretical framework for this study: the transactional theory of reading. The specific details of the process I used to generate and analyze data are described later in this chapter.

Theoretical Framework: The Transactional Theory of Reading

The transactional theory of reading operationalizes reading as a process of meaning making in which meaning occurs in a transaction between the reader and the text. (See Chapter 2 for more information.) The transaction occurs over time and within context as meaning is influenced by the reader's personal experience and knowledge, purpose for reading, social and cultural context, discussion and collaboration with other readers and texts, and written or created responses to the text. This theory suggests a basic concept that "human beings are always in transaction and in a reciprocal relationship with an environment, a context, a total situation" (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 26). The classroom environment—"the atmosphere created by the teacher and students transacting with one another and the school setting"—is an essential part of

the transaction and “broadens out to include the whole institutional, social, and cultural context” (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 26). Rosenblatt emphasizes that effective reading and writing instruction relies on teachers to create learning environments and activities that motivate students and help them to draw on their own knowledge and experiences.

Rosenblatt (1982) offers two specific recommendations regarding the teacher’s role in the transactional process. First, the teacher should have a receptive attitude toward students’ spontaneous and natural aesthetic responses to text, which allow the teacher to guide the students, individually and collaboratively to “further reflection on what in the experienced story or poem had triggered the reactions.” Second, the teacher should create experiences in which the questions they ask “guide the reader’s attention back toward the reading event” and as such place value on the student’s response. The teacher should foster learning experiences in which the student “will be stimulated to make the connections among initial responses, the evoked work, and the text” and grow in self-awareness and self-criticism as they “discover that others have had different responses, have noticed what was overlooked, [and] have made alternative interpretations” (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 276). The teacher’s role in the transactional process is to foster students’ ability to make meaning with increasingly complex and different types of texts and to be able to take into account their growing understanding of themselves and the world around them.

The transactional theory of reading guided me in studying how teachers help students to make meaning as they engage with multimedia texts.

Multiple Cases: Participants

During the past four years I worked with a university-school partnership organization to provide professional development to secondary ELA teachers. Each year there has been a new cohort of teachers from several school districts who come to learn and collaborate on enhancing ELA instruction to increase student engagement and improve students' college and career readiness and literacy skills. From the initial cohort of teachers who met four years ago, a small group of teachers were asked to join a leadership team for the professional development series. This leadership team of seven teachers from seven different school divisions has received additional training, opportunities to collaborate and plan lessons and assignments, support in implementing innovative instruction, and classroom materials. As members of the leadership team for the past three years, they have piloted new lessons and projects with their classes and then presented their expertise and lessons learned at professional development workshops for each subsequent cohort. I have facilitated many of these workshops by providing materials, resources, and information to the teachers. I have provided feedback on their lessons plans and professional development presentations, and I have encouraged them to take risks and try new lessons in their classrooms to meet the needs of their students. Additionally, I have worked during the same period with a group of school- and district-level literacy leaders from the same school districts. This advisory group has met monthly to share and discuss trends in literacy research and practice, challenges faced by the school divisions in implementing literacy-oriented practice, and make recommendations regarding the focus of professional development. Members of each of these groups have expressed interest in diversifying the types of

texts used in classrooms and implementing learning experiences that value students' ideas, interests, and experiences to support literacy in their classrooms and school districts.

I have been intrigued over the years as I have engaged in the discussions, read lesson plans, and participated in professional development presentations which have offered me small glimpses into teaching styles, values about education, and approach to instruction of ELA teachers. In this study, as is typical in multiple case study research design, "the selection process regularly begins with cases already at least partially identified" (Stake, 2006, p. 22). Two members of the teacher professional development leadership team had expressed particular interest in my research and demonstrated evidence of using multimedia and technology in their classes through their professional development presentations. I contacted these two teachers to determine their interest in participating in this study and asked them to recommend another teacher from their schools to be a participant. Each of these teachers, with the support of their school districts, agreed to participate in this study. Henceforth, I will refer to these teachers by the pseudonyms they chose for this study, Ann and Christine. Ann recommended another teacher from her school, who chose the pseudonym Carolyn. Carolyn has not participated in any capacity with the university-school partnership professional development. I also contacted a member of the literacy leadership team who is a district level supervisor for secondary ELA and asked her to recommend ELA teachers who are integrating multimedia into the learning experiences in their classroom. She recommended two teachers who both agreed to participate in the study, Marina and

Norma. Norma had participated in a one-year cohort group of professional development with the university-school partnership program. Marina had participated in a single one-day professional development workshop on integrating technology and multimedia in secondary ELA that I led through the partnership program.

Each of the five teachers represents a distinct case in this study in order to for me to analyze differences in their approaches to helping students make meaning with multimedia, including differences within the same school context and across the contexts of three different school districts. Within this group there is also variation among the amount of participation they had in the university-school partnership professional develop programs. Ann and Christine were very involved and I knew them both prior to this study, Norma and Marina had some experience with the program and I had briefly met each of them, and Carolyn had not had any experience with the program and I had not met her prior to her participation in this study. The three school districts and schools represented are also different from one another in terms of size, demographics, and resources, but they are within sixty miles of each other in the same mid-Atlantic state. More information about the contextual factors of each of the three school districts is provided in Chapter 4.

The cases satisfy the criteria for inclusion in a multiple case study because they are relevant to the research focus, represent different contexts, and are each complex (Stake, 2006). The cases are relevant because they are high school ELA teachers that use a variety of text and multimedia in their classrooms. There is diversity among the three different school districts and within each school, as each teacher has her own classroom,

classes, and students, as well as materials, resources, and lesson plans. By working with multiple participants, the cases provided opportunities for me to learn about the complexities inherent in how and why teachers are creating meaning-making experiences for their students that incorporate multimedia texts. Stake (2006) recommended including between four and ten cases in a multiple case study, as fewer may not have enough “interactivity” among cases and more may provide “more uniqueness of interactivity than the research team and readers can come to understand” (p. 22). I included five participants from three different school districts to provide a balance of “interactivity” and “uniqueness.” Before beginning data generation, all of the participants signed a consent form to agree to participate in the study (see Appendix C for example).

Data Generation

Data generation is a key component of study design that is purposeful and aligned to generate data that can be analyzed and interpreted. Bazeley (2013) recommended that when deciding on a design for data generation, the researcher must “consider the implications of your research questions, within the context of your conceptual framework: what kind of data will be required to answer them? How will you analyze that kind of data, in order to find your answers?” (p. 47). For this study, I generated three forms of data that align with the theoretical framework for the study and my research questions: interviews, observations, and student work documents. I also included contextual information about each case to help to situate my analysis of the data, because “awareness of context during analysis contributes to meaningful and

appropriate interpretation of what has been observed or told” to the researcher (Bazeley, 2013, p. 81). The main form of data was generated through participant interviews to concentrate the data on the teachers’ perspectives about how and why they created and implemented learning experiences focused upon meaning making. As interviews are the main source of data generation, the next section describes how I approached the interviews.

Interview Guide Approach

I used the interview guide approach to the participant interviews. In this type of interview format, a list of questions, topics, or issues is prepared ahead of time to “ensure that the same basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed” (Patton, 2014, sec. “The interview guide”). This interview approach allowed me to have flexibility to cater each interview to each participant and context. This helped me to address variations within individual cases and among all of the cases. Patton (2014) explained that the advantage of this type of interview approach is “the interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined” (sec. “The interview guide”). I created three interview guides (below), one for each round of interviews, and I revised and updated each subsequent guide after each round. For example, the second interview guide included here was refined after I conducted the observations so as to include any relevant topics and increase the specificity of the questions. I refined interview guide 3 before I conducted the final round of interviews. The focus of these interview guides is

on how each case is situated within relevant contextual information: “the way the interviewee sees the case operating is essential knowledge, and the researcher needs to find out a little about the interviewee to understand his or her interpretations” (Stake, 2006, p. 31). The interview guides are designed to balance topics around the research focus with contextual information and perspectives from the participant.

Data Generation Phases

The planned flexibility of data generation allowed me to adapt the data generation phases to accommodate the needs of the teachers, the limitations of the school districts, and in response to the data. I generated the data in three phases, and I will present the phases here representative of the chronology of each individual case, not the study as a whole. I received permission to begin research with the teachers in two of the school divisions during the summer. Three of these teachers agreed to participate in interviews over the summer as it gave them more time and flexibility to speak with me than they normally have during the school year. The fourth teacher joined the study in September. The third district gave me permission to begin data generation in October.

I had initially planned to conduct classroom observations near the beginning of the data generation phase in May or June of the prior school year but planned for flexibility in the schedule knowing that it may not happen due to the schedule of the school districts. The extended timeline for receiving permission for research from the school districts made May and June observations impossible. However, once permission was granted, three teachers were able to begin the interviews over the summer. I

adjusted the interview guides and timeline accordingly and interviewed each of the five teachers at least once and up to three times before I conducted the classroom observation. This variation depended on the available schedule for me to conduct the observation. I conducted a final interview after the classroom observation with each of the teachers.

I interviewed Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann four times each, three times before the classroom observations and one time after. The interviews averaged 57 minutes and all were conducted through a video or audio call, except for Ann's final interview, which was done in person. I interviewed Christine twice in-person, once before and once after the class observation, for an average of two hours and five minutes for each interview. Although I conducted fewer total interviews with Christine, I interviewed her for a slightly greater amount of time than the rest of the participants. During Christine's first interview, I addressed both the first and second interview guides.

I conducted classroom observations of each teacher for at least half of a school day. The teachers chose the day and time for me to observe their classes. They chose a lesson that demonstrated a typical learning experience in their classroom that included opportunities for students to make meaning with text. The observations at a single school were conducted on the same day, except for one additional observation for Carolyn. I conducted an additional observation in Carolyn's classroom because Carolyn had planned to be further along in the unit I came to observe initially. There were not as many opportunities for me to observe learning experiences in which the students made meaning with multimedia during the initial observation as she had planned. After

reviewing the data for the observation, I asked Carolyn if I could return to observe an additional class period in her classroom and she agreed. By returning a second time several weeks later, I was able to see the students actively engaged in meaning-making learning experiences with multimedia in different ways that complemented the beginning of the unit lesson I observed initially.

Data generation continued over the course of five months. Between each phase of data generation, I conducted initial data analysis to help me prepare for the next phase and note any patterns or anomalies in the data. It also helped me to determine when I reached data saturation. The data generation process ended for each case when I reached data saturation, or the point at which no new information or ideas were being added (Bazeley, 2013). A detailed explanation of the data analysis procedures is below.

Phase one: Initial interview. The first interview guide starts with a broad category of contextual information and then narrows to more specific categories that address meaning making and multimedia in the context of the classroom (see Table 1). During the first interview with all of the participants, I started by asking them about some of the context factors relevant to this study, such as the classes they are currently teaching and access to texts and technology in their classroom. I asked the teachers to share with me a lesson or learning experience that they had taught in the past that they believed was particularly effective or successful and included multimedia texts. This provided a concrete reference point for the teacher to talk specifically about her implementation and planning of meaning-making learning experiences and more abstractly about the process of meaning making in general.

Table 1

Interview Guide One: Categories and Corresponding Topics that Guided the Interview

Category	Topic
Contextual information	School Classes taught Teaching experience Access to and types of technology Access to and types of texts and materials for classroom use District/ school/ classroom policies regarding technology use
General approach to teaching meaning making and using multimedia in the classroom	Meeting diverse student needs Approach to reading instruction Roles of purpose for reading (efferent/ aesthetic) What counts as text (print/ digital/ multimedia) Roles of teacher in meaning making Roles of students in meaning making Opportunities for students to collaborate Approach to questioning Assessment methods
Describe a lesson	Goals/ purpose Teacher actions Students actions Assessment of lesson What came before/ after this lesson
Planning for a lesson	Choosing learning goals Addressing students' learning needs Choosing materials/ technology Choosing texts Formal/ informal assessment

Phase two: Student work interview. The second phase of data generation occurred during the second (and third, if applicable) interview and focused on the teachers' perceptions of how students make meaning (and how the teacher helps them to make meaning) through discussion of student work. This allowed the participant to describe the context of student work samples and how they chronicle meaning making. It was more pertinent to the research focus for this study to put the teachers' perceptions and interpretations of the students work at the forefront, rather than that of the researcher. The purpose of including student work was to ask the teacher to demonstrate how she saw meaning making documented within the student work, how she created learning experiences in which this occurs, and how she used her knowledge of student work to plan lessons.

I asked the teachers to provide me with samples of student work prior to the scheduled second interview. I asked each teacher to choose work from approximately five different students to share with me. I allowed the teachers to choose work that they felt best represented the meaning-making experiences in their classroom. The teachers primarily shared students' projects or essays from major assignments. The teachers provided additional work during or after the interview as they thought of different, applicable examples during the interviews. Each teacher ultimately provided and discussed at least three sets of student work from different learning experiences. The teachers included samples that represented a range of the types of work submitted by students in the class. The teachers also provided relevant ancillary documents like

texts, assignment sheets, or rubrics that helped to situate each of the samples of student work in the appropriate context.

I adapted the interview guide based on the student work that we discussed during the interview. This interview guide is based on a “probe-based” interview approach, in which the student work served as a “probe” to solicit the teachers’ interpretation and perspective on the document and its connection to meaning making and multimedia (see Table 2). The purpose of the probe is to delineate the focus for the interview and motivate engagement in the interview (Stake, 2006, p. 31). The first two categories of the interview guide serve to generate contextual information about the student work and why the teacher assigned it leading to more specific questions about the student work documents. All of the questions on these categories and topics will relate to meaning making and multimedia.

Table 2

Student Work Interview Guide: Categories and Corresponding Topics that Guided the Interview

Category	Topic
Assignment	<p>Learning goal for the assignment</p> <p>Context of the assignment – frequency, duration</p> <p>Purpose of the assignment</p> <p>Ways the assignment addresses meaning making</p> <p>Ways the assignment integrates multimedia</p>
Assessment	<p>Method of assessment</p> <p>Expectations for the assignment</p> <p>What did the teacher learn about the student from this assignment?</p>
Student work sample	<p>Meaning making</p> <p>Multimedia</p> <p>Purpose (aesthetic/ efferent)</p> <p>Value/ not value of students' personal experiences, beliefs, ideas</p> <p>Did the student work meet your expectations for the assignment?</p> <p>How did you use information from this student work to inform your future instruction?</p> <p>What, if anything, did you learn about the student from this work sample?</p> <p>What, if anything, does this work sample reveal, to you, about the student's understanding of the text?</p> <p>How do you think this student used their knowledge of culture and society to make meaning from the text?</p> <p>How do you think the student used their personal experiences, beliefs, and/or knowledge to make meaning from the text?</p>

The questions in the student work category were purposefully general so that I could create more specific questions based on my initial analysis of the student work samples. I added or changed topics as needed to address the student work focus for each specific interview. It was important throughout this interview phase to focus on how the teacher makes meaning with her students' work and how this informs the planning and implementation of learning activities in her class. The final phase of data generation specifically addressed the teachers' planning process.

Phase three: Observation and final interview. The purpose of the observation was to observe the classroom context and interactions around the concept of meaning making. The observation was followed with a final interview to reflect on the observation and discuss the teacher's planning process. The observation helped to build shared understanding with the teacher as I got a glimpse into the classroom culture, norms, and language through the observation. During the observation, I focused on:

1. How the students approach multimedia
2. How the teacher presents multimedia
3. Types of questions asked (by teachers and students)
4. Types of suggestions/responses (by teachers and students)
5. How learning activities are organized
6. General observations about the classroom environment

The observation helped me to learn about the classroom environment and build shared meaning with the teacher. I used my notes from the observation to ask the teacher specific questions based on the interview guide (Table 3) that are catered to her specific

classroom. The data generated from the observation also helped me to triangulate the data. Triangulation is a validation strategy used in qualitative research to probe the consistency of the findings (Stake, 2006). (See more detail on triangulation below.) The observational data was triangulated with the teachers' perceptions of meaning making generated during the interviews in the data analysis phase. (See more below on data analysis.)

I spent approximately half of the school day (at least two class periods) observing in each teacher's classroom. I asked each teacher to choose the day and times that best fit her schedule and that would allow me to see some classroom activities related to meaning making and multimedia. The teacher decided the lesson that best fit these guidelines. By asking the teacher to make the decision as to what classes I observed, I was able to see learning experiences that she values or that fit her understanding of meaning making and multimedia. The final interview addressed how the teacher approached planning lessons based on her reflections and prior experience.

I developed specific questions for each participant based on my data analysis up to this point. The interview guide is divided into three broad categories to focus the interview: how the teacher approaches planning, her classroom-learning environment, and her perceptions and use of multimedia.

Table 3

Planning Interview Guide: Categories and Corresponding Topics that Guided the Interview

Category	Topic
Approach to planning for meaning making and multimedia	Describe general approach to (or process for) planning lessons Development of learning goals Development of learning activities Use of technology Use of multimedia (choosing texts) Monitoring and adjusting Roles of assessment in planning process
Learning environment, specifically as it relates to meaning making	How do you go about creating the learning environment in your classroom? What roles, if any, do the students' personal experiences, beliefs, and ideas play in your classroom? What roles, if any, do the greater school and community context and cultural and society in general play in the learning experiences in your classroom?
Multimedia	Value Types Examples Choices/ limitations/ barriers

I used the preliminary data analysis to make appropriate modifications to this interview guide prior to this round of interviews. Even if I had reached data saturation regarding student work before conducting three interviews in one or more cases, I still completed the final interview.

I have frequently referenced data analysis in my description of my plans for data generation, as the data generation happened parallel to the data analysis. In this section I primarily indicated when the data analysis took place and how it impacted each phase of data generation. Next I will describe the specific procedures I will use to analyze the data from these initial to the final phases.

Data Analysis

In a multiple case study, the researcher must contend with the balance between the cross-case analysis and the individual cases as complete, separate, and unique to determine similarities and differences that arise among the cases. This presents a dilemma for the researcher who must tread between celebrating individuality or similarities (Stake, 2006). Stake (2006) recommends holding both as valuable during the data analysis and reporting of the study in order to maintain the similarities *and* differences between cases throughout. To do this, I identified themes from the individual cases and then considered the juxtapositions among the multiple cases. The findings I identified took into account the themes and findings of the individual cases and assertions drawn from the cross-case analysis (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Data analysis took place in stages as I generated and analyzed each section of data for each case, eventually leading to a whole picture. I conducted the initial exploration after each round of data generation (explained in the previous sections). This means that I analyzed each of the cases concurrently, and each individual case did not completely emerge until after the end of the data generation. Although I tried to maintain the individual cases through the rounds of data generation, I noted

comparisons among cases that I noticed during the process and returned to these notes during the cross-case analysis. There were three overarching phases to the data analysis: initial explorations, identifying codes and themes, and conducting a cross-case analysis to develop a coherent understanding of the study and its conclusions (Bazeley, 2013; Stake, 2006).

Initial Explorations

The initial explorations helped me to “become familiar with and reflect on each source of data as it becomes available” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 101). During this stage, I wrote my initial thoughts and impressions after each interview and observation to summarize the key points while they were fresh in my memory and close to the original data generation. I also took notes on important ideas, anecdotes, and connections I made as I transcribed each interview and immediately after I finished transcribing. I recorded what I learned – the meaning I made – with each set of data. The goal of this phase was to help me to become immersed in the data, make my acts of meaning making visible, and inform the next phase of data analysis. It influenced the next phase of data analysis specifically by helping me to “identify relevant categories and concepts” that became emergent codes (Bazeley, 2013, p. 120). This included both expected and unexpected concepts based on the review of the literature (Chapter 2). During this phase, I also wrote any specific follow-up questions I planned to ask the participant in a subsequent interview and noted topics that we had addressed in less depth. These notes helped me to prepare for each subsequent interview by tailoring the interview guides to the specific participants.

Coding Data

Coding is a fundamental stage in qualitative data analysis that focuses on a purposeful way of working with the data. The purpose of coding is to “manage your data; build ideas from your data; [and] facilitate asking questions of your data” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 127). I used both a priori codes, codes developed before data generation, and posteriori codes, codes developed after data generation, in my data analysis. The a priori codes were developed directly from the transactional theory of reading. Using a priori codes helped me to keep the focus of the data analysis on the research focus for this study. Posteriori codes were generated during the data analysis, directly from the data. I created codes by generating descriptive words that identify and label content of the data. Many of the posteriori codes were generated from the initial explorations phase of data analysis and then I added to this list as I began the process of coding the data. I refined and added new codes as I worked through the data to clearly identify the meaning of each code (Schwandt, 2001). A separate code was created for each concept (Bazeley, 2013). I began coding after I had completed between one and three interviews for each participant. This allowed me to generate an across-case list of posteriori codes based on initial explorations of data with representation from each participant in addition to the codes developed from the theoretical framework. I added codes and refined the definitions of codes as I coded interviews and observations. I began by coding Norma’s first three interviews and observation and then Marina’s interviews and observation. The last change to the codebook I made was while coding Marina’s third interview. I did not need to make any additions of codes or change definitions as I coded

the data from the subsequent interview and observations. I coded a total of eighteen interviews and six observations.

As I created, defined, and applied codes, I sorted them into a hierarchical system of categories and subcategories that helped me keep track of the codes and find them expediently during the data analysis process by making conceptual links between related codes. These categories helped me to build my own understanding of the data during the coding by, for example, grouping codes into broader categories that represent overarching ideas or adding codes that reflect gradations of meaning (Bazeley, 2013).

Keeping a codebook throughout the data analysis process helped me refine the meaning of each code and apply them consistently to each set of data (Bazeley, 2013). The codebook includes a list of all of the codes that I used and a definition for each code. I created the definitions so that they are clear descriptions of what I mean by each code and the boundaries for where it is applied to the data (see Appendix D). I updated the codebook to reflect changes to definitions of the codes during the data analysis (Bazeley, 2013). I used the same codebook with all of the data from all of the cases.

I generated the content in the codebook based on the theoretical framework, my initial exploration of the data, and during the process of coding. I organized the codes into the following categories: planning lessons, implementing lessons, barriers to teaching, meaning making, literacies, resources, and ELA content. Many of the sub-codes in the categories of meaning making and implementing lessons were derived from the theoretical framework. For example, within the category of meaning making I

included sub-codes for meaning making in reading, meaning making in discussion, purposeful reading, and meaning making as influenced by students' personal experiences and values among others. Under the category of implementing lessons, sub-codes addressed the role of the teacher in the meaning-making learning experience, for example, the types of questions the teacher asks to foster meaning-making include questions to connect to text, questions for self-awareness, and questions for self-criticism.

I then added codes to the main categories based on the data I generated. I created these codes during the initial data analysis phase and added them to the codes identified from the theoretical framework. For example, they included codes on the types of multimedia being used in the meaning-making learning experiences I observed. These included codes for making meaning with visual texts, non-digital print texts, audio texts, online reading, video, student created texts, and more than one type of text in a single learning experience. Finally, as I coded the data, I added codes to represent and describe the data. For example, under the category of planning lessons, I added a sub-code for making changes to lessons or units due to student interest and for teacher learning. A full list of codes can be found in Appendix D.

I applied the codes to the data during the process of coding. I divided the data into sections of text, each section representing a discrete idea. Separating the data into discrete ideas helped to keep the content of the text around a particular topic or anecdote intact, making the meaning of the text clear within that section (Bazeley, 2013). The discrete idea sections divided at turns in conversation; for example, a new

anecdote, example, idea, or explanation denoted a separation between sections. A discreet idea may be the length of a paragraph or short passage in an interview. All of the codes that are relevant to the discreet idea were applied to that section of the text. See an excerpt of a coded interview transcript in Appendix E.

The process of coding was an important step towards making meaning from the data. The codes helped me fragment, reframe, and connect data with related codes, from which I identified patterns and themes with the data.

Codes to Themes

In creating a hierarchical system of codes, I started the process of recognizing patterns in the data that eventually led to themes. A theme is an “integrating, relational statement derived from the data that identifies both content and meaning” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 190). The process of identifying patterns and themes for each case became a focused effort after all of the data from that case was coded. First, I identified patterns by determining how the codes related to one another in each individual case. For example, regular co-occurrence (or lack thereof) of codes in the data may indicate a pattern (Bazeley, 2013). I used code co-occurrence charts generated by the data coding software, *Dedoose* (version 6.2.21), to locate codes that co-occurred within the case, and then I read all of the discrete sections of data that was labeled with the particular code co-occurrence (see excerpt from the code co-occurrence chart in Appendix G). Next, I identified sections of data that had related codes and read them. While reading, I created a list of related codes based on their occurrence and co-occurrence in the sections of data. In doing this, patterns of codes emerged within and across each type of

data and each case based on each research question. The next step was to group the patterns and create a descriptive label for each group.

The basic content of the theme statements derives from each group of patterns. I added meaning to that content by creating a theme statement and description that represented the integration of the data, codes, and patterns. Table 4 is an example of the charts that I created for each pattern to theme progression for each theme in each case.

Table 4

Example of a Data Analysis Chart to Represent the Connection of Patterns to Themes

Pattern of codes	Label for the pattern	Theme statement based on the pattern	Description of the theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning lessons • Meeting students' learning needs • Learning goals • Providing choices for students • Modifying or changing lessons/units • Purpose for reading • Choosing texts • Choosing technology 	Planning for deep thinking	Christine plans with the goal of having the students walk out of the class with the ability to think and know that they are valid in their thinking. She does not repeat lessons from year to year and makes frequent changes throughout the year based on the students' learning needs.	With the big picture in mind, Christine creates learning experiences based on the students' needs. There is consistency and structure to every class block: time for reading and conversation, individual work and teamwork. The topics and mini lessons change based on the students and their needs and interests. Christine values and relies on the students' input for what works and what doesn't work. Christine makes choices regarding technology that reflect its accessibility to students, use in out-of-school settings, ability to support the learning goals.

The theme statement indicates a “relationship between a set of conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 192). The theme statement was developed, revised, and described in conjunction with the theoretical framework and relevant literature. The description served to help me define the boundaries of theme in accordance with the data. In the description of the theme, I identified the data in which it was most relevant, the gradations in how the theme manifests throughout

the case, and if it was absent or discussed substantively differently in a specific instance (for example, referred to negatively). In the first two cases I analyzed, I initially identified six potential themes. In the third case, I identified five themes, and in the final two cases, I identified three themes. I then returned to the first three cases and upon further analysis realized that what I had initially identified as different themes merged into fewer themes that better represented the cases or the themes that appeared across several cases and later became a part of the cross-case analysis. (See Appendix H for an example.)

Once I had all of the theme statements and descriptions, I created a demonstration of how the themes intersect within the cases. This helped me to “explore their context and their interrelationships to build a coordinated network of understanding” (Bazeley, 2013, p. 193). I was able to consider the nuances of the research questions in terms of *how* and *why* the participants plan and implement meaning-making learning experiences. This resulted in the identification of two guiding principles that each participant used through the planning and implementation process and a justification for the guiding principles. These guiding principles and justifications derive from an analysis of the theme statements in conjunction with the data. In Chapter 4, I present each case by identifying the participant’s guiding principles and justifications and then demonstrate how they manifest throughout the process of planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences with specific examples from the data. I made notes throughout the process that assisted me in the cross-case analysis. Throughout the process of data analysis, I cycled back and forth

through the steps in order to revise, refine, and clarify the patterns, themes, and relationships in conjunction with the data and literature. Throughout this process, I made notes about potential comparisons to be used in the cross-case analysis. The understanding that grows from this data analysis process formed the basis of the cross-case analysis.

Cross-Case Analysis

In the introduction to data analysis, I referred to the dilemma of balancing the individuality of the cases and drawing comparisons between them (Stake, 2006). The procedures for the cross-case analysis helped me navigate this dilemma purposefully. I repeated a similar process of identifying patterns and themes across cases in order to make assertions about the cases, specifically in response to the research questions for this study.

Stake (2006) suggested a process for data analysis that emphasizes the findings from the individual cases that nevertheless leads the researcher to make assertions about similarities across cases. In the data analysis process, I returned to my notes and themes from the case analyses and identified ideas and concepts that connected to more than one case. I considered these ideas in light of the research questions, literature review, and data to determine their importance and relevance to this study. This helped me to focus the analysis on ideas that highlight important connections between the cases. The cross-case assertions address the research questions, have a single focus, and have supporting evidence from multiple cases (Stake, 2006). I returned to the data analysis of the individual cases to identify support for each assertion.

In returning to the individual case analysis and data for the cross-case analysis, I also returned to the guiding principles for meaning making in each case. Even though I had initially identified ten distinct guiding principles (two for each participant), I compared the principles across cases and found they could be divided into categories based on how they support the meaning-making process. In drawing these conceptual comparisons, I was able to determine a set of factors that contribute to how teachers foster the meaning-making learning experience. In Chapter 5, I present descriptions of the cross-case assertions and synthesis of guiding principles. I identify their boundaries and situate them within the supporting data and relevant literature. Like the individual case analysis, the cross-case analysis was a recursive process as I developed and revised the assertions about the cases.

This detailed description of how I analyzed data to develop findings is one way that I addressed the quality and rigor of this study by making my methodological approach transparent to the reader and justifying it through explanation of how the methods align with my research questions and related literature as well as using known procedures in the field of qualitative research. I further address factors related to quality and rigor of this study and my findings by connecting my research approach to established evaluation criteria for qualitative research to ensure the quality and rigor of my study (as described below).

Quality and Rigor

The data analysis and results of this study rely on my informed interpretation of the data. As a researcher, it is vital that I defend the results of this study through clearly

articulating support for my interpretations of the data and against external criteria for determining the quality of my research. Quality is not just in the product, but it is in the integrity of the data, process, and outcomes of the study. Bazeley (2013) contends that the quality of the research lies within “an approach and execution that exhibits the work of a creative, reflective, and competent craftsman, and a product that informs, inspires, and empowers” (p. 401). This is a lofty goal, but one that I strive to meet by taking specific steps to maximize my ability to defend my work and help others to see value in it.

There are two sets of evaluation criteria and procedures that I considered in planning for and evaluating the quality of this study. The first set of criteria is trustworthiness. Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba developed trustworthiness criteria as qualitative methodology analogues to the conventional criteria for validity and reliability used in positivistic research (Schwandt, 2001). The second set of evaluation criteria is authenticity. Authenticity differs from trustworthiness in that it is unique to qualitative research. Authenticity aims to judge the ways in which the researcher emphasizes and honors, in genuine ways, the unique lived experiences and perspectives of the people that are involved in the study (Schwandt, 2001). Both sets of criteria are related to specific procedures that can help the researcher meet the criteria. In the sections below, I define each criterion and explain the steps that I took to create conditions under which these criteria were met.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness criteria help to evaluate the validity and reliability of research in terms that are applicable and relevant to qualitative research. Credibility refers to how closely the reporting and results of the study represent reality, as it is lived and perceived by the participants, researcher and audience. The second criterion for trustworthiness is transferability. Transferability is providing adequate context and description of the data and related theories and literature so that the reader will be able to make comparisons between her own context and experiences and those reported in the study (Shenton, 2004, p. 73). Next, dependability is providing thorough description of the methodological procedures taken in the study. The dependability criterion is met if another researcher could repeat the same methodological procedure. Unlike positivistic research, the goal of meeting the dependability criterion is not to try to create the same conditions or reach the same result. Instead, thorough description of methodology allows the reader of the study to understand the procedures and deliberate on their effectiveness. Finally, confirmability refers to the steps that the researcher takes to make sure that the findings are representative of the experiences and ideas of the participants, and not the beliefs of the researcher. Confirmability relies on the researcher to justify and explain all of the findings and interpretations with evidence from the data (Schwandt, 2001; Seale, 2002; Shenton, 2004). In the following sections, I will describe the specific steps I took to try to ensure meeting these criteria in this study.

Triangulation. Triangulation is a way to identify corroborating evidence to support the findings in the study (Creswell, 2013). I corroborated the findings by using

evidence from more than one case and more than one type of data as support. For example, my observations of the classroom and the student work documents helped me to further support findings interpreted from the interviews. Member checking (described below) also helped to triangulate findings and provide additional support as it gave the teachers another opportunity to clarify and confirm the data generated from their interviews. I triangulated the data within each case and across cases (Stake, 2006).

Member checking. Member checking is a process by which the participants address the way that their perceptions and actions are represented in the data and is a way for the researcher to check her interpretations of the data through verifications with the participants (Shenton, 2004). I used the recommendation of Bazeley (2013) to provide summaries of the interviews to each participant and asked them to provide feedback to the researcher, including elaborations, clarifications, or deletions. This helped me to verify and make applicable modifications to my data analysis throughout the process. It also provided additional opportunities for the teachers to reflect on the information that they have shared in the interviews. An example interview summary is provided in Appendix F.

Thick, rich description. In my report of the findings, I provide thick description of each case by interconnecting details of the participants' actions, perceptions, and plans as related to the focus of the study. This creates a detailed picture of each case and its context to help the readers determine if the information from this study can transfer to settings or experiences with which they are familiar (Creswell, 2013; Shenton, 2004). I

tie my findings to prior research to demonstrate the correspondence, or lack thereof, with prior studies on related topics (Shenton, 2004).

Documenting the role of the researcher as instrument. I am transparent and reflective in my role as the researcher by disclosing my personal beliefs and assumptions, including transparent statements of any problems, changes, or shortcomings in the study. In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of the inquiry, and the life and experiences of the researcher can affect the generation and analysis of data (Patton, 2014). Therefore, the researcher must reflect on these connections between the researcher's life, beliefs, actions, and experiences and the inquiry. I documented these reflections, actions, and decisions made during the implementation and reporting of the study (Seale, 2002). This documentation has two main components. First, in the researcher as instrument statement (Appendix A), I share and reflect on my own experiences and attitudes with multimedia, meaning making, and the teaching of secondary ELA. This helps to establish my own beliefs and experiences as separate from those of the participants. Second, I kept a reflexive journal of the actions, decisions, reasons, questions, ideas, and plans considered during the course of the study. Patton (2014) explains that reflexivity goes beyond reflection by requiring the qualitative researcher to "emphasize deep introspection, political consciousness, cultural awareness, and ownership of one's perspective" and in doing so the researcher must "think about how we think and inquire into our thinking patterns even as we apply thinking to making sense of the patterns we observe around us" (sec. Reflexivity: Perspective and voice). I began keeping my reflexive journal as I narrowed and focused

the direction of this study and regularly updated it throughout the process of working on this study. (See excerpts from my reflexive journal in Appendix B.) This documentation was a way for me to reflect on each step of the research, keep all of the decisions and actions aligned with each other and the focus of the research, and to be open for review in case of any problems or inconsistencies.

The steps I have described above helped to address the criteria for trustworthiness in this study with thorough methodological steps. The authenticity criteria, in contrast, address the potential benefits of the study to the participants.

Authenticity

Authenticity criteria also guided the evaluation of the quality of this study. I used the authenticity criteria to guide the actions I took, as the researcher, to create conditions so that the participants are represented fairly and may benefit from being a part of this study.

Fairness. Fairness is the ways in which the researcher takes into account the unique realities and lived experiences of each participant, as well as their contexts, and analyzes and represents them throughout the process of implementing and reporting on the study (Guba, 2004). I ensured fairness through the procedures that I used in the study to honor the perspectives of each participant individually by ensuring that their voices are presented with an even hand in context and with member checks.

Ontological and educative authenticity. Ontological authenticity is “the extent to which individual respondents’ (and the inquirer’s) early constructions are improved, matured, expanded, and elaborated, so that all parties possess more information and

become more sophisticated in its use” (Guba, 2004, p. 44). By conducting the series of interviews over several months, I was able to inquire about the participants growing awareness or better articulation of their own knowledge and constructions of meaning. In the data analysis, I made comparisons within cases to address changes, if any, within each participant. Ontological authenticity is about the participants’ growing knowledge of self; whereas, educative authenticity is about how the participant grows in understanding or awareness of others (Manning, 1997). The participants do not have to like or agree with the other perspectives, but just understanding or appreciation of other’s opinions, perspectives, or actions will influence the educative authenticity of this study (Schwandt, 2007). The final two criteria for authenticity provided an opportunity to analyze and document what actions, if any, the participants took as a result of their new understandings.

Catalytic and tactical authenticity. The final two authenticity criteria move from change in knowledge to change in actions. The catalytic authenticity criterion is met when the participant makes plans or considers actions that are influenced or facilitated by their experience of being part of the study. The participant may consider plans for future actions based on the reflective aspects of the interview process or consider practical applications of the research focus. Tactical authenticity takes the final step in which the “participants are empowered to take the action(s) that the inquiry implies or proposes” (Guba, 2004, p. 44). Tactical authenticity criteria are best met through participant’s testimony to actions taken and her reported level of confidence in pursuing changes or action based on participation in and results of the study. As the researcher, I

cannot control whether the participants take any actions as a result being a part of the study; however, I created conditions in which the participant's identity is kept confidential, and the participant has access to the results of the study and feels empowered as a contributor to the researcher process (Manning, 1997).

The procedures to help to ensure meeting the criteria for trustworthiness and authenticity were integrated, as applicable, throughout the steps in implementing the research design, as described in this chapter. I will return to these criteria a final time to document the evidence for the ways in which this study has or has not met each of the criteria.

Examples. The authenticity criteria were addressed during the completion of this study. To address fairness, I shared my summaries of their interviews with each participant. They had the opportunity to provide feedback or clarifications to me. After I analyzed the data and wrote all of the cases, I emailed each participant a copy of her own case. This helped to ensure that each participant's voice and perspective was honored fairly. All of the participants read their cases and responded to me via email with approval of their cases.

The criterion of ontological authenticity was met when one of the participants expressed her frustration in an interview at not being able to articulate the relationship between text selection and goals for meaning making in her classroom. In the subsequent interview, she shared that she had thought about that relationship further and was able to more clearly articulate her understanding because she had time to reflect between the interviews.

During the interviews, I shared with the participants information about the transactional theory of reading (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c) and other information about multimedia and meaning making as they asked questions during our discussion. Two of the participants requested additional information based on what I had shared in the interviews. They wanted to learn more about the topics, and I sent them relevant articles. This showed their interest and appreciation in new information and perspectives, and thereby meets the educative authenticity criterion.

One of the participants shared with me her students' work and her corresponding lessons that included a digital multimedia project and online reading. She had done this learning experience with her students several years ago and had not repeated it. In sharing her experience with this project, she reflected it was one of the most successful units she has ever taught. She shared that she now plans on trying to rework this unit so that she can teach it again in other grade levels. Her plans for change in the future based on her reflections and experience as a participant in this study is an example of catalytic authenticity.

Finally, tactical authenticity calls for a change in a participant's actions. One of the participants shared in her interviews over the summer that she gave her students multiple-choice practice test every other week to prepare for the standardized exams given in the spring. She shared that some students had a negative reaction to these practice tests, and they did not contribute to a positive learning environment, which she otherwise felt was very valuable to meaning-making learning experiences. When I interviewed her again about six weeks into the school year, she shared that she had

decided not to give multiple-choice practice test this year based her reflections during the interviews.

These examples demonstrate how the teachers benefited from their participation in this study. They were able to use the interviews as an opportunity to reflect on and learn from their own experiences and take the opportunity to access more information and perspectives and/or make changes to their teaching practice.

Conclusion

There is a need to understand more about how teachers plan and implement learning experiences that help students to make meaning with multimedia due to the changing nature of literacy, the imperative for ELA teachers to help students develop literacies, and the increasing multimedia in everyday life due to digital technologies. The methods that I have explicated here allowed me to work with teachers who are currently planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences and using multimedia in their classrooms. In implementing this study, I explored how teachers are overcoming barriers to accessing multimedia and using multimedia to address students' literacy learning. The multiple case study approach allowed me to highlight the unique aspects of each teacher and classroom while exploring similarities across cases that lend insight into the nature of meaning making in secondary ELA classes overall.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CASES

This chapter presents a report of the five cases of secondary English language arts (ELA) teachers, a comparison of these cases, and a discussion of the themes that arose from these data. The five case reports of Marina, Norma, Carolyn, Ann, and Christine describe how each teacher helps her students to make meaning with texts through planning and implementing learning experiences.

Introduction to the Teachers and Their Cases

Below is a brief introduction to each of the teachers. Their cases will each be presented in detail later in this chapter.

Marina. Marina is an early-career teacher who teaches 9th and 10th grade. She creates learning experiences in which the students learn how to learn through active discussion, engaging texts, and collaborative projects. She ties basic literacy skills and traditional literature with multimedia texts and technology projects.

Norma. Norma has 40 years of experience teaching high school English and currently teaches 11th and 12th graders. She builds learning experiences to help her students gain empathy for each other and people who are in places and experiences far outside of their own. She helps students build critical thinking skills through close reading and analysis of texts.

Carolyn. Carolyn is a tech-savvy teacher who currently teaches 10th graders. She wants her students to be engaged in meaning-making experiences based on their own interests to build confidence in their literacy skills. She guides students in creating complex multimedia products that facilitate meaning making through reading, collaboration, and creation.

Ann. Ann is a teacher and leader in ELA who helps 11th and 12th graders prepare for life after high school. She is passionate about connecting students to books that they will love and helping them to see that the story does not end at the last page. She helps her students to make connections between texts and life experiences through research and service-learning projects.

Christine. Christine is a veteran educator whose background in film studies shapes how she creates engaging learning experiences for her students to make meaning with multimedia. She believes in the power of storytelling to build empathy and empower students through discussion, collaboration, and creativity.

The cases. Marina, Norma, Carolyn, Ann, and Christine's cases exemplify the multitude of ways in which multimedia can be integrated into meaning-making learning experiences. The teachers believe these experience will help their students to develop literacies relevant to their lives in- and out-of-school. Each of the teachers plans and implements learning experiences that are supported by a set of values and priorities for fostering meaning making. In the case descriptions below, I refer to these sets of values and priorities as guiding principles. These guiding principles shape the teachers'

relationships with students, classroom learning environment, and the learning experiences in their classes.

The guiding principles of the teachers correspond to different points on the aesthetic/efferent continuum (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c), which plays a role in meaning making and can be influenced by teachers and learning environments. In the next section, I will explain the role of the aesthetic/efferent continuum in helping students to make meaning followed by how each of the cases aligns to the continuum. Then, I will discuss the guiding principles specific to each teacher and how each teacher uses her principles to plan and implement meaning-making learning experiences.

Teachers Guide Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

According to the Transactional Theory of Reading, the reader's purpose for reading a text impacts the meaning that is evoked in the transaction between the reader and the text. Each reader adopts a purpose or "stance" when reading a text, which allows for "selective attention," or a focus on aspects of the text that best align with that purpose and "push others to the fringes of consciousness" (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 10). These purposes may be implicit or explicit, are decided by the reader, and fall along the "efferent – aesthetic continuum" (p. 11). The "predominately" efferent and aesthetic purposes for reading are on a continuum because Rosenblatt rejects "the traditional, binary, either-or tendency to see them as in opposition" (p. 12). Some readings fall towards the extreme ends of the continuum and others demonstrate a more even balance between the two, but "both of these aspects of meaning are attended to in different proportions in any linguistic event" (p. 12).

The choices regarding purpose impact the aspects of the text that the reader focuses on, and therefore the meaning that she makes with it. Purpose is influenced by the context of the reading and the personal values, meanings, and experiences the reader brings to the text. The text itself may suggest a particular stance through uses the literary conventions in various genres or contexts. An experienced reader may choose to follow these conventional cues and adopt a stance that aligns with the purpose of the text, for example reading an encyclopedia entry for factual data, or purposefully choose to read the text contrary to the cues. Within these stances, there is unlimited potential for varied meanings. Rosenblatt (1994/2005c) explains,

No two readings, even by the same person, are identical. Still someone else can read a text efferently and paraphrase it for us in such a way to satisfy our efferent purpose. But no one else can read aesthetically—that is, experience the evocation of—a literary work of art for us. (p. 14)

There is no hierarchy between efferent and aesthetic. However, because an efferent reading of any text, literature, poems, news articles, etc., may be condensed down to a satisfactory paraphrase, the efferent – aesthetic continuum may be skewed to devalue or deemphasize potential for meaning making or emphasize meaning beyond that suggested by convention in a particular genre or type. Rosenblatt offers the following examples:

The student reading *A Tale of Two Cities* who knows that there will be a test on facts about characters and plot may be led to adopt a predominantly efferent stance, screening out all but the factual data. Similarly, a reading of an article on

zoology could range from analytic abstracting of factual content to an aesthetic savoring of the ordered structure of ideas, the rhythm of the sentences, and the images of animal life brought into consciousness. (p. 14)

All readers use both stances for different reasons and in different contexts when making meaning with all types of texts.

In a school setting, the teacher can play a large role in meaning making by directing students to a particular purpose for reading particular texts. The teachers must create “environments and activities in which students are motivated and encouraged to draw on their own resources to make ‘live’ meanings” that “enrich the individual’s linguistic-experiential reservoir” (p. 27). If students are repeatedly directed toward efferent readings of all texts through the learning environment or activities, they are missing opportunities in making meaning that contributes to their “linguistic-experiential reservoir.” Rosenblatt lists the following teaching factors as impacting the meaning-making process: “organization of instruction, the atmosphere in the classroom, the kinds of questions asked, the ways of phrasing assignments, and the types of tests administered” (p. 27). By planning and implementing lessons in which these factors support meaning making, the teacher helps the students “to build on past experience of life and language, to adopt the appropriate stance for selective attention, and to develop inner gauges or frameworks for choice and synthesis that produce new structures of live meaning” (p. 27). Students’ “linguistic-experiential reservoir” is filled with prior meaning-making experiences, interaction within the school context, and knowledge, experience, and “assumptions about the world, society, and human nature”

(p. 26). Each meaning-making experience impacts the meaning made with each subsequent text. These factors of the Transactional Theory of Reading guided my analysis of how each of the five teachers conceptualized, planned, and implemented meaning-making learning experiences in terms of where they primarily direct their students' stance along the efferent-aesthetic continuum and how this impacts the meaning-making process.

Presenting the Cases on the Efferent-Aesthetic Continuum

In all of the cases both the efferent and aesthetic stances are present within different aspects of the meaning-making process. I have ordered the cases by the predominant stance the teacher encourages in the initial reading or viewing of a text and the extent to which the teacher prioritizes this stance in planning and implementation of learning experiences. The first case describes Marina, who fosters a predominantly efferent stance in reading by guiding students' meaning making with specific topics or essential questions and strategies for how to make meaning. The second case is about Norma who also fosters a predominantly efferent stance by focusing her students' meaning making through the lens of specific strategies but without a set focus on topic. In the third case, Carolyn falls in the middle of the continuum by fluctuating between efferent and aesthetic purposes in different segments of lessons in the same class period. Ann, the fourth case, shifts the balance towards a more aesthetic approach in her planning and implementation as the learning experiences derive from reading chosen by students. Finally, Christine focuses on the aesthetic stance as she prioritizes how the students' individual lived experiences impact

and are impacted by the meaning-making process. As I present each of the cases, I will specify how the teacher's predominant stances relate to their guiding principles in planning and implementing learning experiences that help students to make meaning.

All of the cases are presented with an initial overview of contextual factors of the school, teacher, and her classroom, followed by a brief introduction to the teacher's guiding principles and how her principles compare within the framework of meaning making to the guiding principles of the cases I have presented previously. Then there will be a detailed explication of the teacher's guiding principles and how they are used to meet the goal of helping students to bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies. The final two sections of each case delve into how the teacher's stance and principles guide her in the planning process and lead to implementing learning experiences. I end each case with one example of a robust learning experience that embodies the teacher's goals for helping students to make meaning.

Marina and Norma teach in adjacent classrooms at Two Rivers High School. The description of their school is presented next, prior to the two cases.

Two Rivers High School

Two Rivers High School is in an independent city located in a major metropolitan area of a mid-Atlantic state. According to the State School Report Card, Two Rivers High School is a fully accredited school of approximately 1,100 students. It has met the state benchmark for the standardized test in English based on the average results of the past three years. In the 2014-15 school year, 74% of students passed the reading test, and 69% of students passed the writing performance test. However, neither the middle

school nor any of the elementary schools in this district have met the state benchmark in English and are therefore only partially accredited. The school has an attendance rate of approximately 95% and a four-year graduation rate of approximately 75%. The State Department of Education reports approximately 70% of students at Two Rivers High School are “economically disadvantaged,” defined as a student meeting one of the following criteria: is eligible for free and/or reduced meals, receives temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), is eligible for Medicaid, and/or is identified as migrant or is experiencing homelessness. The State Department of Education reports approximately 50% of students at Two Rivers High School identify as Black, approximately 30% of students identify as White, approximately 10% identify as Hispanic, and approximately 10% identify as non-Hispanic, two or more races.

Marina

Background and Context

Marina is a fourth year ELA teacher. This is her second year at Two Rivers High School. She previously taught grades 6 and 7 in another school district and taught students in grades 6-12 at a center for alternative education. Marina changed careers to become a teacher and previously worked as a teacher’s assistant with special education students in grades 2 and 3. She has a Master’s of Arts in Education. In her first year at Two Rivers High School, Marina taught 9th and 10th grade English.

Marina draws on her experiences in elementary- and middle-level education in her current position. She is very familiar with the standards and curriculum framework

across grade levels and content areas. Marina draws on the teaching strategies that she learned working with younger students with her current high school students.

Texts and technology. Marina is eager to use the technology tools and materials available for her and her students. Marina has a working interactive white board in her classroom for the first time this year and is using it daily. The interactive white board has become a part of the routines in the classroom, and Marina uses it to model writing, share multimedia texts, and engage in collaborative note taking. She talked about her plans for using the board more throughout the year to help the students improve their writing, saying “I want to create activities where the students can practice trying different transitional phrases and moving them around. I want them talk about why one works and another doesn’t. Hopefully that will help improve their writing and standardized tests.” Marina embraces the potential for technology tools to support student learning. Her school provides textbooks and access to digital versions for all of the students. She supplements this with other digital and non-digital texts, like videos and articles she can share on the interactive white board.

Marina wants her students to have access to and use the technology tools themselves, along with the one-at-a-time use of the interactive white board. She makes use of the shared computer lab, and when I spoke to her over the summer, was looking forward to a planned pilot program where all 9th and 10th grade students were to receive tablet computers. Marina explained, “the tablets will give me the capability to share video, infographics, assignments, and the actual text books.” She also received lots of suggestions and recommendations for Apps at a conference she went to and was

“looking forward to looking through the programs that are available for free and figuring out how to integrate them, specifically for writing instruction, but also for reading and researching.” Marina’s plans reflect her sense that texts and technology work together to give students more access and opportunity to build understanding and retain what they learn. Unfortunately, two months into the school year, Marina received the disappointing news that the tablet computers she expected her students to receive would not materialize. She is hopeful that a similar program, perhaps with laptops, will go forward later in the year. This would have been the first time students had their own digital devices for use every day in her classroom. Marina maximizes the resources she has available to her and is open to trying new technology tools and texts to help students be engaged in learning and meet their needs.

Relationships in the classroom environment. Marina creates a classroom environment that balances practicality and support for her students. Reading, writing, creating, and discussing all contribute to meaning making, and Marina has created a classroom environment that values students as equal contributors to this process. During class time, Marina is constantly circulating the room. She facilitates learning with individual students and groups. She explained how she sees her role in the classroom, saying, “I always get the kids who just want you to stand next to them. They don’t even necessarily need you to do anything, but they need you to stand there.” During my classroom observation, I noticed that Marina’s students count on her for both encouragement and support in the learning task. She is a part of the class, working alongside the students. She characterizes herself as their “support and coach.” She

explains: “[Learning] is a team effort – I am not the expert in the classroom. I help them figure out what they already know and then fill in what they don’t know. It’s a partnership.” By describing learning experiences in her classroom as “team efforts,” in which the teacher and students are partners in the process, Marina sets the foundation for meaning making in her classroom.

Marina starts the school year by building open dialogue with her students. She values the credibility and rapport she has with the students, and she sees this as key to her students’ success in learning. She tells the students:

If you are having trouble, tell me, and if we need to look at something from a different perspective, or a different way for you to remember things, we can do it, we’ll figure it out, because not everyone is going to figure it out the first time and not everyone is going to get it in the same way. We are in this together. We will get there together.

This approach plays out in classroom learning experiences through Marina’s focus on teaching students *how* to learn as much as *what* to learn. When she is teaching new material, she cues the students with graphics and models strategies for them to apply.

Marina is very aware of her students’ outside-of-school responsibilities and realities and accounts for this in her classroom policies to build a strong system of support for her students that extends beyond the class period. For example, she encourages students to stay after school with her to get their work done if they have a hard time concentrating in class and other responsibilities before and after school. She cited students’ late assignments as a recurring struggle in her classroom practice from

two angles. First, she sees school as preparing students to be successful in college and careers where they will not be able to turn in assignments late, but she weighs that with assessment as representative of how well the students have met the learning objectives and curricular goals for the course. Marina knows her students' outside-of-school lives and experiences play an important role during their time at school. Marina explained,

The world is not always the warm fuzzy place that school can be. With the population here, at home, many of the kids never got babied, so at school, I think it is good that we have given some of that care and nurturing. I want the students to see that there can be some balance.

Finding the balance between preparing students for college and careers beyond school and meeting their immediate needs as 10th graders is a recurring concern that extends to include how Marina plans for lessons, helps students make meaning with multimedia, and builds a classroom community with her students as partners in the learning process.

Helping Students Make Meaning with Texts

Marina focuses on planning and implementing learning experiences that will help her students to improve their literacy skills, especially in reading and writing.

Marina prioritizes her students meeting the ELA learning standards. To do this, Marina guides her students to a primarily efferent stance when making meaning with texts.

Marina prioritizes the efferent stance in how the students initially approach the text, which may lead to an aesthetic appreciation later in the process. She sets learning goals and develops essential questions to draw the students to opportunities for meaning making. In doing so, Marina defines the initial purpose for reading for her students. This

is an efferent approach because Marina, not the students, defines the topic and strategies that the students must focus on during the initial reading. Marina believes that this approach gives the students a process that will help them to make meaning and eventually will lead to opportunities to make personal connections or other aesthetic reactions to the text.

Meaning making continues to occur throughout the process of reading that Marina uses with her classes. First, she initiates learning experiences for the students to consider universal themes and “big questions” the students can relate to their own lives and to the text. Marina then uses the students’ initial reactions to the universal themes as a starting point to reexamine and reconsider the text from different perspectives, including each other’s. Opportunities for small- and whole-group discussion occur throughout the process.

Guiding principles. Marina helps students to make meaning by planning and implementing learning experiences following two guiding principles: making meaning with a focus on connecting to universal themes and through collaborative interchange with each other. Marina justifies these guiding principles for meaning making because they support students in bridging their in- and out-of-school literacies.

Making meaning through connections to universal themes. Marina is very aware of the students’ attitudes about reading and uses the concept of universal themes to draw students into the text. Marina explained,

Students come to [a text] with this bravado of *I’m not going to read this; you can’t make me read*. But then I start talking about the people who were poor in

the story, and I ask, *can you relate to that? The only thing that the woman had going for her in her life is miracles, what do you think about that?*

Marina will introduce these “big questions” at the beginning of a text, and she guides the class to return to them as they read. For example, in a study of the book *Night*, she asks the students: *“Is it ever ok to lie in order to survive?”* She notes that it is important the teacher knows her students well in order to know what they will relate to, what they struggle with, and then choose literature they can connect with. She explained the importance of the guiding questions, “When you keep pointing the students back to these questions, they really get into it.” The questions help to motivate the students and engage them in meaning-making learning experiences.

Marina wants her students to think about and discuss the big concepts and ideas about the text. She then uses these as a path for students back into the text to extend their meaning making or to help them if they are struggling. She asks students who are struggling: *“How about we look at it this way? It’s not working that way, ok, let’s do it this way.”* She wants the students to make meaning in a way that makes sense to them. The meaning-making process extends from Marina’s questions and reading the text to opportunities for the students to exchange ideas through discussion.

Collaborative interchange. Marina encourages the students to make meaning with texts in collaboration and discussion with each other. She finds the students want to support one another’s learning by sharing ideas. She noted “much of the way my class is set up is based on how the students do care so much about each other. I have to keep them on task a little, but so much relies on them taking the ball and running with

it.” Marina encourages the students to share both their ideas about the text and processes for making meaning with each other.

By encouraging discussion of the processes of making meaning, Marina is helping the students to be metacognitively aware of how to make meaning with a text and develop learning strategies for overcoming challenges in the meaning-making process. She sees the sharing of processes for making meaning among students as a vital purpose for classroom discussion. She often starts class with a review of what they did the previous day and encourages the students who understood the concept or strategy that was the focus of the lesson to “share their thinking” on how they developed their ideas or understanding. Once a few students have shared, “the kids who were struggling have now heard a few different ways to doing it or thinking about it beyond what I said when I presented it originally.” Through sharing, the students learn different ways of making meaning from one another, which enhances their own meaning making.

In the class I observed, the students watched the animated short film *Glued* to practice interpreting themes (the messages or statements about life the reader interprets from the text) as a starting point for the essays they began drafting later in the class period. The theme of *Glued* related to the theme of the short story “There Will Come Soft Rain,” which the students had read previously. Marina used the common thread of the topic of technology to get the students thinking about the theme of *Glued* and then asked them to discuss possible themes for the film. Figure 1 is a segment of the discussion of the students’ initial theme interpretations that ensued after watching the film.

[From my observation notes, starting just after Marina began the film] The students immediately start talking as the music for the film begins. This film has no dialogue - just music and animation to tell the story. It takes a few seconds for the students to realize this, but then they are hooked and paying attention. They also make comments during the film: whoa, oh, laughter, she's crazy.

[After the film]

M: Take 45 seconds, turn to the people sitting near you and try to figure out what you think the theme is.

[Themes I overhear different students discussing]

S: Don't let technology take over your life.

S: Don't change anybody - people can't be changed.

S: Technology is taking over the lives of little kids.

S: If it's not broke, don't fix it.

S: Mothers can't tell their kids what to do.

S: Mom can only be pushed so far before she breaks.

S: Tough love is sometimes appropriate.

M: What about mom? Is she contributing to the problem at all? For example, be careful what you buy your kids.

S: [Some disagreement]

Figure 1. Discussion of themes of the film *Glued* between Marina (M) and her students

(S).

During the classroom exchange, Marina's students discuss possible themes based on the shared topic of technology. The students respond to her question with some disagreement, which Marina welcomes. The next step is to ask the students to defend their interpretations of the theme with specific evidence from the film. The film was interesting to the students and generated much discussion about the role of technology in the students' own lives and in making connections back to related previous texts the students had read. This example demonstrates how Marina helps students to make meaning because the students are able to share different and even contrary ideas about the topic. This allows the students to hear interpretations and perspectives outside of their own, which they then have the opportunity to assimilate into their own meaning

of the text. Marina started the students with a text and topic and used these to foster the students' meaning-making experience through discussion.

Bridging in- and out-of-school literacies. Marina uses her guiding principles to help students to make meaning so that they will be able to bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies. Marina draws parallels between what students are doing in school and what they may do in their own lives in the future. She knows students will need to be able to approach and make meaning with texts that are not "hardcover books or three ring binder operator's manuals." She wants the students to do things in school that are similar to things they will do when they leave school; for example, make "a video presentation and create a report that has graphs, PowerPoint, and text and doing the research that goes into that." Marina feels that in order to prepare her students for the texts they will need to be able to read and create, she needs to expose them to some of the possibilities knowing she cannot master all of the software available to her. Marina explained,

For example, if they have to give a presentation and create a PowerPoint and in doing so create slides that pull together graphic representations of data and create these figures. They need to be persuasive in the presentation with the graphic. We need to talk about the kinds of techniques that advertisers do to persuade people to buy their products, etc. with the way our world is, the kids need to be able to hit the ground running, and I feel like it is my responsibility to at least give them an idea of how to get started, even if they haven't mastered the whole thing.

Marina connects print text to visuals to argument to jobs. This progression has a deep connection to her students' lives. Marina believes choosing texts and topics that are interesting to the students is important because she can help them reach the learning goals for the lesson or course with any type of text. This flexibility in the type of text she uses in the classroom helps Marina prepare students for literacy experiences outside-of-school.

Marina uses her guiding principles in planning meaning-making learning experiences with a long-term goal of helping students to prepare for making meaning with different types of texts and out-of-school contexts.

Planning Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Marina plans learning experiences informed by the universal topics and essential questions for each text and opportunities for students to make meaning through discussion. She plans for the texts, activities, and technology tools that she uses in classroom learning experiences so that they will purposefully be used to help students to build skills that are relevant beyond the classroom. In the following sections, I will describe how Marina enacts these priorities for helping students to make meaning into her process for planning learning experiences.

Approach to lesson planning. Marina's lesson planning process aligns several components that she believes will help her students meet the learning goals for her classes. The mandated standards and curriculum materials are the foundation for her planning along with her knowledge of the students' learning needs and interests. She combines those components with appropriate texts, technology, and pedagogical

approaches customized for her students. Marina's planning processes are iterative and ongoing. She layers instruction in reading and writing with grammar, vocabulary, communication, and research on an ongoing basis. The state standards and local curriculum and unit plans are the basis for her long term planning, and she is frequently searching for and identifying texts and technologies to align with these so as the time to teach a particular learning goal gets close, she can make immediate decisions about the best tools and resources to meet students' learning needs. The immediate and long-term planning are often happening simultaneously for Marina.

In the first two interviews, Marina struggled with articulating the relative importance of the digital and non-digital texts she uses and the skills and strategies she teaches and how these two fundamental aspects of ELA courses fit together. In the third interview, she came prepared with a description she felt better explained her approach:

The last couple of times I've talked I've said it doesn't really matter what I teach as long as I put it in a format that the kids get it. And I've been thinking about how to rephrase that because it does matter what I teach. So I've been thinking: the texts that we use to teach the skills that they need are like tools in a toolbox. I'm choosing the appropriate tool from the toolbox to help them to learn the skills that they need.

This toolbox analogy helps describe Marina's approach to planning for learning experiences in which students make meaning with multimedia because it is not a particular text (digital or non-digital) that frames her instruction, it is helping the students develop the tools they need to approach any type of text. Marina frequently

searches for texts she can use to supplement the learning experiences in her classroom. She regularly integrates short films and documentary videos along with nonfiction articles into her lessons. She describes her process of finding texts as a series of questions she asks herself to guide the process:

What's the skill [students need to learn]? What's already available out there?

What has someone else used and how did they present it? What did the textbook company offer? How can I use something differently [from its intended purpose]? How can I make this meaningful to the students? How can I turn this into something that's mixed with a lot of other skills that we have worked on or that we need to continue to work on?

Marina chooses texts purposefully that will fill a learning need for her students and be interesting to them. She is often looking ahead to future lessons as she searches. She saves texts for the place they will best fit in the progression of the units and lessons she teaches. She keeps her materials organized so she can make decisions that will meet her students' needs on any given lesson. These resources help Marina to implement lessons that are interesting to the students and meet the expectations of the standards and curriculum.

Knowledge of students. Marina is very knowledgeable of the standards and content of all of the grade levels, and she uses this knowledge to help the students make connections by pointing back to what students already learned to make connection to new learning: "I am reaching back and drawing from what they know and bring it forward to anchor them somewhere as we try to push forward and get them

ready.” Marina is concerned with the gaps she sees in the students’ knowledge and skills and works to include this into an already very full set of learning goals she wants the students to meet. She is also conscious of what they will need to be able to do to be successful in the next year of high school. Marina explained,

I look at what is it that they need to know, where are they weak, and how can I make it interesting enough that we can pick up stuff that they had missed before and still make progress for where they need to be to get to English 11.

For example, her focus on universal themes in 10th grade through many lessons comes from her knowledge of the students’ weaknesses on the district benchmark test. Marina works to include content and skills her students have found challenging in the past with the new learning that will help them move forward in the course.

Marina also takes into account the feedback she gets from students. She shared that a 9th grader told her no one ever taught her about a comma before. Marina acknowledges that it is unlikely the student was never in a class that taught commas before but realizes it doesn’t matter, the student does not know how to use a comma and so Marina needs to teach the concept. Marina also sees students who are not living up to their potential. One of the byproducts of teaching some of the same students in 9th and 10th grade is Marina knows them and their abilities well. When she sees a student backslide or change and cannot figure out how to help, it can be frustrating for her:

I see where the students are not living up to their potential and not doing what I want them to do. So much of their issue is that they are teenagers and the most

important person in their life is not an adult, not a teacher, it is their friends. I know the psychological aspects of where they are. But I can see all of their potential, and I know that they can accomplish so much more than what I get out of them on a day to day basis.

Marina brings this rich knowledge and infinite complexity to the planning process when she plans her lessons to meet the needs of her students. She characterizes the challenge of planning like this:

So the challenge is make it interesting, cover everything you need to cover, and give them everything that they missed or didn't get or still have questions about from before. It's daunting, trying to figure out how to pull it together.

However, this knowledge and understanding of the complexity of teaching secondary ELA helps Marina choose texts and design learning experiences that are interesting and relevant to her students.

Modifying and adjusting plans. Marina is aware of the importance of making adjustments and revisions to her lesson plans and the texts she uses depending on the students' learning needs, and she will make changes from semester to semester and adjustments from class to class on the same day to improve the lesson. Marina is very reflective of her own teaching practice and makes purposeful changes to improve her teaching (Hutchison & Woodward, 2014).

As a relatively new teacher, Marina is still working to fill her own toolbox of pedagogical strategies to meet the students' learning needs. She is aware many of these challenges will be overcome with time and experience and through learning from her

peers. However, she still expresses frustration that despite her planning the same lesson can be successful in one class and unsuccessful in the next, even on the very same day:

And that's the challenge – when it works for one group and you do the exact same thing for the other two groups, it should work, right? No. I need more tricks in my bag. That's my challenge—to find the things that work and having alternatives to those things when I am in the situation I am in now where the first block's got it and are ready to move on, and the other classes are not, but I'm trying to keep everyone together on the pacing guide.

Marina takes this challenge on herself and is constantly looking for ways to build her repertoire to better meet the needs of her students.

Marina's flexibility in planning and desire to learn new strategies and approaches for teaching helps her to meet her students' learning needs. Marina identified teaching poetry as a challenge for her when we talked over the summer. She said her own lack of expertise in poetry made her wary of teaching it. When I conducted the final interview, Marina shared she had embraced teaching poetry and found much recent success due to her ability to be flexible in planning and her knowledge of her students. In the poetry lessons, she did not attempt to be the expert in poetry; instead her role was to facilitate learning experiences that allowed the students to make their own meaning with poetry. The culminating experience was when the students' own poems became the subject of class discussion and interpretation. Marina explains this was not initially planned as part of the learning experience but came about in response to the students' interest and

creativity. Here she shares the story of one student whose poems (Figure 2) became the subject of a class theme analysis:

Then I found another kid who gets on everybody's nerves because he speaks out all of the time but he got really into this. Writing poetry. Today I showed the rest of the class his poem at the beginning of the period, and he said, 'That's my poem.' So I said to the class, *'we are going to look at this but you know the author of the poem is in here, he is not allowed to speak, so let's talk about what did the author talk about in this poem that tells us what the theme is,'* and he starts to talk, and I said *'no, you are not allowed to speak.'* So he sat there with this great big huge grin on his face because his classmates are talking about his poem and how he used this and this and this to convey a message. So that was kind of cool.

<p>"She ignores me when I call her name"</p> <p>She ignores me when I call her name I wait for her attention</p> <p>We both act almost the same We got sent to detention</p> <p>To her its just a silly goat And I act very serious</p> <p>We both like to vote She always acts a little curious</p> <p>I hate when she wins She likes when I lose</p> <p>When I see her I throw a ten We really have to pick and choose</p> <p>We like to drive So we ended up in a hive.</p>	<p>"I Am Poem"</p> <p>I am athletic and smart I wonder if I will ever live my dreams I hear the voices talking I see the children walking I want to have a family of my own. I am athletic and smart I pretend that I am in the NBA I feel the breeze on my face I touch the ball in my hands I worry about my family I cry about my dead ones. I am smart and athletic I understand that my chances are slim I say I can make it I dream that I was better than I am I try to be the best at football I hope I will someday make it I am athletic and smart.</p>
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Figure 2. Poems written by a student in Marina's class that became the subject of class discussion and analysis.

Marina's insecurities about teaching poetry were assuaged as she implemented lessons that relied on the students' meaning making and expression of learning as social transactions, rather than a traditional perception of the teacher as the holder of meaning (Gee, 2012; Rosenblatt, 1995). Ultimately, Marina's ability to modify and adjust her plans allowed her to build an opportunity for students to make meaning with poetry. The poems that Marina chose to share with me as representative of her students' learning with poetry demonstrate understanding of poetic forms through the lens of the students' own beliefs, knowledge, and experiences.

Marina's planning process leads to meaning-making learning experiences, in which Marina enacts her guiding principles. In the following section, I will discuss Marina's approach to implementing lessons and one example of implementation that highlights all of the factors discussed previously.

Implementing Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Marina helps students make meaning with multimedia by tying together the processes of analyzing and creating texts with topics that are interesting to the students. Marina acknowledges the way the personal experiences and values of the individual readers play a role in their transaction with the text and combines this with looking toward what they may want to be able to do or experience in the future during her lessons. She uses her concern about preparing students' for their future as a way to help students make meaning with texts that are relevant to them. Marina integrates multiple types of non-digital and digital texts throughout her lessons focusing on those that will be most interesting and relevant to the students' personal beliefs, values, and experiences.

The Odyssey project. In a study of *The Odyssey*, Marina used both the written text and video clips to facilitate students' understanding of a text that is complex and most students in her class find challenging and, perhaps initially, uninteresting. Before reading, the class discussed universal themes to garner student interest, for example "How did you feel about Odysseus being far away and all of these men coming to try and woo Penelope? Are they still married? Is she released from her obligation because her husband has been gone for 10 years?" During the reading, she encouraged them to

visualize, for example, what the Cyclopes would look like, and make predictions about what would happen next. She also helped them make connections back to their 7th grade unit on mythology. When they watched the videos, they would analyze how closely their predictions matched the film. Marina used the print text and video equally in conjunction with one another to help students make meaning throughout the unit.

Marina uses the students' discussion and collaboration as a way for them to express their knowledge. At the end of a unit on *The Odyssey*, Marina had her students make multimedia projects to express their learning in the form of games. She identified the best of these as a student-made Jeopardy game. The game was built in a PowerPoint presentation and does not necessarily mean much to someone clicking through the slides. Marina said the students found making the games to be interesting and engaging, but for her the creation of the game itself was not the most important aspect of the learning experience. Instead, it was the conversation the group had while creating the game that allowed her to best facilitate their learning:

You could make an argument that the end piece that they turned in doesn't really show that they learned, but because I eavesdrop at everything, I'm overhearing the different discussions the groups are having. The group for the game I sent you, they were having the discussions about the things I wanted them to get from it. They started by reviewing the plot of Cyclops, but then they got into '*How does this relate to the rest of the Odyssey?*' and they are having discussions about, '*Well, who was he really?*' They are walking the groups through, '*This is why Odysseus is constantly being picked at*' or '*this is why he*

doesn't want to go back to his wife.' They are having these discussions to figure out what's important, what they need to include in the game, and how they will group together the topics. And I'm listening!

Through this conversation, Marina was able to see students could identify the most important parts of the story, make interpretations about the characters' actions and motivations, and make connections between one story and the rest of the text. The process of creating the game was a vehicle for the students to continue to make meaning with the text through discussion and sharing ideas with each other. This approach to assessment honors students' literacy skills beyond what is measured on traditional tests that privilege print text and traditional literacy skills (Alvermann et al., 2007; O'Brien, 2012).

Marina's guiding principles are to help students to make connections using universal themes and to use collaborative interchange to build understanding of the meaning-making process. Her approach to planning and the example of implementation demonstrate how she applies these principles in her teaching practice to meet her students' learning needs. Her focus on building a classroom environment to support her students is shared by Norma, a 40-year veteran teacher whose classroom is next door to Marina's. Norma's guiding principles for meaning-making learning experiences contrast from Marina's while still centering on student learning. Norma helps students to make meaning with the guiding principles of close reading and analysis of text and collaborative interchange focused on clarifying and expanding their understanding of the content of the text by considering different perspectives through discussion.

Norma

Background and Context

Norma is a veteran teacher who started teaching at Two Rivers High School in 1975. For the first 25 years of her career, she primarily taught 10th grade English. For the last 15 years, she has been teaching 11th grade English, A.P. English Language and Composition, and an Oral Communications class that she developed for the school. This year she is teaching A.P. English Language and Composition to 11th graders and Oral Communications in addition to her responsibilities as Lead Teacher of the English department. In the role of Lead Teacher, she reviews lesson plans and provides coaching for the other teachers in the English department. She says that she can hardly believe it is her 40th year at Two Rivers High School and even called down to the school board office to check.

Norma is deeply invested in her own professional learning, both formally and informally, to stay up to date in the field of English education and how she can operationalize that information to best meet the needs of all her students. In order to do this, she places great value in building supportive relationships with her students and a positive classroom-learning environment.

Texts and technology to create an environment for learning. When I first entered Norma's classroom, I felt at home. She has created a welcoming environment with student work hanging from the walls, cheerful bookshelves filled with young adult novels, posters for popular movies, and visual cues for key content learning. The learning targets for each class are posted with statements of why those learning targets

are important. The bulletin board at the front of the room has on it a collage of images surrounding the quote “Beauty isn’t real. Beauty exists only in perception” (see Figure 3). Norma has a large classroom library that she updates with the latest books and a box of index cards where students can check out books.



Figure 3. Photographs of Norma's classroom.

Norma has a Promethean board that she uses regularly in her classroom, an iPod and speakers, and access to a laptop cart in her storage room. Norma generally does not allow cellphones in her classroom. Norma is concerned about how distracted the students are by their phones “because they are always aware of it. And if they do know that something is happening, they can’t stand not to look at [their phones].” Norma does not have Internet access in her own home, but uses some social media apps on her

Smartphone and keeps herself informed about different social media platforms and incorporates discussion of them into her class

The classroom environment is very representative of Norma's approach to teaching. She incorporates images, ideas, and texts that will pique her students' interest because they are purposefully relevant to the students' lives and experiences. She then uses these to help the students make meaningful connections to new learning in English content that will help them expand their understanding of themselves and the world around them and be better able to communicate with others.

Taking the time to build relationships with students. Norma takes the time to get to know her students well. In each class I observed, she greeted the students as they came in, asked specific questions about recent activities different students had participated in, and checked in with a student who had recently been sick. Norma's genuine kindness to her students sets a tone in the classroom, which the students mirror in their interactions with Norma and each other. Norma explains that building these relationships is a very purposeful part of her teaching:

I think that the relationships with the students are so important even if they take some time. The structure of the class helps because when the students come in, they know what to expect. I have to make them know it's okay. When they come to my room, they are safe and we are going to be okay in here. They can take a deep breath. They are not going to get yelled at. I'm not going to judge them. I just want the best for them. I try to make them feel that way... I think if they feel

safe and trust that you as the teacher have their best interests at heart, you are creating a positive learning environment.

In this environment, Norma says her students get so they do not want to let her down. She sees them trying to learn and do the things they are supposed to do as students. Even the current assistant principal, who is Norma's former student, has told Norma how much being in Norma's class meant to her learning. Norma describes building relationships as "an integral part of teaching."

Helping Students Make Meaning with Texts

Norma wants her students to be able to read texts carefully and critically using strategies for close reading and analysis. She believes that students need to be able to identify the purpose of the text, justify their opinions and ideas with evidence from the text, and in the process make connections from the text to their own lives. Norma sees this as a challenge for the students, but one that they can learn and grow in with practice. Norma uses a primarily efferent stance in how she guides initial readings of texts because she directs the students use a specific strategy while they read. Norma models and has the students practice strategies to help them to read and analyze.

However, Norma does not direct the purpose of reading to relevant universal themes or essential questions that relate directly to the topic of the text. Marina directs both the topic and the strategy for the initial reading, whereas Norma typically only directs the strategy. Norma uses broader open-ended questions and reading strategies that ask the students to annotate texts for literary and rhetorical devices, rather than the specific content focus for reading that Marina gives to the students. Therefore, while Norma's

predominant stance for initial readings of a text is efferent, it is prioritized to a lesser degree than Marina's focus on an efferent stance.

Norma uses the open-ended questions and annotation strategies as a starting point for students to continue to make meaning in small and whole group class discussions. Norma believes that these types of meaning-making learning experiences will help to prepare the students to make thoughtful and well-considered decisions in outside of school contexts and better understand current events. In the following sections, I will explain each of these as guiding principles as to how and why she helps students to make meaning with multimedia texts. I will then demonstrate how she integrates these principles in her approach to planning and implementing learning experiences for her students.

Close reading and analyzing text. Norma helps students to make meaning with texts by guiding their meaning making through asking them to analyze the text using close reading strategies. Norma asks the students open-ended questions that help them to focus on the text itself. She also helps the students to learn and practice reading strategies that guide their meaning making. Norma believes that these strategies help the students to draw inferences and make meaning with the text. She finds that students come to 11th grade able to define and identify literary elements but struggle with tying this discreet idea with the greater meaning of the text. Norma wants the students to consider "why did the author use this particular literary or rhetorical device? What do you think he was trying to get you to see, feel, or understand?" She uses these

questions help them to understand how authors use language and how that impacts the meaning that the students make with the text.

Norma models and has the students practice using reading strategies to help them to integrate their knowledge of literary devices and rhetorical strategies to make meaning with texts. For example, in reading fiction, the students analyze text for diction, imagery, detail, figurative language, and syntax (DIDLS) and, in reading nonfiction, the students analyze the text for speaker, occasion, audience, purpose, subject, and tone (SOAPStone). The students use these approaches in annotating texts and creating double-entry journals where they copy passages and write out their analysis (see Figure 4).

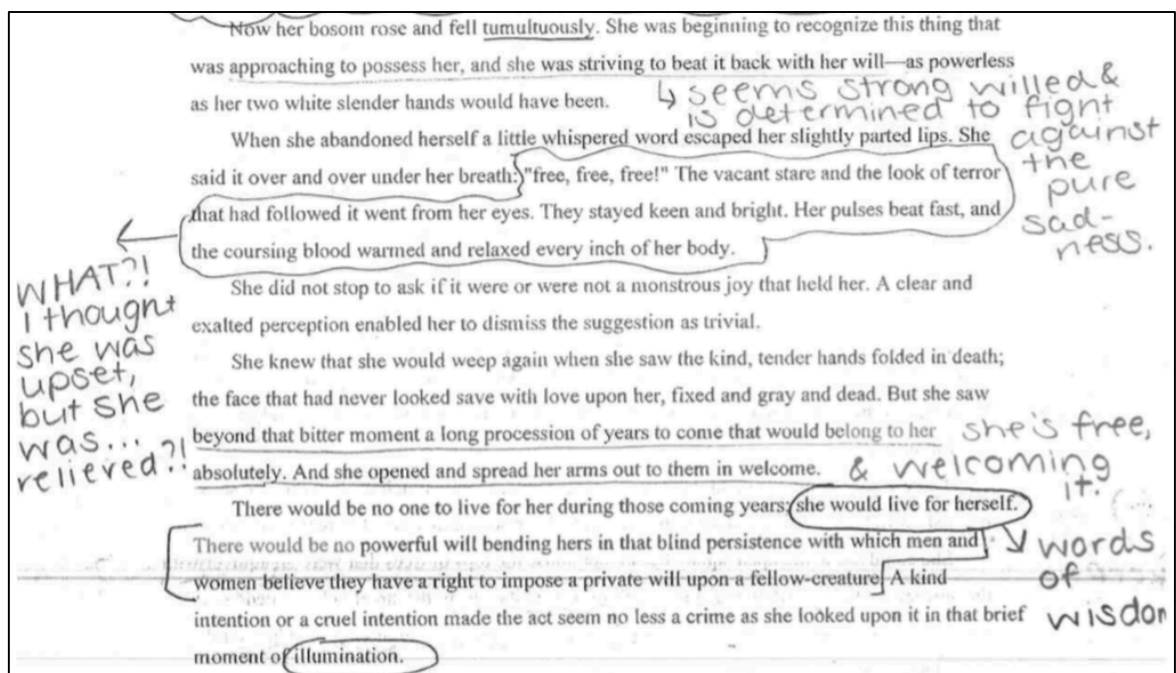


Figure 4. Sample student text annotation.

Text annotation helps the students to “put into words why they marked what they marked” as important or interesting in the text.

Norma helps the students to apply these reading strategies across different types of multimedia texts. She uses examples from popular music to help the students consider “why a songwriter might choose a particular word” is no different than why an author might choose a word. Norma has a wide definition of text in her classroom and helps the students to apply close reading strategies to paintings, videos, news articles, pictures, song lyrics, short stories, or plays. She regularly incorporates different types of texts, but finds herself asking the same open-ended questions. She says, “Students probably get tired of me asking *what do you see? What do you hear? Why did he do this?* It’s all about how the author, the artist wrote and so what, or why did he write it?” These questions give the students a direction that guides their reading and meaning making.

Norma wants the students’ analysis to help them to “see the richness of the text.” The students do much of the annotation and initial close reading of text individually or in pairs. The initial meaning that students gain by using these strategies becomes the basis for class discussion, which is the second primary way that Norma helps students to make meaning with texts and works in conjunction with close reading and analyzing texts. Norma explains that both individual analysis and group discussion contribute to the meaning-making process because with the individual analysis “all of the ideas are their own” but when the students blog or engage in in-person discussions they may “arrive at meanings once they have had some sort of response from another student.” Norma explains “interacting with the other students may help a student to think of something that hadn’t occurred to them before” thereby helping them to continue to

make meaning with the text by considering other perspectives. I will describe Norma's approach to collaborative interchange in the following section.

Collaborative interchange. Norma uses small group and whole group discussion to help students to make meaning with text. While both Marina and Norma believe that students help and learn from one another, the focus of collaborative interchange in Marina's classes rely more on the students helping each other to understand different processes and strategies for making meaning whereas Norma sees the 11th grade students starting to consider perspectives outside their own frame of reference.

Norma believes that discussion can broaden and change a student's view of a text. Discussions help the students "to clarify and expand on their own thinking" about the text. Discussing text allows the students to consider text from the perspective of the other students in the class. Norma believes the "culture, life, and reading experiences of the student play a role in reading. Specifically, in their ability to relate to and think about the text, also being open-minded and realizing it is relevant even though it happened to someone else." The class discussions may help them to consider connections and ideas that may not have initially occurred to them so they can "relate to some experience in the text."

Norma sees discussion and sharing perspectives and connections as helping the students go beyond deepening their understanding of the text to building greater empathy and understanding of each other and other people's experiences. The students' own life experiences impact the meaning they can make from texts that may have settings or conflicts that are outside of a student's realm of experience. Norma explains

that during discussion “students’ eyes are often opened as to what is happening in other people’s lives.” She finds that students make personal connections to books like *The Things They Carried*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and *The Great Gatsby*, and that hearing other students’ connections “helps [students] to broaden their own experiences.” When students make personal connections,

I think it helps students to appreciate the text, and it helps them to have empathy and compassion for other people. Reading about other people’s experiences gives them experiences too. Especially in the culture of the school I teach in, the students definitely have plenty of life experiences, but in terms of seeing the world and seeing other places, they do not have that.

Norma uses a variety of small group and whole class discussion strategies to give students opportunities to discuss that vary depending on the dynamics of the class, the students’ needs and interests, and the topics being discussed.

Norma sees her role in discussion as encouraging students, guiding them to tie their ideas back to the texts, and asking students to clarify or elaborate on their statements. Examples of how discussion works in class will be addressed in the implementation section below. Analyzing text and collaborative interchange are two techniques that Norma believes work together to help students to make meaning with texts. She wants students to be able to make meaning with texts in ways that will be relevant to their lives outside of the school setting. She explains “my end goal is not to just pass the test or become better readers, but as they become better readers, they become better thinkers about decisions they will have to make and just being educated.”

Norma connects her guiding principles for making meaning to the literacies that she believes the students need to develop in her class to help them outside of school and in their future careers, which I will discuss further in the following section.

Bridging in- and out-of-school literacies. Norma sees a link between students' reading skills, critical thinking, and decision-making. Her overarching goal for student learning is for students to use the skills they develop in English class to help them in their lives beyond school. This underscores *why* Norma helps students to make meaning with a wide variety of texts in her classroom, especially with a focus on close reading and analyzing text and engaging in collaborative interchange. These types of learning experiences help students to gain skills to better understand what is happening in the world and their own role in it.

Norma explained that many of her students are paying attention to the news, but she expresses some concern, "I find that students might know the headlines, but some of them aren't reading anything else. Some of them will go on and read much more, but some students know just a little bit and that can be very dangerous." The idea that a little bit of information is dangerous is a motivating factor for how Norma helps students to make meaning with multimedia because she has seen how the negative consequences of this play out in her school. Norma described an altercation in the hallway and how the news spread via the students' cellphones and made it to the local news. Much of the information that spread was inaccurate and caused much unnecessary concern and distraction. Norma explained that the altercation was blown out of proportion because "no one is waiting, and no one is looking at anything deeper

or closer.” Norma believes that these core literacy skills will help students in- and out-of-school contexts.

Norma connected her central concern about this incident to the same concern that she has about students relying only on headlines or just having pieces of information about politics or world events, “You may read that a candidate had said this but you don’t know anything else about it. You don’t know the context. I think it is dangerous for students to not be able to draw inference and read between the lines.” By helping students to make meaning by analyzing texts and testing their ideas in discussion, she hopes that they are gaining skills that will help them to understand politics and world events that have real consequences:

I want the students to know, be educated so they can vote for a candidate, so they can make a good decision about purchasing something. It’s about looking at the text closely and getting meaning. They need to understand the purpose. So often the students don’t know that the purpose. They don’t know someone was being satirical or humorous or serious. The students need to be able to do all of this to understand. My end goal is not to just pass the test or become better readers, but as they become better readers, they become better thinkers about decisions they will have to make and just being educated. I am passionate about this. I try to tell this to the students so that they can read, and that they can read between the lines.

Norma uses articles in her classroom to help students to practice analyzing and discussing texts that address current events and topics that are interesting and relevant

to the students. Norma includes reading and discussion that directly address the impacts of social media on relationships and communication. Through these activities, Norma is helping the students to make meaning by being critical of their own communication and analysis of texts that represent the points of view of others. For example, in the Communications class I observed the students discuss the difference between digitally mediated and face-to-face communication. Norma facilitated a discussion in which the students shared their personal experiences of the pros and cons of digitally mediated and face-to-face communication and asked open-ended questions to help the students navigate some of the problems they identified. (See Figure 5 for excerpt from the discussion)

S: Anonymity – it is easier to be anonymous over computer media communication. Or in personal f-to-f communication people can be anonymous in putting on a facade to hide something about who they are.

S2: Personal appearance. It's seeing someone through the photos they choose to share vs. seeing what they are wearing at a particular moment. It could be people you used to know but now I have moved away so I don't know what they look like anymore. A big problem is when you meet someone online, and then it is very different when you meet them for the first time offline. A big problem when someone is really different online and offline.

N: That can be a problem with dating apps?

S3: Yeah, with texting etc. it can make it hard to have face-to-face conversations with people anymore.

N: How can you address that?

S3: Spend more time actually talking with people or setting up a lunch date.

S4: Some people with social anxiety, the phone is the best way to mediate a conversation because it is so hard for them to talk at all.

N: I understand there is a need for that for some people. Student gave great example of how this is a really good thing and that people with social anxiety were not even acknowledged before social media, etc. and now these people have a real platform for being engaged and not just being a 'shut in' etc.

S4: It can be scary to talk to someone face-to-face because you have to come up with responses so fast and when you are texting you have more time to think about it first.

S3: A lot of people with social anxiety have trust issues; it is easier to do it over the phone and sharing

Norma briefly describes how this comment ties forward to the idea of trust, which is a topic they will be covering in the next lesson.

(Note) A student who has traveled and lived in a lot of different places and gone to international schools shared her experiences:

S5: You can always keep in contact with people you haven't seen in a long time or that we went to school together but a few different schools ago. It is essential for us to stay in contact.

Figure 5. Excerpt from my observation notes of discussion between Norma (N) and five students in her class.

Norma helps students to make meaning because she wants them to be able to understand articles and information. She wants them to then be able to make informed decisions and actions in their personal lives and on regional, national, and international levels through their participation in elections and social media. Norma's approach to planning learning experiences supports her beliefs about the role of meaning making in her courses.

Planning Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Norma plans meaning-making learning experiences that are responsive to the individual needs and interests of the students in her classes each year. Norma's plans incorporate opportunities to analyze and discuss texts as the foundation of the learning experiences in her classes. Norma's general approach to planning lessons includes the flexibility to make modifications and adjust those plans to design learning experiences that support meaning-making.

Approach to planning. Norma's planning is driven by her belief in helping students to reach higher models of thinking and awareness of the skills they need to develop. Norma emphasized both the complexity of the planning process and the difficulty in articulating a process that is such a large part of her life and identity as a teacher. She explains,

As I'm getting ready in the morning and I'm thinking: *oh this will be better than what I put in my plan or I'm going to add this to what I put in my plan.* I am always thinking of something else. Always. Every day. And I could do one class and then decide it needed to be different for the next class. I spend so much

time on my planning because it's how we get through each week and where we are going next.

Norma described some of the factors that she considers in the planning process as “higher models of thinking, the skills you want them to have, and the learning target” and asks herself questions like “Are the students aware of the learning target? Do I need to differentiate? How am I going to get the students to achieve what I hope they will or understand what I am trying to get them to understand?” In her planning, Norma tries to balance helping students to build understanding and meet the learning targets and help them to get to “higher levels of thinking.”

Norma writes daily lesson plans and spends a lot of time working on her plans. Her plans are based on her perception of the immediate needs of the students and informed by an overarching course syllabus and unit plans. In Marina and Norma's school, the English department collaborates to write unit plans and plan how to meet the expectations of the state standards and curriculum framework for English. As the department facilitator, Norma reviews the lesson plans of all of the teachers in the English department and has frequent conversation with them regarding planning. These experiences provide the backdrop to Norma's planning, but her first priority is her students and considering “what we did this week, what do the students need, what do I see in their writing that's missing or what are they doing that we need to work on?” Norma frequently used the word “connected” to describe the planning process because many factors contribute simultaneously to the process that are interrelated. Each lesson she teaches is connected to each other lesson, unit, syllabus, project, and learning

target. In order to address these factors, Norma takes many opportunities to modify and adjust her lesson plans to best meet the needs of students in a particular class on a particular day.

Modifying and adjusting plans. Norma creates all new lesson plans for each class each year. She keeps her past plans and uses them to as a basis for comparison in terms of timing of particular skills or lessons within the year, but she creates all new plans. Norma regularly attends regional professional development and reads the latest publications in the field of ELA education. This has supported her lesson planning regarding close reading and analyzing text. For example, she recently read *Close Reading and Writing from Sources* (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Her learning influences the changes to the lessons that she plans for her students.

She believes the need for changes to her lesson plans also comes from the students and the group dynamics that are individual to every class as well as her own learning about ELA education. She explains her three sections of Advanced Placement English this year “are similar, but they are very unique. I can see the weaknesses and the strengths in each of the classes. So, I think it just depends on them. I just know that something is not going to work that with another group like it did with this group.” Norma plans for these differences in multiple sections of the same course. Planning for these differences is an area that Marina identified as a challenge for her and one that she is working to learn how to better address.

Marina and Norma both make “split-second” decisions to change their plans to respond to events or issues that come up in school, the world or in students’ lives. This

helps them to facilitate the collaborative discourse in their classroom that is timely and relevant for the students in a particular class. They also agree, despite these changes, the unit planning, pacing guide, and state curriculum framework support the continuity of their courses and insure the changes purposefully support student learning.

Implementing Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Norma implements learning experiences that scaffold the development of literacy skills that help students to make meaning with texts in both in- and out-of-school contexts. Norma's planning approach allows for adjustments within a structured plan for what the students need to learn over the course of the class. Similar to the connectivity of factors that inform her planning, Norma implements learning experiences that connect to and build on one another. All of the learning experiences that Norma shared with me featured examples of close reading and analysis of text and opportunities for collaborative interchange. Norma wants her students to see the applicability of each learning experience to the next learning experience and so on to help students to see and understand the transferability of the learning and learning strategies to other contexts.

In the following section, I will describe a learning experience in which the students learn about the elements of literary style and methods of analysis with examples of art. Norma helps students make meaning with works of art by facilitating a learning environment where the students can share their natural reactions to the art and by asking open-ended questions that help students to examine their ideas and assumptions. The purpose of this learning experience is the help students to understand

“the elements of style in literature and writing for literary devices, point of view, and characterization” and it happened near the beginning of the school year.

Analysis of the elements of style with art. In this learning experience, the students participate in a gallery walk of famous pieces art. The learning experience is facilitated to help students go from their initial aesthetic responses to understanding an artist’s style to analyzing the elements that make up that style. Students engage in discussion, close reading, and analysis of art, which they then connect the study of the elements of style in music, fashion, and eventually literature and nonfiction. Norma helps the students to connect the concept of an artist’s style (and an author’s style) to fashion, which helps the students to understand the importance of those differences. Norma explained how “when we talk about fashion we have to be so careful about that because everyone is dressed so differently in the classroom. We talk about being an individual and having your own style.” In addition to the stated goals of the lesson, Norma’s facilitation of the discussion of fashion is helping students to communicate their ideas in a way that respects differences in style, which relates to her goal of helping students to gain literacies that will be relevant outside of school.

Norma chooses a variety of paintings that the students are familiar with like those of Michelangelo and da Vinci and others by artists like Chagall that the students typically do not know. During the gallery walk, the students first responded individually to paintings by writing on their lined paper organized into boxes. The students had directions to note what they like or dislike about the painting and pay attention to stylistic details like shape, color, and texture. This represents a combination of aesthetic

and efferent purposes that Norma has set up for the students. While she specifically requested their aesthetic response, it was coupled with efferent responses on specific features of the painting. This is different from the approach that Marina takes in which she directs the students to a more specific efferent purpose for reading through a thematic or content-based topic or question.

Once the students have completed their individual responses, they gather in small groups to share with each other. Norma noted, “It is interesting to hear about what stood out for each student. Was it the shape? Was it the color? We talk about those elements of style that stand out and draw people to a particular artist.” The individual opinions and ideas of each student are valued in this discussion.

During the learning experience, Norma’s role was to monitor the students’ progress, encourage the students to share with one another, and ask open-ended questions that help the students to make meaning. Norma found some students were reluctant to share at first because this lesson occurred at the beginning of the year and not all of the students knew each other and were comfortable sharing yet. She used questions to help students to move beyond their reluctance. She also found that some students in their individual responses simply wrote, “I don’t like it.” She used questions to help these students to look for and articulate details that support this response.

Norma said, “I ask them *what did you see? What did you like? Why were you drawn to in that particular piece of art?* These types of questions will usually bring forth some kind of comment from the students.” The open-ended questions allow students to formulate

a response honoring their aesthetic response to the text while helping them to return to the art and consider the how the elements of style contributed to their reaction.

Norma helps her students to apply their knowledge of style in art, fashion, and music to literary and rhetorical style throughout the class. At the end of the year, Norma revisits the gallery walk on elements of style:

After the students have read *The Great Gatsby*, *Scarlet Letter*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, I put passages from these texts on cards and we do another gallery walk. The students walk and talk with another person to figure out who they think the author is from looking for the elements of style in the writing.

Norma connects the beginning and end of year learning experiences to demonstrate that the students can apply their learning about the elements of style and strategies for close reading and analysis to different types of texts. Norma explains that she uses art and music throughout the year as examples of literary and rhetorical style and “it all leads to understanding argument and determining author’s purpose. This is all a part of building understanding and meaning.” It is an ongoing process throughout the year in which Norma plans and implements learning experiences that help students to make meaning.

Norma’s guiding principles of helping students to make meaning through close reading and analysis and collaborative interchange to gain new perspectives support her process of planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences. These experiences will help students to be able to think critically and make informed decisions

in their lives outside of and beyond school. Carolyn teaches in a neighboring community to Marina and Norma, but shares their goals of helping to prepare for life outside of school. She wants her students to gain confidence in articulating and sharing their ideas in meaning-making learning experiences. She uses the guiding principles of helping students to make personal connections to texts and collaborating to gain communication skills and synthesize different perspectives on a text. Next, I will introduce Red Oak High School where both Carolyn and Ann teach followed by each of their cases.

Red Oak High School

Red Oak High School is located in an unincorporated community within a populous county that is a part of a major metropolitan area in a mid-Atlantic state. According to the State School Report Card, Red Oak High School is a fully accredited school of approximately 2,200 students. In the 2014-2015 school year, 93% of students passed the reading test, and 81% of students passed the writing performance test. Overall, the schools in the county met the federal annual measurable objective in reading with the status of maintaining progress (the current year pass rate is equal to the prior year's pass rate, or stayed within 5%). Red Oak High School has an attendance rate of approximately 95% and a four-year graduation rate of greater than 90%. The state department of education reports approximately 20% of students at Red Oak High School are "economically disadvantaged," defined as a student meeting one of the following criteria: is eligible for free and/or reduced meals, receives TANF, is eligible for Medicaid, and/or is identified as migrant or is experiencing homelessness. The State

Department of Education reports approximately 30% of students at Red Oak High School identify as Black, approximately 50% of students identify as White, approximately 10% identify as Hispanic, and fewer than 10% identify as Asian and fewer than 10% identify as non-Hispanic, two or more races.

Carolyn

Background and Context

Carolyn is a 7th year high school ELA teacher. For her first five years of teaching, she primarily taught 9th graders, and now she teaches 10th grade and creative writing. This year she moved to a new classroom space that is notably small and contains no outside windows. Carolyn is getting used to managing a classroom in a different and small space. She arranged the room to maximize the space so students can sit in groups. She uses shelving near the door for students to store their belongings and create more floor space, and she pushes 6-8 desks together in order to create each group. With up to 26 students in a class, the room feels full of teenage energy. Within the limited space, Carolyn makes the most of the technology tools and classroom resources available to her students.

Technology and texts. About six weeks into the school year, all of Carolyn's students received school-issued laptop computers. Carolyn began to build opportunities for the students to use the laptop computers into her lessons immediately, and she is optimistic about the impact of the computers in the classroom. Formerly, she had to negotiate time with the limited number of computer labs or laptop carts. The school has a teacher-discretion policy on cellphone use; however, there is generally not good cell

service in the building. The students bringing their own laptops to every class will mitigate many of the access problems that she previously faced. Carolyn noted the laptops present a new set of challenges. She explained that the school laptops present a shift for the students and “there is a lot of sharing of documents and they are not used to that. So a lot of it is getting used to a new culture.” Carolyn has a positive attitude regarding the laptops in her classroom and within the first two months is implementing learning experiences that utilize the resource in ways related to meaning making and multimedia, which I will discuss further below. However, she notes that in the classroom environment it is much more difficult to know what is on the screens of all of the students’ laptops because the classroom space is not organized for that purpose, unlike most computer labs. As the laptops are new to Carolyn and the students, she continues to modify how they are best used in her classroom alongside the other resources available.

Carolyn has a broad definition of text and provides her students with access to many types of text as part of the learning experiences in her classroom. She explains that text can be “anything from fan fiction to Internet articles to novels to newspapers to Manga.” Having the laptops has broadened this access even further as the students have regular access to digital texts in her classroom for the first time. Carolyn also has almost two hundred novels in her classroom library.

Building rapport in the classroom environment. Carolyn is modest about how she builds relationships with students and creates a classroom environment for learning.

She values students' interests and uses these insights to inform the texts she uses and types of learning experiences she implements in the classes. She explains,

I don't feel like I do anything that is super special. I try to pull in things that I am excited about to make them excited about. From day one, I give them this PowerPoint that is ten random things about me, and then I have them do the same thing. I think that setting it up that way from the get-go helps. I want to know who you are before I get to what we are going to learn or how we are going to teach. I think that helps to set up that relationship.

She uses her knowledge of the students to help to set them up for success. For example, she knows that 10th graders in her school typically struggle with completing homework, so she sets up her classes so that students have the opportunity to do all of their work in class. By applying her knowledge of students and utilizing the technology and resources available, Carolyn builds a classroom environment to help students make meaning with texts.

Helping Students Make Meaning with Texts

Carolyn helps students make meaning with texts by following two primary guiding principles to drive the classroom learning experiences. These principles are to help the students make connections to their personal experiences and values, and to help them engage in both digital and face-to-face collaborative interchange. Carolyn applies her guiding principles to learning experiences, which foster aesthetic and efferent purposes for reading in different segments of a class period. This is different than Marina and Norma's approach of primarily encouraging an efferent stance in an

initial reading of a text and in their instruction and learning experiences for meaning making. Carolyn falls in the middle of the efferent – aesthetic continuum in how she encourages the initial reading of a text and in planning and implementing meaning making learning experiences because she switches between efferent and aesthetic stances during different parts of her lessons. Carolyn teaches 10th grade, so she is preparing students to take a high-stakes standardized test; however, she strongly values student choice in learning experiences. Carolyn does not mix the two purposes, which Rosenblatt warned against, noting attempting a reading that evenly balances aesthetic and efferent purposes may be “counterproductive” due to “confusion as to a dominant stance” (1994/2005c, p. 13). During each class meeting, Carolyn reserves some learning experiences to focus primarily on the aesthetic stance and other experiences to focus on the efferent stance.

Carolyn justifies her guiding principles as a means to help students bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies. Carolyn wants her students to learn about perspectives on texts and methods for creating texts to help them to better communicate their own ideas. Carolyn also wants students to have confidence in articulating and supporting their own ideas during classroom learning experiences so they can apply these skills with confidence outside-of-school.

Carolyn, Norma, and Marina all articulate their guiding principles and reasons for them differently. Next, I will contrast Carolyn’s guiding principles with those of Marina and Norma, and in the subsections below delve into more detail about how Carolyn prioritizes bridging in- and out-of-school literacies in contrast to Marina and Norma.

The first guiding principle in all three cases references how the teacher guides the student to make meaning in transaction with a text. The transaction between reader and text is guided by the reader's stance along the efferent – aesthetic continuum (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). Carolyn's first guiding principle is students must make connections between the text and their own personal experiences, values, and interests as part of the meaning-making experience. She does this by offering her students opportunities to make choices in the texts they read and encouraging personal connections and connections to other types of media and popular culture in the meaning-making experience. While Norma and Marina both acknowledge that the students' personal connections to text are important, they provide a greater amount of guidance and direction as to the topics the students make connections to and the use of particular strategies to make these connections.

Carolyn's second guiding principle is the importance of collaborative interchange among students to help them make meaning. Like Marina and Norma, Carolyn frequently includes opportunities for collaborative interchange in her classroom. However, Carolyn's approach to collaborative interchange differs from the approach of Marina and Norma. For Carolyn, collaborative interchange helps students to assimilate different perspectives on a text to build their own understanding. Marina saw collaborative interchange as helping the students to share strategies and processes for how to make meaning and Norma focused on collaborative interchange to help students to build empathy and understand different perspectives. In Carolyn's classroom

collaborative interchange occurs during face-to-face discussion and through digital writing and research. Marina and Norma focus on the face-to-face discussions.

Marina, Norma, and Carolyn justify their guiding principles as a means to helping students bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies. However, their explanations of the connection between in- and out- of school literacies and how they impact the learning experiences in their classrooms are all different. Carolyn believes the study of literature is relevant to the students' communication skills and futures, and it is essential she help the students make these connections. She also believes she must give the students opportunities to take ownership for their own learning and ideas, which will help them to be more confident and successful in meaning-making experiences in out-of-school contexts. Norma's focus was on helping students to develop skills in reading and understanding so they can understand local and world events. Marina focused on practical skills for reading and writing the types of texts that are common in workplace and college settings like emails or graphic representations of data.

Guiding principles. Carolyn's focus on broader communication skills and having the students take ownership for their learning support her guiding principles for helping students make meaning with multimedia. Collaborative interchange supports helping students to build communication skills through a focus on assimilating different perspectives on a text. Helping students make connections between the texts and their own experiences, values, and interests helps them take ownership for their learning and ideas. I will discuss both of Carolyn's guiding principles and her reasons for using them as her approach to helping students make meaning with texts in the sections below.

Making connections to students' experiences, values, and interests. In

Carolyn's case, student interest and opportunities to make personal connections are gatekeepers for both making meaning and persevering with a text. Carolyn described the importance of making connections between texts and personal experiences, values, and interests in terms of herself. She explained,

If the students can't make a connection to whatever they are reading, and they can't relate to it, they don't care to finish it. It's true for me, too. If I am reading or watching TV, and it is something that is out of my understanding or anything that I care about then I'm going to have zero interest in watching or reading it.

Carolyn gets her students interested in texts by providing a great deal of choice in her classroom. Carolyn provides opportunities for students to choose the texts they read, the topics they research and write about, and offers multiple options for creative ways to express ideas about a text that seek to make connections to the ways that students interact with and create texts of their own outside-of-school (cf. Ito et al., 2010; McClenaghan & Doecke, 2010).

When the students have made a choice that is interesting to them, Carolyn then helps them make meaning by providing opportunities for personal connections to the text. Carolyn explained that all students' meaning making "is tied back to their personal experiences." This manifests in how different students respond differently to the same text. One of the popular texts among her students is the memoir *Tweak: Growing Up on Methamphetamines* by Nic Sheff, and Carolyn illustrated the different meanings she and her students made with the book based on their prior experience:

Tweak is about methamphetamines and that story fascinated me because I had no personal experiences with it, and I'm not going to. So I see kids who are interested from that side or the psychological side of it. Then I have kids that have experienced it with somebody else in their lives. They get that experience of building understanding of what might make someone use methamphetamines. Then there are kids who have had that experience themselves and say, *oh yeah, that's no big deal*. Then you have kids who don't care about any of that. So I can see which students are drawn into those things. Sometimes I can see where they are coming from just in the way that they react when I talk about it, but it is going to be the same way with everything they read. It might be something they are curious about and interested in or have experience with it somehow or they are just lost or disinterested.

Carolyn acknowledges and values the individual responses that the students have with the texts by sharing her own responses and by giving them the opportunity to share their own. All readers use their own "linguistic-experiential reservoirs as the basis for interpretation," from which they make new meanings as "restructurings or extensions of the stock of experiences of language, spoken or written brought to the task" (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 6).

Carolyn tries to ask open-ended questions that allow students to articulate their personal connections and not leading questions that presuppose a topic or answer. She does not want to "set them in a particular direction, so they can pull their ideas from anywhere, personal experiences or making connections. If [the question] gets too

narrow that's the only direction [the students] can think in." By helping the students make personal connections and rely on their own ideas, Carolyn is supporting their sense of ownership over their own learning as a bridge between in- and out-of-school literacies.

Carolyn wants the students to take "their work and relate it to their own experiences so it's not just answering questions or writing a five-paragraph essay with a three-point thesis. Making it so that it has some kind of inner meaning to yourself." Providing choices that peak student interest and allowing opportunities for making personal connections help students make meaning that is relevant and important to them.

Making connections across multiple types of media and popular culture.

Carolyn helps her students make meaning through connections to experiences, values, and interests that relate to multiple types of texts, media, and popular culture, in addition to more personal types of connections described in the previous section. Carolyn emphasized the importance of students being able to make connections because without them "a lot of times they don't see the point of reading." She put the onus on herself, especially when addressing mandated texts, to help the students make a connection because otherwise "they'll go through with minimal effort or won't even bother to do it. So I have to find ways to make them care about it."

Students bring a lot of experience with popular texts with them to in-class learning experiences, and Carolyn tries to help the students make those connections because "you can usually find a connection between just about any books. This movie to

this book to this painting to this thing I did last week all fits together in one great big puzzle.” Carolyn finds students who play video games have an “easier time connecting to things” because many of the monsters in games have similarities to monsters, like Grendel, in literature. She also helps the students make connections more broadly through interpersonal relationships and character interactions. For example, the students may not see a lot of their own life in *The Canterbury Tales*, but “how the character dresses and flirts in the Miller’s Tale can be compared to flirting and ways of dressing today. Even over the last 500 years, there are a lot of basic things that don’t change.” These types of connections between texts and personal experiences, values, and interests help the students to critically consider their own world through the perspective of literature.

Collaborative interchange. Carolyn’s second guiding principle is to give students opportunities to collaborate in meaning-making learning experiences. The collaborative learning experiences include students working together to create a product or read the text. Opportunities for collaborative interchange is a guiding principle of meaning making for Carolyn because she sees it as helping students make connections to texts. She explained,

I think there is a role of collaboration in meaning making because if I don’t immediately grasp a connection to what we are reading, maybe you have a connection that I don’t have. Then I can bring all those ideas in and get a wider perspective on the text.

The students continued to make meaning with the text through discussion because as they learn each other's perspectives and connections, they must integrate this new knowledge into their own meaning. The students can learn how different meaning can be made from the text and become more "aware of, and critical of, their own processes as readers" (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 28).

Carolyn facilitates collaborative interchange by asking students to read some texts together in class. The students partner-read by sitting next to each other and "whisper-read" into each other's ears or the students will sit in a group of three or four students and take turns reading paragraphs. During the collaborative reading, the students stop frequently to discuss the texts. Carolyn explains collaborative reading is "more than just getting to the end of the story and asking, *now, what was that about?*" By sharing ideas and annotating during reading, the students have the opportunity to hear connections and meanings that may help them to make or broaden their own connections.

In the class I observed, the students were reading online to identify articles that will help to support arguments and address counter-arguments. This lesson was a part of a much larger learning experience Carolyn created to help the students prepare for the standardized writing assessment. Carolyn created a collaborative learning experience in which the students work together to research potential arguments and counter-arguments for the standardized writing assessment prompts that address similar topics and then create a video essay to share these findings. In the lesson I observed, the groups generated a common thread among the prompts of each student

in the group. Carolyn modeled for the students how to access and search online research databases to find articles related to their common topic. She showed the students how to save the articles and reference information into Easy Bib, a citation creation App. The students were all working on their own laptops but wrote collaboratively in a shared Google Doc. The students engaged in digital and non-digital collaborative interchange throughout this learning experience.

Many of the technology aspects of this lesson were challenging to the students. As they got started, the students had to talk about how to spell each other's names so they could find and add everyone in the group to the same document, and then they negotiated who was going to be the primary person to type. The students also struggled when it came to locating articles that were relevant to their topics and copying the URLs into Easy Bib. Figure 6 is an excerpt from the conversation Carolyn had with students as they tried to navigate this process. These technological challenges present a barrier in the process of making meaning with digital texts (Serafini, 2012a). However, throughout the learning experience, the students engaged in discussions with each other and with Carolyn to figure out how to navigate the digital space and then how to make connections between their search results and group topics.

Snippets of conversation as the students work on their projects from my observation notes:

S: Are we copy and pasting the articles?

C: Just the URL into Easy Bib.

S: I don't get it.

C: Okay, your topic is working in groups.

S: Can I Google it?

C: You can start there to help narrow your topic to find articles.

S2: We need 3 articles

S3: Which article do you like?

C: I don't know that Britannica is the best database for your keywords, why don't you try Opposing Viewpoints?

S2: Nothing is showing up for mine.

S3: Okay, I got to biographies, now what do I do?

C: Search your topic

A few minutes later, student 1 has an article. Carolyn walks him through copy and pasting the URL into Easy Bib.

Figure 6. Excerpt of discussion between Carolyn (C) and her students as they read and searched for articles using online research databases and a bibliography creator app.

By the end of the class period, all of the groups had written a paragraph describing their overarching topic and how it connected to the individual prompts and found several articles related to their topic.

When I interviewed Carolyn after the lesson, she said she expected the students to have some difficulty, but she saw that the students' collaboration led to them "getting more of their ideas on the screen." She is still learning how to help them to address the conflicts that arise during collaborative writing, especially when the students are "editing for each other." During the lesson, one of the students called Carolyn over to complain that another student in her group was "eating my words" (he had deleted what she had typed into their shared document). Carolyn also noted that

the students struggle with citing sources and using Easy Bib. She explained how she addresses this topic with her students,

I can ask you to care about it all day long, but if you don't know why you need to care, you resist doing it. It's trying to get them outside the thinking of, so so-and-so said this and it's important because someone else said it was. I need to get them to make the connections and make the meanings.

The students must see the relevance and connections to their personal experiences and interests; otherwise, they will resist engaging in collaborative learning experiences. Digital collaboration provides much potential and challenge for Carolyn as she and her students become more accustomed to using these tools.

Bridging in- and out-of-school literacies. Carolyn uses her guiding principles for helping students to make meaning with texts through making personal connection and collaborative interchange as means to prepare students to effectively apply their literacies to out-of-school contexts and purposes. Carolyn's students ask her "Why do I need to learn how to write if I'm just going to flip burgers or be the cable guy or whatever?" and she wants the students to understand the relevance of literature and literacies that are primarily valued in-school to communication skills they will use out-of-school. Rosenblatt explained that it is in classrooms that students "learn to ignore or even distrust their own responses to literature, [and] they may therefore reject literature altogether as irrelevant to themselves" (Rosenblatt, 1956/2005b, p. 68). Carolyn actively takes steps to help students to trust their responses to texts. The two primary approaches that Carolyn has for helping students to bridge their in- and out-of-

school literacies are to build their understanding of perspectives and methods in communication outside of their own and to give students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning.

Understanding other perspectives and methods. Students develop their writing skills by getting exposure to other types of writing and methods for writing they may not encounter in their everyday lives but will help them to be better communicators. Carolyn explains, “students don’t see how other people write, so instead, they write the way they speak. I have to expose them to other methods, even just something written in a complete sentence, so they can use that to further their education.” Capital letters may not matter when the student is communicating on Facebook or Twitter because “odds are the people I’m connecting with don’t care,” but Carolyn wants the students to be able to better change their writing to meet the expectations of other audiences and purposes.

Giving students the opportunity to build confidence as learners. Carolyn tries to help the students to not constantly look to her for approval for their ideas. She wants them to know there is not one “right” answer and help them build the tools they need to be able to justify and explain their ideas. She said, “I don’t want them to get to college and say *I’ve never had an original thought in my life.*” The students come to her classroom very accustomed to looking to the teacher for approval or disapproval, and it can take time for the students to get used to Carolyn’s support of their own ideas. She explained, “I think at first they are hesitant. Even further in the year, they stop and look at me half way through an explanation, as if almost waiting for me to say, *no you are*

wild or way off-base.” Carolyn hopes that by giving students the opportunity to make personal connections with texts and engage in discussion, they will gain confidence in articulating and supporting their own responses.

Carolyn uses her guiding principles and her justification for them to inform the planning and implementation of learning experiences that help students make meaning with texts. In the next section I will address her approach to planning.

Planning Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Carolyn’s willingness to learn from other educators and try new approaches and lessons is supported by a strong knowledge of long-term learning goals and readiness to make adjustments and be flexible with plans. Carolyn and Marina are currently teaching 10th grade so, by necessity, are more focused on standardized tests as a driving force in their planning as the students in this state take a standardized writing assessment in 10th grade. However, unlike Marina or Norma, Carolyn balances the mandates with planning for the optimum amount of choice for students. Like Marina and Norma, Carolyn plans with the assumption that plans will change.

Approach to planning. Carolyn plans by setting goals of what she wants the students to accomplish and the timeframe to accomplish it in and adapts the lessons to meet the needs of the students. Carolyn balances state and local mandates with her guiding principles for helping students make meaning in order to make learning experiences “interesting for the kids to learn and for me to teach because if I’m not interested, it’s just going to fail.” Carolyn does research to determine what she wants the students to accomplish within a given timeframe to meet the goals for the course.

She explained, “first I do research it and see if anyone else has created something on it. There is no sense in recreating the wheel. Then, I always have to make it my own. I can’t just parrot someone else’s plans.” Carolyn uses digital resources posted by teachers from other school and talks to other teachers in her own school to see how they have approached a particular standard or topic in the past. By adapting plans for her own students and context, Carolyn is able to plan learning experiences that have immediate relevance and connection to her students’ experiences, values, and interests.

Carolyn also emphasizes student choice in her planning. The students read for 30 minutes of every class meeting and are able to choose any text they want to read during this time. The students make use of Carolyn’s classroom library and also use their laptops to access news articles or other texts that interest them. Carolyn also plans so that her students have choice in a variety of other ways throughout the class:

I allow for choice as often as possible. You don’t have a choice about whether or not to do a research project, but you are going to have choice within those limitations. It may be choice of topic or choice of poem. There are at least some choices as often as possible. Even if we are doing grammar exercises, I try to offer a wide variety of sentence examples. So if you don’t like the example about the plane, you can use the one about the boat or the one with my friend’s name in it or the one that references the homecoming dance. For the most part, they seem to like it. It gives them some ownership. They like to feel like they have a voice. If I just said, *go read Moby Dick or go read The Scarlett Letter*; eventually, they would just kind of shut down.

During her planning process, Carolyn considers ways to maximize opportunities for student choice to help her students have a sense of ownership of their learning.

Planning for flexibility. Similar to Marina and Norma, Carolyn plans with the knowledge and assumption plans will likely need to be changed or adapted. Carolyn includes this flexibility for changes to lessons while planning. She knows sometimes lessons will be unsuccessful and is willing to make fast changes that will be beneficial to her students. Carolyn's confidence in assessing the effectiveness of a lesson and making changes allows her to try new lessons, materials, topics, and tools with her students. She is open with her students about this process. She explained, "there will be times when I will say to the kids, *yeah, that didn't work, so we will switch it up and do this.*" For example, she worked hard to create a new unit from scratch inspired by the popular young adult novel *Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys about the Russian invasion of Lithuania in 1939. She planned to teach about the topic of genocide over the course of history and how it is represented in literature. Each student would choose a book that addressed issues of genocide and tie it in to a class study of the book *Night* by Elie Wiesel. Carolyn explains how outside factors can impact the lessons she teaches:

So we started going through it, and we had a teacher who died right around that time. The students were stressed from that and then we were talking about genocide. I looked at my students at the end of the second day of talking about this and said *I can't. It's just all too depressing so we are just going to scrap it.* Sometimes things like that happen. It happened last year with *Great Gatsby*. I tried to do it, and I looked at them and decided we are just not going to try

anymore. I can stand up here and tell you what happened to Gatsby but that doesn't do anyone any good. You might be able to answer some trivia questions, but you haven't really learned anything.

The changes Carolyn makes to her lessons and planning are in response to her students and their needs. If a unit or text is not connecting with the students, they will not engage in meaning-making learning experiences that will allow them to have ownership of their learning or develop literacies. When the planning does meet the students' needs and interests, then Carolyn makes day-to-day adjustments to keep the lessons on track and help the students to be successful in her class. In the next section, I will share one example of how Carolyn implemented a learning experience that helped her students to make meaning with multimedia texts.

Implementing Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Carolyn implements meaning-making learning experiences that allow students to take ownership of their learning and explore different perspectives in communication through making connections between the texts and personal experiences, values, and interests, and through collaborative interchange. Carolyn encourages both efferent and aesthetic purposes for making meaning in order to encourage students' interests and connections while meeting the expectations for the content area standards. All of the learning experiences that Carolyn shared with me included opportunities for students to make choices, discuss a variety of types of texts, and make connections to their own experiences, values, and interests. In the following section, I will describe a learning experience in which 9th grade students create a hypertext poetry analysis presentation.

This learning experience is similar to *The Odyssey* project that Marina's students created in that the students are working collaboratively and the final outcome is an interactive digital media presentation. However, the projects differ in the complexity of technology applications, the role of student choice, and the relative weight of the students' personal connections to the text.

Hypertext poetry project. In this learning experience, the students worked to make meaning with their poem through collaborative reading, discussion, and research to create a hypertext version of a poem. Carolyn has the students work in groups on a poem of their choice to analyze the craft of the poem and make personal and historical connections. The students created a hypertext version of the poem connecting specific lines to images, videos, and writing to expand their meaning making. Carolyn describes the purpose of this learning experience as a way to "expose [students] to poetry and help them see things are a lot more connected than they think they are. It is important for them to be able to make connections between what they are reading and their everyday lives."

Carolyn worked with the library media specialist at the school to design the hypertext aspect of the experience as a "different way to annotate the poem and a way to get us thinking about ways to use technology in the classroom. We worked with the school's technology integrators to help the students learn different ways of creating hyperlinks." The purpose of using of technology in this learning experience was to help the students make connections with the poem and articulate those connections through the hypertext presentation. Carolyn explained the goal of the learning experience:

I wanted the students to be exposed to different forms of media, thinking, and making connections. I let them choose from 20 poems. They worked with a partner to decode the poem: meter, rhyme scheme, etc. Then they had to make connections to themselves, historical research to understand terms or allusions, and information about the author. Then they worked it into a PowerPoint with multimedia hyperlinks to the poem itself. Using the poem slide as a type of homepage to the rest of the presentation.

The students had to visually represent the connections through the design of their presentation by creating hyperlinks within the PowerPoint. She included directions for the students that required them to make different types of connections, including their own “to show them it’s not all about them, and force them to think about that.” The students’ personal connections and ideas about the poems were valued as an important part of this project side-by-side with research they did into historical documents, the poet’s biography, and connections to other forms of media (see Figure 7).



Figure 7. Excerpts from a student-created hypertext poetry project that connects analysis of specific lines in the poem to a young adult novel, a painting, and a sculpture.

Carolyn described this as one of the most successful projects she has ever done because “the kids seem to like that they had this concrete thing to look at and it was visually appealing. They felt like they had made something that was more substantial than a research paper that is on paper or a screen.” Yet the students were learning similar skills to writing a traditional research paper. In completing this project, they learned how to search for relevant information and cite their sources, but by doing it in this form the “research has more life, meaning, and depth to them. They aren’t just

looking at words; they're finding pictures or video clips. They're talking to people and getting their experiences, and then putting it together into one great big package."

Carolyn emphasized the role of multimedia as important because the students had to both analyze the multimedia sources they identified and articulate how they connected to the original poem. Carolyn's guiding principles of helping students to make connections and engage in collaborative interchange surface frequently in how she implements this learning experience and aligns with the learning goals stated above.

Carolyn's primary role during the implementation of the learning experience was to facilitate online reading and make modifications for students who struggled. She found many students needed her to help them find relevant resources. She walked through the process of searching with small groups to help them reconsider their search terms and identify what is relevant out of the search results. Carolyn explained, "even though they had all of these research tools at their fingertips, sometimes they struggled finding information. So I was really helping them to find that or search in a different way." Carolyn also found that while most of the students ended up grasping the hypertext aspect of the project very well and using it to enhance their connections, other students, especially those with lower reading levels, struggled with it. Carolyn decided, "analyzing the poem and making connections to the poem were leaps enough for them. So we ended up scrolling through their presentations instead." Carolyn prioritized the students' meanings of the poem and adapted the use of the technology to support this and meet the students' learning needs.

The students' collaboration for this learning experience helped them make meaning with the text through reading, discussion, and creating. Carolyn emphasized the discussion aspect as being particularly poignant in how the students' meaning developed as they worked. By working together, the students were able to share meaning with one another and begin to see and synthesize meaning from different perspectives. Carolyn explained discussion helped the students,

Make meaning they didn't see before. One student might say, *this is like such and such* or *I know what this is referring to if you don't*. And that will make something click with the other student. *Hey, now I get that. You said this, but now I think it could be this other thing*. Then they start this little debate or explain further.

Carolyn wants her students to make personal connections to texts as part of their own meaning and then extend these meanings through collaboration and research. Each of these pieces fit into the meaning-making learning experience and help the students develop literacies they can apply to out-of-school experiences as well. By starting with their own meaning and sharing with peers, the students' research was driven by their own curiosity and interest, with guidance from Carolyn. Carolyn explained how meaning shifted for the students during this process:

In some cases, the students originally thought the poem meant one thing and then, through research, they realized that it was written to address something else. All of these different experiences shed a different light on the poem. A lot of them then said, *well, that's like this song I like*. They will see a post on

Facebook that says that song isn't really what you think it is about. It completely changes how you look at it. It was interesting to see that shift from the initial, I thought this poem was about a tiger ["The Tyger" by William Blake], but it is really about a war. It's not always surface deep.

The students made connections to their own lives in their reading of the poem and through the process of how they make meaning by connecting researching a poem to reading about songs on social media. Carolyn helps the students to connect the process and the content of the meaning-making learning experience to the students' personal lives out of school.

Carolyn's guiding principles of helping students to make connections with the texts and encouraging collaborative interchange with a focus on building communication skills and synthesizing perspectives on a text support her planning and implementation of meaning-making learning experiences. Carolyn believes these experiences will help students to build skills and understands that they will help the students to be confident learners and begin to understand perspectives outside of their own. Carolyn's colleague Ann also wants her students to be confident learners who are prepared for life outside of school. However, her guiding principles for planning and implementing learning experiences are different from Carolyn's. Ann's guiding principles focus on helping students to make meaning by (a) using their connections to the text to take action based on their learning; (b) encouraging collaborative interchange focused on each student reading individual choice texts; and (c) making meaning in discussion through comparisons, synthesis, and examples from different texts.

Ann

Background and Context

Ann is an experienced teacher who has faced some major shifts in her classes and role within the first few months of the school year. In mid-October, Ann was promoted to the English department chair position to fill a mid-semester vacancy and asked to co-teach most of the classes she started with at the beginning of the year in order to mentor and transition a brand new, inexperienced teacher, take on two new applied reading classes, and begin duties as a department head. While nervous and excited about taking on this challenge, Ann hopes to use this leadership opportunity to foster and support implementation of some innovative and effective approaches she has used to teach ELA with the other teachers in her department. Ann started her career in 1984 at a small public high school in a neighboring community to Red Oak High School. She began teaching at Red Oak High School in 2008 and for the past several years has taught 11th and 12th grade ELA classes. Along with Christine, whose case will follow this one, Ann has been a member of the leadership team of the school-university regional professional development and research program for four years. Ann teaches in the same school as Carolyn.

Texts and technology. Ann has access to textbooks for every student in her classes, but she has not used them in years. Instead, she has accumulated a classroom library of about 1,000 books. It is these books that set the tone and atmosphere for her classroom as an environment for reading. In the past, Ann had made use of a computer lab that was situated across the hall from her classroom several times a week, but, like

Carolyn, her students received their own school-issued laptop computers mid-semester. Ann was excited about the opportunities that the new laptops present and is very aware of how much they will change her teaching and the classroom culture. She focuses on helping her students to use digital devices in “responsible and mature” ways.

Creating an environment for learning. Walking into Ann’s classroom, to a certain extent, feels like you are stepping into another world, outside of the typical noisy, sterile hallways of a public high school (see Figure 8). Her classroom is filled with neatly organized books and the walls are adorned with book posters and “book-selfies” (photos of her students holding their favorite books). Her students came into the classroom quietly and began reading without Ann having to make any announcement. During the transition time, Ann spoke quietly with a student who was looking for a recommendation for a new book to read.



Figure 8. Fiction and nonfiction books on shelves in Ann’s classroom.

Ann creates a space and environment that reflects her goals for the students' learning. She teaches them how to be active readers during the 30 minutes of independent reading, which helps them to focus and enter the "world of your book." Ann explained, "I don't allow students to listen to music. I want the imagery in their head to take over their thoughts. Heads up. Quiet. I want them to enjoy reading and see it is an active process." The students in Ann's classes are active in their reading and learning.

Helping Students Make Meaning with Texts

Ann helps students to make meaning with texts by following two primary guiding principles to drive the classroom learning experiences. Ann's guiding principles are led by a focus on aesthetic purposes for meaning making followed by an efferent focus that derives from the students' own aesthetic reactions to a text. Ann's approach is distinctly different from Marina, Norma, and Carolyn because Ann prioritizes an aesthetic stance in all of her students' initial readings of texts. She does not direct students to an efferent purpose during the initial reading during any part of her lesson, unlike Carolyn, who switches between efferent and aesthetic during different parts of her class. Instead, Ann allows the students' initial aesthetic responses to a text to guide their interest and curiosity, which may lead to additional reading within a primarily efferent stance.

The 12th grade classes that Ann teaches are the best representation of Ann's guiding principles because there is no standardized test attached to this course. Ann also teaches 11th grade, where the students do have some standardized tests. However, even in teaching 11th grade, she guides students towards the aesthetic stance as a gateway to returning to the text for more efferent purposes. Ann's case marks a distinct

shift away from the focus on testing and standards in the previous cases. First, I will address how Ann's guiding principles and justification for them compare to those of Marina, Norma, and Carolyn. I will follow this discussion with a more detailed explanation of Ann's guiding principles and justifications.

Ann's first guiding principle is for students to make personal connections and take actions based on their meaning-making learning experiences. Ann's students choose the texts that they read during her course, and based on their reading, ask their own questions and derive their own plans for research and service learning. While Carolyn also incorporates opportunities for choice to support student interest and meaning making, Ann's students take this further by learning how to devise their own questions and eventually take action, in the form of service learning, based on the choices and aesthetic meanings they have made with their chosen texts. Unlike Norma and Marina, Ann helps the students to identify their own topics and area of interest and connections with the texts.

Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann all place a great deal of value on collaborative interchange. Collaborative interchange is a guiding principle for the meaning-making learning experiences that they plan and implement in their classrooms. The collaborative interchange in Ann's classroom supports the students meaning making because the students bring unique personal experiences and values to the discussion and their experiences with different texts. Carolyn also provides her students with opportunities for making choices, but the choices for 10th graders have more limitations and need more guidance than 12th grade students. The collaborative interchange in

Marina's class is focused on sharing strategies, processes, and topics related to a teacher directed topic or task. Norma and Carolyn often value collaborative interchange for building different perspectives on a shared text rather than the individual texts that Ann's students read. Ann also has regular individual conferences with her students about their reading, while Marina, Norma, and Carolyn do not.

Similarly to Marina, Norma, and Carolyn, Ann justifies her guiding principles as a means of helping students to bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies. However, the literacies that each of them focus on differ from one another. Ann believes that the meaning-making learning experiences in her classroom are representative of the types of literacies that they will use in "college, careers, or just everyday life," which is why the learning experiences lead the students to take action based on their reading, writing, and collaborative interchange. Ann believes education is about "not just filling your head, but getting your feet to move with what's in your head and heart." This is an extension of how Carolyn wants her students to take ownership for their learning and to build communication skills that will help them in academic and non-academic settings. In teaching 11th and 12th grade, Ann helps the students to take their ownership and communication skills a step further to applications that are closer to authentic experiences and conflicts that the students will face outside of high school. While Norma's focus leads students from local to global connections, Ann wants the students to see how global ideas from their reading can connect back to their local community. In doing this, the students must apply many of the practical skills that Marina's students work to develop in 9th and 10th grade. Ann's focus on action stems from the aesthetic

reactions that the students have in their meaning-making learning experiences. The students' writing, discussion, and service learning projects all are "based on their passions."

Guiding principles. Ann's guiding principles and her reasons for them drive the ways she helps students to make meaning with texts. Ann's guiding principles of making connections and collaborative interchange in planning and implementing learning experiences support her goal to help students to bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies. Ann's first guiding principle of making connections and taking action differs from those in the previous cases because Ann helps her students to extend the connections they make with their texts into specific action, whether it is finding the next book to read, researching more about a topic, or taking on a service learning project. Similar to Marina, Norma, and Carolyn, Ann's second guiding principle is about collaborative interchange, but Ann conceptualizes and values collaborative interchange differently. She sees it as a way for her to help her students to articulate their thoughts and ideas about their reading and to share with each other as each student in the class reads different texts.

Making connections and taking action. Ann's focus on students making connections and taking actions based on the texts that they choose to read guides how and why she plans and implements meaning-making learning experiences. Ann believes that her students' personal lives and experiences, including culture and socioeconomic standing, "drive the meaning that they make. I don't see how it can't. It drives their choices. Rarely are they going to pick something that they are completely unattached

to.” Ann shared an anecdote about a student whose personal experience and goals for the future influenced his choices:

I had a student last year from Guatemala. He had been in the US just since high school and had taught himself English in just a year... He was always reading books about success. He loved the Malcolm Gladwell books. He liked reading biographies of successful people. He talked a lot about injustice and the difference between what people perceived as injustice and what he had experienced as an injustice. Everything he read was driven by his family’s experience as immigrants to this country. He was driven to be successful and achieve the American dream. He read books toward that goal. He was very intentional in his selection of books.

Ann juxtaposed this example with connections to popular culture that the students make. For Ann, the important aspect of making connections is that the connections come from the students themselves. She wants to know what comes to mind as the students are reading. She explains that whether the connection be to “a Disney movie or an episode of the Kardashians, I want to see that there are connections between the stories they read and popular culture.” Ann does not want the students to just “Google a video” on a related topic because “it’s just so artificial. I’d rather the connection come from the student.” Ann wants the students to read books that they choose and connect to because the connections determine if the students will stick with the book and “whether or not the book will stick with the student afterwards so that they will be able to talk about it and write about it, or if they will want to research more about it later.”

Ann explained that students' writing and research come from their "excitement and passion" about the book. She said "It is unfair of us to expect them to have something meaningful to say if they got no meaning from the book."

Ann guides the students from their aesthetic reaction and personal connections to the book towards taking action. Taking action may start with the students' generating questions that stem from the text, which leads the students toward completing service-learning projects. I will discuss the service-learning projects in more detail below. Ann explained,

But really in everything I try to make it meaningful to them, not just an activity, so they can see that this is what people do. I try to help them realize that research isn't something we do just because we have to write a ten-page paper on something. It's something we actually do every day; we do it naturally. It is a natural outcome of reading. Reading leads to questions which leads to answers which leads to more reading. Which gives you more questions and more answers, which is really what learning is when it comes down to it.

Ann's role is not to be the expert in every book that a student reads because she believes that role perpetuates the idea that there is a single meaning or way of understanding a book and that the students need to look to the teacher for answers. Ann guides the students by asking broad, open-ended questions which sometimes leads to more connections to the students' interests and experiences and helps them to make meaning. The role of the teacher is to teach the elements and structure of literature and rhetoric to "help the students to be able to approach anything that they want to read.

This way the students have the confidence and stamina to approach any book that they come across.” The focus on wanting the students to understand style and structure is very similar to Norma’s guiding principal of close reading and text analysis, but Ann approaches literary and rhetorical analysis through student choice reading and personal connections that lead towards action.

Collaborative interchange. Ann regularly has individual conferences with her students about what they are reading. These are driven by open-ended questions that show Ann’s genuine interest in the students and what they are reading. During the 30 minutes of independent reading at the beginning of every class meeting, Ann quietly conferenced with students individually while the rest of the class read. In the conferences, Ann asks open-ended questions that emphasize the students’ aesthetic response to the book and then guides them back to the text to articulate what it was about the text that led them to that reaction. Ann explained a typical reading conference,

I usually start by asking them general things to get them warmed up. Did you like the book? What did you like about the book? Those are easy questions for them, and they always want to tell me anyway so I might as well start there. Then, I will ask them about the protagonist. I try to use the terminology that they need to know. I will ask them what the protagonists are like, what were their strengths, and how are they like you or not like you. I will ask him about the conflict of the book, and that will lead to some talk about the antagonist. And then you will get the students to talk about how did it work out for the characters. I don’t really

have preset questions. That's just about it. The students' responses are what lead me to other questions. I will say: tell me more about that.

Ann wants the students to see that they are experts on the books that they read and not turn to her to see if their response is "right." This fosters the students' confidence in making meaning with texts. Ann's questioning naturally asks the students to turn back to the text to clarify and support their meaning. Ann keeps track of what the students are reading and their page number so that she can help students who might have gotten stuck and encourage them to choose a new book if they are not making a connection to the one they originally chose. Ann is "guiding, conversing, and checking on comprehension" while the students read books they choose and can make a connection to their personal experiences and interests.

Ann also provides opportunities for the students to talk to one another about their books. She values these conversations because each student can bring something unique and authentic to the discussion. There is no perfect example or right answer because every student is reading a different book. This makes the discussions interesting to the students and also often leads to more reading. Ann explained,

There are a lot of common topics in all of the books the students read. It's not hard to find connections between the books. It makes it much more interesting than if we were all reading the same thing. If they all read the same thing and one student finds an example, the other students think, *now I can't use that example*. When we read different books: *if he finds an example, well I have one too*. Everyone in our group has an example of a common topic or literary concept.

We can talk about how they're similar and different. It's just bigger. There's so much more to talk about. At the same time one person is talking, I may be thinking, *that sounds really cool, it's kind of like mine but different. I want to read more like this.*

Through conversation the students learn about different perspectives and different books. The students are experts on their own books and get to share that expertise with their peers. Often the students get recommendations about books to read from these conversations. Reading and discussion leads to more reading and discussion. "When the students talk about books, they fuel each other" to continue reading and sharing as part of the meaning-making process.

Bridging in- and out-of-school literacies. Ann wants her students to be able to connect the things they are learning how to do in class to what they will need to do in college or careers, "or just everyday life." There are no "artificial exercises" in Ann's class. When students do research based on their interests, they are learning skills that will help them "when they plan their wedding or buy a car." Ann finds that most worksheets or study guides are "punitive" for the students because it does not help the students who complete them and it penalizes the students who do not complete them. Ann wants the learning experiences to "have real meaning – or connection – it has to connect to something else. I don't see the point of having them do it if it doesn't connect." Reading is at the core of Ann's class and Ann builds these "meaningful connections" through the reading. Ann explained,

I wanted the students to demonstrate that they had connected with the reading and been moved by the protagonists and their stories so they might act on their reading by the end of the year [in the service learning projects]. I want to show them that there are so many ways to act on your reading. You can empathize or sympathize with the character; reading can be a social or academic activity. We did the text sets to make connections to other experiences in our lives, books, or movies. I wanted them to see at the end that sometimes what we read or learn makes us want to act. Take that next step.

Ann helps the students to make meaning by giving them the opportunity to express and follow through on an aesthetic purpose for reading that leads them to continue to make meaning by taking action. The students' interests, ideas, and discussion drive the learning experiences. Ann uses her guiding principles for planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences to articulate her goals for helping students to bridge in- and out-of-school literacies. Ann's process for planning meaning-making learning experiences will be discussed in the next section.

Planning Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Ann focuses on the long-term goals and then designs learning experiences that will help the students to reach these goals. Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann share a focus on long-term learning goals that tie to their guiding principles and reasons for planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences. Ann shares the long-term goals with her students so they know what they are working towards and how the individual lessons fit into the big picture. Like Carolyn, Ann plans for learning

experiences that encourage opportunities for students to make choices and have a sense of ownership in the learning experiences. Norma and Ann both articulated that English is primarily a “skills-based” class in which students keep practicing and developing a set of literacy skills throughout the year. They plan learning experiences for the students to have scaffolded and repeated experiences practicing and developing the skills. Like Marina, Norma, and Carolyn, Ann plans, evaluates and makes changes to her plans to better meet the students’ learning goals.

Approach to planning. Ann is currently mentoring a novice teacher who is taking over her classes as she transitions to new classes and to her role as department head. Like Norma, she talked about how difficult it is to articulate the process of planning after so many years of doing it. Generally, Ann focuses on long-term planning and scaffolding in describing her planning process but had some insight into the minutia of planning that impacts student learning that she has had to articulate in mentoring a novice teacher. First, Ann considers goals for the year and asks “what are all of the steps it’s going to take for me and my students to get there?” Then she breaks it down by semester and quarter. She noted that looking back “it seems like it just happens, but of course it doesn’t.”

Ann described the pattern of her lessons as including some or all of the following: “an engaging activity to get the students’ attention. Then the lesson involves instruction and modeling followed by guided and independent practice. Finally, there is assessment of some kind. That is what I keep in mind.” Ann reflected on how newer teachers rely on pacing guides and standards, but “as you become more experienced, it

just becomes part of who you are. Inherent in the process.” Ann has learned about cognitive development of teenagers from her years of experiences. She noted she has learned to “think like a teacher.” Ann explained, “I know students need movement and structure to the movement.” In considering all of the complex factors that go into planning, both explicitly and implicitly, Ann is helping to create an environment and learning plans that will allow students to engage in learning experiences that meet their needs.

Ann stresses the importance of process in planning for learning experiences. She does not ask the students to do anything that she has not done. The day that I observed Ann’s class the students worked on the Encyclopedia of Me projects. The students complete this project in parts during each quarter of the year and Ann creates her own project side-by-side along with the students so that she can model the writing process (see Figure 9).

When you go to your Google Classroom, I will show you the draft I have been working on for a couple of years as I model these. Mine pales in comparison but remember these are just drafts, like yours. I told you I was going to write a story in front of you, so I am going to write my V story. Do you remember what the V story stands for for me?

Class: Vomit.

Ann: Yup. So by the end of the year you will have all 20 stories. We will space it out and do it in small chunks over the course of the year. So we will do 5 stories between now and the holidays. You saw that Chris added pictures, but I also want you to add videos or articles or passages of fiction or poetry wherever it might be appropriate for us to see it. I'm thinking at some point as a class we will decide how many is a reasonable number to put in there. So you are watching and I am going to write a first draft of this. Then later I'll have to go back and clean it up.

Ann types her story. She points out where she uses ellipses and how she hopes they will add emphasis. She talks about the difference between nauseous and nauseated. The students point out a few mistakes Ann makes as she types.

Ann: Wow you guys are critical. See, this is just a first draft. I'm showing you my deep, dark first draft secrets. We all make these, but before I would show my final draft, I need to go back and fix all of these mistakes. Isn't easier to see someone else's mistakes than it is to see your own? Thanks for pointing these out. [Ann goes back and fixes the three mistakes that the students found.] Ann continues writing her story and ties it into an event the students are familiar with. They laugh and talk briefly about their own recollections of the event.

Ann connects her story to an old Seinfeld episode and goes onto Google to show the students how she searches for the clip she is looking for. She plays the clip for the class. Then she shows them how she copies the link and adds it to the story.

Ann: I'm going to add a hyperlink to my text and if someone clicks on it, they will go to the Seinfeld video. Having the video linked, enhances my story by making a connection to another text.

Figure 9. Excerpt from my observation notes in Ann's class as she models creating a

multimedia text by writing her own story. Next, students will write their own drafts and include a multimedia element.

Ann can scaffold and adapt her plans because she does the assignments with the students and is very aware of the students' skills and interests through the regular individual conferences she has with students about their reading.

Modifying and adjusting plans. Ann makes changes to her lessons to best help students to make meaning with texts and develop their literacy skills. Ann changes her plans from year to year based on *how* the students are going to reach the long-term goals for the course. In the last three years, Ann has planned and implemented three variations on the service-learning project. Each time she made changes based on her learning from the implementation process the year before. She has sought to balance student choice and freedom with teacher guidance and guidelines that help students to connect back to their reading while doing their service-learning project. In the first year, she had learned about service learning at a workshop given by a local university professor and decided to try it. The first year the students were required to plan projects but were not required to execute them. The students came up with ideas that were not feasible for the time and resources her students could access. The second year, the students were required to act on their plans. Ann planned for this throughout the year as the students discussed characters and the ideas of compassion, sympathy, and empathy in some of her lessons. In the third year, she decided to allow the students to have more freedom so they did not have to connect the projects to a book they had read. She found these projects to be less successful overall compared to the previous year. In the future, she plans “to go back to a project where they actually have to do the service and connect it to one of the many books they read during the year. It was worth

a try, but it helped them to have a direction when they had the connection to the book.”

Ann reflects on the needs of her current students and prior experiences to modify her planning from year to year.

Ann will also make smaller scale adjustments to her plans based on her students’ needs. She explained, “sometimes you realize the students don’t have that skill or that knowledge and then you have to modify that point. Or you just got a good idea along the way.” One good idea that she had when planning for the current school year was to add “see-me” sticky notes somewhere in the first 50-75 pages of the students’ independent choice reading books to help to better manage the individual reading conferences that she has with the students. These notes put the responsibility on the students to make their way to Ann when they get part way through the book. Even a small change in planning like this can help Ann to better facilitate meaning-making learning experiences by ensuring that she engages in discussion with the students about their books at regular intervals.

Implementing Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Ann implements meaning-making learning experiences informed by her guiding principles of helping students to make connections, take action, and engage in collaborative interchange. These learning experiences have the ultimate goal of building students’ out-of-school literacies by directly connecting their experiences in reading texts to practicing skills that are typically used outside of school. Ann fosters the learning experiences by offering the students guidance, support, and space to explore and implement their own ideas and interests.

Ann's guiding principles and their justification are implemented in her the 12th grade service-learning project. The project is directed by the students' aesthetic responses to their individual choice reading. Ann guides them through the process of turning their reactions, interests, and passions into an actionable service-learning project and ends with the students' reflection and presentation. During this process the students make meaning from their reading, in discussion with their peers and teacher, through completing research, in communicating with other stakeholders, and by expressing their learning in a multimedia presentation.

Service learning projects. In the second iteration of the service learning projects, the students had to connect their projects to their reading and go out and implement them in the community. The first step in the service-learning project is helping the students to understand the difference between service learning and community service. Ann explained to the students that research is an integral part of service learning. She tells them, "It's not that I'm requiring it; it's that it is required. You couldn't do the service learning without first researching it." The students' reading and interests and Ann's open-ended questions guide the process. She asks, "What is your driving question? Who do you want to impact? What is a book or situation that had an impact on you? Who can you impact to alleviate the situation?" The students' answers to these questions lead them to initial research. Ann helps the students to narrow and focus their ideas into feasible projects.

The students turn to digital and non-digital texts in order to research their topic and prepare to implement it. The students use online resources to get the information

they need to formulate a plan for their projects. As the students read online, they continue to make meaning as they synthesize ideas from the new and original texts. Ann shared an example of one group of students who struggled with turning their topic into a viable project:

There were two guys last year that I was a little worried about because they needed to do this for graduation. They wanted to do something with politics.

What could you do that is related to politics with students at our school? It took a lot of questions because they were not making the leap to registering students to vote, but eventually, through discussion, we got there. It suddenly clicked with them, and they went from there. That group ended up doing a presentation to a class about the process for how to register to vote. They brought a laptop with them and actually registered people right there on the spot.

The students used collaborative interchange to make meaning with each other, Ann, and the texts in order to build understanding that will lead to viable action.

Once the students have learned more about their topic and organizations who are already addressing the issue, they transition to non-digital research. Often, the students need to make phone calls, send emails, or visit local organizations or people who may be able to tell them or about their topic or guide them in how they could best help their cause. For one project, the students attended training with the local organization before they were allowed to volunteer to work with animals. Ann reflected, "I like this project because it is almost always this way. They start digital and then it brings them face-to-face with people and then they can see the impact that their

research and action has on someone else.” Ann gives the students time in class to work on the projects, for example to make phone calls to organizations that are open during school hours, which extends into work that must be done outside of class. Ann emphasizes with the students, “we don’t research just for the sake of research; we want to know something because we want to do something.” The students’ purpose for meaning making during the research stage of the project is primarily efferent. They need information that will direct their projects. The students decide what kind of information they need, how they will find it, and what they will do with it with guidance from Ann.

The meaning making continues as the students implement their projects through engaging with the community. The students must also document their experience with photographs. Ann shared the experience of one group of students who were interested in the military and had read *Seal Team Six Warrior*, but initially had a hard time deciding what to do for their projects. She explained,

Eventually, the students decided to help a neighbor who is a veteran and widower who was always stopping one of the students and asking him to build him a birdhouse. So the students decided to build his neighbor a birdhouse. They had to go through the research of finding out what kind of birds does the veteran want to attract and what kind of birdhouse do you need to build to do that. It was a perfect project for them. It was hands-on, it involved power tools, and being outside. The cool part of it was that the students spent all day with him. He was a veteran and they read about someone who had served in the war.

The students felt pride of having given the veteran a great day and left him with something that he wanted.

The conversations the students had with each other and the veteran they were helping allowed the students to make meaning throughout the service-learning project. They could integrate their learning from the book with the conversations to build meaning.

After the students complete their projects, they create a presentation to share with the class. This is an important aspect of service learning because it fosters the opportunity for the students to consider their own learning and continue the meaning-making process by creating a presentation that expresses that learning to an audience of their peers. Meaning is made and extended in the process of composition as the writer engages in a transaction as they add text to the page in a back-and-forth process between what they have and will write (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). Similarly to Marina's reflection that the Power Point presentations themselves do not convey a great deal of evidence of meaning making, Ann also finds that it is the process of creating the presentation and the sharing of the presentation with the class that is valuable. Ann explained that creating the presentations "makes the students think through the entire process." The students need the time to realize "what the projects meant to them." Then, they are ready to present to the class. During the presentations, all of the students in the group participate because they are excited about sharing what they did and what they learned. Ann explained the importance of creating and sharing the presentations with this anecdote,

I remember there was this one student who had gone to a fifth grade class to talk about bullying. During the activity they had planned, one of my students told the fifth graders about her own experiences of being bullied about her hair in fifth grade. She said to the 5th graders, *I still remember that story and it's hard for me to tell you about it.* She related this to our class and we could see her getting teared-up about it. She told us, *then a couple of kids in the class said: that's okay we think your hair is beautiful, we think you're beautiful.* I told the student *now this is part of your bullying story. When you think of how you were treated in fifth grade, you will remember what the fifth graders said to you when you were senior.*

Ann explained that the power of the project comes from the students being able to reflect on their personal experiences and share them with the class. It can be an emotional experience, but it is one that helps them to build understanding of their own experiences. Ann said,

That's the kind of stuff that hits them after they do the project. They don't want to do the project. It's the last thing the senior year. After they do it, they're just so welled up with pride. It's so moving to them. A lot of them get teared up. Sometimes it's the kids that you would at least expect. That's when I know.

That's the meaning making. I know that they will never forget what they did.

Ann noted that she does not ask the students to explain how they were impacted by the project because it feels like "setting the students up for an artificial response," instead Ann asks them to relate "how it impacted the people they helped," which leads the

students to more natural responses. Ann referred to this project as “a perfect circle” of meaning making because “the digital presentation informs the rest of the class that see it and might take action from there. They are used to doing research and sharing what they learned, but this project allows them to do something with it.” The students start the learning experience by reading a text that inspires and excites them and ends it by creating a text to inspire and excite someone else.

Ann’s guiding principles of making connection and taking action and collaborative interchange support her ability to help her students make meaning with texts. Her guiding principles align to her purpose of helping students to build literacies that are relevant to their lives and futures outside of school. Ann is focused on the immediate impact of the in-school learning experiences to students’ outside-of-school literacies and lives. Christine shares this concern and value. Christine is the final case and she teaches at a rural school about sixty miles from Red Oak High School where Carolyn and Ann teach. Christine is also focused on the impact and relevance of the students’ in-school learning experiences; however, this manifests as her focus on students’ voice and stories. She wants students to believe that their opinions, experiences, and values matter to themselves, each other, their communities, and the world. Christine’s guiding principles of making connections to value students’ voices and collaborative interchange to build empathy and understanding of different perspectives.

Green Ash High School

Green Ash High School is located in a rural, commuter county that borders several small independent cities in a mid-Atlantic state. According to the State School

Report Card, Green Ash High School is a fully accredited school of approximately 600 students. In the 2014-2015 school year, 92% of students passed the reading test, and 83% of students passed the writing performance test. Overall, the schools in the county met the federal annual measurable objective in reading with the status of maintaining progress (the current year pass rate is equal to the prior year's pass rate, or stayed within 5%). The school has an attendance rate of approximately 95% and a four-year graduation rate of approximately 90%. The state department of education reports approximately 25% of students at Green Ash High School are "economically disadvantaged," defined as a student meeting one of the following criteria: is eligible for free and/or reduced meals, receives temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), is eligible for Medicaid, and/or is identified as migrant or is experiencing homelessness. The state department of education reports approximately 25% of students at Green Ash High School identify as Black, approximately 50% of students identify as White, approximately 10% identify as Hispanic, and fewer than 10% identify as non-Hispanic, two or more races.

Christine

Background and Context

Christine has been teaching secondary ELA for 25 years. The majority of the classes she has taught have been 12th grade English, but she has also had the opportunity to teach grades 9 – 11, a Latin American Humanities class, film studies, and a skill-focused class on reading in English and math. She has an Educational Specialist degree (30 credits past a master's degree) and hopes to someday pursue a doctorate.

Currently, she teaches 12th grade ELA and Advanced Placement English Literature for 12th graders. Christine is the only participant in this study who teaches at Green Ash High School; however, she participated as a member of the school-university regional professional development and research program leadership team along with Ann for four years.

Texts and technology. Christine has a large classroom library and, like the other teacher-participants, a teacher computer and interactive white board in her classroom. Christine integrates many different types of texts into the learning experiences in her classes including encouraging students to include different types of texts in their choice reading. Christine explained, “To me, film, multimedia, music, written text, it’s not separate. It’s all the same thing. They are just different ways of expressing. I can’t separate them.” Christine integrates all types of texts as part of the learning experience, and Christine maximizes the types of texts represented by including the students’ own digital devices in her lessons. Christine’s students primarily use their own digital devices for academic use in the classroom. She supplements the students’ own devices by making laptop carts and iPads available to students as needed.

The district has given all students and teachers access to Microsoft Office 365, which includes online access to Office applications and synchronous collaboration among different users within the application. Christine makes use of this access in her classroom for student communication via email, digital notebooks, and turning-in assignments. Some of the students have their own laptop or tablet computers, but most of the students primarily work on their smart phones during class. Christine regularly

makes use of digital applications that are accessible, “user-friendly with a small level of frustration,” and applicable to uses outside of high school. She changes the applications that she uses from year to year to because she wants to introduce the students to new applications.

The value of education. Christine has a strong sense of the value of education personally and in society. The classroom environment that she creates is built upon her strong belief and passion for education. She shared how her own experience as the daughter of immigrants who came to the U.S.A from Cuba is a part of her identity as an educator. She explained,

I believe that reading skills and writing open the door to everything. My parents were immigrants who came to this country, and they had lost everything in Cuba. I always grew up listening to the saying: *You can take away a man's wealth, but you can't take away his education.* Education can open the doors to other things. It can take people out of poverty. It can boost people into other situations. They will not become the 1% or millionaires but they will get a better life. It is done through reading, writing, and analysis. That's one of the reasons why I use technology so much in my classroom. You just have to figure out how to use it and it is another tool for the students.

Christine described herself as an optimist who challenges her students to believe in themselves and their dreams. She tells the students that if she had listened to people who told her no, she would not be a teacher today, and uses her personal experience to inspire the students to consider their own dreams and how they have or have not been

impacted by other people's expectations or negativity. Christine has a strong sense of responsibility in teaching 12th graders so that they are prepared for life after high school. This is one of the things that has inspired her to include more opportunities for student choice. Christine paraphrased Maya Angelou to emphasize, "I believe that once the students know better, they can do better. I tell the kids that all of the time." Christine wants her students to be empowered in their learning.

In the following sections, I will discuss how Christine helps students to make meaning with texts following her guiding principles for meaning-making learning experiences with specific examples of her planning and implementation.

Helping Students Make Meaning with Texts

Christine helps students to make meaning with texts by following two primary guiding principles in planning and implementing classroom learning experiences. Christine's guiding principles are led by a focus on aesthetic purposes for meaning making that fosters the role of the diverse perspectives, culture, and experiences of all her students in making connections with texts. The students' lived experiences and personal goals for learning guide the meaning-making experiences. Whereas Ann guided students to take action based on their interests and passions, Christine guides the students to be self-reflective and self-critical of their personal identity and ideas about texts within the meaning-making process. Ultimately, Ann and Christine both are helping students by planning and implementing learning experiences that will help them to develop literacies that are relevant and applicable to their lives and goals outside of school; however, they emphasize different aspects of literacy learning. Christine focuses

on the role of storytelling, while Ann's focus is on service learning. I have placed Christine in the final position on the efferent to aesthetic spectrum because her guiding principles and justification have the greatest focus on the impact of students' lived experiences on meaning-making individually and collectively. Like Ann, Christine's efferent purposes primarily come from the students' their own interests, values, or goals, rather than ones stated by the teacher. Efferent purposes are directed more frequently by the teacher in Marina, Norma, and Carolyn's grade 9, 10, and 11 classes. Next, I will address how Christine's guiding principles and justifications compare to those of Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann. I will follow it with a more detailed and focused explanation of Christine's guiding principles and justifications.

Christine's first guiding principle is for students to make connections to texts that foster the development of the students' own voices during the meaning-making learning experience. Christine helps the students by prioritizing the students' personal and cultural identities in the meaning-making process. Christine juxtaposes the students' independent choice reading with multimedia texts that help the students to develop, articulate, and critique ideas in the meaning-making process. Ann's students' personal connections also drive the meaning-making process as their interests lead to further reading, research, and action. Marina, Norma, and Carolyn all provide space for students to make personal connections that are more teacher directed in terms of topic or process. Ann and Christine model their own strategies and topics but want their 12th grade students to choose the topics and strategies that work best for them within a frame of feedback and support from the teacher.

Marina, Norma, Carolyn, Ann, and Christine all have collaborative interchange as a guiding principle for the meaning-making learning experiences that they plan and implement in their classes. For Christine, collaborative interchange helps students to develop, reflect on, articulate, and critique their ideas in discussion with the other students. Christine strives to make her classroom a safe space for students to practice sharing their personal experiences and values and to test their ideas while receiving feedback from each other. Like Ann and Carolyn, Christine's students discuss their individual choice reading and share texts with each other.

Christine justifies her guiding principles as a means of helping students to bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies just as Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann do. Although the literacies that each teacher focuses on differ from one another, all generally relate to the idea of preparing students for their lives outside of school, especially in future careers or college. Christine focuses on literacies that will help students to be better at communicating with other people, especially those who may not share a cultural background or common values or interests. Christine sees these literacies as extending outward and inward for the students as they must develop a sense of value and understanding of their own identity and have appreciation and understanding of others. In this way, Christine's concept of bridging in- and out-of-school literacies is most similar to Norma who explained the importance of collaborative interchange to help students "have empathy and compassion for other people. Reading about other people's experiences gives them experiences too." Similar to Ann and Marina, Christine also wants her students to develop practical skills, like changing the

register of their address when writing an email to a potential employer versus a close friend, which will help them in and outside of academic settings. Like Ann, Christine takes the sense of ownership for learning that Carolyn tries to foster in her 10th graders a step further with 12th grade students as they get closer to graduation. Christine wants her students to be self-sufficient learners who can solve problems and learn from failure.

Guiding principles. Christine's guiding principles and her reasons for them are her ways of helping students to make meaning with texts. Christine's guiding principles of making connections to foster students' voices and collaborative interchange support her goal to help students to bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies.

Making connections to foster students' voices. Christine is aware of and takes into account how students' personal, cultural, and socioeconomic differences impact their meaning making in order to make learning relevant and empower her students. She emphasized, "Ultimately they want to learn. It doesn't matter how many times students say to me they don't care. The fact they tell me they don't care says to me they do care. Otherwise they wouldn't bother. The students get that." Christine takes steps to make sure that students who have had different experiences are included and that their own experiences are valued in the classroom learning experiences. Christine explained how the lack of personal connections could manifest in student behavior,

How do you explain the symphony to a kid who doesn't know what that is? The first thing that they're going to do is try to cover it up by being silly or obnoxious. They don't want to see everyone else getting it, when they don't. As a teacher, how do I reach that kid and say *it's okay that you haven't had the same*

experiences as everyone else? The first reaction for the teacher might be to tell the students to get out of class if they're acting silly, but we can't do that. How many minds have we have lost because they couldn't make a connection?

Christine is very cognizant of the scale of impact that she and other teachers have on the lives of students. She believes that students must be able to connect personally to learn, and that it is her responsibility to provide opportunities through her classes that foster connections to learning. Christine saw poignant evidence of this in how two different classes responded to the same activity in which the students had to use skills in analysis and deduction to solve a mystery. Christine noted that the students' socioeconomic backgrounds and cultural values played a large part in the meaning they made in reading and discussing the case and the conclusions they came to about the mystery and characters. Christine's observation stems from her realization that students who drew on a majority cultural value in one class tried to overrule students who had a different perspective. Christine shared her reflection on the lesson,

In the class with more students of higher socioeconomic level, the few students who had a much lower socioeconomic level were quieted by the majority opinion. If they tried to act silly because they couldn't relate, the rest of the class took it so seriously. And in the other class there were cultural values at play in students' opinions on cheating. They turned the case around completely and came to very different conclusions about it compared to students of higher socioeconomic level. This is the students' life, and they're bringing their lives here. I try to mention that every time we read something together: you may

have a totally different meaning on this from me because we have had totally different experiences in our lives.

Christine addresses the differences with her students with the goal of implementing learning experiences in which all students' voices are valued. She helps students to examine their own experiences and values and how these impact their understanding of each other and texts.

Christine extends the students' meaning making by fostering opportunities for them to make connections and critique literature and popular cultures. Christine shared an example of how she taught *The Canterbury Tales* as an analogy to modern rap music. She explained, "It can be dirty and violent, comical and crass. It talks about society at the time. The students need me to help them make those connections." Christine will rap *The Canterbury Tales* to the class to help the students to "see the richness in text and storytelling. I think it will make us, I know it sounds cliché, but really, it will make us a better world. In the sense that we can understand other people through stories." For Christine, empowering students in their own learning by making connections is closely supported by her second guiding principle of collaborative interchange.

Collaborative interchange. Discussion is a way for Christine to show the students that their ideas are valuable and that they have something to say. Learning happens during the discussion: the students read and talk about what they read. Christine finds students come to her class used to giving an answer but do not know how to have a discussion. Christine helps students to learn *how* to have a discussion with one another in small groups and as a whole class. She purposefully builds in time before a discussion

for the students to think individually, so they come to the discussion prepared to share their ideas. Christine said, “I tell them to trust themselves; it’s not always right or wrong. I tell them that their life experiences are valued. It’s not about the right answer anymore.” She helps them to build their endurance so they can have longer discussions by the end of the year by timing the discussions and helping the students to fill the time with discussion, rather than moving on with the next activity when the students fall silent or get off task.

Discussion is part of the class routine throughout the year so the students get “lots of practice at it.” Christine helps the students to have discussions that allow the students to make meaning through sharing ideas by encouraging the students, being comfortable with awkward silences, and joining into conversations with the students so that she can learn along with them. Christine “realized that the most empowering thing is to empower the students.” The students lead the discussion with their own ideas, texts, and/or stories.

Bridging in- and out-of-school literacies. Christine incorporates many different types of storytelling in her class to help students think critically about texts and arguments, have empathy for one another, and better understand different perspectives. Christine is “passionate about literature and storytelling.” She celebrates storytelling in its many forms including film, texts, and podcasts. She believes stories emphasize the commonalities of the human experience and “by spending more time looking at stories and storytelling, I really think, the world can be a better place when we can see things from different perspectives.” She brings this belief into the classroom

by widening the students' experiences with text and different types of texts as much as possible and by helping them to understand "when they leave school it doesn't stop."

Christine models these literacies in her own life by purposefully trying to be open to new experiences and understanding what is going on in the world herself. Many of Christine's students have known each other since they were in Kindergarten and "have not yet experienced the world," but the population of students from other parts of the world is growing in her school. Christine's belief in the power of storytelling helps her to make the connection between literature and life with her students. Christine explained,

I make connections from what I'm learning to what goes on the world. Isn't that what we're supposed to be doing in the classroom? Preparing students for the world? Not just, here's how you do a resume. But thinking. I tell my students I think the reason why we have so many issues in the world is we don't understand each other's story. If we take the time to listen to the stories I think it will be a better world. I believe that strongly. By studying literature from around the world you realize we are all alike. We are all part of the same story. We all just want to be validated in our stories. But we can't validate if we don't understand. That's what I want my kids to see.

Christine continued by sharing how she addresses students' lack of understanding of differences in cultural or racial identity,

As a minority individual working with children, working with children who are not part of minority, I get asked questions that might appear offensive... I know they're not or I'm trying, hoping they're not, because I just don't know. I say to

the student, privately, never in front of the whole class, *I know why you're asking the question, but keep in mind if you ask this question people might find offensive*. The student will say they didn't mean to be offensive and I tell them *I know that, but you just don't know. So let's find different ways of asking*. That's important too. They need to see that their stories have value, but so does my story have value. And so does the poor child or the autistic child. For the child who doesn't communicate verbally. We should all be validated. We are all important. I try to do that through literature and my own person.

Christine gives the students the opportunity to share their intention or story and uses that to help them to learn other ways of communicating that intent by having better understanding of their audience. Through literature, multimedia, and discussion the students learn stories that become part of their own story and life experience. Christine guides them through this process.

Helping students become self-sufficient learners. Ultimately, Christine wants her students to be “self-sufficient” learners. Christine said, “I’m teaching them how to keep learning.” She sees 12th graders grow a great deal through the course of the year to become more self-sufficient in their learning so that they will be able to continue learning without the ongoing support of teachers. Christine supports the students on this journey by including them in the process of learning. She includes the students in the process of determining their own learning goals for the course, deciding on the criteria by which their assignments are assessed, and in making decisions about how the class is run. The students also have opportunities for choice in the texts they read and in

how they express their learning. Christine explained the challenges of helping the students to overcome their understanding of learning as testing and fear of failure:

You have to remember that they're seniors. It can be like pulling teeth. I have to in some ways break down everything that they have learned and start again. There is no standardized test now. It's just these are the skills you're going to need. But once they get it you can see in their faces. They start to light up. They love that high. I always try to seize the opportunity and say who made you feel that way. They realized that they made themselves feel that way. I, as the teacher, did not have anything to do with that. They begin to realize that it's on them. There is not always going to be a teacher there. I can guide them. But they have to be able to grow and feel comfortable with failure in order to continue growing. I think their biggest fear is that failure. Once the students learn that there is a safety net in my class, they open up more and start taking chances. I help them figure out what went wrong and how they can do better.

Christine wants the students to struggle and to learn how to overcome their struggles, rather than just turn to the teacher for help at every turn. She explains to the students why she does this and gives them opportunity to reflect on the learning that happens as they figure out how to solve problems. Christine uses her guiding principles of making connections and collaborative interchange to help the students become self-sufficient learners by bridging their in- and out-of-school literacies.

Planning Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

With the long-term goals in mind, Christine creates learning experiences based on the students' needs. Christine differs from Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann because Christine includes her students in setting long-term goals for their own learning. In Christine's classroom, there is consistency and structure to every class block: time for reading and conversation, and time for individual and teamwork. The topics and mini skill lessons change based on the students and their needs and interests. Unlike Marina, Norma, Carolyn, and Ann, Christine relies on the students' direct input for what works and what does not work in her lessons. Christine makes choices regarding technology that reflect its accessibility to students, use in out-of-school settings, and ability to support the learning goals.

Approach to planning. Christine teaches 12th grade and sees the year as helping students to get "better at what they already know." The students set their own goals for what they want to learn at the beginning of each quarter and keep portfolios throughout the year to document their learning. The students review college and career readiness standards for ELA that have been adopted by the state to determine their own readiness and decide on their individual priorities. Christine has the students reflect on their goals in writing and discussion. Christine also has long-term goals in mind for all her students. Because Christine's goals are broad, they can be incorporated into each individual student's goals. She wants her students to develop their skills in argument, analysis, reading, and writing. She explained that she plans with the end in mind. She said,

There's the overall end, and then in between the small ends. What is it that I really want them to walk out of my class able to do? I want them to be able to think. Creatively. Analytically. To feel strong about their thinking. That they are valid in their thinking. That they can challenge the world with their thinking.

By including both long-term goals for her students and her students' own goals in her lessons, Christine balances structure and flexibility. This balance supports the differences in students' meaning-making learning experiences.

Meeting students' learning needs through flexible planning. Christine is very responsive to the students' needs and interests. She will change a lesson mid-stream to take into account their responses and ideas. There is continuity between sections of a class because they all have access to the same materials and goals, however there is also variation between sections of a class to account for the diversity of the students' experiences and interests. Christine addressed why she does not use traditional lesson plans,

That's why I have a problem with those detailed lesson plans. Step one this and then they're going to do this and then they're going to do this. You're missing the kid part. How is the kid going to react? That's where the learning comes in. I feel very uncomfortable with that structured kind of thing. I know the three or four things I'm going to do every day. The topics change but I need the students' feedback.

Christine balances this need for flexibility to meet the students' needs and interests in learning with a day-to-day structure of each class meeting that gives the students

continuity and familiarity. The students feel more “comfortable” when they know what is happening next. Every day the classes start with 20-30 minutes of reading, followed by time for discussion, a lesson on a concept and time for the students to engage in an activity and to collaborate. Each class is different because students and group dynamics are different. By planning for flexibility, Christine takes into account the variability between each class and student that fosters meaning making that prioritizes students’ voices.

Implementing Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Christine implements meaning-making learning experiences informed by her guiding principles of making connections to foster students’ voices and collaborative interchange. The learning experiences are designed to maximize opportunities for students to develop and express their own voices during the meaning-making process. Christine plans and facilitates the learning experiences by providing an environment and structure within which students feel safe to express their own ideas and take risks. Christine involves the students in the development of the requirements and in assessment of the projects. In the following section, I will discuss a learning experience Christine implemented inspired by *Humans of New York*, the popular blog and book series featuring street portraits and interviews by Brandon Stanton.

Photography and interview project. Christine implemented a project-based learning experience based on *Humans of New York* that fostered opportunities for students to make meaning in analyzing and creating portraits and interviews. The students studied how photographs juxtaposed with quotes from the subject work

together to give the reader a sense of the identity of the subject. The students then had to create three portrait/interview juxtapositions, one of themselves, one of a peer or friend, and one of a teacher or alumni. They interviewed the person and then represented that person in an accompanying photograph. The students' had to express their own sense of identity and voice in their own photograph and consider how to honor the stories of the other two people. The classes worked with Christine to develop a rubric that accurately reflected the learning they hoped to show and the risks they were willing to take in these projects.

Christine guided the learning experience by asking the students to focus on the stories of the subject in an aesthetically focused initial reading before turning to a more efferent consideration of the text. Christine asked the students to consider "what is this person's story?" After the students had the opportunity to express their initial thoughts and reactions to the text, Christine built questions based on their responses that guided the students back to the text to consider "the faces of the people in the photograph. Do they look happy? What colors do you see? Does the interview match the photograph?" Rosenblatt (1994/2005c) refers to the process of returning to the text as the "second stream of response," in which the reader's initial ideas may be confirmed or something "unexpected or contrary to prior knowledge or assumptions may trigger conscious reflection" (p. 15). In discussion, the students express their responses and interpretations and compare and synthesize ideas to continue to make meaning in collaborative interchange (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). Christine's students are focusing on how identity is expressed in texts and reflecting on their own identity.

The students had to create a set of three photographic/interview juxtapositions. The students made meaning throughout the process of taking and editing the photographs, conducting the interviews, and determining the final presentation of the project (see Figure 10).

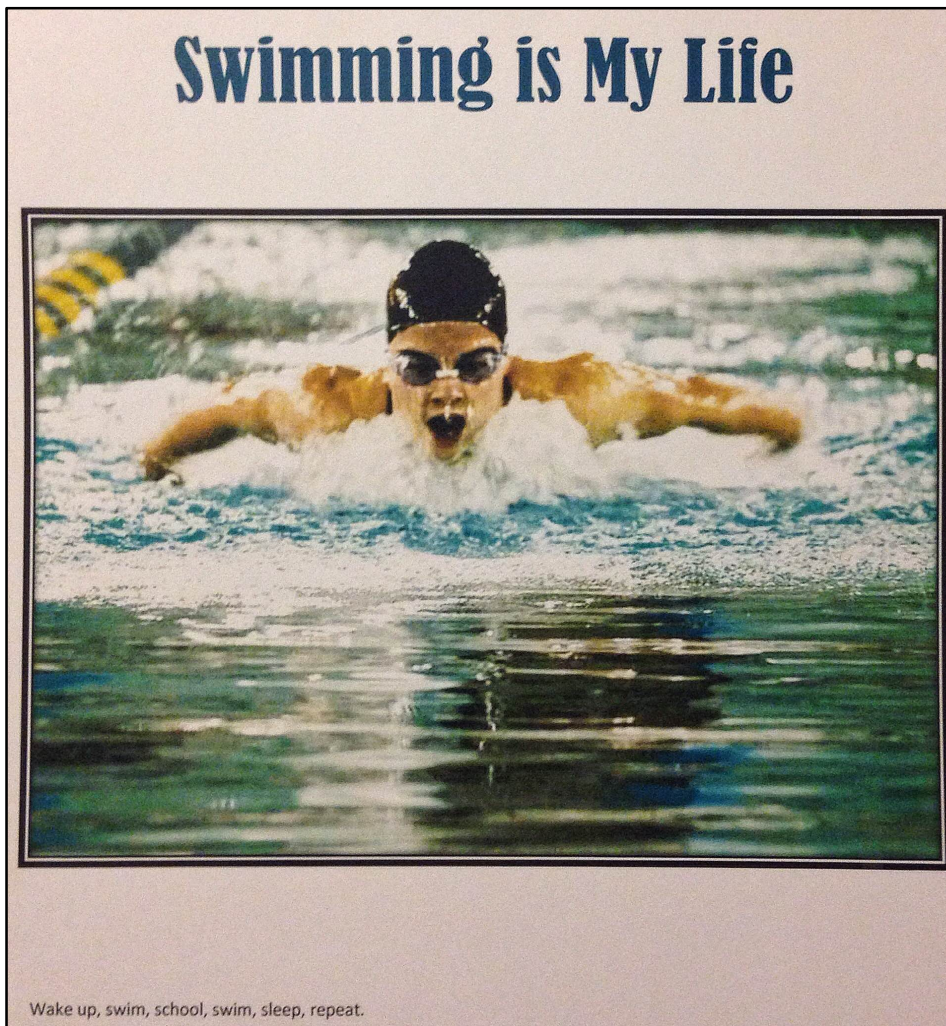


Figure 10. Christine's student took this photograph of another student and used the caption "Wake up, swim, school, swim, sleep, repeat" to represent the student's story.

Christine explained that she kept the assignment as broad as possible, "the only prompt I give them is to include a picture that matches how you represent yourself or the two

other people you include in the story.” This gives the students many options for expressing their ideas. Christine emphasized the importance of honoring and celebrating each person’s story in the process. She explained, “Sometimes the picture can be the story. The world opens up when someone tells you, this is your story, I can see your story, and I value your story.” Christine reflected that the goal of the project is to send the message to her students that “everybody has a voice. We all communicate differently. But, the way you communicate is perfect because it represents who you are. I think kids walked out knowing that they are valued. And isn’t that what we all want?” The process of creating these projects fostered students’ ability to express their own story and to honor those of other people.

Christine worked with the students’ feedback to make changes to the rubric to reflect their goals and what they wanted to get out of the project. Christine also provided continuing feedback throughout the learning experience. Christine created an initial draft of the rubric and shared it with the students asking them, “what works and what doesn’t work. What don’t you understand?” The students said the original draft was too detailed and specific so “it feels like a check list.” In discussion, the students helped Christine to focus the rubric on specific aspects of the assignment that they thought would provoke the most interest and learning while still leaving room for students to make choices and have flexibility to be creative. Christine also provides the students feedback throughout the process of creating their projects. This allows Christine to ask questions that help the students consider their own process of meaning making and creating critically and help meet the individual needs and interests of the

students. She takes on the role of the students' "editor" who needs to review and approve before the students' work is published on the internal school website.

Conclusion

Marina, Norma, Carolyn, Ann, and Christine plan and implement learning experiences to help their students make meaning with texts. They each use a pair of guiding principles in their process of planning and implementation that foster opportunities for their students to build literacies that are relevant in school and out-of-school. Each teacher has a different pair of guiding principles and defines the literacies they value most for their students differently.

Many of the differences manifest in how the teachers' approach facilitating learning experiences that direct students to an initial stance in reading along the efferent – aesthetic continuum (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). I presented the five cases in this chapter in the order of Marina, Norma, Carolyn, Ann, and finally Christine to represent where they are on the continuum in reference to how they guide students to in an initial reading of a text (see Figure 11). When students are guided to a primarily efferent reading during a classroom learning experience, it is the teacher who directs an aspect of the meaning-making experience by giving the students specific direction for a topic to focus on, a question to answer, or to use a specific strategy for meaning making. This approach is particularly common when the teacher is modeling meaning making and all of the students are reading the same text. Conversely, when the students are guided to a primarily aesthetic reading during a classroom learning experience, the students' natural, personal reactions to the text are the focus of the initial reading. This

approach was often used in learning experiences where all of the students were reading different texts and the focus was on the students' personal connections with the text.

<div> Primarily Efferent <div> Alternate between efferent and aesthetic </div> Primarily Aesthetic </div>				
Marina	Norma	Carolyn	Ann	Christine
Often gives students a topic, theme, or question to focus on as they read.	Often models and has the students practice a strategy as do an initial reading of a text.	Guides the students to a primarily aesthetic stance during choice reading, but guides them to a topic or strategy during small group or whole class reading.	Guides the students to an initial aesthetic stance and to use the ideas it engenders to learn more about related topics and ideas.	Guides the students to an aesthetic stance in order to make personal connections and build empathy for others.

Figure 11. The predominant stance the teacher encourages in the initial reading or viewing of a text and examples of classroom implementation.

In all five of the cases, the teachers integrate both the aesthetic and efferent stances throughout their lessons; however, there was a strong contrast in how the teachers guided their students to approach an initial reading of a text as it relates to the efferent-aesthetic continuum.

The differences in the teachers' approaches to implementing reading learning experiences are aligned to their individual guiding principles. Marina's guiding principle of making connections to universal themes directs the students to a particular topic to focus on as they read. The students are then taking an efferent stance because they are reading with the purpose of taking away information and ideas about that particular

topic. On the other end of the continuum, Christine's guiding principle of making connections to foster students' voices focuses the purpose for reading on the students' lived experiences of the texts and their personal reactions and connections to it. Norma and Ann take the efferent and aesthetic stance, respectively, but in more limited ways than Marina and Christine. Carolyn alternates between the two stances during different parts of her lessons. During the independent choice reading, her students are guided to a primarily aesthetic stance, similarly to Ann and Christine, and during whole class and small group instruction, the students are guided to a primarily efferent stance, similarly to Norma and Marina.

The differences in these cases also speak to the unique nature of each classroom context, teacher, and student. These differences demonstrate that meaning-making learning experiences use different content, materials, and activities; are implemented for different reasons; and have different foci depending on the available resources, the needs of the individual students in each class, and the values and priorities of the teacher. However, there are commonalities that bind this set of five cases together. In the next chapter, I will discuss themes that emerged from my analysis of each case in comparison with each other and how they contribute to helping students make meaning with multimedia.

CHAPTER FIVE: THEMES ACROSS CASES

In the cases presented in Chapter 4, I highlighted the different ways that each teacher guides students to make meaning in classroom learning experiences. Their guiding principles, priorities for literacies, approaches to planning, and emphases of meaning making in implementation were unique to each case. In this chapter, I will present a thematic analysis of the factors that contribute to meaning-making learning experiences in the five secondary English language arts (ELA) classrooms. The thematic analysis addresses the similarities across the multiple cases. This analysis highlights the conceptual connections between the cases that describe broad components of the meaning-making learning experience.

Multimedia in Meaning Making

From news articles to graphic novels to paintings and animated films, the teachers in this study embed a wide variety of multimedia texts throughout their classes. Multimedia is an integral part of how they help their students to make meaning. Multimedia is not an add-on or separate part of how these teachers plan or implement learning experiences. For the teachers, it is a natural part of what they do and how they do it. As Christine explained, “To me, film, multimedia, music, written text...it’s not separate. It’s all the same thing. It’s just different ways of expressing meaning.” Each example of digital and non-digital text works in conjunction with each other as a part of

the ongoing meaning-making experience. The teachers in this study have embraced multimedia as a fundamental aspect of the literacies they help students to develop in their classes.

In Chapter 4, I did not specifically address multimedia as a separate piece of the meaning-making process as I presented each teacher's case. This is because the five teachers in this study do not address or perceive multimedia as separate, new, different, tangential, or more important than any other part of the process. When I asked about the role of multimedia or technology in their classrooms as a discrete question, their responses often turned to a list of resources available at their school, including textbooks and computer labs, or struggles with policies on cellphone use in the classroom. These responses did not reflect the purposeful embedded use of multimedia and technology within their lessons that was immediately apparent as they discussed their classroom learning experiences, approaches to planning lessons, and long-term literacy goals for their students. For example, Carolyn's hypertext poetry project exemplifies how the process of annotating a poem with multimedia contributes to the students' understanding of the poem and how the students will carry this understanding with them beyond this project. Carolyn explained,

The artwork gave them a visual of the poem. Something to make the poem more meaningful or valuable to them. It's not just words on the page; there is more depth to it. If I think of this piece of art or image as I'm reading, it's going to hold more of a presence. For the students who did the project on "The Tyger" by William Blake and found a really amazing tiger poem to go with it, every time

they see a tiger or think of the poem or see a tiger painting, those images are all going to connect to each other in those students' minds.

Carolyn's students created a multimedia product that made connections between different types of texts. Each of these connections contributes to the students' meaning making. Carolyn purposefully included multimedia as a part of this learning experience to help students to be able to analyze, synthesize, and create as an expression of their literacies. All five teachers in this study saw value in students making connections between different types of multimedia as a part of meaning-making learning experiences. The focus throughout our discussions of planning and implementation tied tightly to their guiding principles and students' literacy and learning needs of which multimedia was firmly embedded, not discrete.

The teachers did not use multimedia as a way to engage students' interests that led to a "pathway back to monomodal activities and texts" (Rowse & Casey, 2009, p. 317). In a multiple case study of two secondary ELA teachers on their efforts to include more multimodality in their classrooms, Rowsell and Casey (2009) found the participants often used multimedia texts as a means to engage the students' interest in a topic and then used this interest to try to engage students in a monomodal text. Their findings are not supported by the cases in this study in which the teachers did not see the primary purpose of multimedia texts as a means of garnering the students' interests. Although monomodal texts, especially young adult novels, had a large presence in the learning experiences in this study, they were used in conjunction with multimedia texts depending on the goals of the learning experience and the needs of the students.

Throughout all of the cases, there were rich examples of multimedia in the learning experiences used to meet learning goals, including digital and non-digital examples analyzed and created by the students. The digital and non-digital texts “complement each other, as their conjunctions and juxtaposition offer new meanings and enriched experiences for readers” (Swenson et al., 2006, p. 358). Norma demonstrated that a reader can use the same strategies for making meaning across multiple types of text as her students applied them in “close readings” of art, fashion, music, and literature. The students are “not interpreting images in isolation of writing, or digital medium texts from print texts” (Jewitt, 2006, p. 135). The teachers approach learning experiences that support meaning making with multimedia as an expansion of traditional reading literacy. They emphasized the reciprocity of literacies between different forms of texts and multimedia during the meaning-making experience (Jewitt, 2006; Kress, 2003). For example, Christine shared how she teaches students how to read a film and the grammar of film. She explained, “The students start to notice how camera angles and color manipulate the viewer’s opinion or decision-making, just like how an author uses diction to manipulate the reader’s emotions.” Christine noted the students are able to make connections between the elements of style and craft of one type of text to another and apply them to new types of texts. She said, “[The students] realize it’s the same thing. They’re still telling a story. It is just a different form.” By comparing the commonalities of storytelling and contrasting elements of craft, the students are able to enrich their repertoire that contributes to the meaning-making experience. This

approach encourages the students to “expand traditional understandings of the function and form of the written word” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p. 2).

The teachers use technology and multimedia to help students build literacies that are relevant in contexts in- and out-of-school and not because they are a novelty. Ann explained that she actively plans so her students will be engaged in learning, but digital technology is “not new anymore.” She shared a joking conversation she had with her students: “I bet if I gave you a piece of chalk and a piece of slate you would be engaged. And the students replied, *could you do that?*” Ann uses multimedia and digital technology when it is the best means of supporting student learning, not to entertain her students. Marina explained that she purposefully chooses multimedia and technology that has immediate relevance to the students. She is aware that she will need to make changes year-to-year to continue to choose the most relevant texts and technology for the students, because her focus is on teaching skills that will transcend a particular technology or text. In a case study of a secondary ELA teacher, Bailey (2013) found that as the teacher learned about new literacies, she changed from using multimodal activities as add-ons to making them an integral part of the course learning experiences and goals. In the cases in the current study, the teachers approach multimedia texts as an integral part of literacy learning experiences.

Consistently across the five cases, the teachers used multimedia texts purposefully in meaning-making learning experiences that contribute to the students’ literacy development. In order to do this, the teachers had access and opportunity to select multimedia that they deem appropriate for their classes. Although the teachers

face challenges, they are able to mitigate contextual challenges and focus on learning experiences that help students make meaning.

Mitigating Challenges

Previous research with secondary ELA teachers has pointed to several types of challenges teachers often face when planning or implementing learning experiences that address multimedia. These challenges address access to resources, teacher knowledge, and professional learning (Bailey, 2009; Costello, 2010; Hughes & Robertson, 2010; McGrail, 2005; Ruzich, 2012). Contrary to prior findings, the teachers in this study did not face challenges that prevented them from planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences and using multimedia with their students. Although they reported some areas of frustration or limitations, specifically regarding access to technology, they have been able to focus on maximizing the resources and opportunities available in their schools. By doing this, they are able to plan and implement meaning-making learning experiences for their students.

Resources. In this study, the teachers do not rely solely on the resources provided to them and their students by the school. Although the schools provide textbooks and have library media centers, the teachers also have the autonomy to select texts that are timely and relevant for their classes. Each of the teachers choose materials specific to the needs and interests of the students in their classes. Marina shared how she keeps folders organized on her computer by topic and unit so that as she finds materials like video clips, articles, or websites, she sorts and saves them for future use. Norma regularly provides her students with contemporary nonfiction articles

from a variety of news sources to help students make connections to current topics and to study the craft of nonfiction writing. Carolyn, Ann, and Christine allow their students a considerable opportunity to include texts of their own choosing for classroom learning experiences. Carolyn explained, “text in my classroom has a very broad definition; it can be anything from fanfiction to Internet articles to novels to newspapers.” The teachers have a broad definition of text and act on this definition by providing their students with access to many different types of texts in their classrooms. Their efforts in identifying and using multimedia texts that they deem appropriate to their classes is not hindered by restrictive policy or lack of resources.

The experiences of the teachers in this study align to The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Guidelines for Selection of Materials in ELA Programs (2014) which recommends that teachers use a wide range of print and digital materials that celebrate the “spontaneity and creativity in teachers” to choose the most effective materials for a learning experience (para. 5). The teachers and their students in this study are able to use a wide range of texts that are relevant and interesting to the students without a “formal selection process for all materials used for instructional purposes” (The National Council of Teachers of English, 2014, para. 5). Access to relevant and interesting texts is also a major component of motivating students to read (Gambrell, 2011; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). The teachers reported spending time outside of school to research and identify reading materials and multimedia texts to incorporate into their classrooms. Several of the teachers also applied for and received

grants to help them build their classroom libraries with contemporary fiction and nonfiction books for choice reading.

Professional learning. The teachers' outside-of-school work includes identifying materials and extends to a concerted effort to build knowledge of best practice in ELA education, pedagogy, and technology. Marina said, "I feel like during the school year, and even this summer, I am sitting at home and I'm working on school work. Its just what I do." Marina described her professional learning experiences over the summer to include attending a multi-day workshop to learn to co-teach with her colleague, searching for new ideas and texts to use in her classes the next year, and revising lessons and projects based on her learning. Marina's attitude that ongoing professional learning is 'just what she does' is reflected in the varied and frequent professional learning experiences of all of the teachers in this study. In addition to engaging in professional learning themselves, Christine and Ann also have experience in facilitating professional development session for teachers in their school districts and in regional workshops and conferences. They all read extensively, including multimedia, and incorporate these reading experiences into their classrooms.

The teachers in this study supplement professional development experiences on educational technology with their own experience and research. Technology skills and personal knowledge of multimedia do not automatically translate to classroom practice (Hughes & Robertson, 2010). Norma, who has the least amount of experience with technology in her personal life compared to the other teachers in this study, takes an active interest in learning about social media from her students and reading about it so

she is prepared to ask the students questions and engage in conversation with them. She values the students' experiences with social media and gaming and the literacies these produce, even though she does not share in them.

In Norma's case, the absence of personal technology use in her own life does not deter her from addressing it in her classroom, and she values the experiences that the students have with social media and technology. She explained, "I'm not on Facebook because I don't have Internet at home. So many young people today are very knowledgeable about social media—Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and things like that." In the class I observed, Norma facilitated an engaging learning experience that asked the students to think critically about the differences between computer-mediated communication and face-to-face communication. Many of the examples the students shared came from their experiences in using social media. Norma shared information about a research study on Facebook and the role of social media in the U.S. over time. In this way, Norma was able to connect her learning—reading and research about social media—with her students' experiences of using it. Norma relied on her students' experience and expertise to complement her knowledge of the goal of the lesson, understanding mediated communication, and her reading about social media. Marina explained, "I am not the expert in the classroom. I help them figure out what they already know and fill in what they don't know. It's a partnership." The professional learning the teachers engage in is an important part of this "partnership." The teachers are confident in their areas of expertise and are confident in the knowledge and experience the students bring to the class as complementary in the learning experience.

By actively engaging in professional learning, the teachers in this study are able to choose from a wide variety of pedagogical strategies to individualize the lessons to particular classes, choose texts and resources that are relevant to their students, and address the literacy-learning needs of all their students. The teachers use what they learn to meet their students' learning needs. The need for frequent and varied professional learning is emphasized by their desire to have a deep reservoir of activities and texts to help students develop literacies that are relevant in- and outside-of-school.

Meeting Students' Needs in Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

The focus for meaning-making learning experiences is to teach skills and strategies applicable to any text the students encounter for academic or other purposes, in- or out-of-school. Meeting students' needs manifests in a variety of ways in each of the cases in this study, including providing students' choice, opportunities for collaboration, and allowing students to learn from their mistakes. However, ultimately the teachers are trying to help their students be able to identify their own strengths and use these to help others and identify their own weaknesses and have strategies ready to address them. This will help their students gain confidence in their literacies and in themselves as learners. They want their students to have this confidence so they will be able to transfer and continue to develop their literacies to new types of texts in new contexts. For example, Carolyn, Ann, and Christine all shared examples of having their students use new technology tools, like online databases or presentation software, and providing resources, but not specific directions, for how to use them. Ann explained, "I tell the students they need to figure out how to use the technology themselves. There

are tutorials. They can help each other out, and I will help them if I can.” They do not want the students to be dependent on the teacher.

Christine explained how she balances purposefully giving students access to digital tools with which they are likely to experience some frustration coupled with layers of support (e.g., video tutorials, written directions, peer conversations) that they have to seek out. She said she does this because, “I make them think. I’m not teaching them how to use the module. They have to figure it out on their own. They have to be self-sufficient. They’re used to [the teacher] taking care of things. But they can do it.” Christine implements learning activities in which the students practice using and developing their literacies in a variety of digital environments and with a variety of types of texts. She, like the other teachers, seeks to expose the students to different formats and designs of texts and have them learn strategies to figure out how to navigate within the digital environment.

Through these learning experiences, the students are learning how to read in different contexts and navigate different types of multimedia texts. This supports the development of literacies in which “learners develop knowledge and strategies for reading the new and unfamiliar when they encounter it. But you can learn to recognize patterns, to negotiate the unpredictable, to begin to interpret designs of meaning that may not at first make sense” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p. 188). By helping students learn strategies that they can apply to different types of texts, the teachers in this study acknowledge that each student has different literacies and therefore different areas of strength and weakness. They are not focused on one label, score, or criteria to describe

a student's literacies. This aligns with prior research that shows designations of struggling readers may be inaccurate if this label is formed only using one type of measure focused on print text (Alvermann et al., 2007; O'Brien, 2012). Different forms of literacy skills are not reciprocal or dependent on one another. A student's online reading skills are not necessarily reciprocal to their print-based reading skills (Leu et al., 2007). Beers (2003) emphasizes to teachers that any student can become a struggling reader when they encounter a text that is new or unfamiliar to them. The teachers in this study assume that all of their students are going to encounter texts and types of texts that are new, and perhaps have not been invented yet, and they need to have strategies ready to be able to make meaning with these new texts. The learning experiences they implement incorporate multiple types of texts, and therefore opportunities, to develop multiple literacies and better take into account the skills that students have and those they need to develop. Students need to be able to adapt their reading skills to different environments (e.g., print vs. digital) and the different types of texts within the environment (Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

The teachers in this study described their role in meeting students' needs in meaning-making learning experiences as flexible, responsive, and supportive. The teachers bring their expertise in content and pedagogy to each learning experience to guide the students to figure out how to overcome their struggles and work with and learn from each other. For example, Carolyn explained that her role while the students created their hypertext poetry project was to "facilitate the discussion between the small groups and partners in terms of trying to figure out what resources were best for

them. Even though they had all these research tools at their fingertips, sometimes they struggled finding information.” Carolyn helped them identify and practice strategies, like using different key words in a search, to overcome these struggles. Ann shared similar experiences in helping her students to search online and noted that she sees a difference in herself as a teacher now from when she was a beginning teacher. She explained,

In the computer lab, I am wandering around, helping them with what they are searching for, helping them when they get stuck. This is the big difference between me in my first career as teaching when I was right out of school doing it and now. Now, I am constantly guiding and facilitating instead of talking. I’m still talking – but we are talking to each other, not me talking at them. I’m constantly looking at what they are finding and helping unstick them.

Ann is an active member of the meaning-making learning experiences in her classrooms as she talks with her students and they make meaning together through collaborative interchange. Neither Ann nor the other teachers in this study view themselves as the holders of knowledge to impart to their students. Instead, they are active collaborators in the meaning-making experience with their students. They bring knowledge and experience that is different from their students and are able to use this to help their students question their initial responses, navigate challenges, and synthesize different texts and ideas to make new meaning in transaction with the text and collaboration with each other (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c).

The teachers in this study identified two areas in which they are currently seeing students struggle and are finding them important to helping students make meaning with texts. The first addresses the process of reading online and the second addresses immersing students in reading texts that are relevant, interesting, and meaningful to the students as part of the meaning-making learning experiences. In helping the students read in digital environments, the teachers are addressing a specific need because they see their students struggling reading online. In allowing students to engage in choice reading, the teachers are addressing a broader need that gives the students an opportunity to gain confidence and knowledge in themselves as readers.

Online reading comprehension. When students read any type of text, they are making meaning with the text as they engage in the process of constructing the text itself. No two people will make the same meaning or construct the text in the same way in terms of sequencing and emphasis (Leu et al., 2011; Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c; Serafini, 2012a). The teachers in this study have noted that the dynamic process of creating text while reading can become a major barrier for their students when they are reading and researching online. The teachers know when they ask students to search or read online they must be prepared to provide different levels of support to students who become frustrated. During online reading and researching learning experiences, the students must search with keywords, navigate different websites, and read different types of multimedia in order to make meaning. None of the teachers provide specific or whole-class instruction in reading online, instead they individualize instruction by providing immediate instruction within the context of the student's own struggle and goals.

In my observation of Carolyn's classroom, some of the students struggled with locating texts using online databases even after Carolyn modeled how to use the database and provided written instructions. Carolyn explained how she expected some of the students to struggle. She monitored the students closely during the activity providing graduated levels of support for the students individually and within their small groups as needed. In these types of learning experiences, Carolyn explained, sometimes the students needed step-by-step instruction in the functionality of the database, while other students needed help in choosing appropriate keywords. Both of these actions require students to make meaning with the multimedia text on the website. Other teachers reported facing similar struggles and using similar approaches to help the students.

The teachers also found a common struggle for students in reading online is in the process of searching and using keywords to find appropriate online resources. Ann described the struggles she has observed in her students while doing online reading and research: "It amazes me how quickly the students hit a roadblock in searching. I think we presume that because they are teenagers they should be awesome at this. But sometimes students aren't at all good with technology. They are good at certain things with technology" and these things may not be reciprocal with the purpose or context of the classroom learning experience. Ann described her role as helping them to persevere and build stamina for when they get stuck in searching and reading online.

Carolyn and Ann characterize this type of teaching as individualized to the needs of particular students and on relying on the students to support and help one another as

each student and teacher has different strengths and weakness in making meaning with multimedia texts in constantly changing digital environments. This aligns to prior research that has found that students can struggle when they are asked to read online for specific purposes, especially to answer a question or locate information, which may truncate the meaning making experience and disengage the students from the text (Kajder, 2010; Kiili et al., 2012). In this study, Ann found this to be true even when the students are reading online to answer their own questions or pursue topics of their own interests.

Providing students with choices. Students need to be able to adapt their comprehension skills effectively from print to online reading to other forms of multimedia in different contexts and for different purposes. Teachers can give students many opportunities to read different types of texts, which allow all students to be challenged and build their skills in areas that are relevant to them. When students have choice in the texts they read, they are more motivated to read and have higher achievement in reading (Gambrell, 2011; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004). For example, students in Christine's and Carolyn's classes may choose audiobooks or graphic novels for their independent choice reading. Independent choice reading allows every student to participate in reading with a focus on individual interests, perseverance, and building a culture of reading. Each student needs access to texts that "his own past experiences and present preoccupations enable him to evoke with personal meaningfulness" (Rosenblatt, 1956/2005b, p. 67). There is no particular text that will be perfect for all students, rather,

We need to be flexible, we need to understand where our pupils are in relation to books, and we need a sufficient command of books to see their potentialities in this developmental process. Our main responsibility is to help the student to find the right book for growth. (Rosenblatt, 1956/2005b, p. 67)

Ann concurred when she noted that if you asked one hundred English teachers what books are essential for every student to read, you would get a hundred different answers. It is preferable, with guidance, to allow “students to choose the books.” Ann, Carolyn, and Christine provide a minimum of 20 minutes per class meeting for in-class independent choice reading. They provide support and guidance to their students for choice reading by engaging in individual reading conferences, helping the students to document their reading, incorporating opportunities for the students to talk about their books in other classroom activities and helping the students to find books or other texts to read that are of interest and relevance to them. The teachers have extensive knowledge of young adult and adult fiction and nonfiction texts along with podcasts, audiobooks, magazines, and web resources that they use to provide guidance to the students in their reading.

By giving the students opportunities to talk to each other about their books, they build interest and motivation among each other for reading. Carolyn, Ann, and Christine have been able to create a culture of reading and sharing different types of texts. Alvermann et al. (2007) found that students who participated in an afterschool media club read more because of the opportunities they had to hear from their peers about the texts they were reading, including Internet sites and song lyrics. The teachers in this

study have built those opportunities into the confines of their regular class meetings. The students are able to share interests and ideas about the texts and multimedia in school like they do in out-of-school digital environments. The teachers use these texts and discussions as starting points to help the students to identify and develop their literacy skills.

By using a variety of texts for instruction, the teachers in this study give the students opportunities to build strategies for how to approach texts that may be unfamiliar to them or more challenging. Ann is a strong advocate for choice reading in ELA classes and explained that the teacher is the expert in the structure and elements of literature and rhetoric, and it is not necessary, or even laudable for the teacher to have read all of the books her students are reading. She said,

I teach the elements, style, and structure of texts. This helps the students to approach anything they read. I do not want the students to leave school having read four major works chosen by four teachers. I want them to finish the year having read forty books or one hundred books. This way they have the confidence and stamina to approach any book they come across.

The teachers are accounting for the literacy skills that the students bring with them to the class, even if they are not skills that are traditionally measured or valued by standardized tests or labels related to reading level. The students have the “confidence and stamina” to read a variety of types of texts for different purposes and in different contexts by practicing those skills consistently throughout the course.

As students read independent choice books, the teachers in this study provide guidance, suggestions, and opportunities for self-reflection. Carolyn's students keep a digital reading log, and Christine's students write a brief, weekly reflection. Ann has individual conferences with her students on a regular basis. These strategies help the teachers to monitor the students' progress in reading and provide guidance when they struggle. The goal is for the students to be confident, independent readers of any type of text. To do this, the teachers guide their students to texts that the students will find thought-provoking and challenging. In reading many books in the school year, the students also have opportunities to make connections between the topics and style of the different texts they read and share these comparisons with one another. Text sets are a method of purposefully helping students to make these connections between texts and to guide students to texts that are different and challenging.

Text sets. Ann and Christine have taken the concept of text sets and combined it with their students' independent choice reading to help students to make meaning by making connections between themselves and multiple texts. Text sets are a collection of texts that relate to a common topic. The text sets help students to explore a topic of interest from different perspectives and identify different types of texts that may offer different approaches to the topic. The concept of text sets in secondary ELA is limited in prior publications to text sets created by the teacher that the whole class explore or reads together. This method of linked text sets asks the teacher to start with a complex required text, choose a major theme, identify related multimedia texts, and have the students create a final synthesis project to express their understanding of the theme

that was chosen by the teacher (Elish-Piper et al., 2014; Wold et al., 2010). This is very similar to the approach that Marina and Norma take in their classes by integrating multimedia texts throughout their units and lessons, including nonfiction articles, art, and short films among others. Ann and Christine's approach is markedly different because the students create their own text sets based on their own interests and independent reading. Their students also get the experience of using online reading strategies to search for multimedia texts that will fit their topics. The students often include videos, music, poetry and nonfiction articles in their text sets.

Ann and Christine know one another through their participation in the school-university partnership program and have supported one another in experimenting with and implementing student-choice text sets. Ann and Christine have both created their own text sets and have their students contribute to them as a model for the process. Then the students create their own text sets by building on an anchor text and tracing their development of understanding of the topic through the multiple texts. The students make connections between their personal experiences and interests, texts they have encountered outside of school, and texts they have read in school. By having choice in topic and multimedia texts throughout this process, the students are engaged in meaning making that is relevant and motivating in bridging in- and out-of-school literacies (McClenaghan & Doecke, 2010). Text sets are a way for students to make meaning across multiple types of texts to explore how the topic manifests comparatively across different forms of media, each offering a different perspective on the topic.

Ann and Christine have their students express their learning from the text set learning experience in ways that help the student to reflect on what they have learned and how they can apply that learning. For example, Christine's students write two paragraphs to express their learning from creating the text sets: "one paragraph about what knowledge they have gained, and the second paragraph on why the rest of the world needs to know this. Simple, that's it. Just two paragraphs." Although simple, Christine's approach asks students to reflect on their personal learning and consider that learning from an outside perspective. Ann's students create an interactive presentation that demonstrates how the texts are related visually and with the students' explanation and connections. Figure 12 is a series of screenshots of one student's text set project on the topic of loss. The circles in the top left image represent all of the different texts she read and connected to the topic. The three circles at the bottom of the figure are an example of one of the texts she included, a nonfiction article, and her analysis of the article through the lens of the topic of loss and her personal connection to the article. The top right square is her theme statement, or the summary statement of her learning from the process of creating the text set. Ann explained that this student's theme statement was particularly compelling because "it sounded to me like something that she has learned based on what she read. I don't think that is something she would have known from the get-go. It came from after the reading and thinking." Ann sees the meaning-making learning experience extending from searching for texts to reading the texts to creating and presenting the synthesis product. Meaning is made at all stages of the project.

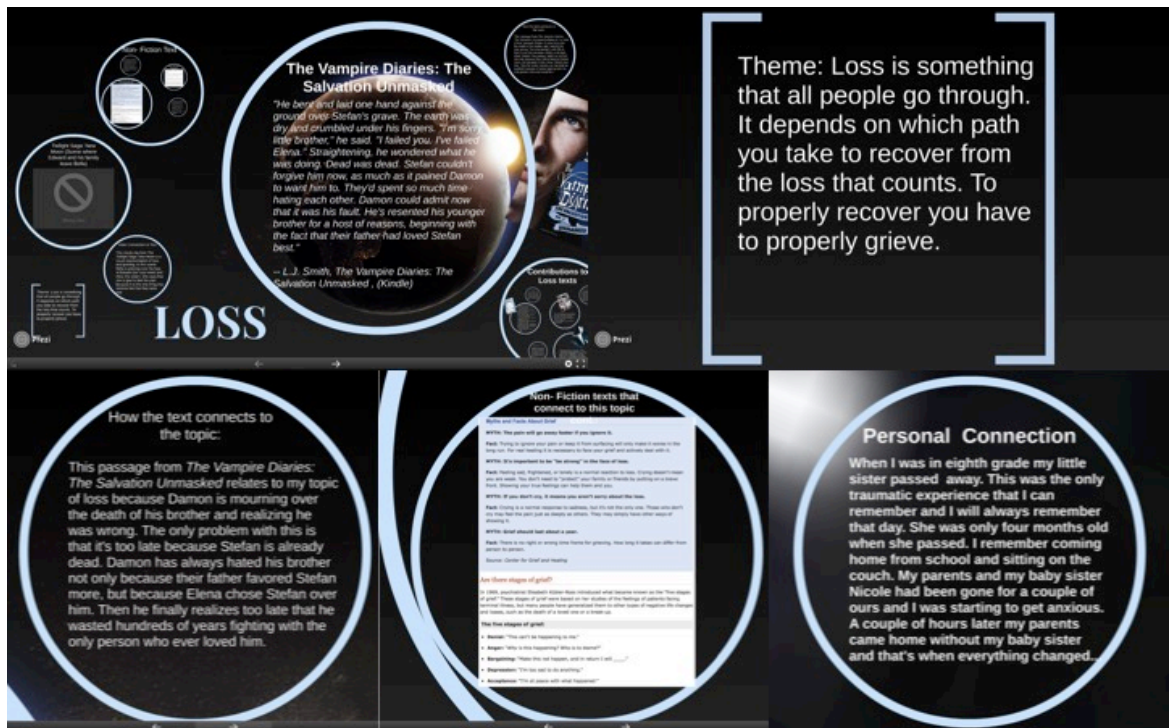


Figure 12. Excerpt from a student's text set presentation on the topic of loss.

Ann explained the learning goal for the text sets is for the students “to be able to see connections between books they read, their previous reading, and where it might lead in the future. The students need a passage to support the connections between all of the texts in their presentation.” Ann guides the students to create a theme statement about their topic based on the texts and use passages from the texts to support it. Ann said the theme statement and connections are,

The part I’m most interested in when I’m grading. It doesn’t really matter what passages they use, but they have to connect them. They have to take all of these pieces and put them together into a theme statement. It has to be meaningful. I tell the students, *it can’t be something you could have said when you started.*

The students embed multimedia texts like videos and websites that contribute to their text sets into the presentation. It is the process of creating the text set that is the valued meaning-making process in Ann and Christine's classes.

Providing choices for students and opportunities for them to discuss the wide variety of different types of texts they are reading and creating means that the teachers have to be prepared for lessons, topics, and discussions that are not exclusively led and controlled by the teacher. Especially when the teacher has not read all of the texts that the students have read, she has to balance guiding the students to develop their literacy skills and honoring the students' as the experts on the texts they have read. The value the teachers place in their students' literacies and learning experiences is reflected in how they plan their lessons. In order to meet the complex and varied needs of their students, the teachers in this study plan learning experiences so that they can be flexible and responsive to their students.

Flexibility and Responsiveness in Planning Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

The five teachers in this study reflect on their students, goals, and knowledge of ELA content and pedagogy as they plan lessons. This reflection allows them to build lesson plans with the purposeful assumption that those plans will change. The teachers want the emphasis on flexibility in their planning so that they can make changes to the lesson on a moment's notice depending on the students' reactions and interactions during the learning experience. They are also reflective on a larger scale by building each learning experience as it relates to all of the other learning experiences in the course. The teachers plan the lessons both from the view of the course as a whole and

how it fits into the long-term learning goals and from the viewpoint of meeting their students' needs on a day-to-day basis and that these needs may change. Norma spoke frequently of how in the planning process "everything is connected."

The teachers in this study did not describe separate stages to the planning process, instead they characterized several aspects of the planning happening near simultaneously. The teachers do not plan chronologically or linearly. They plan both near-term and long-term learning experiences in conjunction with one another. For example, Ann explained that she is thinking about second semester learning experiences while she is planning and implementing those in the first semester within the frame of long-term goals and unique needs of students in a particular class.

None of the teachers in this study replicate learning experiences from year-to-year either at all or without significant changes, and expressed a sense of incredulity at the very idea of even being able to repeat a lesson or unit the same way twice. Christine explained,

The joke in my building is that I have the whole year planned. What they don't understand is that it changes. I know the end product. I know what I want them to be able to do, but how I get there is going to change a million and one times. The changes happen within a single class, from class to class on the same day, from lesson to lesson in the same week, and eventually from year-to-year. The need for these changes stem from the students. Norma explained the individual difference of the students and how these form different group dynamics from class to class create different sets of "strengths and weaknesses in each of the classes. So, planning depends

on them. I just know that something is not going to work with another group like it did with this group, so I am constantly changing.” Despite these changes and flexibility, the teachers are focused on helping all students reach the long-term learning goals. Their responsiveness to the students helps to foster meaning making learning experiences that draw from the choices, interests, and personal experiences, culture, and values of the students. Just as no two readings of a text are the same, no two learning experiences are the same and the teachers are responsive to the cues from their students.

In Chapter 2, I presented three models for planning in secondary ELA and each designate determining learning-goals as a first step to planning closely followed with a priority on pedagogy (Hutchison & Woodward, 2014; Young & Bush, 2004; Young et al., 2010). Similarly to the models, the teachers in each of the five cases align their approach to planning with priorities of learning-goals and students’ needs. They follow other recommendations in the planning models in terms of allowing the goals and students to drive decision-making about the activities, assessment, and resources (Young et al., 2010). Even though the models do allow for flexibility in the processes of planning that they suggest, the teachers in this study do not have a linear process that fits any one of the models completely. This may be because the teachers are often planning many lessons concurrently, including lessons they plan on implementing in the near future and those they may be planning for the next semester or year.

The teachers’ planning is centered on meeting their students’ learning needs and helping them to develop skills that will allow them to make meaning with multimedia. In

Chapter 4, I described how the teachers each have guiding principles that underlie how and why they plan meaning-making learning experiences. In the following section, I will synthesize their guiding principles to describe the main ways that teachers in this study help students to make meaning with multimedia.

Guiding Principles for Helping Students to Make Meaning with Multimedia

In Chapter 4, I presented two principles each teacher uses as a guide to the planning and implementation of meaning-making learning experiences. The specifics of each principle was different for each teacher in terms of how they prioritize and conceptualize meaning making and multimedia in their classrooms. However, each of these principles contribute to learning experiences that are culturally situated and value the individual life experiences, values, and interests that the students bring with them to school. The teachers are not the holders of all knowledge in the classroom; instead, they are the experts in their knowledge of their students, the craft and structure of texts, and pedagogical approaches that they integrate flexibly to respond to students' learning needs and interests. It is the differences in perspective each student brings with them to the classroom that allows for rich meaning-making learning experiences. Gee (2012) explained "meaning is not something locked away in heads... Two people don't need to 'share a culture' to communicate. They need to negotiate and seek common ground on the spot of the here and now of social interaction and communication" (p. 24). In the classroom context, this sharing and negotiation of meaning among people and texts is directly impacted by how the teacher plans and implements meaning-making learning experiences. Because the teachers value the expertise, experience, and interests the

students bring to the classroom learning experience, they purposefully create learning experiences that honor and foster students' meaning-making experiences and literacy skills.

The ten guiding principles I presented in Chapter 4 (two for each teacher) are subsumed into two distinct categories that demonstrate the role the teacher takes in helping students to make meaning with multimedia. Each category then has two components. There is no hierarchical or chronological relationship between these categories and components. They happen in concert with one another throughout the planning and implementation of meaning-making learning experiences. The first category is collaborative interchange, which encompasses sharing the process of meaning making and making and sharing connections to texts. The second category is the role of the teacher in fostering meaning-making learning experiences, which encompasses modeling strategies for meaning making and valuing the perspectives of students.

Collaborative interchange. All five teachers prioritize collaborative interchange as a guiding principle for planning and implementing meaning-making learning experiences in their classrooms. When students engage with each other and the teacher in discussion about text, they are continuing to make meaning through collaborative interchange. Collaborative interchange impacts student learning,

When students share responses to transactions with the same text, they can learn how their evocations from the same signs differ, can return to the text to

discover their own habits of selection and synthesis, and can become aware of, and critical of, their own processes as readers (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 28).

Students learn, through experiencing collaborative interchange, that no two readings of a text are the same and to understand and appreciate different perspectives.

Collaborative interchange through small group discussion “teaches [students] that they are responsible for making their own meaning. Real meaning making occurs when the teacher has carefully considered how to formulate groups and has taken care to give students a task they will see as intellectually motivating” (Gallagher, 2004, p. 123).

Discussion boards and virtual reality worlds are digital tools for students to engage in collaborative interchange in online learning environments (e.g., Gomez et al., 2010; Larson, 2009).

In the five cases presented in Chapter 4, the teachers did not utilize digital tools for collaborative interchange as a recurring or prioritized part of the learning experiences for their classes. Instead, the teachers focused on the importance of the discussion that happens face-to-face during the class meetings. For example, Norma shared that her students used digital discussion boards during a whole-class novel study in a prior year. She found that the online discussions were most effective in helping the students to be better prepared for the in-class discussions that followed. Other teachers in this study had their students engage in collaborative writing or creating collaborative presentation outside of class but these experiences were focused on creating texts and expressing learning, not discussion to extend the meaning-making process with a text. In meaning-making learning experiences, teachers foster productive collaborative

interchange by helping students to learn about the process of meaning making and by giving the students the opportunity and supports to make, share, and synthesize connections with texts.

Learning the process of meaning making. The goal of giving students frequent and guided opportunities to discuss text is so that eventually they will not need guidance from the teacher to have a productive discussion that engenders meaning making (Gallagher, 2004). Students can gain insight into their own meaning making process through hearing about the processes of others. For example, Marina prioritizes collaborative interchange with a focus on helping students to understand different processes for meaning making. Marina models her own meaning making process and encourages the students to share their own. She will explain how she determined a theme of a story with specific examples of how the theme is supported by the text and how the theme connects to her own life experience and other texts. She asks the students to share this process with each other as they discuss as well. When the students specify how their ideas are supported by the text, they are articulating their thinking and connections. She finds that students who struggle understanding the teacher's process can often make a strong connection to a process (or explanation of a process) shared by another student.

As discussion of texts is an important way for students to make meaning, students may need opportunities to develop and practice their skills in how to have a discussion. The students need to learn strategies for how to make meaning with each other. For example, Christine shared how she emphasizes helping the students to learn

how to have a discussion that fosters meaning making. She emphasized the difference between talking and discussing because the students are “used to saying, *this is my answer*, but they are not discussing. I have to help them and say, *you might have answered a question but you didn’t have a discussion*.” Christine monitors the students’ discussions and takes notes as she walks around the room. She uses this information as formative assessment of the students’ learning. She tries to guide groups that get stuck without letting the students think they need her approval for every idea or topic. She explained, “I tell them to trust themselves; it’s not always right or wrong.” She will sometimes prompt them with a question or even simply smile, but she avoids saying “yes or no.” The goal is for the students to practice sustaining a conversation and gradually lengthening the amount of time.

These two strategies for helping students to make meaning through collaborative interchange foster students’ confidence in the meaning-making process. The strategies rely on the students to gradually gain skills they will eventually be able to apply to new texts and with less direct support from the teacher.

Making and sharing connections to texts. Collaborative interchange can also increase student engagement and build a sense of community among students (Ivey, 2012). The five teachers emphasized face-to-face discussion within the classroom setting as the primary way their students engaged in collaborative interchange. During these discussions, the students have opportunities to share their own meaning, which may manifest in terms of the connections they make between the text and their own experiences, values, and interests. These discussions are an opportunity for students to

see, first-hand, how each person makes different meaning with text because of what the reader, as a unique individual, brings with her to the transaction with the text. However, through discussion the students are in a process of negotiating meaning. They continue to make meaning with the text throughout the discussion. The discussion itself becomes an extension of the text and the meaning. The student synthesizes the meanings they hear “filtered through the prism of the ways they have learned to represent the world to themselves, colored by their own experiences, interests, and identities” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012, p. 180).

In the process of collaborative interchange, the teacher has the opportunity to help to guide students’ initial reactions back to the text to build support for and critically consider one’s ideas about the text. An initial reading can be reconsidered or developed through the meaning-making process in reading, thinking, and discussing. For example, in the discussion on *The Scarlet Letter*, I observed in Norma’s class, the students first weighed the character’s decisions against a modern value-system rooted in their own cultural backgrounds creating dissent among the students who did not share in the same values. With some guidance from Norma, the students then turned back to the text to consider the value-driven decision making of the characters who were written in the 19th century but set in the 17th century to consider how context impacts meaning. The students made frequent conjunctures about “what I would have done” in a particular situation as they began to immerse themselves in the imagined experience of the book. Each idea shared by a student led to confirmations, rebuttals, or qualifying statements from other students that urged the dialogue along. Norma only minimally

contributed to the discussion. Norma had set expectations and protocols for student-led discussion prior to the class meeting, and the students were prepared to contribute and encourage one another to contribute to the discussion.

When students hear each other's perspectives, again they compare these to their own meanings and can return to the text for confirmation or reconsideration. In this process, the students have the opportunity to widen their own meanings and build confidence in articulating and sharing their meanings with each other. The teacher shapes this opportunity in the ways that she guides the students and how she prioritizes the goals for the learning experience.

The role of the teacher in fostering meaning making. The process of meaning making is complex and ongoing, and the teacher can shape this process in how she frames and guides the process. Her priorities and values for meaning making are embedded in how she plans and implements meaning-making learning experiences. In a comparison of the guiding principles of the five teachers, they all take active roles in shaping the experiences, and thereby the meaning making, that happens and is valued in their classrooms. When a teacher's perception of literacies changes due to the opportunity to learn about new literacies, the nature of meaning making, and multimedia texts, her instructional approach can change to better align with the new learning (Bailey, 2009). In this study, the teachers' priorities and understandings of meaning making and their students were important factors in the meaning-making learning experiences they planned and implemented. The two main priorities for meaning making that impacted how the teachers helped students to make meaning

were the ways in which they modeled strategies and their valuing of the students' voices and perspectives in the meaning-making process.

Modeling strategies for meaning making. By modeling the process of meaning making, teachers can help the students to see how to overcome challenges and explore different approaches. For example, Norma and Marina emphasized explicit strategies for meaning making by providing students with essential questions or topic and by guiding them through step-by-step prompts to guide their thinking about the text. The students were actively engaged as the actors in the meaning-making process.

Even with guidance through the meaning-making process, the teachers never took on the role of expert holder of all knowledge of the text. For example, Marina and Norma balanced opportunities for students to develop their own meanings by making personal connections to the text, within the guided frame of a strategy for meaning making. Norma hopes that guiding the students with specific strategies for meaning making will help them to draw conclusion about a text and consider tone and purpose. She is wary of literary devices and terminology taught in isolation of meaning making. Her learning experiences seek to help students to develop meaning through the learning experience. She explained,

Our 11th grade students—most of them—can define a simile. But a lot of times, if I give them a terrific simile, they won't recognize it as a simile. All they have done in the past is define the term: a simile is a comparison using like or as. But they have never been asked, *so what? Why was that comparison made?*

Norma guides the students to make meaning by annotating the text and actively returning to the text in discussion and journaling. Through these strategies, her goal is that the students will be able to answer “*so what?*” about the text. She also guides the students to connect this to their own use of language. She explained that annotating text helps students to “notice how the writer chose a word so a reader can relate to it. It is the same thing when you chose words, syntaxes, or figures of speech in conversation to get people to understand, feel, or see your meaning.” Norma helps the students to make meaning with texts by guiding them through strategies for meaning making.

As the teacher shares and guides students to developing strategies that will help them to develop their ability to make meaning with texts, the teacher is also considering the perspectives of the student and the meaning they are making with the text. Implementing strategies does not happen separately from making meaning.

Valuing the perspectives of the students. As students make meaning with texts, they are also learning about themselves and the world around them. Rosenblatt explained “imaginative sharing of human experience through literature can thus be an emotionally cogent means of insight into human differences as part of a basic human unity” (Rosenblatt, 1946, p. 53). Study of a wide variety of texts helps students to build a repertoire of experiences that they take with them into any linguistic transaction. For example, Norma emphasized the concept of empathy as a crucial part for students’ meaning making experiences. She noted, “reading about other people’s experiences gives the reader experiences too.” These imagined experiences help prepare students to bridge meaning and understanding across differences and diversity of perspective in

different types of communication or transactions. The NCTE includes in its definition of 21st century literacies a focus on building “intentional cross-cultural connections and relationships with others so to pose and solve problems collaboratively and strengthen independent thought” (The National Council of Teachers of English, 2013). Reading is a process that helps us to use “language to think about and act on the world” (Gee, 2001, p. 714).

Christine focuses on students’ voices and storytelling as a means of valuing the lived experiences of her students and how these intersect with each other and the texts they read. She explained,

How do you explain the symphony to a kid who doesn’t know what that is? The first thing that they’re going to do is try to cover it up by being silly or obnoxious. They don’t want everyone else to see that they get it but I don’t. As a teacher, how do I reach the kid and say it’s okay that you haven’t had the same experiences as everyone else? The first reaction for the teacher might be to tell the students to get out of class if they’re acting silly, but we can’t do that. How many minds have we have lost because they couldn’t make a connection?

Christine asks herself and other educators to put themselves in the shoes of their students and consider the assumptions and biases we inevitably bring to the classroom and call these into question. All of the teachers value the individual differences in culture, experience, beliefs, and identity the students bring with them to each meaning making experience. It is these differences that foster lively discussion, classroom communities, and robust meaning making. The value of personal connection and

reflection is also present in the three ELA classroom examples of making meaning with multimedia that I shared in Chapter 2 (Carroll, 2014; Lisi, 2014; Wissman & Vasudevan, 2012).

Conclusion

Embedded across all of the themes presented above is the unwavering idea that students are at the center of meaning-making learning experiences. The students' personal experiences, values, and interests are honored and accounted for throughout the teacher's planning and role in implementing learning experiences. The teachers have folded multimedia into the meaning-making learning experiences in their classrooms because they are a part of the lived experiences of their students and the literacies the students bring with them to school. They cannot be ignored as students out-of-school literacies provide a vital bridge to the literacies the students develop in school.

CHAPTER SIX: IMPLICATIONS

The guiding principles of the teachers in this study demonstrate their commitment to helping students develop skills and strategies that will allow them to build vital literacies for their present and future lives in- and out-of-school. The teachers understand and value the role of the reader as essential in the process of making meaning with multimedia texts. Regardless of the type of multimedia, the reader actively engages in a transaction to make meaning (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). By acknowledging and placing value on the role of the reader in the planning and implementation of classroom learning experiences, the teacher can influence the meaning-making experience of the students in her class (Rosenblatt, 1956/2005b, 1994/2005c). However, the role of the reader is not valued equally in all aspects of English language arts (ELA) education (Carillo, 2016).

The teachers in this study build their classroom practice for meaning making on the premise that meaning is made in a transaction that occurs between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). The following anecdote from Christine, one of the participants in this study, illustrates how she came to appreciate the role of the reader in making meaning with texts and helps to underscore why understanding the role of the reader is vital to classroom practice. Christine began by sharing a story from when her daughter was four-years-old,

When my daughter was little she drew a picture of our family. In the picture, my face was blackened out. No face at all. So now I think she hates my guts. I'm making all these assumptions, crying to my husband.

Christine brought her knowledge, experience, and assumptions to her transaction with the text, her daughter's drawing, and was devastated by the meaning she made. Instead of holding on to her initial reaction to the text, however, Christine asked her daughter about it. Christine relayed this conversation and what she learned from it, saying

I asked my daughter why I had all black on my face. So she said, *well mommy, Zorro is my hero, and you are my hero*. She blacked my face as a Zorro mask because that was the movie at the time. She saw me as her Zorro. If I hadn't asked a question, to this day I would probably think that my daughter hates my guts. And it could've changed the dynamics of our relationship. I still have the picture. Every time I don't understand something a little voice in my head tells me I need to go back and look at it. This experience changed my entire perspective. I learned to always ask the question.

At first, Christine and her daughter held very different meanings of the drawing. Both sets of meanings—the Zorro mask or hatred—are equally defensible with evidence from the text (drawing) itself. Through discussion, though, Christine learned a different meaning from the one she had initially made and that changed her perspective.

Christine learned not to assume that her meaning would be shared by others and that simply asking can illuminate these differences.

Christine then shared how she has applied this experience with her daughter to how she approaches teaching and how she supports the meaning-making experience,

When I don't understand their answer, I don't tell my students that it is wrong. I know I just don't understand where they're coming from. I ask them, and then it makes sense. But how many times have we told these kids that's wrong. Once they feel that the teacher is not validating them, they are going to shut down. Some of them don't have a voice to stand up for themselves. I don't want to be the killer of passion.

When Christine works with a student who has a different interpretation or idea about a text, she assumes the differences likely come from the differences in experience, perspective, beliefs, values, or culture and can be understood through discussion.

Christine seeks to learn with her students and from her students. By striving to validate the students' ideas, she is emphasizing the vital importance of the role of the reader in making meaning with texts. Christine, like the other participants in this study, plans and implements learning experiences based on this precept. They plan for frequent adjustments while implementing learning experiences because they accept they do not know what the students know and in each learning experience have to discover the students' understandings. The examples of collaborative interchange, formative feedback, and open-ended questions in Chapter 4 are common ways the teachers try to acknowledge and understand the perspective of each student as they make meaning with texts.

Unfortunately, teachers are faced with contradictions and inconsistencies in the standards-based policies that govern ELA education, specifically regarding meaning making. The teachers in this study faced challenges characterized by mandates for class time spent on test preparation, isolation in curriculum and lesson design and implementation, and the need for professional learning and identification of resources outside of the schools. They worked to mitigate the challenges they face in helping their students in making meaning with texts by pursuing outside professional learning experiences and spending their own time and resources to identify and integrate relevant multimedia texts in their classes. The teachers reported feeling supported by their administrators and schools in taking these outside steps, but the implications of the standards that govern ELA education create conditions in which test preparation is mandatory and these teachers must work above and around the standards in order to create learning experiences that fulfill their goals for student learning. In the following sections, I will analyze these problems, address the implications, and make recommendations for leaders and policy-makers to provide better guidance and support to teachers in helping students make meaning with texts.

The Text and the Reader

In the experience of making meaning with a text, the readers have the opportunity to learn about text, themselves, and the world. They synthesize ideas from multiple texts and experiences and continue making meaning in conversation with their peers and in creating new texts (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading provided the theoretical framework for the current study (see

Chapters 2 and 3) because of its descriptions of the processes by which a reader makes meaning with texts and the aligned pedagogical practices of how the theory can be operationalized in K-12 education (Rosenblatt, 1982, 1995, 1994/2005c). Rosenblatt's theory and recommendations for classroom practice value the importance of the reader in the experience of making meaning with texts. In the transaction, "constructed meanings are disparate and contextualized" in the experience of the reader (Harkin, 2005, p. 413). Rosenblatt is not the only theorist and educator to hold this view; however, Rosenblatt's perspective on the reader has appeal for the fields of education and English studies because it allowed for the idea that both the text and the reader were essential to making meaning.

Rosenblatt came to be known as part of a group of theorists who considered the role of the reader as central to the process of making meaning and whose work was collectively referred to as reader-response theory (Chadwick, 2012; Harkin, 2005). The term reader-response and Rosenblatt's association with it persisted even though Rosenblatt was wary of the term and association because of its imprecise definition (Rosenblatt, 1982). Collectively, the theories that contributed to reader-response had a profound impact on criticism, research, and pedagogy regarding meaning making (Chadwick, 2012; Harkin, 2005).

Reader-response theory and the notion of the reader as fundamental to the experience of making meaning eventually came to replace the preceding literary theory and pedagogical practice of New Criticism, which privileged the role of the text (Carillo, 2016; Chadwick, 2012; Harkin, 2005). The conflict between the relative role of reader

and text is important because of its implications for pedagogy and meaning making.

According to the New Critics “readers should learn to deal directly and only with words on the page” (Beers & Probst, 2013, p. 40). The meaning is already there in “a spatial, unified whole, a jigsaw puzzle already assembled; readers simply needed to understand how the pieces fit together to form a unified whole. The text was paramount; the individual reading it, much less important” (Chadwick, 2012, p. 7). The pedagogy of the New Critics asks the reader to go back into the text to find all support for meaning.

In New Criticism pedagogy, students were taught to “hunt for the meaning” in the text rather than make meaning with the text (Beers & Probst, 2013, p. 40). This manifested in classrooms as a process in which meaning was found in the teacher’s guide, and students “realized that it was easier and more efficient to read the analysis of the text than to read the actual text” once study guides like Cliff’s Notes became widely available (Beers & Probst, 2013, p. 40). As the foundational ideas of reader-response proliferated in the mid- to late-20th century in English studies, “New Criticism eventually died out” and criticism and pedagogy that valued the role of the reader replaced it (Chadwick, 2012, p. 6). The concepts of reader-response have become so enmeshed in English studies that they are now “simply assumed in virtually every aspect of our work [...] Many people have never known a time in the academy when it has not been normal” (Harkin, 2005, p. 413). The concept of the reader as a necessary part of meaning-making process is now a fundamental part of English studies and works in conjunction with other theories and in related disciplines (Harkin, 2005).

Reader-response and meaning-making that values the role of the reader were part of the underlying assumptions of the teachers in this study about the meaning-making process. Their guiding principles (see Chapters 4 and 5) focused on how readers make meaning in a transaction *with* texts, not *from* the text. Unfortunately, these theories do not seem to sit beside each other in classrooms offering students and teachers different theoretical lenses for making meaning with text. Instead, the pedagogy aligned to each theory, one that emphasizes the role of the reader and the other that excludes it, compete with each other in classroom learning experiences, content-area standards, and assessments. It is the conflicting understanding of the role of the reader in each theory, specifically, that have manifested as a point of tension in pedagogical practices and standards in ELA (Carillo, 2016). One area in ELA education where this tension is evident is in the types of questions teachers ask and are encouraged to ask students about texts.

Text-dependent questions and meaning making. When Christine questioned her daughter about her family drawing (see above), she was inquiring into her daughter's meaning of the text. In listening to the response, Christine learned a different interpretation of the text than the one she had initially. Christine valued her daughter's meaning and the prior experience and understanding her daughter brought with her to the meaning-making experience. Christine did not presume there was one right answer. She did not assume the interpretation of the more experienced reader would take precedence over that of the inexperienced reader. Yet, Christine still acknowledged the evidence in the text—the symbolic mask of Zorro—as valid support for her daughter's

interpretation. Christine's questions demonstrate the value of a reader-centered perspective on meaning making.

The types of questions prompted by reader-response theory also value a reader-centered perspective on meaning making because they allow the reader to consider the text through the lens of their personal experience, culture, and context (Beers & Probst, 2013). Some of the theories that are incorporated into reader-response decouple the text and the reader completely, allowing for questions and responses that do not refer back to the text at all (Chadwick, 2012; Harkin, 2005). Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading took a more measured approach in considering both the text and the reader and so the types of questions consider them both as well. This is in contrast to the approach promoted by New Criticism, which allows only for interpretations and questions that consider the text and not the personal experience, culture, or context of the reader.

Rosenblatt (1982) promoted pedagogy that aligned to her theory of meaning making in which the experience of the student-reader must be valued. She explained that in a classroom community of trust, students should be able to feel comfortable sharing their natural, unprompted reactions to the text. She cautioned teachers to guide discussion carefully by asking questions that allow the students to choose the aspects of the text that were most important or relevant to them and not lead the students to ideas or aspects of the text that were important or relevant to the teacher. Rosenblatt elaborated,

the point is to foster expressions of response that keep the experiential, qualitative elements in mind. Did anything especially interest? Annoy? Puzzle? Frighten? Please? Seem familiar? Seem weird? The particular text and the teacher's knowledge of the readers involved will suggest such open-ended questions. (1982, p. 276)

The teachers in this study emphasized the importance of creating a classroom environment where the students' responses are welcomed and encouraged and using open-ended questions for students to share their own understandings and connections with the texts. Their approach is supported by reader-response and the transactional theory of reading as well as contemporary publications for ELA practitioners. The teachers in this study referenced several books that had influenced their teaching including *Notice & Note* (Beers & Probst, 2013), *Deeper Reading* (Gallagher, 2004), and *Read Write Teach* (Rief, 2014). Each of these books promote strategies for questioning that values the role and experience of the reader in making meaning with texts.

Text-dependent questions and pedagogy. In contrast to the open-ended and reader-centered approach to questioning promoted by pedagogies associated with the transactional theory of reading, there is a standardized-test driven emphasis on asking students questions from which they are only supposed to answer using evidence from the text (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012; Virginia Department of Education, 2012). This text-centric approach to questioning is promoted on the state level by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and state departments of education. For example, on the Virginia

Department of Education website under resources for English, they state that students are

Required to determine the meaning of complex texts and make logical inferences. Text-dependent questions do not ask students about their prior experience or feeling on a subject, but rather rely on explicit or implied information from the text. Students are expected to speak and write using evidence presented in texts, and to present analyses based on credible information that is based in the text. (Virginia Department of Education, 2012, para. 1)

The authors of the CCSS in ELA also emphasize this approach to questioning by “encouraging students to ‘read like a detective’ by prompting relevant and central inquiries into the meaning of the source material that can be answered only through close attention to the text” (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012, p. 16). The use of the word “only” in this definition emphasizes the way in which text-dependent questions have the potential to suppress students’ experiences of making meaning. There is “only” one way to read, and that is through hunting for and finding meaning in the text. In the “detective” approach being advocated by the CCSS, the students are not *making* meaning with the text. They can only find meaning from the text itself in order to answer questions. In recommendations for teaching with text-dependent questions, teachers must create the questions that rely on the text for answers (Lapp, Moss, Grant, & Johnson, 2014). The directives by the authors of the CCSS guide teachers to limit the role of the reader in how and why questions are asked and answered in classroom

learning experiences. This approach is aligned to the work of the New Critics and these types of questions ask students to hunt for meaning within the pages of the text (Carillo, 2016). These questions privilege the meanings that are made by the teacher and exclude the perspective of the student that disagrees with the teacher's perspective.

The emphasis on text-dependent questions that privilege one interpretation of a text are being advocated as the preferred method of questioning in classroom learning experiences in ELA while de-emphasizing questions that value the role of the reader (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010b; Virginia Department of Education, 2012). This creates a tension in ELA education because it sends the message to teachers that the only legitimate form of evidence in constructing an argument can be found in the text and "natural student responses referencing their own experiences in response to a text may be squelched by teachers who believe this kind of evidence is off-limits" (Snow & O'Connor, 2014, p. 31). Advocating one type of classroom practice regarding meaning making may have a particularly detrimental effect on students who are learning only one type of evidence counts and that their personal meanings, experiences, and values are not included.

Instead, it is important to give the students opportunities to learn different strategies for making meaning, how different meanings are made, and how different meanings can be developed through synthesis, reflection, and collaboration to meet the larger goals of preparing students for out-of-school literacy experiences. The teachers in this study emphasize the importance of student developing critical thinking skills and

receiving opportunities to learn about themselves and the world around them through the study of texts. This greater purpose in ELA education is also emphasized by researchers and professors in the field of English. Salvatori and Donahue (2012) explain that in their college English classes and research,

readers can use reading not merely to report on texts or to construct their signifying functions, but also to learn about themselves as readers: that is, as readers who, in thinking and activating the thoughts of another, can learn about and critically engage their own proclivities to listen to those thoughts, to dialogue with, to learn from, or to shut them out. Teaching students to perform the necessary self-reflexive moves to promote this kind of self-understanding has always been a project of paramount importance to us, the sine qua non of our professional activity. (p. 201)

Questions generated by the students or that are sufficiently open-ended and allow for different perspectives on a text may help students to engage in meaning-making experiences that include the text. It may also help them to go beyond the text to learn about themselves and the world around them, which in turn can then help them to deepen their understanding of the text. This demonstrates an expansion of potential for meaning-making learning activities that teachers can plan and implement in their classrooms.

Text-dependent questions and content standards. The emphasis on text-dependent questions is one example of how classroom practice can limit the role of the reader in meaning-making learning experiences. Text-dependent questions, if used as

just one type of question or if generated by the students themselves, would likely not have an undue impact on meaning-making learning experiences (Beers & Probst, 2013; Gallagher, 2004). However, the current standards for ELA education guide a classroom approach to meaning making emphasizes the use of only text-dependent questions that are created by teachers, publishers, or tests. This limited approach aligns to the New Criticism literary theory and unduly excludes the role of the reader and limits students' learning experiences (Carillo, 2016; Hinchman & Moore, 2013; Snow & O'Connor, 2014).

Content standards help teachers to navigate the priorities in approaching meaning-making and direct them towards the types of questions to ask and other pedagogical practices. An emphasis on a type of meaning making that excludes the reader may limit teachers in helping students make meaning with texts in ways that bridge their in- and out-of school literacies. In the following sections, I will compare the ways in which different sets of standards can include and exclude the role of the reader and how this may impact meaning-making learning experiences. I will contrast guidance for teachers in fostering meaning-making learning experiences from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)/International Reading Association (IRA) Standards, the English Standards of Learning for the Virginia Public Schools, and the Common Core State Standards for English, each of which conceptualizes and advocates for a different understanding of meaning making.

National Standards for ELA

On the national level, the field of ELA education is guided by a set of standards from the NCTE and the International Reading Association (IRA). These standards are

guides for teachers and educational leaders and policy makers for ELA. The NCTE/IRA standards are important because they give teachers a broad understanding of the opportunities and instruction needed by students and guide curriculum development. They are designed to “complement other national, state, and local standards and contribute to ongoing discussion about English language arts classroom activities and curricula” (The National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association, 1996, para. 1)

The NCTE/IRA standards advise teachers to use a variety of types of texts in different genres including print and multimedia in implementing learning experiences to help students make meaning. They also reinforce the complexity of making meaning with texts including reference to the role the reader plays in the meaning-making learning experience. Importantly, the standards do not suggest that there is a *right* answer or meaning to any text. However, they do suggest that reading is an experience in which students need their personal knowledge and beliefs and that meaning is shaped through discussion. They reinforce aesthetic purposes for reading to include reading for “personal fulfilment” and researching topics of “interest.” In the final standard, they reemphasize the importance of different purposes for reading reading and the students’ right to choose these purposes by stating “students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information)” (The National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association, 1996, sec. 3). These standards

provide guidance for grades K-12 ELA in which the role of the student is acknowledge and advocated for across several standards.

The NCTE/IRA standards guide the teaching of reading to give students the opportunity to learn about themselves, the text, their peers, and the world. These standards align well with Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading (1994/2005c) and the cases presented in this study. However, these standards, in order to be relevant and applicable in many different teaching contexts and to different levels of policy makers, administrators, and researchers, are necessarily broad. They do not prescribe a curriculum, texts, or method of teaching. They do provide a broad frame through which teachers can support their students' ability to make meaning with texts. However, the lack of specificity does not provide teachers with guidance on day-to-day planning and implementation of developmentally appropriate lessons to meet these stands. Instead, these standards should be used by states, school districts, and teachers to create grade-level standards, goals, and curriculum that will provide teachers with specific guidance in planning and implementing learning experiences.

State-Adopted Standards for ELA

The NCTE/IRA standards give broad direction to states, school districts, and teachers that must be operationalized for each state, school district, grade level, and classroom. The state-adopted standards in ELA provide grade level lists of standards that give teachers specific direction on what their students need to learn. In the following sections, I will compare the English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools and the CCSS in ELA to demonstrate different ways the language of standards

can represent and constrict meaning making learning experiences. The language of the standards is a guide for teachers in planning and implementing learning experiences. The assumptions regarding meaning making embedded in the standards can impact these experiences.

The English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools. The English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools provide a list grade-level based standards for grades K-12. The goals of these standards are to “teach students to read, write, and communicate” while helping to prepare them to “participate in society as literate citizen, equipped with the ability to communicate effectively in their communities, in the workplace, and in postsecondary education” (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, p. v). Like the teachers in this study, the standards state a purpose for ELA education that goes beyond classroom learning experiences or the reading of specific texts and speaks to the importance of developing literacies that will help students in their lives outside of school. There are 855 standards in grades K-12 that address topics ranging from learning speech-sounds and rhymes in Kindergarten to methods of citing sources in twelfth grade. My focus in the analysis of the standards below is on the standards that specifically address reading. In the reading standards, there is language that addresses the types of literary terms or concept (e.g., point of view, free-verse poetry, imagery, tone) and that suggests specific strategies and skills the students should develop (e.g., summarizing, analyzing, explain, make predictions). In the following sections, I will explain how the role of the reader manifests and changes

throughout the standards in grade K-12 and their implications for classroom meaning-making learning experiences.

Kindergarten to grade five. The English Standards of Learning in grades K-5 ask students to make connections between their prior experiences or reading and the text. This supports a reader-response approach to teaching because the experiences of the students are acknowledged and valued. This helps give teachers direction in their instruction that it is important and necessary to value to the role of the student when making meaning with texts. In grades K-1, the standard states that the student will “relate previous experiences to what is read” (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, pp. 2, 5). This standard is stated generally so that the student may potentially make a relationship between any previous experience and any aspect of a text. This allows for a response that is natural and authentic to the student (Rosenblatt, 1982). In grade 2, the standard states the student will “relate previous experiences to the main idea,” and in grade 3, it states the student will “make connections between previous experiences and reading selections” (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, pp. 8, 11). These two standards also demonstrate that the students’ experiences are valued in the process of making meaning but they begin to suggest a limit on where the connection can be made, for example, to the main idea rather than the aspect of the text the students deem to be most relevant to themselves and their own purposes. In grades 4 and 5, the standard states that students will “describe the relationship between the text and previously read materials” (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, pp. 14, 17). This

standard shows a marked shift from the standards in the previous grades because it puts the emphasis on text, rather than the students' experiences.

The role of the purpose for reading also shifts in grades K-5. The reader's purpose in a transaction with the text will influence the meaning made with it (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). In grades 1 – 3, the standard states that students will "set a purpose for reading" (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, pp. 6, 8, 11). However, in grade 4, the standard says the student will "explain the author's purpose" (p. 14). This shift in language highlights a change from the perspective that it is the reader who decides the purpose for reading to the idea that the purpose can be found in the text. This shift implies a devaluing of the reader in setting purpose as is stated in the transactional theory of reading (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). A focus on the author's purpose gives more direction to the teacher to help the students make meaning by hunting for it from the text than making it with the text. The focus on the author's purpose, rather than the reader's purpose, continues throughout grades 6-12.

Grades six to eight. In grades 6-8, the language of the standards shifts again further limiting the role of the reader in making meaning with texts. The standard states that students will "use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning" (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, p. 20). This standard has changed "experiences" to "knowledge" and suggest the "knowledge" be used "as context" for, rather than as an integral part of reading. The final phrase of the standard, "for new learning," does not add much meaning to the standard or direction for the teacher who may be trying to apply it. Many of the other standards suggest a hunting or detective

style of reading in which the student must identify and/or explain a wide variety of elements of texts from main idea to figurative language to characters to transitional words and phrases. For example in grade 6, the standards say students will “identify and analyze the author’s use of figurative language” and “identify transitional words and phrases that signal an author’s organizational pattern” (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, p. 20). This may recast the “prior and background knowledge” of the student not as the knowledge they have gained through their lived experiences in- and out-of-school, instead as their knowledge of literary terms and conventions, further limiting the value of the role of the reader.

Grades nine to twelve. In the standards for high school, several shifts of language occur regarding the emphasis of reading. The ninth and tenth grade related standards ask teachers to support students’ reading by teaching them to use prior knowledge in support of reading comprehension. The phrase “prior knowledge” is added to a list of other skills and strategies suggested in the standard: “Make predictions, inferences, draw conclusions, and connect prior knowledge to support reading comprehension” (Virginia Department of Education, 2010, p. 29). This standard points to many of the same concerns I addressed with the standard in grades six – eight; however, they have shifted utility of “prior knowledge” from “context for new learning” to “support reading comprehension.” This shift in language signifies another narrowing of the potential use of “prior knowledge” as students make meaning with texts, this time only for reading comprehension. There is no value placed on a meaning-making learning experiences that helps students to question, critique, deepen, or extend their

understanding of themselves and the world around them or how integrating the different perspectives of their peers may contribute to making meaning with the text.

Lack of consistency in the English Standards of Learning for Virginia. The personal experiences, beliefs, values, and culture that students bring with them to the experience of making meaning are as valuable in twelfth grade as it is in Kindergarten. The lack of consistency and apparent devaluing of the role of the reader in the Virginia English Standards of Learning is startling, and speaks to the need for state level educators and educational policy-makers to closely consider the language of the standards and how it represents, or does not represent, the role of the student in transaction with a text to make meaning.

The standards in Virginia demonstrate ways in which the language of the standards can emphasize or de-emphasize the role of the reader in making meaning with texts. In Virginia, the language of the standards is not consistent across grade levels but does offer some guidance for teachers regarding different approaches to meaning making. In contrast, The Common Core State Standards, which are currently being used by 42 states (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2016), are consistent in their language across the grade levels but provide less guidance for teachers in different approaches to making meaning.

Common Core State Standards: ELA Anchor Standards. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English are based on a text-centric view of reading to a much greater extent than The English Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools. For example, the first ELA anchor standard states, “read closely to determine what the text

says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speak to support conclusions drawn from the text” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a, sec. 2). The standard focuses directly on the text, directing the reader to the words on the page and suggesting that meaning comes *from* the text. It also limits the type of evidence that can be used to support ideas to words from the text, implying that other types of evidence are not valued. The standard also limits the meaning-making experience to inferences and conclusions. Other standards are focused similarly on narrowly defined skills and strategies for making meaning, for example, “summarizing supporting details and ideas” or “interpret words and phrases as they are used in the text” (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a, sec. 2). These standards direct the reader to focus on the text, and not the reader’s experience of the text or what the reader could potentially learn from the text about themselves or the world.

The CCSS conceptualize meaning-making, not as a transaction with the text where each reader transacts for her own purposes within her own context, but as a “throwback to a time wherein texts were situated as stable repositories of meaning and, by extension, teachers were cast as the masters and safeguards of these meanings” (Carillo, 2016, p. 31). This ‘throwback’ aligns to what Gee (2012) explained as a “traditional view of literacy” (p. 63) that takes away the value of aesthetic reading, collaborative interchange, social and cultural context, and the lived experience of the reader all of which contribute to meaning making and corresponding meaning-making

learning experiences. Traditional literacy removes the “sociocultural contexts and treats it as an asocial cognitive skill. It cloaks literacy’s connections to power, to social identity, and to ideologies, often in the service of privileging certain types of literacy and certain types of people” (p. 63).

The CCSS’s limitations on the role of the reader in meaning making has implications for the learning experiences in the ELA classroom. This is noteworthy because a survey of teachers in five states currently implementing the CCSS by Harvard University’s Center for Education Policy Research found the majority of English teachers (72%) have made “major changes in their lesson plans and instructional materials to meet the new standards” (Kane, Owens, Marinell, Thal, & Staiger, 2016, p. 4). In a guide for publishers of materials and tests aligned with the CCSS for English, two of the lead authors of the CCSS for English explain the emphasis of the standards have “shifted the focus of literacy instruction to center on careful examination of the text itself... the standards focus on students reading closely to draw evidence and knowledge from the text” (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012, p. 1). These sentences, hidden away in a document for intended for publishers rather than teachers, belie the enormous shift in the definition of literacy demand by the CCSS but reveal much of their intent.

Coleman and Pimentel (2012) further opine on the purpose of reading and reading instruction by stating “developing students’ prowess at drawing knowledge from the text itself is the point of reading; reading well means gaining the maximum insight or knowledge possible from each source” (p. 1). The implications of such words cannot be understated. They are built on an assumption that there is one reason for

reading and that is to gain “knowledge.” They claim that “reading focuses on what lies within the four corners of the page” (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012, p. 4). Their assumption is contrary to the lived experience of all people who engage in meaning-making experiences, including myself, who often read for pleasure or for a combination of reasons and bring a wealth of experience, knowledge, and beliefs with us to the meaning-making experience.

Coleman and Pimental (2012) state no fewer than nine times that meaning is solely derived from the “text itself” (pp. 1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17). Their use of the preposition “from” preceding “the text itself” further emphasizes their stance that meaning somehow resides in the text to the complete exclusion of the reader. This is in stark contrast to Rosenblatt’s (1994/2005c) transactional theory of reading in which the meaning is made by the reader in a transaction *with* the text (not *from* it), and it is the reader, not the text, who decides the purpose (on the efferent/aesthetic continuum) for reading. Rosenblatt argued that meaning is made on even ground with the text and reader: one cannot survive without the other. Newkirk (2013) emphasizes this point in his critique of the CCSS with the viewpoint that the reader “can never stay within the four corners of the text – even if we tried” (p. 3). His view illustrates how thoroughly the concept the reader making meaning with the text has been engrained in the field of English (Harkin, 2005) and how difficult it can seem to return to a text-centric lens for meaning making to address the CCSS.

Supporting Teachers in Creating Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

The three sets of standards I presented above provide very different guidance to teachers in creating meaning-making learning experiences. The NCTE/IRA standards provide broad guidance for English education in general to value the role of the reader, the English Standards of Learning in Virginia apply opportunities for valuing the role of the reader inconsistently across grade levels, and the CCSS and supporting materials leave teachers and students with the least possibilities for meaning-making learning experiences (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010b; The National Council of Teachers of English & International Reading Association, 1996; Virginia Department of Education, 2010). In the classroom, the teachers face inconsistency among the priorities advocated by the national organization for English education, current theory in the field of English studies, and the state-adopted standards (Carillo, 2016). Because teacher and student assessment is based on state-level standards and teachers must align their instruction to these standards, it is necessary for teachers to have state standards that reflect the priorities of the national standards and in the field of English studies. Revision of the standards and policy to reflect this change would allow teachers to plan and implement meaning-making learning experiences that value the role of the reader and allow students opportunities to learn about themselves, the world, and the texts.

The teachers in this study stated goals for their students' learning that included helping them to learn about themselves and the world around them. They highly valued the perspectives of their students in meaning-making learning experiences and used them to help prepare students for literacy experiences outside of school. The students

had options to choose their own purposes for reading and the teachers acknowledged that the student's first reaction to a text is going to be aesthetic. The aesthetic readers' "feelings, ideas, situation, scenes, personalities, and emotions are called forth and participate in the tensions, conflicts, and resolutions of the images, ideas, and scenes as they unfold [in the text]" (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 11). The reader's experience of the text is an important part of the experience of making meaning. Meaning is also affected "by the physical and emotional state of the individual, for example, by fatigue or stress. Attention may be controlled or wandering, intense or superficial" (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c, p. 7). All of these factors need be considered as educators help students to make meaning from text, not just the "text itself" (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012, pp. 1, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17) because learning happens in a classroom environment in which the students voices, ideas, emotions, and experiences influence the experience of meaning making. Revising the state-level standards and resources for teachers to acknowledge these factors will better enable teachers to create meaning making learning experiences that help them to build literacies relevant in- and out-of-school.

Currently, the teachers in this study are engaging in what Gilbert (2014), an ELA teacher in North Carolina State University's Early College High School, calls an act of "subterfuge" (p. 27). He explains that

while acknowledging mandated standards, my ultimate focus has been on crafting meaningful, student-centered lessons... My lesson plans always referenced the standards, and they were posted on my classroom wall as well. Despite these outward affirmations of compliance, I truly derived instructional

inspiration from my values, collaboration with colleagues, and students' lives. In actuality, the standards were peripheral guidelines (p. 27).

However, Gilbert found these acts of subterfuge were much more difficult to implement once the CCSS was adopted by his state. The teachers in this study are trying to find ways to both acknowledge and work around the state standards to meet the needs of their students. Their guiding principles, planning processes, and approaches to implementation suggest that learning in their classrooms encompass much more than what is stated in the standards. Critical examination of the text itself is just one way of making meaning with text, but it is the primary way encouraged by many state-level standards. Gilbert (2014) explains "the student's gaze must encompass both the page and the world, and this is more likely to occur if the text is acknowledged while the present context and human beings in the room remain the principal curricular components" (p. 28). Currently, in order to help students to make meaning with texts, teachers cannot solely do what the standards imply. Some teachers, like those in this study, are trying to limit the role and impact of the standards in their classrooms to make sure their students have robust and authentic meaning-making learning experiences. However, as state standards have an ever greater influence on classroom practice (Kane et al., 2016), teachers may have less autonomy or support to do this, despite believing it is the right thing.

Rather than having teachers engage in acts of subterfuge, educational leaders can recognize and examine their assumptions about the nature of meaning making, how these assumptions are embedded in educational policy and standards, and the impact

these assumptions might have on classroom learning experiences. Explanation from literary theorists and their pedagogical recommendations (Carillo, 2016; Harkin, 2005) regarding how and why readers make meaning with texts give guidance in undertaking these examinations, as do the lived experiences of teachers who are helping students to make meaning with texts in their classroom every day. Their voices and perspectives need to be heard so that this examination of assumptions and change in policy will happen.

Many of the state-level standards regarding English education ignore the predominate assumptions of literary theory, research, and criticism that the reader plays an essential role in making meaning with texts (Carillo, 2016). By building the standards on a predominate assumption that does not acknowledge the role of the reader, the meaning making experiences that help students learn about themselves and the world around them are not accounted for or valued in ELA education. Instead, they become part of what Joanne Yatvin (2013), former president of NCTE, calls the “standards’ fatal flaw: they are set of academic exercises without any real-world applications” (p. 27). In examining assumptions and their implications regarding meaning making, educational leaders need to consider the role of the reader in terms of the goals of ELA education and the literacies that students need to be successful in- and out-of-school and take actions and create conditions for the implementation of pedagogical practices that support these goals.

Leadership to Support Meaning-Making Learning Experiences

Many aspects of the meaning-making learning experiences used by the teachers in this study are examples of the “new pedagogies” described by Fullan and Langworthy (2014, p. i) in their report on the intersections of leadership, pedagogy, and technology in education. They make recommendations for creating conditions and taking actions that will foster widespread adoption of new pedagogies. They define new pedagogies as practices in which students and teachers learn alongside one another as partners in “deep learning tasks” that are oriented to “knowledge creation and purposeful use” supported by technologies as tools in the learning process (p. 10). They assert that these practices are needed to make school more relevant and applicable to future career paths and creative, social, and community-based engagement in digital and non-digital environments. Current practices in schooling often leave students disengaged, are not clearly relevant to career paths, and do not use technology tools to support learning and engagement in a global community (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). The purpose of the new pedagogies Fullan and Langworthy (2014) describe is to create conditions for the “deep learning” so that students develop,

Competencies and dispositions that will prepare them to be creative, connected, and collaborative life-long problem solvers and to be healthy, holistic human beings who not only contribute to but also create the common good in today’s knowledge-based, creative, interdependent world. (p. 2)

The goals of new pedagogies align to the goals the teachers in this study have for their students to bridge in- and out-of-school literacies by preparing them to communicate, collaborate, make decisions, and take actions in authentic literacy experiences in a

variety of contexts with many different types of texts. In the following sections, I will describe how new pedagogies can manifest in secondary ELA, barriers to implementing new pedagogies, and how leaders can create conditions and take actions to support and spread the use of new pedagogies that support meaning-making learning experiences. Educational leaders' active support for new pedagogies have the potential to remediate some of the problems and tensions caused by the inconsistent standards that limit the potential for meaning making and the lived experiences of the students discussed in the previous sections.

New pedagogies. The new pedagogies described by Fullan and Langworthy (2014) are guided by three principles that should shape and steer all learning experiences that engender deep learning. They recommend learning experiences have (a) learning goals that include content-area curriculum and "students' interests or aspirations," (b) criteria for success accessible to the teacher and student, and (c) regular opportunities for formative feedback and evaluation to build "students' self-confidence and proactive dispositions" (p. 22). In these learning experiences, the students should synthesize prior knowledge and ideas to create new knowledge, solutions, or ideas with the outcome of being able to use that "new knowledge in the world" (p. 23). The focus of new pedagogies is on authentic learning experiences in which the students work as partners with teacher and their peers to apply new learning, information, and concepts to solve problems, build relationships, learn about themselves, and engage in their communities.

The examples of meaning-making learning experiences implemented by the teachers in this study demonstrate new pedagogies in practice. This study demonstrates how teachers and students can work together to create and use knowledge in authentic contexts. For example, in the service learning projects in Ann's class the students used their learning to help their communities and in Christine's class the students conducted interviews and took photographs to tell the stories of the people in their school. These examples demonstrate how Ann and Christine helped their students to synthesize prior knowledge and ideas to create and act on new learning by engaging with their communities. Ann and Christine acted as partners with their students in the process by giving the students the opportunity to shape their learning around their own interests and ideas, providing feedback throughout the process, and building criteria for success that was clear and relevant to the students (see Chapter 4 for more details and examples).

Building positive relationships with students as partners with teachers and students and using technology as tools for learning are factors that support implementation of new pedagogies (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). The teachers in this study emphasize building relationships with their students and using opportunities for collaborative interchange as a fundamental aspect of the classroom learning experience and are examples of the "partnerships between and among students and teachers" valued in new pedagogies (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014, p. 10). The teachers in this study have also integrated multimedia and supporting technologies as everyday, regular aspects of their classroom learning experiences to support pedagogy that focuses on

meeting students' learning needs for applicability in- and outside-of-school (see Chapter 5). However, the teachers are taking active steps to diminish systemic barriers in order to implement meaning-making learning experiences in their classrooms. Educational leaders need to be aware of what the barriers are and how they impact implementation of new pedagogies and student learning in order to better support teachers and spread the implementation of new pedagogies.

Barriers to new pedagogies. Systemic barriers in the form of lack of access to technology tools, lack of access to meaningful professional learning, and lack of vision and support from leaders may prevent the full implementation or the spread of implementation of new pedagogies (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). Similar barriers have been identified specifically in secondary ELA classes. For example, Ajayi (2013) found in a survey of secondary ELA teachers that even though they believe that new media are essential to student learning and lives in- and out-of-school, they do not always have the training, access, or support to fully integrate it into classroom learning experiences. In Chapter 5, I detailed how the teachers in this study take active steps to mitigate barriers to implementation that they find in their school contexts. Many of these steps, including professional learning and access to materials and resources, are happening outside of the systems and resources provided in their school contexts.

Even though the teachers in this study have their supervisors' support to implement new pedagogies or use outside resources, they are still working against the cultural norms and practices in their schools. For example, Ann shared that she has given professional development workshops on how she incorporates independent

choice reading in her classes in a neighboring school district that heard about and is adopting her work. She has also shared her classroom strategies regionally through a partnership between a local university and regional school districts. However, her practice of integrating independent choice reading in ELA has not been fully adopted in her own school and district, despite Ann and her students' success in these meaning-making learning experiences, which have been recognized by leaders in her school and regionally. Ann's experience demonstrates how systemic factors can limit the spread of new pedagogies across a school. Carolyn shared how systemic factors impact how she plans and implements lessons. She has to work to find balance between mandates and creating learning experiences that she believes will be interesting and engaging for her students. Carolyn explained,

I spend between October and March drilling them in the persuasive paper. After that, we have goals or topics from the state and county. I try to take those and make them interesting for the kids to learn and for me to teach.

Carolyn tries to minimize the impact of the standards and standardized test preparation on her students learning experience by focusing on transforming them into interesting and engaging learning experiences, but she still has to address them. All of the teachers in this study spoke about the impact of the standards in their classes, whether it was to try to incorporate them as Carolyn described, or in Christine's case, her twelfth grade classes are the first time that students have an ELA class with no required standardized test and she finds that she must "break down everything that the students have learned and start again."

The experiences of the teachers in this study demonstrate how standards and standardized tests can impact or limit the potential for meaning making learning experiences and the implementation of new pedagogies that support them, despite the teachers' best efforts to work around them. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) argue that "many current curriculum standards, alongside standardized assessments that primarily measure content reproduction, are the greatest barriers to the widespread adoption of new pedagogies" (p. 9). They recommend that standards need to be re-designed to be more "challenging and engaging" (p. 22). Educational leaders need to know how the standards may suggest pedagogical practices that are limiting and do not embrace new pedagogies, as described earlier in this chapter. This knowledge will help them to better understand why these changes need to take place. For example, new pedagogies embrace the role of the teacher and students as partners in learning. Many state ELA content standards suggest pedagogical practices for meaning-making that primarily value the role of the text, and not the student, in the meaning-making learning experience. This may disallow teachers and students as partners in meaning-making learning experiences because the students are being directed to find meaning rather than make meaning. If new pedagogies were an integrated part of their schools, teachers may not have to take steps to circumvent the existing systemic barriers. Educational leaders can support these efforts with a vision for spreading new pedagogies throughout the system and creating conditions for this to happen collaboratively and organically.

Overcoming barriers through professional learning in schools. The teachers in this study participate in and seek out a wide variety of formal and informal professional learning experiences. Much of their informal learning happens outside of school, on the teachers' own time, and using resources not available in their schools. Yet, the teachers highly valued this learning as instrumental to their teaching, their content knowledge, and in planning the learning experiences for the students. Educational leaders can better advocate for the implementation of new pedagogies by broadening the opportunities and support for formal and informal professional learning within the school context. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) recommend a "cascading model of learning through partnership extends through students, teachers, and leaders – all learning with and from each other" (p. 52). By modeling and being an active participant as learners in the school community, the school leaders create conditions and take actions to advocate for and support broad professional learning and change.

Fullan and Langworthy (2014) emphasize that school leaders need to remove isolation within the educational community. This includes isolation in teaching and professional learning and isolated professional development sessions. Instead, it is a continuous, collaborative culture of learning that will foster development of teacher learning and the dissemination of new pedagogies. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) share three specific features of professional learning that is the most impactful, characterizing them as "involving 1. collaborative, social learning, 2. relevance to the local context, and 3. analysis of impact in relation to desired student learning outcomes (e.g. professional learning is structured by clear learning goals and success criteria)" (p. 58).

The recommendations of Fullan and Langworthy (2014) for professional learning are parallel to the new pedagogical approaches for student learning in the classroom. They propose expanding new pedagogies from the classroom level to the whole school as a means of creating a community of ongoing, relevant learning for students and teachers. This approach to professional development as an expansion of new pedagogies in the classroom also reflects the types of learning environments and experiences that were present in the classrooms of the five teachers in this study. A particularly important point of similarity is the focus on collaboration. Students and teachers collaborated in ELA classroom in this study in content-area based meaning-making learning experiences. However, the teachers sometimes did not have access to this same level of collaborative learning on the professional level in their schools. The use of collaboration for learning can be expanded from the classroom as a way of spreading a focus on professional learning that is collaborative among teachers.

Fullan and Langworthy (2014) emphasize professional learning that have clear long- and short-term goals, supports for taking risks and trying new approaches and ideas, and relevance and immediacy to the needs and experiences of the teachers, students, and leaders in the school. These features for professional development can be used as models to spread and support the implementation of new pedagogies and learning experiences that value and emphasize the role and experience of the learner, be it teacher or student.

Overcoming barriers with vision and support from educational leaders. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) have found that new pedagogies are already emerging in

schools around the world, especially in places where there is leadership and conditions that allow the new pedagogical practices to flourish. The leadership conditions and characteristics described by Fullan and Langworthy (2014) may provide leaders with a path to better support the integration and spread of pedagogies that will help teachers to implement new pedagogies and overcome barriers. Fullan and Langworthy (2014) identify a set of actions and characteristics of leaders that can help teachers to implement new pedagogies and for the new pedagogies to spread throughout the system. The role of leaders to support new pedagogies include encouraging change and risk, developing and communicating the new vision, influencing change without controlling it, collaborating, modeling “being a learner,” mentoring, providing access and opportunity to model and use technology tools, and supporting multiple types of assessment (p. 51). The role of the leader as collaborator includes partnering with leaders, teachers, students, parents, and community in the vision for learning. These roles advocated by Fullan and Langworthy (2014) would help teachers to implement meaning-making learning experiences without engaging in acts of subterfuge (Gilbert, 2014) and see these practices spread in ways that are not hindered by standards that direct teachers to limited options for pedagogical practices. Instead, teachers could be supported, systemically, in their learning and teaching if leaders implement conditions in which meaning-making learning experiences could expand and flourish.

Leaders can create a vision of the future that builds the leadership capacity of everyone in the system, including teachers and students. In this way, the vision for the future is built collaboratively within a context of learning and support. This will help to

decrease isolation among teachers and help them to share strategies and take risks on new pedagogical approaches. The focus on collaborative leadership in supporting new pedagogies (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014) reflects the focus on collaboration in meaning-making learning experiences valued the transactional theory of reading (Rosenblatt, 1994/2005c). These approaches focus on helping students to engage in learning experiences that value the students' perspective, interests, and experiences, help them to use these to better understand themselves and the world around them, and encourage them to take action based on their learning.

Through building a shared vision and creating a culture of collaboration and support, leaders can foster the integration of new pedagogies and technologies through whole systems (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). The leadership recommendations by Fullan and Langworthy (2014) are designed to create a context in which administrators, teachers, and students are working together to learn with and from one another. These may help to spread the meaning-making learning experiences that the teachers in this study found to be vital in supporting their students' learning.

Conclusion

The goals of new pedagogies and the leadership that supports them (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014) are reciprocal with the goals of the teachers in this study: they want students to be prepared for future careers and participate in local, global, and digital communities to solve problems, build positive relationships, and gain personal fulfillment. The teachers in this study were identified as exemplary ELA teachers through their leadership in regional professional development initiatives or were recommended

by one of these leaders for their success in teaching ELA. By fostering conditions and taking actions to support new pedagogies, educational leaders may further help the practices of these teachers spread beyond the classrooms of a few teachers. These cases demonstrate how and why each of these teachers help students to make meaning with multimedia in ways that value their students' voices and experiences and honor the students as partners in learning. As leaders consider the nature of meaning making and how it is represented in standards, assessment, and pedagogical practices, the suggestions for leaders by Fullan and Langworthy (2014) provide a path towards systemic collaboration and support that may help teachers to expand the ways in which they plan and implement meaning-making learning experiences for their students.

Appendix A

Researcher as Instrument Statement

Since I was a child, I have had a passion for reading. I often had two books going at the same time when I was in grade school. I read and reread and reread the same books multiple times, switching between a new one and an old one. And in between those, I watched TV. I watched cartoons, dramas, and comedies. As I got older, the newspapers left on the dining room table every morning began to have greater appeal, and I began to read articles and comics, every morning before school. My days were bits of stories pasted together. I got a few comments from Cathy and Linus in the morning, and then slipped in some Bilbo Baggins during the day. I found Emma lying in wait before I went to bed, juxtaposed with Jerry, Elaine, and Friends that I imagined the adult world to be like. Angela and Ricky and Jordan Catalano waited for me in reruns as often as I could find them on TV.

Even before the Internet, stories of all kinds in different styles, genres, and mediums were juxtaposed around my life. I read with the characters. Every time I reread a story, it was like I was immersed anew. Stories are living and breathing entities. When I learned in high school that we always write about literature in the present tense because the story is always happening in real time, I thought that made perfect sense. Later, when I started to consider stories from other people's points of view, I learned that they each read the books differently. If each reading was different for me, then of course, each reading was different for every other person.

Digital Multimedia

More recently, the possibilities of storytelling have greatly expanded due to readily accessible digital technology tools. In the fall of 2013, one multimedia, digital story captured my attention and interest in a way that I had not experienced before. This story has become the touchstone for me when I think about multimedia. [The Lizzie Bennett Diaries](#) are a modern retelling of *Pride & Prejudice* that uses a multiplatform, multimedia approach to interactive storytelling. It was first released as a weekly serial with the main storyline told through video diaries posted on YouTube. However, Twitter and Pintrist pages ran parallel to the video diaries fleshing out subplots and secondary characters. On all of these platforms the readers/viewers could interact with the characters, story, and each other. In fact, additional videos were made in which the characters responded to readers' questions and characters would respond to comments posted by viewers. Unfortunately, I did not know about the Lizzie Bennett Diaries early enough to experience it in real time, but instead I had to go back and experience the whole thing after the serial was completed. This led to a couple of weeks of binge watching/reading but was well worth it.

As I navigated through The Lizzie Bennett Diaries, I realized several things that have stuck with me as I have begun to think about my dissertation topic. First, in order to get the whole story, I had to be able to piece the story together through reading Twitter feeds, watching videos, and navigating Pinterest pages. Each of these contributed to the story as a whole in unique ways. The entire story was archived on a website in chronological order, so I was reading/watching an order that was suggested by the creators after the fact. I imagine if I had been keeping up with the weekly serial,

this order could have been very different. For example, I may have come across tweets in my Twitter feed before getting a chance to sit down and watch a particular video. I am not a Pinterest user, so it is possible that I may have missed those posts altogether. Each reader's experience of *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries* is different. I think the comment part of this is very important too. The viewers/readers got to actually become a part of the story by posting their reactions and questions, discussing with each other, and actually shaping parts of the story in how the characters' responded.

I am sharing my experience of *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries* because I think it has important implications for how ELA is taught. Students need skills in interpreting and analyzing visual, video, and written and spoken dialogue, just like they need these skills in reading print text. They also need to be able to move from one type of text to another in piecing together a single story. How the Twitter conversation connects to the video is just as important as how one video connects to the next. Students also need to be able to feel empowered to be a part of the conversation – their questions and responses to the story are just as important and valid as those of other readers/viewers. When the voice of the teacher (or the voice of the author) is privileged in the classroom, students can get the impression that their ideas and questions are less important or even invalid. I am curious to learn more about how teachers are addressing these kinds of problems in their classrooms.

I think that watching/reading *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries* is equally as challenging a text to *Pride & Prejudice*, albeit for different reasons and in different ways. When I first read *Pride & Prejudice*, I will admit that I missed almost all of the humor in the story.

Humor is very context dependent to shared language and culture. It was fascinating to me to realize I was laughing out loud at *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries*. That being said, I very much enjoyed reading *Pride & Prejudice* (many years ago now), but my experience of it was very different and challenged me in different ways than navigating *The Lizzie Bennett Diaries*. I think that in school reflection on metacognitive aspects of reading can feel forced or superficial for many students – at least in my experience as a student and a teacher. I wonder how the process of having to navigate online to even put the pieces of the story together could change that.

I also wonder about the struggles my former students may have had in even attempting to read/watch a digital multimedia story. I do know that many of my students struggled in reading. I was surprised to find that even students in my advanced and A.P. classes struggled when it came to certain texts or types of texts – especially those that were unfamiliar to them. I think there is an underlying expectation that by the time students get to 9th grade that they can read and that our job as ELA teachers is to help them interpret more complex and sophisticated meaning from their reading. Upon reflection of my experience as a teacher, I think the experience of students is much more complicated than that. It seems like being able to decode, read, understand, interpret, analyze, make connections and critique texts are all, in some ways, independent of one another depending on the specific text that the student is trying to read. For example, a student who struggles decoding alphanumeric text may be able to successfully analyze and critique visual texts like photographs or videos. In my advanced classes, I taught students who were able to reading and interpret sophisticated novels

but balked when I put photographs and poems in front of them. It was very challenging for me to navigate all of these variations in students' knowledge and skills.

I was lucky in that I was in a school where I could develop and try out my own lessons based on what I thought my students needed. The struggle was that I didn't have access to professional learning that would help me to navigate these challenges. A lot of what I did was, in some ways at least, educated trial and error. I think one of the underlying holes in my own knowledge was that as a secondary teacher I received no education coursework in teaching someone how to read (phonics, decoding, etc.), so all of the comprehension and analysis strategies I taught were not built on a solid foundation of my own knowledge of reading development. This made transferring the teaching of reading comprehension strategies to other types of texts even more challenging. I think that the same threads of learning and ways of understanding hold a lot of these together, but it was a struggle to transform this into sound, motivating lesson plans. I am curious as to how other teachers are navigating these hurdles and addressing multimedia in their classrooms, especially in how it applies to helping struggling readers (of all types of texts).

Non-digital Multimedia

Personally, I enjoy reading texts that push the boundaries of storytelling and play with words and language in unexpected or unusual ways. Novels like *Welcome to the Goon Squad*, *Ceremony*, and *Everything is Illuminated* are some of the ones that have stuck with me for their use of nonlinear narratives and interesting use of language. In searching for books to recommend to for secondary classroom libraries, I have

discovered books, fiction and nonfiction, that are working in some of these nontraditional storytelling modes for a young adult audience. Books like *Tales from Outer Suburbia*, *Chuck Close: Face Book*, *Chopsticks*, and *Rookie Yearbook* all are non-digital multimedia texts aimed at young adults. Last summer, I worked with a small group of teachers and was able to purchase with grant funding a bag of books for each of their classrooms. All of the books had some aspect of nontraditional narrative to them – though some to a much greater extent than others. It was fascinating to watch the teachers open the bags and start to go through the books. They had some background on what to expect, but most of the books were new to the teachers. I saw that some of the teachers immediately gravitated to the books that were the closest to traditional narratives in the way they appeared: trade paperback, prose, and alphabetic texts. The nontraditional elements of these books, like changing point of view or chronology, would only appear once the reading started. Other teachers headed towards books that had familiar subjects, like *Humans of New York*.

This observation highlighted to me how even teachers tend to head towards what is familiar and perhaps are more reluctant to approach what is new, different, or unfamiliar. I'm afraid that this does not bode well for students who may benefit from having access to and instruction on reading these types of books. I think that there are important connections between nontraditional (meaning nonlinear, non-chronological, and/or multimedia) digital and non-digital texts that could impact reading instruction if teachers are willing to address them. Ultimately, what I walked away thinking from my experience with the teachers last summer is that they were open to trying new things

and considering different types of texts, especially if they could see how it may help their students be more motivated and engaged or help them improve. At the same time, this seemed to all feel brand new to them. It was in some ways very overwhelming, and they could see a long road ahead to make even minor changes in their classrooms. I think it is important in this study to consider the gap between what teachers know, what they believe or value, and what they do in their classrooms. I suspect that even among teachers who are using multimedia in their classrooms that there will be gaps between knowledge, beliefs, and actions.

Literary Lenses and Student Voice

Another encounter in a professional development setting that has influenced my thinking on this study deals with teachers' perception of literary analysis and student voices (and the intersection between the two). First I want to share what has shaped my thinking on this issue. When I was in 10th grade, my English teacher introduced us to the concept of literary lens for analysis. I distinctly remember reading the short story "Young Goodman Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne and having my teacher's handwritten and photocopies notes beside us. The notes were very brief (10th grade appropriate) summaries of key aspects of literary lenses, symbolic, new criticism, reader response, feminist, Freudian, Marxist, historical, biographical, post-modern, etc. As a class, we went through the story and applied each one to see how our understanding and interpretation of the story shifted with each lens. So from a fairly young age, I was aware of literary theory and how it worked. As an undergraduate English major, this concept came up again as I wrote more sophisticated literary analysis papers and

learned from my professors. I did not take a particular class on literary theory, but it was something that was acknowledge and embedded throughout my classes. This was not addressed, however, when I went to graduate school for teacher training. I was not trained to teach this way.

When I began teaching, I soon learned that the CT state standardized test in reading across the curriculum was based on a combination of reader response theory and new criticism. This helped me as a teacher to develop appropriate instruction to prepare students for the test with a comfortable grounding in why these were the questions being asked and the relative position of the reader and text for each question (the questions were the same every year, it was the text that changed). The reader response lens (and questions) put the students' personal experience, beliefs, and knowledge at the forefront. Their interpretations, unique and individual, mattered in my classroom and in how the students were assessed. Although certainly challenging for students, I think it was also empowering. They couldn't wait for me or anyone else to tell them what the text meant or what to say or think. They needed to take a stance, through a literary lens, and justify it with persuasive examples and clear logic.

I am telling this story because since this time I have met teachers who have a very different perspective on literary analysis and do not have any background in literary theory. Frankly, this was shocking to me when I encountered it. One teacher actually told me that the only valid way to teach and interpret text is through a historical lens. I was so taken aback I didn't really know what to say. She had honestly never heard of anything else. This matters because of its impact on the role of student voice in the

classroom. If a historical lens is the only way to understand literature, students' own beliefs, experiences, and knowledge may be suppressed. They will be waiting for the teacher (or whomever) to reveal meaning. I think that this perpetuates teacher/ student roles that are harmful to students who need to grow as independent and confident readers. It also may limit teachers' ability to address new texts and multimedia in the classroom because a historical lens may feel very limiting (or perhaps inappropriate) to study these types of texts (although it would certainly be possible).

My Beliefs and Values

These experiences have shaped my values and beliefs about teaching, learning, and literacy in ELA. I think that teachers have a responsibility to their students to provide access to many different types of texts, perspectives, genres, and beliefs in the classroom that are similar and different than their own. The students' reactions to these texts are valid and should be valued as a part of classroom discourse. When students feel empowered to share their own opinions and perspectives and learn from others, they have more opportunity to grow and learn in ELA. I think that ELA classes should celebrate the diversity of the students in the class because that is how all of our understandings of texts can grow. I also believe that this can impact, in potentially very positive ways, students' understanding of the world around them, empathy for others, and motivation to be engaged in society.

I also value teachers' voice and perspectives. I think one of things that help me be successful as a teacher was that I had a balance of support and autonomy in my classroom. I was able to try new things, respond to the needs of my students, and make

adjustments as I saw fit. I was also able to ask for help from the other teachers in my department and get their opinions and feedback on any new lesson or text that I wanted to try. In my opinion, teachers need to feel empowered as leaders and facilitators in their classrooms and in their schools. In working with many teachers through professional development, I have learned that these feelings of support, empowerment, and autonomy can vary greatly from school to school and even within a school depending on the teacher.

In describing my position as researcher, I want to document my expectations about this study, including what I hope to find and what I hope not to find. Ultimately, I hope to find teachers are working within the constraints of their contexts to meet students' learning needs as best as they know how. I hope to find teachers who are using multimedia in interesting and innovative ways that help students to find their own voices in responding to texts. I hope to find a variety of different types of multimedia being used, both digital and non-digital. I hope that the teachers are designing lessons with purposeful uses of multimedia that support students as developing readers. Conversely, I hope not to find that the teacher's voice and interpretation of text is exclusively privileged in the classroom. I hope not to find teachers that place the importance of traditional texts, standardized tests, or curriculum mandates over their students' learning needs. I hope not to find multimedia as relegated solely as a motivational tool or add on activity that is not valued as part of literacy learning or reading development.

I hope that the readers of this study will learn about innovative ways to integrate multimedia as a fundamental part of reading instruction. I hope that they will question and consider their own definitions of text, literacy, and multimedia. I hope that they will consider how the findings of this study relate (or don't) to their context as teachers, teacher educators, or literacy researchers. I hope that the readers of this study will consider the importance of documenting teachers' experiences and perspective in defining text, designing instruction, and designating roles and relationships between content, students, and teachers.

Appendix B

Reflexive Journal (excerpts)

Dec 11, 2014 –Today I met with Dr. H to discuss the plan for my dissertation proposal writing next semester. I am finishing classes at the end of this semester. She suggested taking some time off between the end of the semester and New Year's day and starting fresh in January, so that is what I plan to do. The first steps that I will need to take in January are to contact potential school divisions for my study and find out the process and paperwork that they need to get a study approved in their school division. I should also find out their timelines and deadlines for any approvals. I can't submit any paperwork until a successful defense of the proposal, but I can have everything ready to go so I can submit as soon as possible after that notification.

I also need to decide on the focus for the study. I love the question that Dr. H left me to ponder: what is it that you are most passionately curious about? I am definitely still on the same track I was last spring when I wrote a literature review in CRIN 603 on multimedia and meaning making in secondary ELA. One of the big questions in considering how to create a study based on this literature review is addressing meaning making itself. Making meaning is such an internal thing, so how is it externalized? How can the methodology for this study document the externalization of meaning making? Some potential ideas that we brainstormed are looking at students' final project/presentations for the classes, conducting observations and then basing follow up interview questions on what I observed in the interview, potentially doing focus group interviews with students, and interviews with teachers. Dr. H brought up the idea of having the teacher talk me through 2-3 student projects that represent a range of ways of making meaning of levels of quality. I think this idea has a lot of promise because it deals with how the teacher interprets her students' meaning making and addresses assessment and lesson plan off of that. It would be interesting to see the difference between the teacher's perspectives on the student work and mine. I think it will be interesting to have the teachers pick work from several students that represent a range of work – how are the students doing things differently?

With this general focus in mind, we are discussing using a multiple case study approach. Dr. H suggested several texts for me to read and consider to prepare for writing my proposal.

Robert Yin: Case Study Research Design and Methods (he is more of a positivist at heart)
Stake - not a positivist: Multiple Case Study Analysis - newer, this is only about multiple case study analysis; The Art of Case Study is his older book that addresses case study approach in general. Qualitative data analysis: practical strategies by Pat Bazeley has good information on how to analyze data and organize my process for analysis.

I will also need to make the decision on what theoretical framework to use for this study. One idea would be to use Rosenblatt and a more contemporary theory -

sequentially, as in tact theory - using them to analyze two different aspects of meaning making so as to account for meaning making particularly as applied to digital multimedia. I think this idea has some promise. As I look into Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading more, I will have to consider how robust her theory is for application my research focus, especially in considering digital texts and the social nature of meaning making in online spaces.

Jan 7, 2015

Today I met with Dr. Johnson to discuss dissertation research study. She has agreed to be on my dissertation committee. Our discussion focused on two main concerns going forward. What is my focused research question and what will my theoretical framework be. Rosenblatt is a possibility, but Dr. Johnson also suggested two books that were helpful to her on research that addressed similar topics to what I am doing. These books theorize literacy as directly applicable to digital multimedia and technology.

- need to shape research questions to be precise and descriptive
- if I want to focus on teachers then the questions need to align with that
 - be careful not to make the questions (or anything else, student focused)
 - is the focus of my study on teacher decision making or literacy?
 - how do I keep the focus on literacy and technology?
- Recommended reading: Social linguistics and literacies by Gee and Literacies by Kalazitis and Cope - these are the two major texts on new literacies (multiliteracies) research to consider using for my theoretical framework

Jan 10 - SOE writing retreat

Dr. Harris sent the initial feedback on the lit review that I created in CRIN 603 last year. Her primary concerns where that I have clear definitions of all key terms the first time that they appear in the literature review. How, if at all, will this be complicated by adding chapter 1?

- Today I reread all of lit review from CRIN603 and backwards constructed an outline of the paper, making note of all areas that need further development or things that need to be added. This ended up being a much more time consuming and challenging and task than I initially expected it would be. However, now I feel like I have a much stronger sense of what I actually have so far and where to go next. Right now the weakest sections are definitely on: making meaning with multimedia (especially the definitions of multimedia and meaning making) and 'an expansion of eading literacies. I think that this is how these sections should flow with further elaboration on what is currently there:

Making Meaning with Multimedia

1. *definition of multimedia*
2. *connection of multimedia to transactional reading theory*
3. *the difference between making meaning from multimedia and static print texts*

("text and picture often convey more meaning when juxtaposed")

An expansion of reading literacy.

1. *theories on making meaning from multimedia that do not privilege print text – but I haven't yet described these specifically or individually – need to.*
2. *how different types of literacy work together – need to make into a separate paragraph*
3. *"multimodal and multimedia environment" – need more explanation of the environment aspect*
4. *reading the world (Kress) – dynamic process of meaning making – navigation and social interaction*

The other section that needs much more explanation is in the section on the transactional theory of reading, specifically about 'collaborative interchange.' The focus on teachers' in this study makes the collaborative interchange aspect of theory even more important because the classroom environment that the teacher sets up may have a major impact on how/why meaning making happens in the classroom. I need to more fully explain how meaning is constructed by society and social construction of meaning as a pedagogical approach (as explained by Rosenblatt).

- Today I also considered options for theoretical framework and created a matrix of the main characteristics of the potential theoretical frameworks that I could use for this study. The matrix isn't done yet, but at least I am starting to see how they all lay out and potential overlaps/discrepancies between them.

Note: I need to be consistent about using the term literacies, rather than literacy skills or literacy (singular) to reflect the new literacies research and to represent my stance on literacies (as a plurality)

Future step: need to research: what is changing about literacy? add section that specifically describes the changing nature of literacy

Brainstorm to revise the research questions: (note: I need to keep the focus on the teachers, including what they do in their classroom and how their experiences and understandings influence that)

how 2ndary ELA teachers conceptualize and operationalize the new literacies of reading in their classroom?

how do the teachers' attitudes and values about literacy shape their classroom practice and literacy learning for all students?

Jan 17 - writing group

Today I finished backwards outline the lit review. It was a tedious process, but I am very glad I did it. It is interesting to be able to open one document and see the whole

literature review in just 2 pages rather than scrolling through the whole document. I think the later parts of the literature review are stronger than the beginning parts at this point. They were much more straight forward to write initially because they are mostly a synthesis of current literature on the topic framed in terms of classroom practice and barrier to meaning making and the use of multimedia in the secondary ELA classroom.

- wrote a intro paragraph regarding what I want to study and why
- drafted research questions
- sent to peer review group for feedback

When I met with Lindy last week, she asked me to think about what is it that you are most passionately curious about? So I am taking some time today to answer that question with the hopes of narrowing and focusing in on my research questions:

I am most interested in teachers who have already implemented greater student choice in 'reading' in their classroom and incorporated multimedia into their teaching practices successfully. I am specifically interested in teachers who have used (and fostered the use of by students) multimedia as part of their reading instruction and the types of texts that read, discussed, presented in the classroom, not just as multimedia projects that students create or solely as part of the writing instruction. I want to know about teachers who use published and unpublished, formal and informal multimedia in their classrooms to build students' literacy skills in meaning making and comprehension. How have the teachers who have done this conceptualized new literacies in their own lives, in the lives of their students, and in their identities as teachers? How has this impacted lesson planning, assessment, and feedback?

From this, I have drafted research questions (again!) and brainstormed related questions to help me to visualize the related topics I am interested in and how these relate to my literature review (or not). After this exercise, I think I am still generally on the right track, but I definitely have too much going on!

Draft of research questions:

How do secondary ELA teachers conceptualize new literacies?

- for themselves, their students, and their teaching
- the teachers' journeys of how they conceptualize literacy (has it changed over time? why?)
- the relationship between their attitudes and values about new literacy and their classroom practice (how does what you believe drive what you do?)
- what, if any, role does collaborative meaning making play in the classroom - is reading and meaning making valued as an individual or collaborative endeavor?
- how the teacher blurs or builds the line between students' in- and out-of-school literacy practices and why

How does their conceptualization of new literacies impact their teaching of reading?

- what skills and strategies the teacher uses to make meaning in their own reading of multimedia text and if/how this impacts the lessons she teaches
- what do the teachers see as the purpose for reading (different purpose leads to different meaning)?
- how and why they demonstrate or use their own literacy learning and skills to model to students
- how they use text sets with their students and what new literacies do these types of assignments/ activities help to build
 - how is the conceptualization of reading changes through the creation of texts sets, specifically in the way that meaning is created through synthesis of texts and underlying ideas and how the text itself is created by the reader
- what types of multimedia (texts) are most valued or emphasized in the classroom and why are these texts privileged?

How do the teachers' attitudes and values about new literacy shape their teaching, assignments, and the feedback they give to students?

- how their understanding of new literacy drives assignments, feedback, and grades they give to students
- the role of student choice in operationalizing literacy practice in secondary ELA
- how do the teachers' goals for student learning relate to the new literacy practices
- how students demonstrate (make visible) their new literacy practices to the teacher so that she may assess and give feedback (what is valued in this process)?

Jan 19 - writing group

Received feedback from Adam and Julie on my outline and research questions. I think the outline and argument of the literature review still feels pretty strong. During our discussion, we talked about the difference between new literacies and meaning making and how they both relate to each other and to multimedia in the classroom. There was also discussion of the focus: is my student focused on teachers or students? How do I make this distinction? I want my focus to be on teachers in this study, so it is important that I keep tying all of the pieces back around to teachers. I think this can be done in how I frame each of the sections of the literature review, but it is not completely clear yet in the outline and chapter. I think that these are things that I will need to wrestle with more as I develop a clear focus and questions for my research. We all agreed that I need to revise the research questions - they feel redundant/ unclear at this point. I'm not sure what the next step will be on this front, but this is helpful feedback.

Jan 21 - Continued reading on New Literacies theoretical framework. I do not think this is looking like it will be the best theoretical framework for my research, but it is filling in a lot of holes in my literature review so far. I finally have an understanding of the so - called changing nature of literacy that is referred to so often in the literature, but is so

rarely defined. I will need to read more into the research and theory on new literacy to help put these pieces together with my focus in this study. I will type in my notes/reflections tomorrow.

Jan 24 - writing group/ Swem - drafted chapter 1

Today I wrote a draft of chapter 1 of my dissertation and sent it to Julie and Adam for initial peer feedback. Chapter 1 was challenging to consider how to frame all of the ideas that feed into my dissertation. I really wanted to start this study with a personal anecdote to help my readers to get on the same page right as me off the bat. I really like the flow of it to begin this way – I hope that my readers and committee see the value in starting this way. From the personal and professional related experience, I try to transition into giving a brief introduction to the changing nature of literacy. I think the notion of traditional literacy as one that minimizes the experience and knowledge of the student is an important contrast to what I hope to highlight in this study. The work of the new literacies group and Rosenblatt both really center students and their beliefs and experiences, etc. as the heart of meaning making and literacy. I then transition into an introduction to meaning making – again this is one of the hardest concepts to write about. Meaning is not fixed or static; it cannot come from just one person or one text. This is where I really like how the transactional theory of reading fits in with this study because it values the personal transaction between the reader and the text and how this transaction continues into the social and collaborative realms as meaning continues to get made. Finally, the NCTE position statement on 21st century literacies and a recent study by Ajayi (2013) help to define some of the needs and challenges of using multimedia in ELA classrooms. This will help to further the justification for the study.

Today I completed readings on new literacies with a specific focus on how and why our understanding, as educators, of literacy has changed over time. These notes helped me to address the changing nature of literacy in the draft of chapter 1.

Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2012). *Literacies*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
#newliteracy @cope @kalantzis #meaningmaking #changingliteracy [»](#)

- "The term '*Multiliteracies*' refers to two major aspects of meaning-making today. The first is *social diversity*, or the variability of conventions of meaning in different cultural, social or domain-specific situations. Texts vary enormously depending on social context- life experience, subject matter, disciplinary domain, area of employment, specialists' knowledge, cultural setting or gender identity, to name just a few key differences... For this reason, it is important that literacy teaching today should not primarily focus, as it did in the past, only on the rules of a single, standard form of the national language." (p. 1) @cope @kalantzis #changingliteracy #multiliteracies #newliteracy
 - This is interesting and relevant because it addresses the connection between multiliteracies and meaning making and it fact defines them in terms of each

other. I think one of the difficulties I am having in this study is defining the relationship between the two concepts. Is meaning making an expression of literacy or is literacy an expression of meaning making? I feel like what Cope and Kalantzis are getting at here is that meaning making is bigger than literacy. Also note that the two aspects of meaning making defined here are applicable and align with Rosenblatt – if in more modern terms and examples – social diversity is key.

- "Communication increasingly requires that learners are able to figure out differences in patterns of meaning from one context to another and communicate across these differences as their lives require." p. 1 @cope @kalantzis #meaning #meaningmaking
 - I think this is an important underlying concept in my research: that students need to be able to apply what they learn in different contexts and see how meaning shifts across contexts. I like this phrase of 'patterns of meaning.' I wonder how/if that will manifest in my data.

Jan 25 – Now that I have sent to draft of chapter 1 to Adam and Julie, I am working on chapter 3 today. First, I am trying to draft a statement of purpose for this study. This is a first go at clarifying my own thoughts as to why I am doing this study and what I hope to get out of it.

The purpose of this study is to delve deeply into two (three?) specific cases in teachers have conceptualized and operationalized new literacies and multimedia into the secondary ELA classrooms. These are cases of interest because the teachers embraced multimedia as an integral part of their teaching practices. Because this is an area in which many other ELA teachers are struggling due to lack of professional learning opportunities, access, and/or support, cases in which teachers have found ways to overcome these barriers are of particular interest. Additionally, definitions of new literacies in the extant literature are complex, multifaceted, and at times at odds with one another. Therefore, it is of interest to learn how teachers who are successfully integrating new literacies instruction are making sense of these complex concepts to themselves and how their individual understanding has impacted their teaching. The teachers highlighted in this study will be chosen because they have emphasized this particularly in their own classrooms. Finally, from so-called 'reading crises' to outcry over how reading is defined, taught, and assessed, this study seeks to address how/ if teachers conceptualize new literacies are situated as an expansion of reading literacy, rather than solely as way to motivate students or allow them to express their learning. #methodology #purpose @krm

I also created an outline for chapter 3 using the basic structure for a methods chapter. As I am reading up on methodology, I am organizing my notes within this outline. This is helping me to synthesize ideas from multiple texts as I read. I have started reading the case study books by both Yin and Stake. So far, I am much more inclined to lean on Stake's work for this study. Although Yin has some helpful ideas and explains case study

research clearly, it feels much to stifling and programmatic for the nature of research that I wish to do. I think Stake's approach is much more holistic and qualitative in nature and is a better fit for this study.

- Qualitative case study was developed to study the experience of real cases operating in real situations" (Stake, 2006, p. 3) @stake #methodology #purpose
- "A multicase study is organized around at least one research question. It asks what is most important for understanding the quintain. It may focus on the binding concept or idea that holds the cases together. It is a conceptual infrastructure for building the study. The multicase study will probably have several research questions" (Stake, 2006, p. 9). @stake #methodology #purpose
 - I am on board with this idea of 'real cases operating in real situations' – that is a good fit for this study because I am interested in how teachers are integrating multimedia in their classrooms. However, Stake's use of the incredibly awkward word quintain to refer to the intersection of multiple cases is not particularly helpful. I need to avoid this word and make it clear that I am interested in both what makes the cases unique and what holds them together.
- Research Framework: Interpretive/ social constructive #methodology #researchframework »
 - This study is situated in interpretivist paradigm in order to study the complex views of the research participants and the complex contexts in which they work and build meaning from the world around them. This study will honor the multiple realities and meanings of the cases it explores. This study seeks to interpret realities as they are perceived and lived by secondary ELA teachers. @krm #methodology #researchframework
 - "In social constructivism, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences- meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of research, then, is to reply as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically." p. 24-5 @creswell #methodology #researchframework #social_constructive
 - "Thus the researchers make an interpretation of what they find, an interpretation shaped by their own experiences and background. The researcher's intent, then, is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings that others have about the world." p. 25 @creswell #methodology #social_constructive #researchframework

- This is a good review on interpretivism and social constructivism from EPPL 694, but I will need to do more work to be able to explain the nature of the interpretivist paradigm for my dissertation. I need to look into what other interpretivist researchers have said about interpretivist research. I think that this idea of the researcher interpreting the ‘meanings that others have about the world’ is so apropos for this study because it is, at its essence, about understanding meaning making – exactly what I am trying to do in this study.
- Theoretical Framework #methodology #theoreticalframework
 - I have already written about the transactional theory of reading in chapter 2 – how much of the theoretical framework should I include in chapter 3? I will need to look into this more – a good question to discuss with Adam and Julie and to look at when I am reading other dissertations.
- Research Approach: Multiple Case Study #methodology #multiplecasestudy »
 - “Perhaps most important is this work is applicable to real life as it relates directly to the reader’s experiences and facilitates understanding of complex situations, understandings that cannot be made explicit in most other research designs” (Barone, 2004). @barone #methodology #multiplecasestudy
- Cases - the individual cases in the study #methodology #casestudy »
 - “it is often better to pick the cases that most enhance our understanding than to pick the most typical cases. In fact, highly atypical cases can sometimes give the best insights into the quintain.” (Stake, 2006, p. vii) @stake #casestudy #methodology
 - “Each case to be studied is a complex entity located in its own situation. It has its special contexts or backgrounds. Historical context is almost always of interest, but so are cultural and physical contexts. Others that are often of interest are the social, economic, political, ethical, and aesthetic contexts. The program or phenomenon operates in many different situations. One purpose of a multicase study is to illuminate some of these many contexts, especially the problematic ones.” (Stake, 2006, p. 12). @stake #methodology
 - “An important reason for doing the multicase study is to examine how the program of phenomenon performs in different environments. This often means that cases in both typical and atypical settings should be selected. When cases are selected carefully, the design of a study can incorporate a diversity of contexts” (Stake, 2006, p. 23) @stake #methodology »
- Data Generation/ Collection #datacollection #methodology »
 - “the most meaningful data-gathering methods are often observations – both direct observation and learning from the observations of others” (Stake, 2006, p. 4) @stake #datacollection

- "For single-case and multicase studies, the most common methods of case study are observation, interview, coding, data management, and interpretation." p. 29 @stake #methodology #datacollection
- Preliminary Interview Questions #interview #methodology
- Data Analysis #dataanalysis #methodology
- Quality and Rigor #methodology #rigor »
 - Triangulation
 - Member checking
 - "The qualitative researcher is interested in diversity of perception, even multiple realities within which people live. Triangulation helps to identify these different realities." p. 38 #triangulation #rigor #methodology

Feb 1 -

Today I worked on wording research questions: what is the difference between using define vs. conceptualize in the wording of the research questions? it depends on what I am looking for. Diana helped me put into perspective the two words. Define implies that I am looking for a direct, explicit definition from the teachers - which is not really the case at all - because I think I can solicit information about their understanding of new literacy without them being able to actually define it. I am interested in casting a wide net around the concept so that my multiple forms of data that I collect can all feed into building a picture of how the participants understand (conceptualize) rather than specifically define, new literacies. We also talked about the use of the word impact vs. influence. I am worried that influence implies intent on the part of the participant whereas impact may suggest a positivist point of view (is impact measureable?) I probably need a different word here.

I moved the sections on change nature of literacy from chapter 1 to chapter 2. I think this is a better fit.

Right now I am working on contending with defining the term 'text' without creating a huge list and using etc. over and over again even though that seems like what everyone else does. Ridiculous.

Still wrapping my head around the relationship between literacies, meaning making, and literacy skills but I think I have this all lined up better than I did before. The literacies skills piece is how literacies are broken down for instruction and assessment - they are to help teachers help students develop in being able to do these things. Meaning making provides the context and purpose in which all of this happening.

If I keep my questions as is I wonder if transactional reading theory is really the right way to go with this study - questions cast a wide net, theory too narrow? don't know. does transactional reading theory really come down to context and purpose - if, so then maybe it is a good fit. but i don't think it does because there is still that meaning making - what happens between the reader and the text piece (or else is that the context -

maybe it is?!?!)

Today I continued reading the *Literacies* book with a particular focus on how these authors define the term meaning making. I think it will be helpful to be able to compare how different authors use the term meaning making as I attempt to be able to define it in my proposal. I think this concept of meaning making is both at the heart of my study and the most difficult part to write about so far. How do I explain this very internal process? Especially one that has become so internalized that I am doing it without really even paying much attention to it. I think reflection is important because this may be a similar struggle in working with the participants in this study: how, if at all, do they make visible their own meaning making processes for their students? Do they even realize that this is what they are doing? What opportunities do their own students have for making their own meaning making processes become visible?

Feb 14 - SOE writing retreat/ submitted work to peer review group

Today I got feedback from Dr. H on chapter 1. Her main piece of feedback is that chapter 1 seems to take a big turn away from meaning making and refocuses instead on literacies. The good news is that she gave me positive feedback on the beginning of the chapter where I start by using first person and sharing my personal experiences. I was a little nervous to start it this way, but it felt right, and it is affirming to know that I am hitting an appropriate tone and level of formality, even in using first person. So the big decision I have to make now is whether reframe my study with a new literacies focus and use that as the theoretical framework, or reshape my research focus so that it aligns more closely with Rosenblatt. Drafting and redrafting the research focus questions is definitely a challenge. I definitely can see the cracks in logic in my chapter one now that Dr. H has pointed them out, and I agree with her line of questioning. Right now I am still feeling pretty determined to use Rosenblatt's work as my theoretical framework, so rewriting chapter 1 will be in my near future. I think the new literacies work is still important in this study though and is relevant (and in some ways closely aligned to a lot of Rosenblatt's work, though, interestingly they never cite her). I will have to consider how this all fits together.

Feb 22 – I have been reading some of Rosenblatt's major work *Literature as Exploration*. She published extensively throughout her (very long) life, so I am trying to work through some of her back catalogue to supplement her seminal essays (which I have read several times now). Reading *Literature as Exploration* is almost an emotional experience for me – I got a little teary eyed reading her description of the impact and beauty of the experience of reading literature. I know this is the right theoretical framework for this study. She has such an expansive handle on so many related pieces – the social and collaborative aspects of meaning making, the impact of purpose and audience, the individual reader as important in the process. I can see how it fits so well with multimedia and digital texts. We are doing the things she described in even greater ways with the affordances of digital technology. This is definitely getting more excited and happy about the rewriting of chapter 1 that I am working on. I think it is going well.

This is what I have drafted so far for the research question and rationale for the study:

Secondary ELA teachers must contend with the types of texts that their students will encounter in their lives both in and outside of school to meet the goal of teaching students to have literacy skills that they can apply to new contexts and types of texts. As there is no standard or common pedagogical practice for teaching making meaning with multimedia or guidelines for what multimedia can be used in ELA classrooms, it is teachers own conceptualizations of multimedia that are the gatekeepers of how this aspect of literacies is valued, operationalized, and practiced in classrooms. Therefore, this study seeks to explore the following research question:

Why and how do secondary ELA teachers design and implement multimedia infused learning experiences for their students?

Also note: HUGE justification for using this theory in my study:

- Rosenblatt, Louise M. (1995). Literature as Exploration »
 - Booth introduction: "It will also require of us new kinds of thinking because of the cultural changes since she wrote. Can we hope that some young reader of her work will take it in, fully, and then be tempted to address its diverse and complex implications for our TV and video generation? Some have done this already, but far too few. Can we hope that Rosenblatt's plea that we treat reading as a transaction between two great kinds of stuff - literary works and living persons - will be extended more aggressively to the treatment of *viewing* as transactional in the same sense: not just providing for the new superficial kinds of technological feedback but for the creation of truly critical viewers? Can we hope for a generation of viewers who engage fully in thinking through their emotional responses, moving toward deeper self knowledge? Can we hope for teachers who will educate students to resist passive absorption and develop active *transaction*? (p. xiii) @rosenblatt @booth #transactionaltheory #meaningmaking

March 17 – In preparing for the SURN teaching and technology workshop, I have compiled a list of multimedia texts to share with the participants during one of the activities. I am including this list here because in my exploration I continue to see different manifestations of multimedia for storytelling and reading that is applicable to secondary ELA. Each of these websites is built on the idea that multiple forms of media work in conjunction with one another and presumably the reader. Many do not have a clear linear or chronological order; others combine words, images, and video in unique layouts or formats to drive the reader forward. Serial and the Lizzie Bennett Diaries are familiar to me, but all of the rest are pieces that I found new for this workshop. I think they all push the boundaries of text, especially as it is traditionally used in ELA, in exciting ways. I am curious to see how the participants respond to the activity that uses these pieces during the workshop.

Fiction:

Todd Baxter Photography: "Project

Astoria" <http://www.baxterphoto.com/index.php#mi=2&pt=1&pi=10000&s=0&p=1&a=0&at=0>

(click slideshow)

"The Lizzie Bennet Diaries"

<http://www.pemberleydigital.com/the-lizzie-bennet-diaries/>

(Read the introduction then click to the next page: "You can follow the complete story [here](#).")

Nonfiction:

'Raising My Head High': A 16 Year Old with Quadriplegia Goes to Prom

<http://lightbox.time.com/2014/06/17/raising-my-head-high-a-16-year-old-with-quadriplegia-goes-to-her-prom/#1>

Serial: Season 1 (include pages: podcast episodes, 'maps, docs, etc.' and posts to get the whole story)

<http://serialpodcast.org/>

Interactive Documentary: Immigrant Nation

<https://www.immigrant-nation.com/>

40 Maps that Explain the World

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/08/12/40-maps-that-explain-the-world/>

Poetry

Interactive Virtual Poetry Tours from The Poetry Foundation, choose Washington DC, New York, or Chicago

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/gallery/walking-tours/index>

April 9 - met with Dr. H to discuss the plan for the rewrite of chapter 3.

Here are the major decisions that we discussed and agreed on in this meeting:

- 4-5 participants
- nuanced nature of the focus will call for more interviews:
 - especially in order to talk about the student work samples
 - propose 5 interviews - one interview about every 3 weeks
 - first week: 4 interviews
 - second and third week; process data
 - tell the teachers the specifically which weeks that the interviews will happen in

- frame the number of interviews for the dissertation proposal in terms of data saturation - need to saturate the data for each participant
- for example, if I plan for 5 interviews but the early interview run long, you can do less interviews
- this estimation is based on the idea that I will need 7-8 hours of data for each participant
- document analysis
 - my meaning making of the student work is going to be very different from the teacher's analysis of the student work
 - I need to highlight this difference in chapter 3
 - what kinds of things, if anything, will I look at the artifacts first (review them)
 - and develop a list of topics/ questions based on the artifacts to shape the interview - what kinds of questions would I keep in mind, in preparation
 - i won't get the artifacts until after the first interview
- observations:
 - how will I maximize the benefit of the time that I will be observing
 - talk to the teacher ahead of time to see something purposeful in action on a given day
 - describe it flexibly in chapter 3 - 1/2 to 1 day in each classroom
 - -take notes on what i see and what i sense relative to the research focus - meaning making in action - evidence of meaning having been made
- present data generation in chronological order in chapter 3 - this will make it much easier for the reader to follow
 - you can create an advanced organizer to help set it up
 - the introduction is okay as an overview as is but then go into the chronology of the data generation
 - make sure I plan it out clearly and specifically now ... but with flexibility

April 14 submit revised chapter 3

from meeting with Dr. H = need to be much more specific in my process for analyzing data

compare to the results chart from Qual. Research methods

- a prior codes p. 170
- emerging codes
 - what will they emerge from?
 - start broadly and then narrow
 - use contrasts in codes to clarify meaning p. 164
 - compare and contrast to identify dimensional structure p. 164
- Develop a coding system
 - after a prior
 - create "codes to catch ideas as they happen" - keep code book, manage codes

a separate code will be made for each concept
 each passage of text will be coded with multiple codes
 “sort and connect both existing and new codes into categories and subcategories” p. 178
 “construct metacodes or more abstract codes to reflect either overarching ideas or higher-order concepts, or to identify broader, more complex themes running through the data” p. 179
 this is where we get into parent codes, etc.
 “When you build a hierarchical coding system, the items in a particular branch of the system are similar in that they represent the same kind of thing, but they do not necessarily have any other association with each other.” p. 179
 “Your coding system will not remain fixed, it will be a work in progress.” p. 181
 a typical project will have about 10 top level codes and then 1-2 levels of sub-codes under them.
 parent codes will be based on conceptual similarities

- From Codes to Themes

a theme as used in qualitative data analysis refers to: “an integrated, relational statement derived from the data that identifies both content and meaning.” p. 190

this will help me to work out how the codes are related to one another and why that relationship may be important or significant. I will look for patterns in the data within and across each type of data and each case using the results of the coding. I will then group the patterns to help guide me to forming the theme labels (that describe each pattern). Each conceptual label of themes, analyzed in conjunction with the codes, patterns, and relevant literature will lead to a theme statement.

i will create memos as I am coding or reading the data with any ideas I have about themes and a description of how I came to that idea, so that it can be returned to later to see if it continues to hold up, needs modification, or deletion after all of the data has been reviewed and coded

after all of the data has been reviewed and coded I will work out the major relationships between codes (and patterns of codes) to form a set of theme statements - these statements may indicate a “relationship between a set of conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences” p. 192

The description will help to define the boundaries of the theme - what it does and does not include, which cases was it most relevant for, what are the gradations between how it manifests in different cases, if it was absent, or discussed negatively (or in opposition to how it was discussed in other instances) p. 230 I will use examples

from the data and relevant literature to help me to fully describe the themes.

Once I have all of the theme statements and descriptions, I will create a description that demonstrates how the themes intersect. This will help me to “explore their context and their interrelationships to build a coordinated network of understanding” p. 193

I finished revising the data analysis section of chapter 3 based on these notes above. I finally made sense of the Stake book in terms of cross case analysis - he - very confusingly - uses the term themes to denote research questions or research focus (or something roughly equivalent) and I just wasn't making the connection. Now that I got that, I decided to continue to use the word theme as we used in Qual A and in line with how Bazeley uses it - not Stake. It was a little tough to constantly make that shift while reading/writing, but I think I am consistent now.

Next steps for tomorrow are:

- rewrite as many quote sections as possible in my own words
- do more reading, as necessary, and further explain the trustworthiness section
- rewrite the intro to the quality and rigor section
- write a conclusion
- rewrite the data generation section to reflect changes from last meeting with Dr. H and so it is chronological rather than by data type
- reformat interview guides using APA tables or something - need to check APA guide

Appendix C

Consent Form

Making Meaning with Multimedia in Secondary English Language Arts

I, _____, agree to participate in a multiple case study involving 4 – 6 high school English teachers. The purpose of this study is to explore how high school English teachers help students to make meaning with multiple forms of media and plan and implement instruction with multimedia. The researcher is conducting this study as her dissertation study at the College of William & Mary.

As a participant, I understand that my involvement in this study is purposeful in that participants were selected with the intention of exploring my beliefs and experiences as a teacher of high school English. I understand that I will be asked questions about how I plan and implement classroom instruction, how I use multimedia to support learning, and how I use student work outcomes to plan and evaluate instruction. I understand that I am not required to answer every question that is asked.

I understand that I will be asked to participate in up to five interviews, each about one hour in duration. I will provide 5-6 student work samples from 5 different students to the researcher (with no identifying information). I agree to allow the researcher to observe at least a half-day (or two class periods) of my teaching.

I agree that I will read and review summaries of the information that is generated during the interviews to check and correct them for accuracy.

I have been informed that any information obtained in this study will be recorded with a pseudonym of my choosing that will allow only the researchers to determine my identity. At the conclusion of this study, the key linking me with the pseudonym will be destroyed. I also acknowledge that individual discussions will be audio recorded to ensure the accuracy of the data analyzed. At the conclusion of the study, the audio files will be erased and will no longer be available for use. All efforts will be made to conceal my identity in the study's report of results and to keep my personal information confidential.

I understand that there may be minimal psychological discomfort associated with this study and that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in this study at any time by notifying one of the researchers by email or telephone. I also understand that I do not have to answer every question asked of me. My decision to participate or not participate will not affect my relationships with faculty, administration, or with the college in general. If I have any questions that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact Dr. Judi Harris, the project director and dissertation chair at 757 221 2334 or judi.harris@wm.edu. I understand that I may report any problems or dissatisfaction to Dr. Thomas Ward, chair of the School of Education Internal Review Committee at 757 221 2358 or tjward@wm.edu and/or Dr. Ray McCoy, chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the College of William & Mary at [757-221-2783](tel:757-221-2783) or rwmcco@wm.edu.

My signature below signifies that I am at least 18 years of age, that I have received a copy of this consent form, and that I consent to providing samples of student work, allowing the researcher to interview me, and allowing the researcher to observe in my classroom. I also consent to reviewing summaries of the interviews as part of this study.

Date

Participant

Date

Investigator

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECT COMMITTEE ON May 25, 2015 AND EXPIRES ON May 25, 2016.

Appendix D

List of Codes and Definitions

D ep th	Title	Description
0	Planning Lessons	The teacher describes the process of planning lessons
1	Learning goals	The teacher's description of the goal of the lesson or project to develop student learning
1	Assessment	Description of how the teacher plans for assessment
1	Choosing texts	The process of choosing what texts the teacher using for a particular lesson
1	Choosing technology	Description of how the teacher choosing technology to use during a lesson
1	Modifying and changing lessons/ units	The teacher describes how and/or why she makes changes or modifications to lessons from year to year or class to class
2	changes due to student interest	The teacher modifies or changes a lesson or unit due to the interests of the students in a particular class
1	Providing choices for students	Description of lessons where the teacher builds in opportunities for the students to make individual choices based on their interests or needs.
1	The role of student interest in planning	Description or importance of the role of student interest in the topic or text
1	Meeting students' learning needs	Ways in which the teacher plans lessons so that students' diverse learning needs are met, especially students with different reading levels
1	Teacher learning and knowledge building	Teacher describes the PD, peer discussion, online research, etc. that influenced lesson planning, using technology, and teaching strategies.
0	Implementing Lesson	The teacher describes the process of implementing a lesson that she has taught
1	The role of the teacher	Description of the teacher's action during the lesson
2	Teacher questions	The types of questions that the teacher asks to help students to make meaning
3	Questions to connect to text	Questions the teacher asks to help guide the students' ideas back to the text
3	Questions for self-awareness	Question the teacher asks to help the student grow in self-awareness
3	Questions for self-criticism	Question the teacher asks to help the students by critical about the own thinking or ideas (questions to guide the students to the next step or a deeper level of thinking)

2	Fostering meaning making with complex texts	What the teacher does to help students understand complex texts
2	Foster students' growing understanding/expression of themselves	Actions that the teacher takes to help the students to better understand or express themselves
2	Foster the students understanding of the world around them	Actions that the teacher takes to help the students to better understand the world around them.
1	The role of the students	Description of the students' actions during the lesson
2	Role of audience	The students will present their work to the class (or wider audience) and how this impacts their work
1	Informal assessment	Description of how the teacher informally assesses student learning during the course of a lesson
1	Technology during lessons	The types, amount, and frequency of the use of technology devices (by students or teachers) during class time
2	Students using technology	How and frequency of students using digital devices in the classroom
2	Teacher using technology	How and how frequently the teacher is using digital devices in the classroom
1	Classroom environment	Description of the classroom environment including the type of relationship the teacher and students have and how the teacher fosters this relationship
2	Supportive relationship with students	Interactions between the teacher and her students that demonstrate a supportive and positive relationship between the teacher and students
0	Barriers to Teaching	The teacher describes an external barrier or challenge that she faces in planning or implementing lessons
1	Overcoming barriers	Actions that the teacher has taken to overcome barriers to implementing lessons or using technology in her classroom
1	Student behavior	Challenges with student behavior that impact learning. For example, inappropriate use of technology.
1	Access to (working) technology	Problems with access or infrastructure that prevents the use of technology
1	Mandates and testing	Description of the impact of curricular mandates, new school initiatives, or testing on teaching and learning
0	Teaching Experience	The teacher describes her own experience as a classroom teacher or other education related experience, including qualifications, training, leadership roles, pre-service experience, or professional development

1	classes this year	Description of classes, students, and schedule this year
0	Meaning making	The process of making meaning of texts
1	Meaning influenced by society and culture	Description of the influence of society and culture in how students make meaning (and the meaning that they make) from texts
1	Meaning is influenced by context	Description of how the meaning that students' makes is influenced by their more immediate context (school, local community, classroom)
1	Meaning making as transaction	Reference to how meaning is made through a transaction between the text and the reader
1	Meaning making in reading	Description of experiences in which students make meaning through reading
1	Meaning making in collaboration	Description of how the students make meaning in collaborative learning experiences (group projects, problem solving, inquiry)
1	Meaning making in discussion	Description of how students make meaning through discussion with one another and/or mediated by the teacher
2	Small Group Discussion	Description of learning experiences in which the students participate in discussions in small groups
2	Whole class discussion	Descriptions of learning experiences in which the whole class is engaged in discussion (including Socratic seminars, student led discussion)
2	Teachers' role in discussion	Description of the teachers' role in student-centered discussion
1	Purpose for reading	The role of the purpose for reading and how it impacts students' meaning making
2	Efferent	Description of the role of efferent reading in the classroom (reading for information) and how it impacts students' meaning making. Including the role of nonfiction texts.
3	Purpose related to test taking	Impact of standardized testing on meaning making, specifically related to how purpose for reading impacts meaning
2	Aesthetic	The role of aesthetic reading in ELA. Especially the role of aesthetics on students' meaning making
3	Teacher attitude toward students' aesthetic responses	Description of how the teacher responds to the students' aesthetic responses to text
1	Multimedia	The teacher describes meaning making experiences with multimedia that she uses in her personal life or classroom, including digital or nondigital texts
2	Meaning making with	Description of meaning making experiences that include

	visual texts	visual texts (paintings, photographs, cartoons, etc.)
2	Meaning making with nondigital print texts	Description of meaning making experiences with non-digital print texts (including young adult literature, other books, newspapers)
2	Meaning making with more than one type of text	Description of meaning making experiences that include more than one types of text (example, paired passages with a poem and photograph)
2	Meaning making with audio texts	Description of meaning making experiences with audio texts (Podcasts, music)
2	Meaning making with online reading	Description of experiences in which students must navigate mulitple webpages, searching, media in order to find information, research, or answer a question.
2	Meaning making with video	Description of experiences in which students make meaning with video texts
1	Meaning making in student created texts	Description of how students make meaning of texts in the process of writing or composing (including mulitmedia texts, poems, essays, images, videos, photographs, etc.)
2	Using technology to support meaning making experiences	The students use blogs, digital collaborative writing experiences, or other digital tools to support interaction to make meaning about a text or texts
2	Student work sample	Description of a specific student's work sample and how it demonstrates the students' meaning making
1	Meaning making as influenced by students' personal experiences and values	Descriptions of learning experiences in which the students meaning making is influenced by their personal experiences, prior knowledge, and values
0	Resources	The materials and resources that the teacher and students have access to in and out of the classroom for learning
1	Types of Text	The types of texts that the teacher and students have access to in the school
1	Types of Technology	The types of digital technology that the teachers and students have in the classroom
1	BYOD	The role of bring your own device policies and students' use of their own device in the classroom
1	Technology policies	Classroom or schoolwide policies related to students' use of technology in the classroom
1	Administrative support	Support from administration that the teacher finds helpful or encouraging.
0	Literacies	Description of the role of literacy learning in English language arts
1	In-School Literacy	The students' in-school literacy practices; the types of

		literacies that are valued in school (reading, writing, discussion)
1	Out-of-School Literacy	The students' out of school literacy practices (social media, video gaming)
1	Bridging In- and Out-of-School Literacies	Classroom strategies or steps that the teacher takes to help her students bridge their in- and out-of-school literacies
0	ELA content	Description of the content area learning in the class: vocabulary, grammar, rhetoric, research, reading comprehension skills, etc.
0	Great quotes	Great quotes from participants that I want to be able to find later

Appendix E

Coded Interview Transcript (excerpt)

Ann interview 2

K: Please tell me about the text set assignment

It is a way for us to make connections with the reading and other text. In the small way it will scaffold the research process. We don't really do a big research paper at my 12th grade class and not really in my eleventh grade class either. I like to do research but not in the way it has to become a paper. I think they can learn the process of documenting sources and looking for sources without writing a big long paper. We don't start this until after the first quarter so they have read a few books by then. Or hopefully they have. By then hopefully most people will have a three and four. I have them use one of those books for what we will call an anchor text. The anchor text is the book that spoke to you the most or maybe you're still even thinking about because you connected closely to it or you just liked it that much if your standout book. From there we are going to intentionally make connections with your own personal life experience and in some other text that you will find from here. Some of the texts will be ones that exist in your reading life and some of the texts that you find. I mapped the process out for them.

Codes (18-1210)

Providing choices for students

Planning Lessons

Multimedia

Meaning making in reading

Purpose for reading

Efferent

The work that you saw is based on a model that I gave them. Similar to the models that you showed us when you had the workshop participants do this. Some of the students really need the template to work off of so they have the template for the Prezi to work off of and can do what they want from there. I say put the anchor text front and center, nice and big. Give me a passage from the book that screams whatever topic you're going to choose. For example the topic might be survival or hardships things like that. So they need to find the passage that screams that topic and tell me about how it connects. The first year I let them have the Prezi speak for itself but I found that it often didn't unless they were there to present it. Often they did present because they like sharing

what they created but I didn't always have time for them to explain it. So now I have them explain on the Prezi.

From there I have them go onto connection whether it is a personal experience or a book they have read in the past. Maybe something they read in elementary school or that had been read to them or something that had been studied in a previous grade. From there they go to other fiction that they have read since this book. It could be another novel or something they find or really anything from there. Usually, it ends up being another novel or they will look for a poem. From there they need two other short nonfiction article. This gives me a chance to talk about reliable sources and choosing good sources. A lot of times the students just want to Google something and go with the first thing that pops up, but we try to find something more meaningful than that. Will try to find something from an online newspaper or perhaps CNN or Huffington Post. From there I want them to find a visual text of some kind. You could be a famous photograph for famous work of art just something that is media in other words. Even for that we have to have a discussion about what makes something well-known or classic as opposed to just the first thing that popped up on Google images. They will tell me that oh 4000 people have you this but that doesn't make it well known that just means it has been viewed frequently.

Codes

Meaning making in student created texts

Student work sample

Meaning making as influenced by students' personal experiences and values

Multimedia

Meaning making with more than one type of text

Meaning making with nondigital print texts

Meaning making with visual texts

Providing choices for students

Meaning making with online reading

I tried to do this at a point in the year, maybe November or December, about halfway through the calendar year. When I modeled this for them, I will have them contribute to it so they can see how it works as though our whole class was doing a text set together. We had talked about the idea of redemption being an important topic in novels, and I had done some book talks about books that had redemption in them. I had mentioned some popular all class reads that they might have done like *The Scarlet Letter* for example or *The Christmas Carol*. Then for the other fiction texts in the text set, I had each of them contribute something. From the pool books that they have read so far, they came up with one that had redemption in it and explained how it connected. So my model text set on redemption is huge because it contained text contributed by the students as well. That was the assignment, how I modeled it, and how I explained it.

I really just gave the students a couple of weeks to do it. In many ways you don't have to read all of that, you just have to find it and be familiar with it. This year I was like my seniors to do more because they have done this with me and have already done the process of choosing their own books and reading independently and talking about the books. They already know how to talk about ideas as opposed the story. I wasn't just teaching a book, I was teaching students how to read whatever book they happen to be reading. This year I would like them to start looking for an anchor text early. Think we'll have the idea in mind that they will follow a path from there to read more with fiction and nonfiction on the topic. I will make this an ongoing assignment for the year. I will check it periodically. I don't do a lot of assignments in their senior year. As we read in research, we keep adding to what they're doing. The projects are very cumulative.

K: I think that is common in senior year. I think that is showing that the students are becoming more mature learners.

I want the students to see the revision process. We don't just crank something out, get a grade and move on to something else. We keep working on something that is ongoing; they get better and better the more we work on it.

Codes

The role of the teacher

Fostering meaning making with complex texts

Foster the students understanding of the world around them

Multimedia

Meaning making with nondigital print texts

Planning Lessons

Learning goals

Providing choices for students

Assessment

K: a minute ago you mentioned that you're not teaching students the book but you're teaching them how to read whatever they want. Please tell me a little bit more about that.

Last week I did some consulting at a nearby school system. It is hard for teachers that teach in the more traditional style. Their focus is on teaching a story or teaching a book or plot and everything about it, instead of teaching them how to approach any text that they come across. It is hard for them to imagine that everybody could be reading something different. They asked, how do you teach them anything? Especially when the teacher has not read all 25 books. It is hard to get across to them that they are the experts in how literature is structured and you understand everything about it. There is the structure to everything that is written. You are the expert on that and that is what you teach. You teach them all of the elements and structure. This helps the students be able to approach anything that they're reading. You do not want students to leave school with four major works chosen by four different teachers. This way they finish the year with 40 books or 100 books. This way they have the confidence and stamina to approach any book that they come across. They now understand the structure and elements that go into writing. They understand style. They understand what we have learned. I don't understand why so many teachers don't get this.

The school I was working everyone was on board, but then the principal came in at the last minute and said that they all have to read *Romeo and Juliet*, *Oedipus*, and *The Tears of a Tiger* by Sharon Draper. It turns out that *The Tears of a Tiger* was the only young adult book that they have in their book room. It took forever to get them to understand that *The Tears of the Tiger* is only the tip iceberg for young adult literature. There's so much out there. If you like *Tears of the Tiger*, there's so much else that you will like. We asked, why *Oedipus* and not the *Odyssey*? Why *Romeo and Juliet* and not *A Midsummer's Night Dream*? Who gets to decide what the book is that everyone is going to read? It is the classroom teacher. I think we convinced them pretty well. They are on a 4 x 4 schedule which give them a much more compacted time to work with their students. We challenge them to do *Romeo and Juliet* in a week. You don't have time to drag this out for six weeks. It is so much more important that they understand how to read everything then it is for them to know the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, which you can get across to them in a week. So that's what I'm talking about. Not everyone the ninth grade needs to know any particular story.

Codes (5666-8354)

Teacher learning and knowledge building

Providing choices for students

The role of student interest in planning

Planning Lessons

Choosing texts

Learning goals

Meeting students' learning needs

Meaning making

The role of the teacher

Fostering meaning making with complex texts
Meaning making in reading

K: especially when every ninth grade teacher in the country has a different idea about what that story should be.

Exactly. If you asked every English major in the country what is the one book that they have to have on their list, they would all come up with something different. It should be the students that decide and the teachers that guide them to the books. If you say the required read to the end of the course they will have many more books to connect to that. They will have read other books on the topics of love and revenge. They will have so much more to bring to the table collectively. They will also have more confidence to read Romeo and Juliet. We try to tell the teachers that they need to give up some of the control to the students. You want the students to feel like the experts on the book that they're reading.

[Note: Dropped Facetime call and reconnected]

K: Is there anything else that you would like to add to that.

I just feel strongly that when you do a whole class read both the teachers and the students know that the teacher has all of the answers. The students' think that what can I say that the teacher doesn't already know. So they tend keep their mouth because they don't want to be wrong. They want to look engaged in it. When they read something that I have not read that gives them a little bit more confidence. Even without reading it, I can ask all of the same questions. I know how a story is set up and how to draw out the details from the students. In a three-minute conversation, I can tell whether they have read and understood the book versus writing a five-paragraph essay on it or taking a multiple-choice test. It is not as hard as it seems.

Codes (8355-10052)
Providing choices for students
The role of the teacher
The role of the students
Meaning making
Meaning making as transaction

Meaning making in reading
Assessment
Meeting students' learning needs

K: What are some of the typical questions that you would ask students about a book they are reading but you have not read?

I usually start by asking them general things to get them warmed up. Did you like the book? What did you like about the book? Those are easy questions for them and they always want to tell me anyway so you might as well start. I will ask them about the protagonist. I try to use that terminology that they need to know to understand literature. I will ask them what the protagonist is like, what were their strengths, how are they like you are not like you. I will ask him about the conflict of the book, and that will lead to some talk about the antagonist. And then you will get the students to talk about how did it work out for the characters. I don't really have preset questions. That's just about it, what I just told you. The students' responses are what lead me to other questions. I will say: tell me more about that. I've seen conversations where the teacher can tell that the student is off-track. For example, a student had read *Abraham Lincoln, Vampire Killer* and in the conversation it seemed like the student believed that the story was true. He said: they're telling you things that they have just always left out of history. So the teacher had to say: did it really happen or was it written to seem like it really happened? She is guiding him. She's not saying: you're an idiot. She's helping him come to that conclusion in her discussion with him. I find that you can have these conversations in one or five minutes. If you get the kids alone they will talk forever about it. If they think that there is an audience or someone else might hear them, they are more reticent to speak. But if it is just you with a student, they will go on for hours about it.

Codes (10052-11849)
The role of the teacher
Teacher questions
Questions to connect to text
Purpose for reading
Aesthetic
Efferent
Meaning making in discussion
Meaning making
Meaning making as transaction
Meaning making in reading
Meaning making with nondigital print texts

K: how would you describe the learning goal for the text sets?

The big takeaways for the students to be able to see connections between the books they read, their previous reading, and where that might lead in the future. The students have to be discerning about the passages that they include in their presentation. The students need a passage to support the connections between all of the texts in their presentation including the part of the poem for the screenshot of a nonfiction article. We will talk about the structure of newspaper articles and how they follow the inverted pyramid with the most important ideas at the beginning. They're basically supporting their thesis with these documents and pieces of the documents. They are doing everything they would do on paper but the details are these snapshots and next to that as an explanation. They have both the facts from the text and the commentary to make the connection. So it is a paper and in a Prezi format.

Codes (11850-12821)

Meaning making in student created texts

Student work sample

Using technology to support meaning making experiences

Meaning making with more than one type of text

Meaning making with visual texts

Meaning making with nondigital print texts

Learning goals

Assessment

Technology during lessons

Students using technology

K: That was evident in the Prezis you shared with me.

Maybe if we had more time, the students would go from the Prezi to writing the paper. I think the students would feel like that would be the duplication of their efforts because both take a lot of time and effort.

Another take away is for the students to learn how to make a Prezi. I want students to learn the presentation style. I do offer them the option of doing as a Google presentation. But I tell them it will lose all of its oomph. They're not docked for it in any way and I'll have a handful out of 75 kids will choose to do it that way. Most of the students have never even seen Prezi before but they pick up on it very quickly. When I introduce the students to a new technology, I give them a model that I have created,

but I tell them that they need to figure out how to use the technology themselves. There are tutorials. They can help each other out or I will help them if I can. Sometimes the students will work with photostory and I will tell them that I have ever made one so they have to figure it out on their own. I will tell them that this is part of the project. What? What do you mean? Put together a team of people so that you have someone with a little bit of text savvy who can figure this out. We use Google Docs all the time. But learning how to use other technologies will help students be better prepared for college and careers. This will help them stand out to a college professor or employer down the road. If everyone else is doing a power point, you can do a Prezi and yours will stand out.

K: Prezi is not linear to begin with, which is very different from other presentation formats.

Prezi forces them to make connections from one thing to the next thing. PowerPoint builds this in for them.

K: The mode of Prezi matches the learning goals of making connections. Prezi matches your content for this assignment.

Yes, exactly. I hadn't even thought of that. Yes I love that part of that. Because they have these experiences with Prezi and photostory, when it comes to the service-learning project they can choose which technologies they want to use. Teachers usually present things using slides. It doesn't require that kind of making connections. It is more straightforward. Prezi offers templates. The students need to be able to pick a template that is appropriate for their content. You can't do your text set on the topic of hardship and then pick butterflies and rainbows as your template. That becomes part of it.

K: The templates of the samples were very appropriate to their topics. One had the topic of letting go and the students use the background of raindrops. One had the topic of lost and used space in the background. There is a lot of symbolism.

Right. This is something I would question them on if the template and background did not match their topic.

Codes (12822-15691)

Assessment

Students using technology

Technology during lessons

Informal assessment

The role of the students

The role of the teacher

Meaning making in student created texts

Student work sample

Using technology to support meaning making experiences

K: What evidence of meaning making do you see in the student presentations?

I think the part that interests me most when I'm grading them beyond meeting the basic requirements is the part they write about the connections they're making between the texts. That's the part I'm most interested in what I'm grading. Of course the passage needs to work as well. It doesn't really matter what passage they use and there are a lot to choose from, but they have to connect it. At the end they have to take all of these pieces and put them together into a theme statement, or thesis you could call that. What statement can you make about the topic based on the reading that you have done in the past, currently, in the pieces that you have found. I told them that it has to be meaningful. It can't be love is a beautiful thing or everybody needs love. It can't be a cliché. It can't be something that you could have said when you started. It has to be something that you learned because you've read and put all of these pieces together. A lot of the meaning making is there. There is meaning in all of the little connections as well.

Codes (15692-16818)

Student work sample

Meaning making in student created texts

Using technology to support meaning making experiences

Meaning making with more than one type of text

Meaning making

Meaning making as transaction

Meaning influenced by society and culture

K: the theme statement in the presentation loss is loss of something that all people have to go through it depends on which path you take to recover from loss that counts. To

properly recover you have to properly grieve. How would you assess or give feedback on that particular theme statement?

The first part of that statement is something that you can take anytime. The last part of it sounded to me like something that she has learned based on what she had read. I don't think that something she would have just known from the get-go. This came from after the reading and thinking. In this case, the student had also suffered a personal loss. To recover you have to properly grieve as a statement that not most students in high school would think of. I can see some thought put into that.

K: There seems to be some connection back to the articles as well. One of the articles was about the myths and facts about grief. There is that direct connection.

Her personal connection makes her think differently about this than someone who has just read about loss. She comes from a different place than her fellow students might have.

Codes (16819-17954)

Meaning making in student created texts

Student work sample

Meaning making as influenced by students' personal experiences and values

Meaning making as transaction

Meaning making

Appendix F

Interview Summary

The following is a summary of some of the main points we discussed in the first interview. Please read through them and make any changes, corrections, additions or deletions that you see fit.

- Teaching assignment: last year: English 10 inclusion and standard and English 9 inclusion and standard; next year: tentatively English 10 inclusion and standard
- I am a career switcher. This is my fourth year with my own classroom, and second year at HHS. Before that I taught English 6-12 at an alternative school and taught English 6 and 7 advanced at CCMS. I have a master's of art in teaching and have worked with 2nd and 3rd grade inclusion student as a teacher's assistant.
- I draw on my experience in elementary school to help the students make connections to their prior learning experiences and see that they are doing similar things at a higher level.
- Last year I face the challenge of not having a working SMART board. I am looking forward to having working technology this year, including the new tablet one-to-one initiative for 10th graders. I am spending time this summer getting apps and materials ready that we can use on the tablets. I will use them for writing instruction, and also reading and research.
- We have traditional and online textbooks and whole class novels. I bring in art, articles, and related nonfiction to supplement the reading. I choose texts that give them background information and texts that relate to big ideas universal themes in the texts.
- I want the students to know how to do a video presentation and a report with graphs and research that will prepare them for what they will have to do when they leave school, but I think it is important to make it interesting and relevant to the students as I do this.
- I choose texts that my students can relate to or will have some common ground with, including big ideas about life. I may use these ideas in an anticipation guide and then return to them as we read to help them make the connections between their lives and struggles and the characters. It is key that I know my students and choose literature they can relate to.
- It is interesting to me to see how different students respond to different characters. The students don't always respond how I predict they will.
- I start the year with a 2-3 day lesson on idioms. I remind the students of the definition, we watch video clips on idioms, and then the students illustrate their own idioms to contrast literal and figurative meaning. The idioms in the videos are often new to the students, but I keep track of the idioms the students use and those are the ones they pick from to illustrate. If the students don't like the

idiom they pick, they can grab another one to work with: I want the students to figure it out in a way that works for them. Then when the students share out, they will get to learn about the ones they didn't get at first.

- I constantly circulate during the class, even when the students are working independently. Some students just want me to stand next to them; other students need some support to get going. Some students work together, some students work independently.
- I explain to the students the purpose of why we do everything. I make the connection to the standardized test for graduation and the kinds of things they need to know and be able to do for that.
- When I am planning, I look at what is it that they need to know, where are they weak, and how can I make it interesting enough that we can pick up stuff that they had missed before and still make progress for where they need to be to get to English 11.
- I play a different role for different students in order to best meet their individual needs. I offer options to challenge higher level students, for lower students I work on drawing them in to learning and giving them a purpose for learning, for the middle level students, sometimes I am the coach and constantly making adjustments to both challenge them and help them where they struggle. I am the game show host: I am giving you what you want but in a variety of ways and means to find the one that works for them that gets them where they need to be. I wear a lot of hats.
- The students in my class demonstrate a lot of caring for their peers. They will help one another; they are collaborative and social, which I try to build on for learning.
- I've found that if I can get the students started on a task, and I do it right – with the right vehicle and text to get them going – they will pick it up and run with it.
- I have a lot of credibility with the kids. I am upfront and honest with them and they are the same with me. We have a lot of good rapport.
- When I have to stand up and tell the students things, I try to balance it with giving them ways to remember, including strategies with graphics and reminding them to write down what's important and giving them models.
- My classroom is a team effort – I am not the expert in all things. I help them figure out what they already know and then fill in what they don't know. It's a partnership.
- I am often floating around, touching base, taking temperature in the room all of the time to make sure no one slips through the cracks. Sometimes there are several days in a row where I start with brief review of what we learned yesterday and I'll say: 'it seems like some of you were having trouble with "this." Okay, so those of you who got it can you share your thinking of how you got it.' I am getting them to be metacognitively aware. I realize having the students themselves share with one another is helpful to the students who didn't get it right away. Most students are good at this: the student will say: 'hey when I get

here this is what I look for or think about.' When I have a few kids do this, the kids who were struggling have now heard a few different ways to doing it or thinking about it beyond what I said when I presented it originally. I use a lot student direction to have them help build one another up. I couldn't do this if I wasn't circling the room and knowing who was where.

Appendix G

Code Co-Occurrence Chart (excerpt)

Code Co-Occurrence

Include Overlapping Excerpts

Codes	Codes	Barriers to Teaching	Access to (working)	Mandates and testing	Overcoming barriers	Student behavior or attitude	ELA content	Great quotes	Implementing Lesson	Classroom environment	Supportive	Informal assessment	Technology during lessons	Students using	Teacher using	The role of the students	Role of audience	The role of the teacher	Foster students'	Foster the	Fostering meaning	Teacher questions					Literacies	Bridging In and Out of	In-School Literacy	Out-of-School Literacy	Meaning making	
Barriers to Teaching		6	11	11	4	3	1	8	8	3			5	4	1	3	1	3	3	3			1					1	5	1		
Access to (working)		6			4			1	2	2			2	2	1	2	1		2		1											
Mandates and testing		11			5		4	1	3	2	2	1						3	3		2		1					1	4	1		1
Overcoming barriers		11	4	5		5	1	2	5	8	3		6	5	1	2		1	3	4	3								5			
Student behavior or attitude		4			5				3	5	3		4	3		1		2	1	1	2							1	3	1	1	
ELA content		3		4	1			4	11	4	1	4			1	8		14	9	5	25	5	2	2	5	2	3					8
Great quotes		1	1	1	2		4		5		1		1	1		3	1	7	9	3	10	1	1	1	3	6	8	2	1		11	
Implementing Lesson		8	2	3	5	3	11	5		59	11	24	42	31	13	48	4	68	28	17	41	24	18	6	13	5	15	2	1		24	
Classroom environment		8	2	2	8	5	4		59		36	12	20	14	6	24	3	50	24	16	23	15	8	4	9	3	10	1			10	
Supportive		3		2	3	3	1	1	11	36		5	3	1	2	5	2	17	12	7	8	8	1			6	3	8			1	2

Appendix H

Example of Theme Analysis

Initial Theme Statements (based on the pattern of codes)	Description of the Theme Statements
<p>Creating multiple types of learning experiences centered around making meaning with complex texts helps students to read analytically and develop their understanding of the text so that they can become better readers, thinkers, and decision-makers.</p>	<p>Norma provides opportunities for students to make meaning with complex texts and supports their meaning making experiences through self-reflection, discussion, and writing. She notes that analysis of complex texts leads to students further developing their understanding of the text, enjoying it more, and being able to see the greater relevance of the text. Students need to be able to identify the purpose of the text, justify their opinions and ideas with evidence from the text, and make connections to their own lives. Norma sees this as a challenge for the students, but one that they can learn and do grow in with repeated practice. Norma is very aware of the expectations of the AP exam, but frames this learning as much larger and more important than just the test for her students.</p>
<p>Students use their experiences and values in making meaning with texts, which leads them to better understand the text and themselves.</p>	<p>Students bring prior knowledge and experiences with them to the classroom and to the texts that they read. This impacts their meaning making with the text. Norma fosters learning experiences in which the students' personal experiences and values are valued. She then has the students use the learning experiences to reflect, grow, and make changes to their own lives and understandings. Norma does this by asking open-ended questions that require the students to become more aware of themselves and critically consider their ideas and experiences. Norma hopes that these experiences will help the students to better express their ideas in writing, including making connections between texts and their personal experiences and prior knowledge.</p>

<p>Discussion allows students to share experiences and connections to the texts, which then helps the rest of the class to develop their understanding in relation to the text and their peer's point of view with the goal of being able to imagine the world through someone else's lens.</p>	<p>Discussion based learning experiences are an important part of all of Norma's classes. From highly structured seminars to partner walks to informal conversation, Norma fosters experiences in which the students' initial aesthetic responses to texts are valued as are their personal connections and anecdotes. When students share their responses, their peers are challenged to see the text from a different point of view. In doing so, they think more about their own understanding of the text and learn about the experiences and values of their peers. Ultimately, Norma believes that these learning experiences can help students build empathy for other people and better understand themselves and the world around them. She facilitates these conversations by creating a safe and supportive classroom environment and asking open-ended questions.</p>
<p>Strategies for meaning making can apply and transfer to multiple types of texts allowing students to build skills in analyzing existing texts and creating their own.</p>	<p>Norma uses paintings to introduce students to rhetorical devices and has students make connections to music, fashion, and videos. Norma regards multiple types of digital and non-digital text as important in her classes and to her students' learning. She sees the applicability of these analysis skills to the many types of texts that they will encounter in her classroom as well as those that they encounter outside of school and on social media. Although Norma does not have Internet access in her own home, she stays up to date on new applications and encourages the students to make connections to social media applications and other types of media (and related language) that they use in their own lives. Norma integrates nonfiction articles into her lessons in order to help students to learn more about the headlines they see but may not pursue. She also gives students to opportunities to</p>

	<p>express their learning by creating texts using different types of media. For example, one student created a painting and another wrote and sang an original song in response to a book they read in class.</p>
<p>Students' aesthetic responses to texts are rich and valuable gateways to deeper analysis and understanding: aesthetic leads to efferent which leads back to aesthetic.</p>	<p>Norma starts discussion of texts by asking students open-ended questions about what interested or stood out for them. They then use these observations to delve into why those particular aspects of the texts stood out. This leads into a more efferent oriented (re)reading of the text that asks students to identify and analyze particular literary or rhetorical devices that the author used to convey the intended purpose of the text. Norma sees these types of analyses as possibly leading to a change or revisiting of the students' initial aesthetic response. Norma particular notes this shift when students tackle complex texts. As they develop the skills and further analyze the a complex text, they appreciate and enjoy it more. Norma characterizes the purpose for reading as experiential: "the main purpose for reading is experiences. Through the literature and nonfiction, it is about learning and growing and experiencing." She engages students in this process of meaning making with fiction, nonfiction, and visual texts in various ways throughout the year. The process is the same but the texts change – more challenging and complex in type, subject, purpose, and audience.</p>
<p>Planning lessons is an ongoing pursuit in which curriculum, standards, pedagogy, and ELA content are molded to fit the unique student profile of each class to engage them in meaningful and relevant learning experiences.</p>	<p>Norma spends a lot of time thinking about and working on her lesson plans but did not articulate it as a linear process, instead her description of lesson planning is notable in its vitality and ubiquity to her life and role as a teacher. Norma does not repeat lesson plans from year to year. She is responsive to the needs, strengths, and</p>

	<p>interests of the students in each of her classes. For example, this year she has three sections of AP English 11. These sections have the same learning goals, curriculum, standards, and test, but in a given week she may plan different lessons for each of the sections to best meet the personality of the class. Sometimes she makes adjustments on the fly as the need becomes apparent, but she also plans for them when possible. Norma stresses the complexity of reconciling state standards and curriculum framework, multiple standardized tests, local mandates, and department level unit plans into the implementation of her lessons. Norma balances using the textbook, supplementing with nonfiction articles and other multimedia texts, and being responsive to what is happening in the school, community, and world the impacts the students' lives.</p>
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Revised Themes Outline	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1: Analysis of texts leads to students' developing their understanding of the text, enjoying it more, and being able to see its relevance to the students' personal lives. Students' experiences and values influence their meaning making leading to understanding of the text and themselves. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close reading and analyzing the text: Writer's notebook and double-entry journals • Collaborative interchange: Student discussion: Building Empathy • Bridging in- and out-of-school literacies • Theme 2: Implementing learning experiences that emphasize student discussion and modeling and practicing strategies for making meaning apply and transfer to multiple types of texts and will help students to develop understanding in relation to the text and their peer's point of view with the goal of being able to imagine the world through someone else's lens. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sang an original song in response to a book they read in class. • Communication course • The Scarlet Letter: Modeling analysis and argument: Mentor Texts and Reading Strategies • Modeling analysis of the elements of style with Art 	

- Theme 3: "Everything is connected" Planning with 40 years of experience. Planning lessons is an ongoing pursuit in which curriculum, standards, pedagogy, and ELA content are molded to fit the unique student profile of each class to engage them in meaningful and relevant learning experiences.
 - Approach to planning
 - *On making changes to lessons and planning:*
 - Choosing technology and mulitmedia

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