EXCAVATING READERS: FINDING MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS' LITERACIES IN A PERMEABLE LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM

By

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Excavating Readers Finding Middle School Boys Literacies In A Permeable Language Arts Classroom

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Summary: Free excavating readers finding middle school boys literacies in a permeable language arts classroom pdf download - adolescent literacy researchers frequently recommend that teachers incorporate lots of opportunities for students to selfselect personally interesting texts to read as part of the language arts curriculum and the literature suggests that this may be especially powerful for improving boys motivation for and attitude toward reading for multiple purposes however the literature does not contain a detailed analysis of the texts that adolescent readers might choose in such a permeable curriculum the extent to which boys and girls reading selections might overlap or differ or the extent to which choices made for academic purposes resemble those that students might make for recreational or vernacular purposes during the 2004-2005 school year texts selected by 48 sixth graders for a variety of academic contexts in which students were encouraged to choose personally interesting reading materials were documented and analyzed as were the text selections made by a subgroup of focal students for vernacular purposes fantasy and realistic fiction were the most popular genres among participants text selections with boys selections more evenly spread across a wider range of genres than were represented among girls selections sports-themed texts from multiple genres and media as well as supernatural mystery thrillers had an especially greater prominence among the text selections made by boys boys selected texts from a wider range of media than did girls particularly for vernacular purposes this trend was observed at both the group and individual levels while serial works were extremely popular among both boys and girls boys text selections for vernacular purposes were more heavily concentrated around serial works than were girls and their text selections for academic purposes were more skewed toward non-serial works than were girls girls serial reading interests were almost exclusively print-based and were visible in the text selections they made for academic purposes boys on the other hand were more likely to be interested in multimedia series that is series that had unique manifestations in print visual and interactive media while the majority of both boys and girls text selections across contexts were works created specifically for a young adult audience boys were more likely to select more linguistically difficult texts to read for vernacular purposes than for academic texts while the opposite trend was observed to a lesser degree among girls selections while the distribution of genres within the text selections made by girls for vernacular purposes was echoed in the distribution of genres within their academic text selections the distribution of genres within boys academic text selections was more reflective of boys vernacular print-literacy practices than the overall portrait of their vernacular literacy practices boys expressed a number of strong genre preferences and the database of text selections reveals that these boys engaged frequently with these genres not only in their vernacular literacy lives but also within the more permeable contexts of their language arts curriculum however as permeable as the teacher made his classroom to the texts of students vernacular literacy practices a focus on print literacy practices over the course of the school year limited the extent to which the full range of boys vernacular literacy practices could become visible within academic literacy contexts

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