

LITERACY OF LEARNING: FOUR MID-CAREER ENGLISH TEACHERS REFLECT
ON INTERESTS AND EXPERIENCES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

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I am grateful for so many. If my life were a book, I would have all of the archetypes to support me.

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It is only because of your gifts that I have moved through this journey.

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This dissertation examines the storied lives of four mid-career English teachers through their experiences with lifelong learning and individual academic curiosities. The examination provides depth to discursively constructed identity and resilience within the frame of the teacher as a learner. I use narrative inquiry to highlight the fluid identity work crafted by teachers in and outside classrooms while reflecting on teaching, learning, and self. In the research, I analyze 2 interviews per participant and a series of poetic transcripts and Google search elicitations. The dissertation uses poetry and art to examine the themes of growth and resilience within teacher identities as learners. Finally, the dissertation offers a concept of learning as an embodied literacy that supports the development and flexibility of teachers.

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Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Often teachers feel that they are not supported in the classroom, and this feeling of abandonment leads many teachers to leave the profession before the five-year mark. A common feature of those remaining teachers is that they learn to practice resilience in their work. The research on teacher resilience centers on the active work of teachers in the classroom and the connection to their identity as teachers (Carrillo & Flores, 2017). Teacher identity supports both teacher and student; a large part of a teacher's identity is also one as a learner (Hedges, 2012; Jurasaitė-Harbison, 2005; Palmer, 1998). Teachers' organic literacy of learning is based on individual passions and curiosity and is fully embedded into a teacher's fluid identity. Although resilient teachers identify as students and practicing teachers, administrators and district leaders do not view teachers through an asset lens.

School districts and administrators frequently do not consider the funds of knowledge offered by teachers (Banegas, 2020; Cutri et al., 2011; Moll, et al., 1992) or the importance of learners' choices (Jurasaitė-Harbison, 2005) when choosing professional development sessions. Instead, those in charge of professional development plan training modules on the swings of local educational pendulums, meeting new salespeople, and funding new grants (Jackson, 2011; Schmoker, 2012). And while professional development changes at the whims of those not in classrooms, teachers continue to teach. However, often they separate their role as learners from their role as teachers. Viewing teachers through a deficit lens often leads to uninspiring professional development and a dearth of authentic learning experiences within the walls of a school building. Teachers' rote movement through learning modules and trainings is common, and this preformative certificate and continuing education credit hours accumulation often

significantly contrasts with those same teachers learning when exploring more genuine and individual interests. Since teachers do not often view their outside interests as being professional development that matters within their role as a teacher, they often do not actively work to connect their outside interests and the ways they learn to the methods they use within their classrooms while teaching.. However, how might classrooms changes when teachers view their outside interests as learning and work to connect that learning to their professional identity?

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Research demonstrates that students have the most success in classrooms where teachers prioritize the passions of their students (Moje et al., 2011; Subero et al., 2016), learn alongside their students (hooks, 1994; Sizer & Sizer, 1999), and demonstrate their own learning struggles (Giroux, 1988). This sociocultural work of learning as a literacy is complex, and I initially consider it in two specific ways. The first is the significance of *shared* learning as a literacy which offers connection among learners' **creation** (or artifact). The second specifically links to conversation in learning where the learning as literacy creates an authentic and informal way to use Pask's conversation theory of learning within a classroom and continue those conversations outside the classroom. When teachers prioritize conversation among all students, including one teacher and many students, around lifelong learning instead of the confines of curriculum, this mirrors the three tenets of Zhao's belief around creativity: learning, courage, and the understanding of social needs (Richardson et al., 2017). I focus on the last tenet, social needs of teachers, while considering the connection among learning, discourse, and literacy.

Zipin's theory of funds of pedagogy (2009) provides an analysis of teachers' reflection on the art and praxis of their teaching (Alexander, 2019; Day, 1999; Foucault, 1988; Jurasaitė-Harbison, 2005; Street, 1984) based on the funds of knowledge held by their students.

Simply put, teachers can use all of their teaching tools, pedagogy and experience, to help students succeed when teachers look for their students' knowledge. However, teachers' funds of knowledge (Banegas, 2020; Cutri, et al., 2011; Hedges, 2012) must also be prioritized in their connection to the understanding of the learning process for their students and their lifelong curiosities and how that learning translates into the choices they make in the classroom. I view this duality of teachers' funds (pedagogy and knowledge) as evaluative pedagogy. Unfortunately, most schools have not prioritized the activity of teacher learning and the connection to the classroom. Teacher identity is a fluid concept that changes as teachers organically reflect (Schön, 1987) on their learning and movement toward evaluative pedagogy.

Paavola, Lipponen, and Hakkarainen (2004) define learning as a “collaborative effort directed toward developing some mediated artefacts, broadly defined as including knowledge, ideas, practices, and material or conceptual artefacts” (2004, p.570) These artifacts of learning provide social-material ways of examining the literacy of learning embedded among the interactions of learners. Not all artifacts are physical, but all can be noted by a learner in the discourse of investigation, interest, and identity. We need to know more about how teachers' literacy of curious and passionate learning leads to their own teaching and supports teacher resilience.

And with this research, I attempt to investigate this literacy of learning. As noted in the paragraph above, I define literacy of learning as conversation and artifact that both marks and moves the process of learning. The conversation is both internal dialogue and self talk as well as external discussion between learners while the artifacts are those creations, physical and mental, made in the process of learning. In my final chapter, I offer a more complete description and analysis of my idea of literacy of learning within a classroom community.

Researchers note there is still a need to discover ways in which teachers learn and are lifelong learners (Jurasaitė-Harbison, 2005; Olson & Craig, 2001). Specifically, discoveries about how this lifelearning of teachers provides a demonstration for students' immediate and lifelong learning. In addition, how the lifelong learning of the teacher supports the individual work of an entire classroom of curious and courageous learners. This qualitative narrative study explores the outside learning interests of four mid-career English teachers in connection to their practice of reflective instruction.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What learning is revealed through the stories of mid-career secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. How do ELA teachers' stories of learning engage/reflect/contradict with their storied identities as teachers?

1.4 Conceptual Framework: Teacher Learners and Storying a Self

In this initial chapter, I focus on teachers as learners and storying a self. This broad opening to my conceptual framework narrows in chapter 2 where I note the three strands to my conceptual framework focusing on teacher learners: 1. The action of learning as a literacy, 2. The fluidity of identity in connection to teaching, and 3. Reflection through lifelong learning.

Before considering these three specific components, I look to define teacher learners through identity and lifelong learning while noting the possible connections with learning and reflection.

Teacher Learning

I imagine teacher learning as a series of tableaux. A group of students surrounds a teacher sitting at a student desk with a laptop while the students point to various parts of a screen,

directing her on how to create her first stop-motion movie. A teacher stands outside his classroom with knitting needles in hand, a scarf in progress hanging from the needles, as he knits while students pass to the next class. A teacher laughs aloud at a book she's reading as her students take a test. A group of students and teachers crouch on the floor with pieces of an Ikea bookshelf and instructions as they discover how to build the piece of furniture together.

The process of learning is not one of silence. It is a dialogue of self-reflection and conversation with students where teachers display their vulnerabilities in the discourses of learning (hooks, 1994) and work to create “truly revolutionary pedagogy” (Pineau, 2019, p. 201) where teachers embody head, hands, heart, and soul within the walls of classrooms as well as the world of discovery and learning. This is the literary discourse of learning and connectedness (Palmer, 1998), and I look to discover the discourses of teachers' lifelong learning that connects to their classroom teaching.

Lifelong Learning

Street (1984) posits that learning and literacy should be “geared to people's own interests and not simply to those of profit-making by commercial interests” (1984, p.186). When teachers experience their own excitement surrounding their learning, they can be more aware of the importance of focusing on students' individual interests when planning lessons. The difference between passion-driven learning and industry-driven teaching is significant. Teachers can connect their own learning and interests to classroom teaching and the understanding of motivation that goes on within learning/teaching communities. This intra/inter literacy of learning helps move individuals to consider learning as one that deeply connects to living, identity, and growth.

Teachers as Lifelong Learners

Freire (1998) views lifelong learning as an integral part of teaching. This learning does not have to be formal to be effective, but not all teachers (and administrators) see the value of this learning. “If it were clear to us that our capacity to teach arose from our capacity to learn, we would easily have understood the importance of informal experiences in the street, the square, in the work place, in the classroom, in the playground, among the school staff of both teachers and administrative personnel” (Freire, 1998, p. 48). These informal learning experiences, led by curiosity and individual passions and illustrated through literacy of conversation and artifact provide multiple ways for teachers to continue to learn. Lifelong learning is often demonstrated within the classroom as a passion for learning (Giroux, 1988; hooks, 1994; Sizer & Sizer, 1999) which positively correlates with students’ interest levels.

Students might demonstrate acceptable scores on standardized tests. Those students might nod along during a lecture and fill in a cloze notes form. But do those students continue to investigate a topic of instruction at home or after a school year ends? Do those students hold onto those notes so that they can connect this learning to their interest? I question whether those parchment thin layers of instructive learning fold enough to support a students’ true lifelong learning. It is my belief that the lifelong learnership of teachers is paramount to true student learning. Not only do teachers who model learning help students grow in their learning literacy, but teachers also continue to discover unique ways to reach students when individuals struggle with challenging material. A teacher's identity as a learner leads to effective instruction within a classroom. Freire (1998) succinctly explains the reliance on the two identities by explaining “there is, in fact, no teaching without learning” (p. 31). The role of a teacher can be fixed when considering a teacher as an instructor, but when viewing a teacher as a human, one with a heart,

soul, hands, and head, this person is less of a being and more of a human. The individual teacher is a learner and more likely to provide proof of those multiple roles within a classroom.

When “we separate teaching from learning [the r]esult [is] teachers who talk but do not listen and students who listen but do not talk” (Palmer, 1998, p. 66). In these fixed identities, teachers would not consider the fluid roles that the individuals in the room could temporarily adopt during a school day. And without the permeable roles of teacher and learner within each individual in a classroom construct, the barrier between lifelong learning and classroom learning is strong. However, when the roles of teacher and student are more fluid, the third spaces of leisure learning (Ackesjö et al., 2018) can be added to the literacies of learning within the classroom.

As teachers learn in their exploration (Schön, 1987), they demonstrate (Alexander, 2019; Pineau, 2019) the actions of being lifelong learners. Researchers have discovered that teachers who are lifelong learners think deeply about the art of teaching and the most effective ways to motivate individual students (Day, 1999). This focus on individual students by teachers who are lifelong learners allows teachers to “acknowledge the multiplicity of knowing and [allowed teachers to work] with the ensuing intersections” (Latta et al., 2007, p. 31). It is the intersections of home and school where I consider the teachers who prioritize their lifelong learning. Teachers as lifelong learners and reflective practitioners are different concepts; however, those teachers who are lifelong learners innately reflect on their teaching.

In addition to the demonstration of learning within the classroom, the “languages of inquiry and action” (Pineau, 2019, p. 34) that makeup teachers’ lifelong learning work to refine instruction where students are teachers and teachers are learners and the community

acknowledges the imbalances of power within and outside of a classroom and actively works to change this imbalance (Freire, 1998; Giroux, 1998; Street, 1984).

Storying a Self

One tells stories about personal experiences and considers these stories, the framing, addition, and subtraction, as the creation and reflection of an individual (Brabazon, 2022). In the midst of that narrative is the storying a self. It is not just storytelling, but it is instead an active process of reflection and remembering through experience and understanding of self and relationship to others. Phillips and Bunda (2018) define storying as “the act of making and remaking meaning through stories” (p. 6), while Quintero and Rummel (2015) repeat the phrase “stories lead to stories” (p. 1) throughout their book on storying as a method of teaching and educational research. Storying as a means of self-reflection is found in academic research including education (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2002; Foote, 2015; Montes, 2022), English (Fitzsimmons, 2022), science (Essebo, 2021), sociology (Strain et al., 2022).

Within this work, I use multiple ways to offer my participants opportunities to tell their stories. I offer space to build their story and the time to consider the layers of memories shared. Was this the story they wanted to share? Storying is a process. Fuller (1998) examines Welty’s “A Memory” and notes the author “exposes the gossamer of interconnected narratives that constitute a living memory” (p. 332). It is the work of storying that offers the undulating fabric of identity.

Identity as Discursively Constructed

“Human beings and their social worlds are inseparable” (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014, p. 31), and the social worlds in which we reside help us create our evolving and fluid identity. As individuals interact with the community through the literacies of learning, their individual

identities form where the “identities reside on a sea of stuff and experience” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 8). Palmer (1998) views identity as “an evolving nexus where all the forces that constitute life converge in the mystery of the self” (p. 13). The concept of self strongly connects to identity and the work of reflecting on one’s fluid identity. Philosophers have identified the self as a key feature of identity.

For instance, Foucault (1988) viewed the self as an imperative part of identity where he focuses on the theme of care for the self and “examining [one’s] soul” (1988, p. 26) while enacting identity work. He explains that the word self can be used to “convey the notion of identity” (p. 25) therefore, the care of self highlights the focused action of searching for the answer to the question, “What is the plateau on which I shall find my identity?” (Foucault, 1988, p.25). The concept of a plateau for personal identity work indicates understanding personal travel and climbing throughout one’s life. Learning through struggles and climbs while using that movement to rest in temporary ease while building the pieces of one’s identity.

Identity, though somewhat stable, is on a spectrum of individual fluidness. This fluid movement connects to learning within the discourses of groups and the connection of self to others (Chomsky & Foucault, 2006; Foucault, 1990). Part of an individual's identity can be defining characteristics such as professions. As teachers often see their job as a calling connected more to the soul than just a defining feature, the role of the teacher often is part of a teacher’s identity.

Teacher Identity as Fluid

Research regarding teachers' identity demonstrates that teachers view identity as a fluid concept supporting teachers differently as each grows in the profession (Carrillo & Flores, 2017). The teacher within the classroom enacts teacher identity through “connected yet competing

construals of cultural identity, racial identity, and social identity” (Alexander, 2019, p. 42) as well as outside the classroom with other teachers (Robson, 2017). As veteran teachers grow in their identity as practicing and knowledgeable teachers, they rely on “permeable boundaries” (Carrillo & Flores, 2017, p. 639) to connect the personal and school (Hedges, 2012) through “negotiated identities” (Ticknor, 2016, p. 201) and discourse (Oppenheim, 2016, p. 207). As teachers share an experience through narrative, they strengthen their identity as a teacher and learner (Pineau, 2019) and work with their students to consider their “conscience in this culture” (Foucault, 1988, p. 33).

Scholarship finds that many teachers have trouble integrating their full body, soul, and heart within a classroom community and that this distance sometimes creates a schism in a teacher’s identity or integrity (Ackesjö et al., 2018; Alexander, 2019; Day, 1999; hooks, 1994; Palmer, 1998). When the entirety of a teacher is present in classroom performance, this wholeness helps in “identity construction” (Pineau, 2019). While working to discover identity as a professional learner and teacher, most teachers look to “answer not only the question: ‘Who are we?’ but also ‘Who are we not?’” (Ackesjö et al., 2018, p. 887). Palmer (1998) believes that a teacher’s call to teach comes from “the inward teacher” (29), the self that helps a teacher create a fluid identity and leads to more truthful teaching through an understanding of self where one can “teach from curiosity or home or empathy or honesty, places that are as real within [teachers] as are [their] fears” (57).

Identity Negotiations and Critical Reflection

A teacher uses critical reflection to negotiate his/her/their identity (Robson, 2017) and time teaching. Alexander (2019) refers to this teaching time of identity work as “lifescritps—the sedimented and deeply documented experience of living, all become negotiable tinder in the

reciprocal process of teaching and learning” (49). This reflection on self and praxis also creates a strong sense of evaluative teaching (Schutz & Hoffman, 2017; Ticknor, 2016). As a teacher navigates this reflection, he/she/they begins to view their identity not as an expert but as one part of a relationship where the teacher’s “culture meets theirs; [and their] expectations meet their goals” (Warren, 2019).

As a teacher continues to identify as a learner and demonstrates the literacies of learning, that teacher shares their love of learning and “creativity in the service of the young” (Palmer, 1998, p. 49). Schön discusses the importance of learning within teacher identity and their work in reflective teaching practices when he considers the theory of teacher as learner. He proposes that when teachers learn new information

“they would reflect on their own processes of inquiry, examine their own shifting understandings—and compare their actual learning experiences with formal theories of learning built into standard pedagogies. They might be helped in this process by exposure, later on, to experiences in and theories of cognitive development.they might shift their attention to the classrooms in which they interact with children...they would be attentive to the ways in which children’s learning is like or unlike the kinds of learning they have detected in themselves...they would be encouraged to think of their teaching as a process of reflective experimentation in which they try to make sense of the sometimes puzzling things children say and do.” (1987, p. 323)

As proposed by Schön, the role of the teacher is flexible, while the role of the learner is fixed as an imperative piece of the literacy of learning that affects multiple pieces of teaching pedagogy. This reciprocity of learning and teaching among the members of a classroom community (Buck et al., 2019; hooks, 1994) creates “movement[s] between self and other” (Latta et al., 2007) and encourages the conversations about learning while teachers “remain open” (Oppenheim, 2016) to the fluid roles in the individual search for the identity of each member of a classroom. “Remembering ourselves and our power can lead to revolution, but it requires more than recalling a few facts. Re-membering involves putting ourselves back

together” (Palmer, 1998, p. 20) in working to understand teacher identity through a lens of reflective teaching.

Research has provided some insight into the fluidity of “teacher’ identities as personal, situated, and professional” (Carrillo & Flores, 2017, p. 647). Calls for research that investigates teacher learning (Jurasaitė-Haribson, 2005) might “help to understand the permeable boundaries of the settings where teachers live and work” (Carrillo & Flores, 2017, p. 648).

As teachers identify as learners (Jurasaitė-Haribson, 2005), they continue to question their work within the classroom and look for ways to learn more about the students they teach (Heath, 1983) as well as “consider the nexus of power and knowledge” (Siegel, 2016, p. 34) that is part of a classroom where the roles of teacher and learner are rigid. As these roles become fluid, the individuals can work on becoming “transformative intellectuals” (Giroux, 1988), where all can examine the needs of communities and schools to effect change.

1.5 Positionality: Storying Myself

Kinship and Stories

“I was certainly aware that the people I was living with had rural, southern backgrounds, but all of that seemed to be behind them; all around us now - and, of course, for the foreseeable future - was city life.” (Stack, 1996, p. xiii)

I am an only child of an only child. My mom has published two children’s books and writes short stories about the land and the people from her childhood that live on in her mind. My grandfather told stories too. And according to my mom, he always had. He told fairy tales to my mom when she was a child and later told me tall tales and truths about his childhood—some of the truths even better than the tales. It would only take a little coaxing, and he would tell the horrible and sensational stories of his childhood. Not just what happened every day but the

stories that made visitors gasp and relatives just shake their heads back and forth in amusement and annoyance.

One of my grandfather's most prominent skills was his ability to tell the story—the story of growing up poor and working hard, helping people without seeming generous, and loving the surrounding land. My mom can tell the story too, but her story sounds different. She has tales about high school and college, moving to the city, and adopting slight variations to some of her parents' values. I have my own story: one of houses close together, public school in the city, and sometimes weekends and summer visits to the country. But that is all it is—sometimes and the “country.” It is not home, and after I read Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* in seventh grade, the open land of the country could never be my home. However, as a child, Ashland, Mississippi, the county seat of Benton, was fertile ground for cultivating my passions for education and documentation.

When I was younger, I would spend a week in the summer with my mom's parents and play school with them most of the time. I would give them worksheets, tests, and assignments in packets, grade the packets, and then start the process all over again. My grandmother didn't like playing school very much. She always told me she didn't like school when she had to go, and she didn't have to like it now. Pawpaw loved it. Neither one of them finished high school; coming from big country families, their families needed them to work more than study. But Pawpaw, using all capital writing and his own grammar style without punctuation, would express himself beautifully.

During those summers of playing school, I did not recognize Pawpaw's talent. Instead, I would take the opportunity to feel like a “real teacher” by using my new red pen my grandmother had bought me and making great big slashes through his packets. His packets of

fantastic stories of his childhood memories with funny little sketches in the margins. I foolishly corrected his grammatical mistakes; he never said a word. He just shrugged his shoulders when I gave back Cs with trite little sayings written in an elementary hand such as, “Beter luck next tim!”

When I was twelve, my grandfather became the teacher. He taught me to drive. We started in the pasture, driving around the curves, slow like, and then coasting down the long length of the field, giving it just a little gas to make the next curve. I was a fast learner, and soon my grandfather and I would go out not just to practice but to talk on our rides around the field. At the age of thirteen, I was out on the highway. I loved driving. Sitting high in my grandfather’s red pickup, I felt in control. And I suppose that was why I kept visiting during the summer. My practice teaching had kept me entertained during earlier years and then, as my mom and grandfather before me, the sound of a motor kept me coming back to Ashland.

* * *

I am an only child of the coveted baby boy. My dad planned the building of bridges and levees. He protected flood plains and our family. Bayou-childhood led to a love of reptiles and fishing, and he always had another adventure to tell about his created character, Pierre the Crawfish. He told the same stories about his childhood again and again at my request until they were crystalline. Being on American Bandstand with his basketball team. Keeping baby turtles inside his school desk and selling them to classmates for a dime. Seeing Jimi Hendricks in a poorly attended concert. Getting the call his freshman year at Vanderbilt from his brother-in-law that his father was dead. I was born on his father’s birthday twelve years later.

Since we share a birthday, I feel connected to my Gram Jack, but Gram Louise I knew. She was the foster child of her aunt and uncle. They never adopted her, and this emptiness of

familial connection made her careful with exposing her emotions. A widow for thirty-six years, she practiced yoga, painted, traveled to China, volunteered at the New Orleans Art Museum, knitted, played bridge, and read. Always busy because it was an embarrassment to be without worth. My parents never smoked, but Gram Louise did. I always thought it looked so elegant, her cigarette in a long cigarette holder, book in hand, tapping ash at just the right moment.

Once while visiting Gram Louise in New Orleans, I used an entire roll of film to take photographs of cars and signs. As a seven-year-old, I thought that the future might be different, and someone might want to see what things looked like in the past. That early desire to document stories and images of the surrounding community never diminished.

School and Passions

I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee, in an area of the town where the homes were all built in the 1920s, the first "suburb" of Memphis where the doctors and business owners spent evenings and weekends before driving their Model Ts, Roadsters, and Touring cars the ten minutes to downtown. I attended large public schools, some of the first built in Memphis. These had been the "White schools" before integrating the schools in the early 1970s. By the 1980s and 1990s, the "White flight" and the influx of private schools had helped to change my schools' racial makeup considerably. As a White student, I was in the ten percent minority.

In my senior year, I applied to all state schools, and I decided, even before applying, to go to the school that gave me the most money and would therefore be the least expensive. I decided to major in education, and teachers shouldn't have college debt. So I accepted the offer at the University of Mississippi and its Honors College. I was embarrassed to tell my high school friends where I planned to go to school. Every high school assembly began with the Pledge of Allegiance and ended with all three verses of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing"—which has been

referred to as the unofficial Black National Anthem; no one at my high school had a positive opinion about the state of Mississippi, and so I didn't either.

I was overwhelmed by the number of White people at the University of Mississippi, and I mentioned it to a new college friend when we walked to class during the first week of school. "Look at all of these White people!" She looked at me with confusion and pity, "Sally, you're White." At that moment, I realized I did not know anyone's story. I only saw their face through my filters of bias and experience. That simple sentence changed my perspective on others. I must hear others' stories, and acknowledge my assumption, but not embrace my assumptions while listening to someone else's story. And I wanted to hear others' stories.

I spent two years conducting interviews on generational migration and as part of a documentary studies team following the harvest and traditions of Mississippi Delta cotton plantations—always searching for commonalities among the many and the significance of the one. Hortense Powdermaker's (1967) *Stranger and Friend* was the first text I read describing the significance of my passion. Although flawed and dated, she will always be my favorite anthropologist. I often found that I could get further in documentary projects because I was a "girl" and not a man. I was able to ride in the cotton picker with the driver because he didn't want to be too close to the guy. I had full access to the cotton gin because I looked like the foreman's dead wife. As with my anthropological hero, I found that "in Mississippi, I had sometimes to pretend naivete" (Powdermaker, 1967, p. 198). I knew the shorthand of the rural, White community, and I had a different perspective of the Black families and churches I visited, but I also knew enough not to act as if I thought I belonged or insinuated that I felt as though I should be there without gratefulness.

As Powdermaker observes two intellectuals discussing culture and personality, she remarks, “each man seemed to combine within himself something of the scientist and of the poet” (Powdermaker, 1967, p. 134). I embraced this description—a poet and a scientist. I used my English background of close line-by-line analysis to consider words in an interview or objects in an image and my background in rural societies to connect to individuals whose stories I wanted to document.

Teaching, Observing, and Shifting

I spent fifteen years as a public school teacher in a large district. Early in my career, I learned two things about teaching that I can easily connect to qualitative research—the importance of observation and the paradigm shift based on experience. I remember feeling anxious during those first few years—the change of requirements, new rules, and lots of yelling by principals during faculty meetings. The stress of experiencing the mercurial nature of administrators started to affect me, so I started watching the teachers who had been teaching for decades. I could see the phrase “take it in stride” in their expressions; they rode the waves of requirements, rules, and surprises. The principal would start yelling, and the science teacher on my team, who had been teaching for over thirty years would just smile and nod. A parent ripped off her earrings and fingernails during a conference and then jumped up to try and fight an assistant principal, and the other teachers on my team silently waited until she calmed down. I started to follow their lead. That choice to observe saved me from quitting in frustration early on in my career.

When I had my son in 2004, I returned to my classroom, the same classroom with the same students, but my paradigm of my students' needs had changed drastically. Suddenly they were not thirteen-year-olds who needed to learn how to write an essay, discuss literature, and

diagram a sentence. Instead, each of my students was first someone's cherished baby. Someone should have loved each one of them the way I loved my son, and if they hadn't been cherished, I would honor and respect them as individuals before I saw them as students.

Our Family: From the Outside Looking In

Today, my son is nineteen-years-old and six feet and four inches. He is our bull. He bites himself so often that he has scar tissue on his inner arms and hands. He slaps his head or slams his head against walls enough that I google, "teen with severe autism hits head affect," at least twice a week. He slit his wrist twice while punching his hand through panes of glass. We have four holes in our walls from his punches. He goes through periods of anger and becomes volatile mainly because of his low level of frustration and sometimes just because these actions have turned into self-stimulatory behaviors. His autism and intellectual disability increase his behaviors as he ages instead of decreasing. The layers of mourning for the little boy we did not have and the trauma of continual physical attacks on us have changed us. It also changes the way the community perceives our family. We no longer go to church; a church is not willing to accept Jack's behaviors. We don't go to museums or restaurants or stores. We go on walks in the woods, drives in the car, and that's about it. Many people have more understanding and acceptance of individuals with special needs, but Jack is an outlier. There is no acceptance for him. Until it was very obvious that he had significant special needs, we received a lot of vocal judgment in public. "You need to beat his ass," was something we heard often.

Our daughter has a bone condition called pseudoarthrosis of the tibia. She is our china cabinet. She is not scared of the volatile nature of her brother, but she should be. When she was little, she would get in his face and threaten him with her "ninja hands." She has broken her tibia five times. She has had thirteen surgeries in Baltimore with two external fixators, five titanium

rods, and at least a dozen full-leg braces. If Jack had been typical, we would have babied Ingrid. Instead, we let her fend for herself. It's our reality.

My Research Reality

My first introduction to education research (and catalyst for my desire to major in education) was Kozol's (1991) *Savage Inequalities*. I believe Kozol's text is an example of what Eve Tuck refers to as "damage-centered research" (Tuck, 2009). As Tuck explains "there was a time and place for damage-centered research" (Tuck, 2009, p. 415), but many of the studies are "finger-shaped bruises on pulse points" (p. 412) and now we must focus our curiosity and passion on desire-centered research frameworks where expectations for "complexity, conditions, and self-determination of lived lives" (p. 416) are innate in our work of understanding. I believe that good research revolves around Tuck's expectations. Good research might not alter education systems, but it does begin the push for continued inquiry and growth.

I believe that the documentation of events and people is important for one's understanding of others and self. I embrace the idea that "methodology is inevitably interwoven" (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 109) and see the significance in looking to engage the subjects of a study as fellow researchers, thereby combining the constructivism and participatory paradigms (Lincoln et al., 2011).

I am grateful for practice and the process of writing my thoughts since, as Milner wisely reminds me, "How education research is conducted may be just as important as what is actually discovered in a study" (Milner, 2007, p. 397). In my research study, I also face the dichotomy of my fairly strong, almost paradoxical opinions regarding teachers: They are smart and lazy. They are empathetic; they are cruel.

I am a teacher, have always wanted to be a teacher, and I love teaching. Many of my friends are teachers, and they are passionate about providing engaging lessons and working to reach all students.

However, I also despise many teacher traits and loathe the “just getting by approach” many teachers display. I saw teachers “whisper” about annoying kids in their class with the grade book in front of their mouths while the class understood every word the teacher said. I have seen special education teachers mock the speech patterns of their students. My son, who cannot communicate in the same way as neurotypical children, has come home with scratch marks on both cheeks where his teacher grabbed his face and dug in her fingernails.

1.6 Study Design: Inquiry, Story, and Metaphor

In this study, I interviewed four mid-career English Language Arts high school teachers to understand their negotiations of identity as teachers and learners. Using qualitative narrative inquiry, I analyzed their stories to uncover the themes of lifelong learning and critical reflection to see how these meshed in their discursive constructions of selves as teachers.

As I reflect on my incongruous beliefs about my subjects of study, teachers, and the addition of my relationship as an insider/outsider, I find Emerson’s encouragement for the ethnographer reassuring, “The task of the ethnographer is not to determine ‘the truth’ but to reveal the multiple truths apparent in others’ lives” (Emerson, et al., 2011, p.4).

My goal in research pursuits is to focus first on inquiry instead of hovering too close to the following procedure of certain methods where “the tail of methodology wags the dog of inquiry” (Lather, 2006, p. 47). I understand that my experience as a parent makes it so that I view research as an escape; it is a distraction and a joy—my lifelong learning.

I believe my concept of reality can be explained through the metaphor of a rainstorm. Each drop of water is one person's reality, similar, possibly, almost repeatable, but different; these realities rush together at times, converging into fluid movement of momentary rivers of reality. The researcher is a raindrop but not all the drops. Though the molecules are bonded, they move, splash, and undulate; they do not remain in the same shape. And a narrative inquirer "position[s] herself in the midst" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p.100) of this metaphorical shower. The time a researcher asks questions and observes is just one moment of that participant's reality. It will change. Narrative researchers return to a question, reexamine data methods, retell, and restory. Narrative inquiry is not a linear progression through questions, research, data, analysis, and write-up. Instead, it is an organic progression.

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Vignette

“Be serious, Sally.”
Scribbled at the bottom of my PD survey
in the same cursive as my paycheck signature line.
[Learning isn’t teaching.]
[Learning isn’t professional development.]
Keep learning disparate. Don’t learn. We don’t care.
We will still sign your paycheck.
So “Be serious, Sally.”
I was/am serious, employer.

For 15 years, I taught at a Title I K-8 school in the heart of Memphis, Tennessee. Approximately 115 teachers worked at the school and participated in weekly professional development (PD) sessions. During these sessions, the teachers brought papers to grade, laughed as they glanced at text messages from other teachers in the room, and drew doodles in the margins of pages that would later line trash cans or be another paper on a cluttered desk. Teachers did not engage in the work, so the principal decided that our teachers needed “buy-in” to PD. Therefore, we all received a Google survey asking us to make a list of PD in our professional learning communities that we thought would be helpful. I decided to brainstorm learning that might be exciting and meaningful.

I suggested pages of ideas: book clubs on novels (not education texts), art classes, language classes, science experiments, and on and on. I thought that teachers with hobbies could teach other teachers. I have a linocut art business. I could explain how to create hand-pulled linocut prints. I knit; a third-grade teacher created crocheted blankets from plastic bags; the elementary librarian played the mandolin; a 7th-grade English teacher played ultimate Frisbee; a

2nd-grade teacher ran a 5K almost every weekend. We could learn from one another and highlight our continued passions.

I received a printout of my survey in my box the next day. My principal had written, “Be serious, Sally,” at the top of the first page. I cried. I am such a crier. Later I emailed her and explained that I was being serious. My brainstormed thought was that teachers might learn more about effective teaching strategies through learning. Could being the learner instead of the sage allow teachers to empathize with their students’ learning struggles, find ways to break down the material in manageable chunks, and be more open to learning new ways to teach? And would students learn more from teachers who are still passionate about learning?

My principal walked down to my classroom that afternoon to apologize and agree with me. We talked for a long time, and the following week I taught knitting to some of my fellow teachers during a PD breakout session. There were pleas for help, cries of dropped stitches, and celebratory cheers when a teacher completed their first row. Teachers forgot the papers to grade and their phones. They were learning.

Overview

Di Paolantonio (2019) examined the “rise of mind–brain and the eclipse of the soul in education” (p. 602), but the scholar’s antidote to academic monotony is not teaching creativity or encouraging students to be more curious. Instead, Di Paolantonio (2019) posits that a teacher’s desperation to move past a soulless education of instruction will often lead that teacher to a frenetic pushing of passion. When teachers demand students share a constant rushing of curiosity and lifelong learning, those rivers of rapids can be just as damaging to overworked students as the number of standardized tests.

Teachers are models for students, and researchers have identified the importance of teachers modeling healthy choices (Cheung, 2019; Laguna et al., 2019), providing cultural and ethnic representation (Brown, 2012; Gosse, 2011), and demonstrating positive learning methods (Yazigi et al., 2006). In addition, scholars have investigated the actions and demands of parents and noted the larger impact parents' observable actions have on their children (Hays & Carver, 2014; Ogle & Damhorst, 2003) versus vocal directives. Teachers are models for students; children observe and imitate the actions of the adults around them (Wilson & Conyers, 2018).

Therefore, instead of focusing on students' lifelong learning, teachers can model this trait to encourage students. When teachers demonstrate instead of instructing, students see a path to lifelong learning while teachers build resilience in their profession. Because of the number of scripted curriculum adoptions and the administrative fidelity checks in offering these lessons, teachers lament the disconnect between teacher creativity and autonomy versus district-wide expectations for teachers. But when teachers remain passionate learners within the context of teaching, these teachers are more resilient in classrooms because of the control they wield in autonomous learning and growth.

I offer a review of the literature based on my focus on teachers and their learning. I designed an iterative and organic research process while finding and reading peer-reviewed journal articles and books. I used Indiana University's EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate to perform most initial searches for literature. Some search terms I used throughout the process were teacher autonomy, teachers and creativity, lifelong learning, learning as literacy, interest-based learning, teachers and hobbies, creative teachers, careers and lifelong learning. I would discover additional articles while reading one article. The researcher's citations added to the body of literature and the number of search terms I used. For instance, once I read

about transformative teaching and understood this term's connections in my research on a teacher's learning, I also used the search term *transformative teaching* in databases.

During this part of the process, I added all articles to my Paperpile account, a reference management software system. Although I briefly read each article as I added it to the reference management system, leading me to discover additional research, I did not annotate them at this point. Once I had moved through several sequences of finding and reading literature, I began annotating the literature. While reading, I considered my research questions:

1. What learning is revealed through the stories of mid-career secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. How do ELA teachers' stories of learning engage/reflect/contradict with their storied identities as teachers?

and the strands of my conceptual framework:

1. The action of learning as a literacy
2. The fluidity of identity in connection to teaching
3. Reflection through lifelong learning

Although I followed this process for a month, I acknowledge that I do not have a comprehensive literature review. I eliminated some articles not closely tied to my conceptual framework strands or research questions through the system I note below. In the end, I read and coded 47 articles. A significant percentage of these articles (83%) are from 2011-2021.

I created an Excel document where I included quotes from the literature. Once I had closely annotated each article and made notes in my excel sheet, I read through these findings several times. I looked to code the quotes from the articles based on common themes I saw throughout the literature. The coding was an iterative process where my initial codes were not my final

codes. For instance, *power* was a theme in quite a few of the qualitative research studies. Initially, I considered using power as a code, but after multiple considerations, I decided to use power as a subcode in *identity, learning, and the soul*. Eventually, I identified the following codes: career and learning, identity, learning, and the soul, and role of teachers in the classroom. Once I identified my main codes, I read through the notes to assign subcodes to each strand. These subcodes provided themes within each strand. Throughout this process, the conceptual framework I introduced in chapter one was essential in understanding and coding my annotations.

I reach beyond the scope of educational journals and academic researchers to thoroughly investigate the strands that revolve around identity, learning, and teaching. This mirrors my consideration of teachers outside a school building.

2.2 Career and Learning

Employers expect employees to be problem-solvers and demonstrate the ability to pivot. Green et al. (2020) suggest a radical change in all sectors of workplaces and the minds of community partners—prioritize lifelong learning. The argument centers on economics. Workers open to new learning continue to grow in their career skills, welcome challenges, and provide flexibility in their thinking. Notably, medical educators indicate the importance of teaching their medical school students to “be competent in the skills that underpin lifelong learning” (Murdock-Eaton & Whittle, 2011, p. 120) as it relates to new information in the field of medicine. The expectation is that within a medical professional’s time of practice, medicine will change based on continued research. The debate within the medical education field is about how instructors provide support for lifelong learning. While some medical educators focus on the importance of modeling lifelong learning for medical students (Conway et al., 2022; Dyche &

Epstein, 2011; Teunissen & Bok, 2013; van Schaik et al., 2012), other authors highlight ways to teach lifelong learning by prompting students to engage in inquiry work that might lead to continued investigations (Irby, 2011; Jeffree & Clarke, 2010; Mifflin et al., 2000; Wagner & Reeves, 2015).

Medical schools note the importance of lifelong learning because of its connections to inquiry. Doctors should value discovery and questioning. However, schools of education focus solely on professional learning as a teacher's **responsibility** (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2013 [emphasis added]) and do not name lifelong learning as a goal. As pre-service teachers, students learn professional development requirements and the newest teaching strategies. Although teaching strategies change based on educational research, education professors often present these strategies as static instead of dynamic. Even with Finsterwald et al.'s (2013) work where the researchers created a curriculum for teachers that focused on the "teacher competences" (p. 153) for lifelong learning, the researchers used a model where the teachers were learning about the general positive characteristics of lifelong learning that focused on the importance of lifelong learning for their students. This yearlong program led to a series of quantitatively measurable tests that indicate an increased understanding by the participating teachers that lifelong learning is essential for students. Unfortunately, this learning is not the movement that is necessary for teachers to embrace their own lifelong learning.

The implication of consistency within the field of education and direct instruction to students does not encourage preservice teachers to expect lifelong learning. However, when Henriksen and Mishra (2015) explored the out-of-school lives of successful teachers, they identified the importance of a teacher's lifelong creativity. The researchers look to Howard Gruber's "studies of creativity [that] offer some insight into the notion of creativity as a sustained

act, a way of thinking, living, and being” (Henriksen & Mishra, 2015, p. 7) while investigating the connection between excellent teachers and those teachers’ “creative interests” (p. 8). In Henriksen and Mishra’s (2015) research, they recommend that

“helping pre-service teachers tap into their own personal creativity is one important way that teaching programs could prepare new teachers to think of themselves as creative individuals. Teacher education courses that encourage a bridge between creative hobbies and interests and teaching practices, lessons, and activities may be important to consider” (p. 38).

Personal hobbies and interests are tethers for a teacher’s heart and soul in the classroom. When a new teacher can connect their outside interest-driven learning to the actions of teaching, whether that be the actions of understanding a struggling learner or offering a passion-driven example, that teacher can remain fully present within a classroom (Ogden, 2013). The storying of the learning by a teacher often connects teacher and student as well as teacher and place.

While some researchers have examined teachers’ funds of knowledge (Banegas, 2020; Hedges, 2012) using more traditional understandings of instructional practices, Zipin (2009) used the term “deep funds of pedagogy” (p. 317) in consideration of the complexity of the whole teacher. Zipin (2009) considered teachers’ identities and cultures based on the pedagogical choices teachers make in a classroom. Several years later, researchers offered a term that highlighted the importance of an individual’s identity— funds of identity (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Subero et al., 2016). These asset-based assessments can continue when teachers can examine their interests through the lens of discovery and transfer their passions, hobbies, and interests into the vital work of identifying their funds of learning.

2.3 Identity, Learning, and the Soul

Learning is life-changing and more significant than a career; it offers power (Biesta, 2012; Galloway, 2015). Transformative learning (Eschenbacher & Fleming, 2020; Greene, 2014) provides a way for personal growth, including learning methods to “cope with existential individual crises ... and active citizenship” (Eschenbacher & Fleming, 2020, p. 670). Eschenbacher and Fleming (2020) identified personal discovery, self-assessment, and reflection as essential stages in learning that lead to metamorphic experiences.

Philosophers and education scholars note the connection between learning and the soul. When learning infuses throughout a life lived, individuals experience contentment (Coulter & Mandell, 2018; Eschenbacher & Fleming, 2020; Merriam & Kee, 2014) and an embodied approach to life where “self-education [provides a way for] both unconscious and conscious aspects of life-experiences [to be] integrated completely” (Semetsky & Delpech-Ramey, 2012, p. 70). This focus on passion, power, and contentment as embodied learning offers paths for students and teachers to work together in the classroom. Instead of a teacher representing only knowledge on an academic subject, a brain floating in a viscous fluid, that teacher can demonstrate whole pursuits and passions of heart, hands, soul, and brain.

One teacher in Henriksen & Mishra’s (2015) study of teachers and creative pursuits notes, “I guess it’s hard to separate the life of a teacher into compartments. There’s so much that goes on that finds its way into the classroom” (p.35). The multiple compartments of a teacher’s identity provide students access to teachers as “learning partners” (Fullan & Langworthy, 2013, p. 14) within a classroom. The “connected and social nature of learning” (Fullan & Langworthy, 2013, p. 17) offer the basis for what Fullan and Langworthy (2014) call a “learning revolution

[where] the citizen of the future [is] a knowing, doing person who can function productively in a complex world” (p. 76).

Teachers who are learners focus on the connections made by students and teachers that are generated by discovery. The bonds of learning among students and teachers create “equality in an educational relationship” (Galloway, 2015, p. 63) and “enable [all learners] to move beyond our current state of knowing” (Haas et al., 2020, p. 374).

2.4 Role of Teacher as Learner in the Classroom

Maxine Greene championed imagination within teaching and examined the connections through passionate learning to social justice while often using her word “wide-awakeness” to describe that state of being. Greene explained the construction of the term from Alfred Schutz’s *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, Thoreau’s “Where I Lived, and What I Lived For” in *Walden*, and Freire’s theory of conscientization (Greene, 2014, p. 122). Within Greene’s philosophical writing, aesthetics, passion, beauty, and imagination take places of priority in education. The open mind of a teacher is also imperative to Greene’s philosophies of education.

“One of the things that preoccupies me is what kinds of teachers can enhance children’s imaginations. The teacher herself has to be alive. The teacher herself can’t come in the room with the problem of *Hamlet* already solved. I think she has to come in with the same open questions, with the same wonder that children will feel” (Greene, 2014, p. 122).

Teachers who wonder with children are the wide-awake ones.

And teachers who wonder and model passionate learning offer their students a pathway to lifelong learning (Armour et al., 2015; Groman, 2021; Haas et al., 2020; Howard et al., 2018; Jeffree & Clarke, 2010; Kettler et al., 2018). Students look for mentors within classrooms. When

teachers work alongside students to learn through passion and interest, threads of connection between student and teacher are no longer thin, tracing only facts and testable material. Instead, those threads intertwine to create a strong rope of connection among a classroom of learning partners (Haas et al., 2020). A strong partnership between teacher and student relies on the teacher's actions (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). Specifically, the actions are modeling passionate learning and interest for students in the classroom. This modeling is not contained to demonstration, but Fullan and Langworthy (2014) note an expectation that teachers model this learning as co-learning with students. The partnership provides links of connection, and a teacher who learns with students is wholly present within the classroom community. The creativity demonstrated by a teacher encourages students to take risks in problem-solving (Shkabarina et al., 2020); the academic passions shared by a teacher bolster a student's intrinsic motivation (Du et al, 2019).

The reality of teacher roles is both nuanced and specific (Jackson, 2007). The nuance is in the number of identities a teacher demonstrates as a co-learner, mentor, disciplinarian, motivator, and instructor. However, the specific notes that measurable progress for students hovers around the scores of standardized state and national tests to demonstrate understanding of academic concepts. Howard et al. (2018) challenge that specific teacher role by noting that “the expectation of 21st-century learning is to disrupt the very idea of what it means to be a teacher” (p.851). The scholars highlight the importance of partnership between students and teachers. When teachers look to create learning partnerships with their students, this emphasizes the importance of individual students and collaborative and passionate learning.

When a teacher is a learner, the teacher is a model for students (Du et al., 2019). Şentürk & Baş (2021) found that teachers who had an “affinity for lifelong learning” (p. 675) looked past

traditional teaching methods to more authentic and unique ways to support their students' deep learning as well as saw the classroom as only one of the many places their students could learn. A teacher who continues to learn sees learning outside of academic discipline and rooms (Sarid, 2017) and begins to discover “connections between their own interests in anything from rap music, cooking, and travel, to school subject matters like math and language arts, ... find[ing] interesting ways to teach and develop creative lessons” (Henriksen & Mishra, 2015, p. 36). In addition, Groman (2021) found that these teachers who were open to new, creative learning also indicated “sensitivity to the inherent risk-taking required for creative work in the classroom” (p. 61). Risk-taking means failing, and a teacher who takes those risks will not just acknowledge the attempts made by students but celebrate the failures as leaps to success and thoughtful forward movement.

Fullan and Langworthy (2014) share their new pedagogies as learning partnerships where “everyone becomes a teacher ... and everyone becomes a learner” (p. 8). They explain,

“Let us stress, teachers as mere facilitators are poor pedagogues. The teachers we interviewed almost unanimously recognised the importance of proactively learning alongside students, in contexts where students are contributing their own ideas, experiences and expertise to the learning process” (p. 12).

This lifelong learning is imperative to economics (Şentürk & Baş, 2021), community service, and professional requirements (Armour et al., 2015; Rocco & McGill, 2018), but it is also a passion that can wane. When teachers find ways to bolster hobbies, interests, learning, and creativity, their teaching improves since they are “open to change in their professional lives” (Şentürk & Baş, 2021, p. 677) while their students see an embodied teacher-learner (Howard et al., 2018).

2.5 Teacher Identity, Learning, and Social Literacy

The social practice of learning as literacy brings teachers and students together in conversation and curiosity. Heath (2008) eschews a model of education that only prioritizes the teachers' academic knowledge and instead explains that

“teaching and learning to be enlisted here is much more of doing, sharing and practicing than one of mentally possessing. The idea of laying down mental items or images as knowledge does not get a look in. It is an entering into a community, call it a community of knowledge or community of practice, but it is one of coming to be in a group and as a result locate one's understanding as part of the group” (p.121)

Teachers as learners create those social practices within a classroom and minds. During Groman's (2021) study on teachers and their experiences with creative learning, one of the teacher participants explained the importance of the creative learning seminar. “I not only understood my students better, I started to understand myself in a way I hadn't before. It changed how I taught” (p. 58).

This more profound understanding of self and rooted passions of home, body, and class offers teachers private support during the continuous turmoil that runs through a career in teaching. Green et al. (2020) name flexibility as one of the three “key components of education adaptability” (p. 859). In comparison, Claxton (2002) noted resilience as one of the four pieces of “learning power” (as cited in Scales, 2013, p. 240). Being a lifelong learner strengthens teachers' skills in flexibility which positively affects their ability to withstand the continuous changes in administrative expectations and requirements.

2.6 Looking for Learning and Identity

Three years ago, I continued to “Be serious” when I began working on a doctorate so that I could investigate the possible relationships teachers’ outside lives have on their careers. Specifically, I searched for lifelong learning, and the connections teachers' learning had on pedagogical choices. However, I did not find only learning and teaching. Unsurprisingly, it was complex. Instead, the four interviewed teachers speak of working and living with their identity while teaching and learning from it and constantly questioning and prioritizing that identity. Their learning and passion, hobbies and interests, and relationships and oppositions were pieces of a teacher’s identity. The teachers I spoke to experienced deep callings to teach from the soul, worked on healing emotionally damaged hearts, and opened hands to colleagues and students while refusing to shutter their brains to new learning, excitement, and engagement. The stories they share demonstrate the resilience of those teachers who learn.

Heath (2008) argues that teachers who practice lifelong learning recognize the “capacity to become a new person through the imaginative learning process. Good teachers at all levels already appreciate this dimension of learning and embed it in their practice” (p. 122). The multiple identities of the teachers who shared their stories with me were fluid in learning and imagination and fixed in passion. Greene (2014) explained that the positive of teaching through imagination “is that there are so many openings, so many doors open and windows open that you never knew existed because it breaks with a single vision — it opens all kinds of possibilities” (p. 125). Those possibilities can be seen by teachers who learn and lead using a framework of what bell hooks (1994) names a “passion of experience” (p. 9).

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this qualitative narrative study, I investigate how four midcareer English teachers in a large urban district use their experiences with lifelong learning to inform their instructional praxis and shape their identities as teachers. During my analysis, I consider the following research questions:

1. What learning is revealed through the stories of mid-career secondary English Language Arts teachers?

2. How do ELA teachers' stories of learning engage/reflect/contradict with their storied identities as teachers?

I use narrative and poetical thinking as a braided arts-based methodology. Focusing on the process of narrative thinking and analysis, I prioritize the memories of my participants, their oral and written reflections, and the layers of storying in my participants' transcripts while being reflexive throughout each research stage. As a narrative thinker, I desire to listen, write and read through the lenses of aesthetics (Kim, 2016) and research. I have used poetic inquiry in the analysis process of my narrative inquiry to provide more authentic participant voices and additional ways to provide member checks and collect data.

3.2 Narrative Methodology

The action of storytelling is broader than family, academy, or culture. It is universal (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Freeman, 2018; Leavy, 2020; Riessman, 2008), and because of this human desire to tell and hear the story, narrative inquiry is a natural process. As with any story, there are characters, settings, climaxes, and conclusions. There is also the understanding that the story is for an audience and that both teller and listener, writer and reader are also

participants in the process of the story. These expectations do not alter the narratives a researcher tells through a narrative inquiry. A researcher is a participant, audience member, storyteller, and investigator.

The Researcher

A “sensitive” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 191)
& “compassionate” (Freeman, 2018) inquirer is
participant (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 23) & “protector” (Denzin, 1989, p. 83) who
embraces that
“diverse” (Riessman, 2008, p. 183) narrative inquiry is
“fluid” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 121),
“organic” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 153) &
[always] “muddled” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 179).

Considering narrative methodology, the researcher is also a reader (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 164). A reader of literature and student of literary devices and writing styles, the researcher works through understanding modes of writing and literary techniques during all stages of the narrative methodology inquiry. The expectation is that an individual who often reads within multiple genres is also an accomplished writer. Kim (2016) questions the organic process of learning to write well through only reading literature and suggests that those writing narrative research take English literature and composition classes in addition to qualitative research courses.

Not only playing the role of a reader, but the researcher is also a participant (Freeman, 2018) in the inquiry since “narrative inquiries are always strongly autobiographical” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 121). And through that autobiographical stance, the narrative researcher looks to prioritize the “ethical aim of increasing sympathy and compassion” (Freeman, 2018, p. 134) for the stories told by a participant.

How to investigate as a narrative inquirer

M

O

V

E

1. “Backwards & forward”

2. “Inward & outward” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 54)

Give time/ space/ heart for those you interview to talk, really talk. (Czarniawska, 2004)

Allow others to read your writing...while working (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999)

Why?

Because with questions and comments, you (the inquirer) see more

in the “reflexive relationships”

while “living and telling”

and “retelling”

and “reliving” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 71)

Narrative methodologists connect the forms of literary writing to research (Denzin, 1989; Freeman, 2018; Kim, 2016), viewing creative fiction and non-fiction as both pieces of telling a story of partial truths, universal themes, characters and setting, epiphanies, and temporary dénouements. The data reading begins through the story, and, at times, the researcher focuses not only on the narrative but the structure of the narrative. Here the researcher considers “how content is organized by a speaker” (Riessman, 2008, p. 101) based, possibly, on the theory of memory or reflection in the storytelling process of lived lives. The researcher might also consider how the participant evaluates the story's actions since “sensemaking is a retrospective process” (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 23).

How to write a narrative inquiry

First, read

literature (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Denzin, 1989; Freeman, 2018)

and then read more.

Know metaphor (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999).

and other literary devices and techniques (Denzin, 1989; Riessman, 2008)

so that you (the inquirer) can

“experiment with new possible narrative forms” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, p. 164),

look for “idea units” and “codas” (Riessman, 2008, p. 33), &

“interpret” and represent” (Riessman, 2008, p. 50).

And then?

Realize that

your participant has already analyzed all transcripts (Freeman, 2018).

And know, feel, embrace the oxymoronic action and juxtaposition of

“Writing is work.

Writing is an art” (Adams & Jones, 2018, p. 141).

When writing a narrative inquiry, a researcher embraces both participants of the inquiry and readers of the research “jointly construct narrative and meaning” (Riessman, 2008, p.23). This construction of meaning does not begin with the analysis or gathering of data. The analysis has already begun when participants share their narratives as the narrative has “already [been] interpreted by those individuals whose narratives they are” (Freeman, 2018, p. 129). Riessman (2008) explains that storytelling can happen at any time during an interview, but a researcher must give time for participants to talk. This statement might seem obvious, but in the interview process, researchers can often not provide the wait time needed by the participant to reflect on a story fully. Denzin (1989) segregates stories told by participants into two distinct categories, those that are “self stories” (p. 43), where the narrative is more personal and specific, and “epiphanies” (p. 22), where the narrative is deeper, focusing on “a feeling, moral, sacred, inner self” (p. 29) and can provide themes about the larger human experience.

Crafting the report is more than decimating information and analysis. The narrative's writing style and “language being used is significant in its own right” (Freeman, 2018, p. 135). By embracing literary techniques, particularly metaphor, the researcher can use these devices to represent the data in various ways to provide analysis and think about the “interpretive” (Denzin, 1989, p.58) work of the writing process (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999).

Throughout the narrative inquiry process, from research to writing, researchers must consider the negotiation between storytelling and the concept of truth (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Riessman, 2008). Freeman (2018) provides a framework for narrative researchers where he provides some word-play using the word *stage*. “These are descriptions that actors themselves cannot give at the time of experience. This is why we can say that a certain experience or stage of life was significant even though it was not experienced as such at the time” (p.130). These

stages continue into the research process when the narrative inquirer considers layers of data in the analysis process.

A researcher using narrative inquiry, works to understand the concepts of the stages of participants' lives and truths, considering the emplotment (Freeman, 2020) for the audience and the memory work of truths in the story as well as the researcher's frames of memory and bias (Denzin, 1989) while going through the process of data analysis.

Czarniawska (2004) suggests that the researcher consider the how and what of the stories within the data and then "deconstruct the stories, put together [the researcher's] own story, [and] set it against/together with other stories" (p.15). This is only one way to consider the data through narrative thinking. The writer/researcher of a narrative inquiry often provides awareness of the possible differences between "a life lived and a life told" (Denzin, 1989, p. 30). The stories told can be told differently based on the audience and the time, but a researcher must consider if there should be a conclusion for the research. Is a conclusion providing some understanding of complicated experiences, or is it finalizing an experience as impenetrable and inflexible?

3.3 Poetry in Arts-based Research

Leavy (2020) includes a list of 40 different ways scholars refer to poetry in research (p. 88) and explains that "poetic inquiry may be used to represent and/or generate data or as the entire inquiry process" (p. 99). My focus is on participant-voiced poems. Participant poems are also known as transcript poems or found poems. Researchers can create participant-voiced poems by reviewing one or more transcripts, highlighting essential quotes from the interview transcript, and arranging these quotes into a poetic form.

Faulkner (2018) goes on to highlight the importance of "paying careful attention to the line, including the use of spaces and breaks" (p. 215). Although this strategy can also be referred

to as transcript poems, this can get confusing since transcript poems are also defined as an entire (and only) transcript of the interview where the researcher looks for “competing discourses and dialectical tensions in the data by paying attention to repeating, recurring, and forceful words and phrases” (Faulkner, 2018, p. 215). Riesmann (2018) shares an additional way of creating this type of transcript poem where the researcher looks for “idea units” and “codas” (p. 33). These units and codas represent the repetitive themes that the participant revisits in the telling of stories over and over again.

When considering transcript data, a narrative researcher works through narrative and poetic thinking in the framework of understanding that all interviews and transcripts have already been initially analyzed through the researcher since that researcher “play[s] a major part in constituting the narrative data that [is] analyzed” (Riessman, 2008, p. 50). In poetry transcripts, the researcher listens to the interview and then creates a poem based on the feelings and meaning of the transcript.

And then there’s always poetry

Poetry in narrative inquiry

“challenges the fact-fiction dichotomy” (Leavy, 2020, p. 85) &
can be research or method (Leavy, 2020)

where it “can help the researcher” & “help the audience” (Leavy, 2020, p. 86)
in “provid[ing]/[creating] a distilled narrative” (Leavy, 2020, p. 89) &
as a “strategy for building trust” (Leavy, 2020, p. 89).

It is an “engaged method of writing” (Leavy, 2020, p. 97)

where the researcher must be reflexive (Faulkner, 2018; Leavy, 2020)

while “giv[ing] true voices to participants” (Faulkner, 2018, p. 215)

because poets

compress data (Leavy, 2020, p. 104) &
write/research/analyze diversely (Faulkner, 2018).

Poetry in narrative inquiry is

accessible (Leavy, 2020) &
provides “waves” (Faulkner, 2018, p. 222) of
“transformat[ive]”
& “artistic

“Truth” (Faulkner, 2018, p. 225)?

The participant-voiced poems can provide a more authentic voice for participants and be “used during analysis as a strategy for building trustworthiness into the data” (Leavy, 2020, p. 89) if the participants can co-author their participant-voiced poems. Research poems also provide a way for those reading the research to interact with the stories more viscerally (Faulkner, 2020; Leavy, 2020). Riessman (2008) explains that “working with images can thicken interpretation” (p. 179); poems, these words as images, can also provide expansion of analysis.

Those researchers who use poetic transcripts in the analysis must be aware of one of the most often shared concerns about this method: Is poetry a “partial knowledge” (Leavy, 2020, p. 86)? However, I think Faulkner’s (2018) explanation of using poetry in the research process overcomes the fear of partial knowledge. “The use of poetry as reflexive practice can help the acknowledgment of bias and expectations, and power differences between researcher and participant” (Faulkner, 2018, p. 211). Faulkner (2018) suggests a bevy of ways to answer questions about “truth, representation, aesthetics, researcher ethics, and voice” (p. 214). These answers include “footnotes and endnotes, a layered text with explicit context, theory, and methodological notes surrounding poems, reflexive poems, ars poetica, and sometimes just poems” (p. 214). More succinctly, Faulkner suggests poetry to bolster poetry. However, within this suggestion, she also recommends additional writing, including robust literature reviews and research analysis using ethnographic and narrative research methods (Faulkner, 2016). I see the use of poetic transcripts to link participants, researchers, and audiences in a way that gives all people the role of “discoverer” (Faulkner, 2018, p. 213) in the research.

3.4 Study Participants

During participant recruitment, I focused on mid-career English teachers. I define mid-career as teachers with 15 to 20 years of experience in their classroom, not including student

teaching. My reasons for these foci are that I wanted to consider how teachers in the middle of their careers push against the possibility of stagnancy within the classroom while focusing on literacy instruction within their teaching context.

Using my connections in a large Southern city where I taught for 15 years, I considered teachers I knew and had shared outside learning and interests with me during conversations in the last ten years. I asked five teachers to participate, and four of the teachers agreed. One teacher explained that with the stressors of the pandemic, it would not be possible for him to participate. I gave each participant a pseudonym: Davis, Rose, Amy, and Lawrence. Three of the four participants have only taught English at either a high school or middle school level. Rose has taught several subjects, including elementary gifted education and Spanish, but she has spent one-third of her career teaching middle school English. I taught in the same school as three of the four participants. I attended high school with the fourth participant, Lawrence. Although I know all participants, I am not close friends with any of them. This was an intentional decision while selecting teachers that might participate in my research. There are some teachers with whom I am close friends, and I was concerned that interviews would be filled with places where I should have asked follow-up questions since I knew the particular teacher so well.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

I conducted one hour-long interview with each participant through Zoom. I ensured each teacher understood that I would schedule the interview based on their needs. I offered to meet with them once for an hour or smaller amounts of time over several weeks. All four participants selected the most convenient hour. I ensured that all the participants understood that I wanted to schedule these interviews at comfortable and convenient times. The teachers seemed to understand my earnestness. For instance, one of Amy's former students died several days before

our interview, and she texted me to let me know. At the time, she thought she would still like to continue with the planned interview day and time, but she later decided to reschedule when she could concentrate. Rose asked me to keep times open throughout the week of her fall break based on the needs of her children. She would text me when her sons were napping, and we could talk then.

The Zoom interviews created a comfortable environment for each of the teachers where the teacher could find the most convenient place to be interviewed. For instance, Davis took a walk as we talked while Rose sat on her porch. Lawrence enjoyed an after-work beverage while sitting on his couch, and Amy reclined in bed.

The collection process continued after the first interview series. In the next section, I explain the data analysis procedures. These procedures transition to participant elicitation models that lead to the second series of interviews based on these written elicitations. The second series of interviews were also on Zoom, and I scheduled each at the participant's convenience.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

After each interview, I spent approximately seven hours typing the transcript of the 60 to 80-minute interview. I first uploaded the interview audio file into otter.ai and then used that ai transcription to create a more accurate transcription. As I listened to the interview, I would correct words and phrases that were not accurate and make sure that the transcript correctly indicated the speaker. After correcting the transcript, I listened to the entire interview while reading the transcript to catch any additional mistakes. I created PDFs of the transcription and emailed a copy to my interview subject. After receiving a positive response from each participant, allowing me to use the transcript, I began annotating the transcript.

Using the transcript, the annotations in the margins, and multicolored highlighted passages based on repeated topics, I created thematic transcript poems for each teacher. I used sheets of notebook paper to write poems based on themes I saw in the data. I focused solely on quotes throughout the transcript to tell a narrative in the poetic form of one theme. I created four participant-voiced poems (Leavy, 2020, p. 89) from each interview. The creation of thematic poems allowed me to continue the thematic analysis of the data. After reviewing these poetic transcripts and revising them several times, I looked at the notes I made in the margins of the transcripts, highlighted quotes, and “interpretive poetry” (Leavy, 2020, p.89) before writing a memo regarding the process of analyzing the data. In total, I have created 18 poetic transcripts

I sent Rose, Davis, Amy, and Lawrence packets with six multicolored flair pens, their four transcript poems, and four additional documents. The four additional documents consisted of internet searches. One was a screenshot of the first page of a Google search where I typed in their name and the city where they live in the search bar. The other three pages are screenshots of online places where each teacher’s name can be found. For instance, an article from a local paper written by Rose or a notice of Davis’s Frisbee golf statistics. In the packet, I included a note asking them to write on the pages, any responses they had, whether they agreed or disagreed, felt positive or negative about the information, etc. I also explained that they were welcome to write only a few words or nothing on any or all of the pages or just draw pictures. I included a self-addressed stamped envelope so they could return the pages to me when they completed my request. The data collected through this process was a collage of words and images (Burge et al., 2016; Culshaw, 2019) and like Brown’s (2019) identity boxes, it provided a “process of meaning-making” (p.490) based on the participants’ hours of reflection and revisiting their initial comments, stories, and experiences .

The collection of responses was a gift of time that my participants gave me. They are all full-time teachers with commitments outside of school. I did not expect this to be a fast process, and it was not. The earliest response was from Rose. She took a month to return the packet. The longest response was Davis at three months.

When I received the pages with their written thoughts, I made them into PDFs and emailed copies back to that participant (See Appendix A). I am storing these PDF documents and the transcripts in my Google Drive in one folder and Atlas.ti. These new reflective pieces include some material I obtained from public-accessed Google searches.

Table 1

Google Search Pages

Participant	Additional Material Found From Google Searches
Amy	<p>Blog written during Amy’s time teaching in Turkey</p> <p>Information on the Inclusion Committee she helped start on her campus</p> <p>Fundraising effort to support Amy when her house burned</p>
Davis	<p>Disc Golf Statistics</p> <p>Disc Golf Design</p> <p>Interview with education podcast</p>
Lawrence	<p>Interview on a friend’s podcast</p> <p>Blog written during early years of teaching</p> <p>Graduation announcement</p>
Rose	<p>Online article written for a parent magazine</p> <p>Article about her in the school online magazine</p> <p>Poem she wrote and published</p>

All four participants provided a significant amount of reflection on each paper. Rose drew quite a bit around the edges of each paper and wrote to me as if in conversation. By the end of one of her pages, she realized that she had shared some things that she would prefer that I not include. When creating PDFs of her reflective pages, I placed index cards over this information so that it would not be included in the data.

In addition to using pseudonyms for each participant, I have abbreviated the names of the schools, principals, former and current students, family members, and cities that the participants mentioned in their interviews. In the screenshot and transcript poem elicitation, I blacked out any mention of their name or city of residence. Since there were many mentions of the participant's name and city, most of the pages are blacked out (See Appendix A). I could black out this information by uploading the PDFs to Sedja and editing the documents using black rectangles to cover all information to indicate the participant's name or city. The data remains. These are the reflective written works by my participants that indicate their present thoughts about their identities (see Appendix A). Although I did not give any more instructions for the reflections other than the ones mentioned above, the participants considered their identity through the lenses of learner and teacher while using the screenshots of the Google searches and poetic transcripts.

This data provided another way for me to investigate my participants' funds of identity (Cutri et al., 2011; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Subero et al., 2016) and the ways that they work to situate their roles into their identities as well as how that identity might shift. I used their reflections to write my interview questions for their follow-up interviews (See Appendix B). These interviews were 30 (Rose), 42 (Davis), 35 (Amy), and 28 (Lawrence) minutes long.

Since these second interviews, I have had approximately 15 sessions of reading through the eight transcripts (2 each for Rose, Davis, Amy and Lawrence) and elicitations. Each session

lasted from one to three hours; I worked with all eight transcripts in some sessions. In other sessions, because of time constraints, I only worked with one transcript. My work consisted of the following: reading each transcript while listening to the audio of the interview, reading the transcript aloud, reading the words of only the participant aloud, and reading it silently. The final step, reading it silently, was done several times with each transcript.

Each time I interacted with the transcript, I would have a highlighter and pen at my side. My intention for my multiple readings was not to mark the transcripts or code them; however, if I found something important at the moment, I would write why I was drawn to that phrase or story, or I might highlight a section of the text that I wanted to review. I did not intentionally expect to highlight or write while reading because I wanted to take my time in the process of reading. Instead of expecting to find codes each time I read, I wanted to read for an understanding of the following: the broad story, main characters, conflicts and challenges, successes, and conclusions or themes identified by the speaker.

When considering the broad story, I look for repetition in how my participant frames his/her experiences. For instance, Davis takes all the blame for his mistakes while identifying others as the reason for his success. While Rose folds humor into every story, whether it is painful or exuberant, there will always be humor. Amy looks to entertain her listener with each reflection. Her stories are more about the listener and less about her. And Lawrence highlights his learning and success that only happened because of his abilities and hard work.

The participants are often the main characters in their stories, but I also look to see what other characters my participants give strong voices. All four participants prioritized the voices of their students as well as a specific, and small set, of influential teachers. My participants

identified different catalysts for their conflicts. Except for Davis, all the participants identified external catalysts.

During this process of reading, listening, and reflecting, I created a series of documents that helped me consider my research questions (see Appendices C-E) while looking for “prevalence” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) in themes. I found that my research questions transitioned slightly throughout this process since I wanted to craft questions that were not leading in my narrative thinking within these significant themes. I reviewed the questions and quotes multiple times during the analysis in order to ensure I followed a consistent procedure throughout the analysis.

I do not have a long number of hours at one time to spend with the transcripts; however, even if I did have luxurious days to read over transcripts, again and again, I would not. The time between the readings was not wasted time. There were moments as I was making dinner or walking the dogs, putting my son to sleep, or brushing my teeth that I would think of the words and stories shared with me by the teachers I interviewed. I thought of Amy’s time in Denver while working for AmeriCorps and when she called her brother to say, “I have to teach.” I laughed over Amy’s answer to her eighth-grade students, who asked her what it would take to make her quit. I thought of Lawrence’s time creating websites while he was in high school, learning early HTML and physiology.

Returning to the transcripts, I would follow this procedure of reading them aloud and silently. As I silently read the transcripts, I thought of my participants’ voices which helped me evaluate how they spoke and the broader stories. Reading the transcripts aloud allowed me to consider the specific words used by my participants and a closer line-by-line analysis of the words spoken. I moved between the paper transcripts and the transcripts on Atlas.ti, although I

spent more time with the paper transcripts by the end of this process. Eventually, I reread my first poetic transcripts and looked to see if there were more stories to tell through poetic transcripts. The several additional poetic transcripts I wrote focused on Lawrence and Amy's stories, particularly one that is more of a "short drama" with reflection instead of a poem.

I spent seven sessions looking at the written comments of my participants. These written comments consisted of writings around screenshots that included website searches about the teacher and poetic transcripts from the interview. I read their comments and writing, both aloud and silently. I highlighted pieces of the writings in Atlas.ti, and I also handwrote parts of their writings. Throughout all of the analysis, I look to tell the stories of four teachers based on the following research questions:

1. What learning is revealed through the stories of mid-career secondary English Language Arts teachers?
2. How do ELA teachers' stories of learning engage/reflect/contradict with their storied identities as teachers?

3.7 Ethical Issues

I prioritize the relationships I have with my participants. These four individuals are not pseudonyms to me. They text me photographs of children and emojis. They have become closer friends than they were two years ago. I have made the decision to protect my participants by using pseudonyms and masking information that indicates the names of others in their stories as well. As a former middle school teacher, I prioritize the time that my participants have gifted me throughout this study. I attempt to respect their time in member checks by offering succinct poetic transcripts while honoring their voice throughout the process. . For instance, Davis used the word "thug" to describe one of his high school teachers. I included this word in a poetic

transcript of the interview. In his feedback, he wrote, “I wouldn’t say that.” He has changed his reality here, and it is not part of my analysis. Instead he offers a “co-construction of meaning” (Andrews, 2021, p. 374) that provides me more understanding of his experience and story so that I can share his tale with more truth.

4.1 Narrative Artistic Analysis

In this examination, I group the findings by theme. Within these four themes, I tell the connected and flowing stories of each participant in my research. I named the themes based on my response mirrored-poem to “Harlem” by Langston Hughes. Lorraine Hansberry named her drama *A Raisin in the Sun* in response to Hughes’s “Harlem”. The theme of goals is a significant one in the play where the action, set in the 1950s Southside Chicago, focuses on the plans and dreams of a family. Each main character has given up on a specific dream and their response reflects one of the lines from Hughes’s poem. After remaining in the classroom for over fifteen years, each of the teachers in my study demonstrates resilience. Part of this determination connects to their identity and learning. I have used lines from my response poem to introduce each theme. Instead of one participant representing a line from the poem, I find connections among all four of the participants for each theme/line. I created a series of linocuts (Lavoie & Caine, 2021) to visually represent each theme. As Lavoie and Caine (2021) note in their work, printmaking provides a literal representation of “framing” analysis in the confines of the art medium. I begin with a short explanation connecting my interpretation of the lines (see appendix F for full interpretation) and my linocut print representation (see Appendix G for photos) before I analyze examples from my data. I finish with a conclusion drawing together my themes.

Table 1

Line by line response mirror poem

Original Poem	Response poem
“Harlem”/ “Dream Deferred”	“Classroom”/ “Ongoing Dreams”
What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore— And then run?	What happens to a dream ongoing? Does it flourish like a grape on the vine? Or mend like a bandaged wound— And then heal?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Is it aromatic like roasted meat?
Or pour and pool—
like a liquidy sweet?
Maybe it reclines
like in repose?

Or does it explode?

Or does it flow?

Note. “Classroom” by Sally Busby was written as a response mirror-poem based on “Harlem”.

Findings

A Grape on the Vine

Figure 1

Creation because of growth; growth because of creation



Unlike a raisin in the sun where the individual has given up on their dream, a grape on the vine flourishes. The flourishing indicates perseverance and a desire to actively learn more about teaching through crafting and making. I frame my linocut to focus on the actions of creating and growth through an image of a drawn (including the hand) grape flourishing.

While reading the stories shared by Lawrence, Amy, Rose, and Davis, I discovered that they often looked to define their role as a teacher through the actions of creation. This concept of creation signified the importance of honing their teaching skills and not expecting their role as

teachers to remain stagnant. Each participant connected their own experiences with teachers while they were students with their beliefs about the active process of *making* a teacher.

Both Rose and Davis view the act of teaching as a craft. Their use of the word craft signifies a connection to the belief that their work in the profession is a practiced art instead of a learned science. Davis's desire to learn more about teaching stems not just from his desire to help students because of his own childhood experiences with trauma at home, but his awareness that the students in his classroom and the other teachers provide him a level of academic nourishment and professional validation. Davis explains, "Childhood plays into the way I teach and practice this craft. I just am really aware of the fact that that was a difficult time for me. And so I feel blessed that I made it through, first of all, and secondly, that I'm in a place now where maybe I can be like a Coach King and be present for kids." He describes his interaction with students, noting that the "relationships with kids" is his favorite part of teaching and uses the word *fed* to describe what he receives from education and teaching.

Davis views students in his classroom from the lens of a former child experiencing "toxic trauma" outside of school and "presenting well" in school. He believes it is his responsibility to foster academic engagement in his classroom. "I've been able to find kids that are going through difficult circumstances, and, or not just like that, not just kids that are having a hard time, you know, emotionally or things outside the classroom, but also aren't engaged—aren't fired up about what we're talking about in school, and are kind of on the sidelines. And if I can get those kids into the conversation, or excited about being there, then that's what really fires me up. And even from the beginning of teaching, that was a big deal for me." Twice Davis uses the phrase *fired up* in connection to both his engagement within the classroom as well as his students' interests. This fire to be present is fed with his interest in his students and learning.

And this fire ignites his curiosity to observe the relationships created among the families of his students. His identity with recovery, family, and growth is always part of his learning and teaching. Because he grew up in a toxic home, Davis sees value in observing more wholesome parenting choices reflected in the actions of his students. “I learned from some of these kids what a healthy family could look like, that's supporting their kids and want their kids to do well.” He explains observing his students taking actions revolving around academic risk and resilience. “I was just stunned and blown away with what these kids could do, and what is learning and how deep [they] all think and the work [they] poured in. I never did that. I certainly didn't do that in middle school, so I just saw what was possible and learn so much.” He notes the importance of parental support that he observed in his students' actions. “I didn't grow up with that. And I remember thinking I am going to be a better father because I had these years here with these families.” He crafts learning that moves from classroom to home.

Rose also grounds her teaching in her memories as a student. Her experiences with both kind and cruel teachers make her focus on her craft in her own classroom. “I got my feelings hurt by or got so encouraged by that I just really, really, really understand the impact teaching can make—like a teacher can have on a kid.” As a student, she became excited about a subject when her teachers were excited about the subject they were teaching. “I liked seeing teachers' passion about what they were teaching. And it, unfortunately, was kind of rare. I think some—a lot of my teachers were just slotted in like ‘You got biology, Coach So-and-So’ or like, ‘You get sixth-grade science, Mister Whoever-Hated-Whatever-You-Were-Doing’. But, the English teachers tended to be women who were super passionate about writing, reading literature, communicating, like the fundamentals of school, like getting yourself in line, being a good person, those kinds of things. And so, I think that just being sensitive to what kids experience

because I have such a strong memory of a lot of my experiences probably helped what I'm doing today.”

Rose uses her personal experiences with anxiety to help students in her classroom. She has deeper empathy for their shared frustration, “It was just kind of a delicate balance of like, ‘I have 13 other kids in this room. But you also really need way more. You're not just kinda like the touch-and-go kind of kid. You need the full embrace.’” Rose makes self-deprecating jokes about her work in the classroom several times, but she highlights an intentional focus on the emotional needs of her students. She notices the feelings they have regarding hard work and frustration, and she works to find ways to help her students with these feelings. “And then what else do I want to learn? I want to learn. I don't know, maybe just different theories on how to engage with people, like engage. I don't know, help someone out. I just feel there's so much you can do to help people out just by being there and talking to them, that being more finesse in what you say, and having a purpose.” Rose continues, “So maybe having more knowledge on behaviors, and that was cool when I was learning in my master's—childhood behaviors and all these theories and experiments that they've done. Just maybe learning more about that. So, yeah, somewhere in the brain—what the brain's doing these days.” Her use of the word *engage* highlights a significant part of her stories—the focused energy she invests in each of her students. She practices engagement within the context of her classroom and learning outside the classroom.

As she works on a gifted education certification, she notes her learning and how she adapts it for her students. “And so the teacher's really good. And she's been showing us these learning inquiry models that I've never done with [my students], and the [models are] super high level in-depth. So I started doing it last week, and [the students] really got it and loved it. But I was really worried that at the beginning, I wasn't super confident in the questions I was asking.”

She explains that she had to listen closely to the students' questions and understand their misunderstandings. "I just think teaching is communication, and I'm not communicating." When Rose realizes that the deep listening on her part isn't happening, she reframes her instruction to actively listen. "We just kind of go back to a community. We've lost communication with each other."

The honing of the craft revolves around the memories and experiences of past learning in tandem with the continual self-evaluation of practicing the craft. This practice and the idea of teaching as a craft directly relate to the word that Amy uses throughout her description of the teaching process—make. Amy considers the making of her persona as a teacher, understanding that she must share her true and whole self with her students in order to create a community of learners who make mistakes and ask for forgiveness as much as they ask questions.

Amy remembers that only one of her high school classes, team-taught by two teachers, offered a place where she could ask questions without fear. She explains that in the other classes, "I never really felt like I could just be who I was." And she goes on to question why she was even in the other classes, "Why was I even in your class? What was the point of me sitting through all those classes because I got it all in those two." In those two classes, she observed what she believes is teaching and learning. "That's where I really learned you have to be wrong. You're going to fall on your face. You're going to get stuff wrong all the time. That's how you learn. [In those two high school classes,] I was never fearful of being wrong. You can't learn and grow if you're always right. It had never been presented to me like that."

This concept that made such an impression on her as a student drives her classroom practice. She finds her favorite thing in teaching to be what she learns about her students. She

shares a story of a time when she thanked a student for teaching her something, and the incredulous student asked, “What are you talking about?”

Amy responded, “You do realize you teach us stuff, right?” But the middle school student was unaware of this. “No, it had never occurred to her because why would it occur to her that she can teach her teacher anything? If her teachers never tell her, ‘You taught me that.’” Amy makes her vulnerability with her students apparent so that her students will feel comfortable asking questions and approaching her. “If they’re not comfortable in your room, are they really learning everything you want them to learn? They have to be able to feel comfortable. To make a mistake; to mess up; to just be human. And if they can’t do that, are you really teaching them?”

Lawrence moves into the connections between the craft and making. He works to “better [his] craft” in professional settings by recently earning a doctorate and two master’s degrees, being an officer in his state’s chapter of the National Council of Teachers of English, and leading professional development sessions. As a Black male, Lawrence finds that his obligation to his high school students is not “just to teach the content, but to give them exposure.” The making of a teacher for Lawrence is the importance of representation. “In a lot of cases, some of my students might not see an educated African-American male.” He sees an important part of his teaching craft as acting as “some sort of role model. To show you what it looks like to be able to speak intelligently, to write coherently. And even one thing that I tried to impress upon my students is to be able to code-switch.”

Lawrence considers the most important part of his experience with his favorite high school teachers to be the connections among teachers and families. “Our high school was relatively large, [but] teachers took the time to know who you were. They knew you by name. They knew your family.” Recently two of his favorite teachers passed away, and he considers

even in the last few years, decades after he was a student in their classes, “Whenever I would see them, they would still ask about my parents. They would ask about my sister. They took the time to know who we were beyond just faces and names in the grade book.”

As a teacher, Lawrence is now teaching the children of his first few groups of students. Recently, a mother stopped him in the office as he was walking into school. After pulling down her mask to show her face and remind him that he had been her ninth-grade English teacher years before, Lawrence asked, “Girl, what are doing out here in R [area of the large city]?” His former student explained, “My daughter goes here.” Lawrence responded, “Hold on, baby, who’s your daughter?” After she shared a picture of her daughter, Lawrence realized he had taught her daughter the year before when the district remained virtual the entire school year. “I say, ‘Yep. She was one of the selfies in the circle with the lashes.’” Lawrence continues the story by explaining how he asked about both of his former students, mother and daughter, in a very similar way as his favorite teachers had seen him as more than a photo and a face.

The reflective process of learning and teaching in connection to experience and desire supports all four teachers’ evaluative process in the choices they make in their classrooms while actuating their craft, prioritizing their actions, and making themselves into the teachers they would have wanted as learners.

Pour and Pool Like a Liquidy Sweet

Figure 2

Remembering the sweetness of learning



In my reconstructed poem, the dreams are not forgotten but instead remembered. The focused activities of teaching and learning by Rose, Davis, Amy, and Lawrence, indicate their expectation and desire for change. They focus the *change* on themselves. The expectation is that *they*, as teachers, will change based on their learning within and outside of the classroom. The majority of the learning within the classroom comes from critical comments and actions from students and my participants' reflection which extends outside of the classroom. I frame my linocut to represent the fluidity of this learning through the sweetness.

The expectation for Rose, Davis, Amy, and Lawrence is that their methods of teaching are fluid based on their own learning and student feedback. As continual students, they share stories of the classroom as a place where each of them is still learning. The learning consists of an expectation by each of the teachers to remain attentive to the specific needs of their students and feedback from both students and colleagues. They accept feedback from students because of the respect each holds for the group of learners in their classrooms—including themselves.

Early on in his career as a teacher, Davis listened to one of his students. This student shared an overwhelming unease regarding Davis's changing demeanor in his classroom

explaining that one day Davis acts easygoing and the next day he is angry and rigid. Davis acknowledges this criticism and works to change the mercurial nature in the classroom.

“But this kid is eloquently—this 10th grader is telling me very clearly how I'm doing that and how it's impacting him in a negative way. Holy shit, I've got to look at this.” Davis has been teaching for fifteen years, and explains, “I still really don't know what I'm doing. And I'm open to—that sounds bad, you know, I'm not saying I don't know what I'm doing—but that I'm open to going in new directions with this and trying new things.” He looks to find ways to engage with other teachers around him—finding out what these teachers do in their classrooms, asking questions of teachers, meeting with teachers to discuss ideas and articles regarding pedagogy and praxis. Davis continues to feel like a new teacher, “which is fun, which is good. I always want to be new at this.”

Even this summer Davis texted to ask questions about providing more discipline in his classroom. He asks for feedback from his students each year, and in the reflections, students felt comfortable to critique the boisterous energy in the classroom that is intimidating for some students. Davis did not balk at the suggestion, but he instead worked to improve this area of his teaching while balancing the needs of many individual learners. “I think if there's anything that is true for all of my students, it's that they need to feel safe in the room; they need to feel seen.” Although Davis notes that as a student he “never wanted structure in the classroom,” he has worked to learn methods to support the students in his classroom.

Rose continues with this idea of transitions in teaching while learning. She explains that she spent her first seven years teaching in 36 classrooms each week using a cart. She would “roll into a classroom” and watch teachers. “And just learning from the best teachers and learning from the worst teachers was really, really helpful. I had zero ego, I feel like, with teaching.” She

attributes this to the fact that she never wanted to be a teacher, and it was only in her third year teaching that she realized she must like what she was doing because of the time and money commitments she was making toward the craft. She explains that she always loves learning about “the different ways of teaching, reaching diverse learners,” as a teacher. Rose focuses on the needs of her students in the classroom and realizes that even former students view her as a person who cares. When she spoke to a former student at the park, he spoke at some length with her about his present life. “It was like, ‘Do you want to hear about what I'm doing?’ Because you are somebody who actually cared about that kind of stuff.’ So that's a good interaction.”

Rose focuses on the importance of the whole child within the classroom and a teacher as learner and leader. As a young student she often found herself wondering, “What else [does a teacher have] in there?” She explains that early on she “realized a whole lot is happening [in a classroom] that has nothing to do with books and school. And that’s why [she] love[s] school. That’s why [she] love[s] teaching.” It is this whole child, full community of questioning, communicating, listening, investigating, failing, and trying again that is Rose’s definition of teaching and learning.

Davis describes one of the best days in his classroom: “It wasn't a day where I was teaching and made a point. It wasn't a day where I said the thing that helped them, you know, understand the poem. It wasn't about me. It was this organic thing that happened with the kids. And it was just magic.” He continues by explaining the “moment in a classroom where I was totally immaterial, like on the sideline, but this space like by giving kids the total control of the classroom. They did it. They made this thing happen.” Davis intentionally reflects on the importance of not always leading discussions but instead allowing his students to take steps in

the process of their own learning paths. Which connects to the way he learns best. “I guess when I have choice and find my own sources and do my own work, instead of being told what to do.”

Davis regrets some of the choices he made early in school and on through his undergraduate work. He explains that he received a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and considered working on a Masters in philosophy. When he reached out to a college professor he respected to ask for a recommendation, his professor responded, “I’m really sorry, Mr. U., but I can’t in good faith write this recommendation.” Davis respects the professor’s honesty and admits that not until his masters in English had he been part of a learning “community and showed up.” Because of these lessons and his more recent experiences with his love of learning, he considers three skills most important for his students. “If I can teach my students to be intellectually curious, to be independently motivated, and to be comfortable advocating for themselves by asking the teacher for help or clarity, then that’s the dream. That will carry them through any class, and they can really be successful in the future on that.”

Rose identifies her flexibility as a learner as one of her greatest strengths as a teacher and explains, “Not everything has to look exactly the same way. I think that some teachers get really proud of their process. And then if a kid's not on board with it, they just kind of determine that they're not going to succeed in their class.” Instead Rose believes that learning looks different for each student and “every kid's process is different.” Her deep understanding of individual students leads her to appreciate that “their products can be different, but just the level of learning that needs to take place kind of needs to stay the same.” She explains the process of flexible learning she envisions: “You didn't know it, you couldn't do it, and now you can. That kind of cycle needs to just be happening.”

Rose goes on to explain “it’s really frustrating to not understand something; it’s really frustrating not to be good at something; it’s even more frustrating to watch other people be successful in learning—especially if you’re trying. And that is where I think you have to build resilience.” She considers her own experience with failure and how essential it is to growing grit. “Falling apart, losing it, embarrassingly losing it, working really hard on a project and just not getting a good grade. And then doing the exact same thing again, the next year, the next week. And putting yourself out there. I mean, being resilient is like you lost big time. Maybe if you’re like me, it’s always big time. It’s always in a really big stage. Everyone watched; everyone saw, and it was entirely embarrassing.” But her goal is to allow her students to celebrate the times they stand back up and try again because Rose highlights the times she falls as well.

Amy notes that her greatest strength as a learner and a teacher are the same—curiosity. She explains, “We’re constantly learning, especially if we’re reflective about what we’re doing. You can’t be a good teacher if you don’t reflect and think about what you did. And then you’re clearly going to learn how to do it better.” Reflection happens in and outside of Amy’s classroom.

Amy identifies a particular moment in the classroom when she spent time in reflection considering a student’s words as a meaningful lesson for her in listening carefully to her students. “So last year, this girl in my class would ask me a question, and then I would try to answer it.” Amy goes on to explain that the student would become frustrated because although Amy thought she understood the student’s question, Amy would answer the student before the student finished her (sometimes) rambling question. Amy explains the student’s breaking point, “one day, she’s like, ‘You’re not listening!’ She yelled it. She was like, ‘You’re not listening.’”

Amy did not get angry; she only asked, “I’m not?” and with the student’s response of, “No, you’re not. You never let me finish my question,” Amy walked away. Amy did not walk away because she was angry, but because she had been studying the “divine moment” and “reading all these articles on the importance of reflection.” Amy explains the reflective process she goes through at that moment. I thought of “the back and forth between us. And she was right. I thought I knew what her question was. So I’m answering that question, but not listening to what it really was. Sometimes it was because she just wasn’t asking the right question, but there were times where it was because I just wouldn’t shut up and let her finish.”

Amy returned to the student and explained, “You know what? You’re right. I didn’t listen to you.” Her student responded, “Ms. C, sometimes it’s just like you’re a train wreck.” Amy explains that she was “dying laughing because it was a train wreck. This girl is trying to ask me questions, and I’m answering what I think her question would be.” Amy expects to learn from her students and makes the space for her students to feel comfortable to teach her.

It is important for Rose to find the right way to help and motivate each of her students. “If it takes an agenda check-in every afternoon with some kids, or if it takes ‘hands-off and just kind of watch me,’ if I needed to do it by myself, and just could not do the group work that, okay, maybe now's not the time to force you into group compliance. Let's just focus on teaching you how to write a five-paragraph essay or whatever it is. Kind of reminding myself—what is the goal here?”

In that goal, Rose highlights the human, body, soul, and brain. “I guess the main thing is that you’ve got a really beautiful brain, so let’s use it. Let’s not waste it; let’s sharpen it. And in your body is compassion. So, let’s weave that into it. The main thing is to be good and think good. Just use your brain and heart and go and just be.”

Lawrence looks to teach the individual students he has each year, not expecting them to have the prerequisite skills for his class. It is important for him to learn about them early enough in the year to help move them to more autonomy in reading and writing. “We spend a lot of time in class, reading stuff as a class, going, paragraph by paragraph. And if that means that by the end of the day, I’m tired and barely have a voice because I’m doing most of the heavy lifting, then so be it.” He goes on to explain that in this intentional movement where he demonstrates this learning process, he still holds his students to high expectations, expecting them to be more competent readers as the year goes on. “I’m very intentional with being right there in the thick of the work with the kids. I do a lot of modeling, a lot of thinking through with them, you know, modeling my own thought process.”

Amy, Davis, Lawrence, and Rose work to learn about their students and teaching methods as well as apply their understanding of learning to the classroom. This is an intentionally reflective process and one that they do not expect to make crystalline. Instead, the learning and reflection are always present and the movement within their identity from teacher to the learner is one that changes often.

Aromatic like Roasted Meat

Figure 3

Learning together



Instead of pushing people away through the stench of deferred dreams, the actions of a teacher learning in a classroom with students bring the group together. The teachers expect a conversation with students where they, both teacher and students, are learning together. The actions of a teacher learning outside of a classroom brings other teachers together, learning together. Instead of focusing on the craft (theme 1) or expecting to change based on learning (theme 2), this theme focuses on how my participants view the conversations while learning and the connection this creates for them. My linocut frames the connections among people. It focuses on cooking with people gathering around. Instead of people around a table, I decided to create images of people connected.

The academic conversation is a wide spectrum of discussion within the classroom and school. Exchanges are based on my participants' interests outside of their classrooms, sometimes briefly indicating to their students their lifelong learning interests, as well as leading and participating in discourse based on the theories and practices around the craft of teaching among other professionals. I use the word *interest* instead of *learning* intentionally. My participants often save the word *learning* for their scholarly endeavors in teaching while they most often used the term *interests* to reference their passion-based learning. Each of my participants sees times

where they are mentors and mentees, and they see the importance of their experiences as mentees connecting to both their desire to teach and their motivation to keep on teaching and learning.

Davis not only learns from those teachers who are older and more experienced than him but also learns from new teachers he is mentoring. He is very interested in learning about politics outside of school and would like to work in politics at some point, but he does not feel as though his passion for politics should be part of his classroom. A recent student-teacher disagrees. “And so we've butted heads on this the whole time. And it's gotten to where she's really pushed my thinking on it to where it's like, okay, I hear what she's saying.” He mentions an article that he read regarding introducing politics in the classroom, and he wants to continue an academic discourse on this topic. “And I'm working now for the first time in a really young faculty to where I've been inspired, where it's like, I want to invite all of these young teachers, because E [high school] is full of young people. I want to send that article to everyone and say, ‘Hey, y'all, what if everyone reads this article, and then we all after school one day, get on Zoom and talk about it?’”

As Davis considered his teaching process, he realized he does find some ways of embedding his interest in politics into the classroom, “But, uh, how do I then share some of my thoughts or passions or interests without calling them out for what they are? You know, I think everything's like, Socratic method. And I, because all these issues come up in the great literature that we, you know, you can't teach *Animal Farm* and not touch on Donald Trump and the age of fake news and everything that we've been living through for the last four years. It's all intertwined. And so you just ask kids to make connections.” As a high school student, Davis says, “I was honest and outspoken and willing to engage in discussion and be flexible in my thinking.” He continues to use these learning traits in his own classroom.

Davis added to this passion to learn history and “connections across time periods” by starting a quiz bowl team at his school. “I think that’s why I like quiz bowl. I’m not a math/science person, but doing quiz bowl with kids, I’m kind of forced to learn all these different recurring topics. It does help me with history which is not a strong suit for me to get a larger scope of work history and get a sense of how everything’s connected.”

Rose focuses on the discussions she has had with her students in class, particularly as they read *The Little Prince*. “I think they all realize like, ‘Okay, that’s what you mean by a good book. That’s what you mean by being glad you read it; being better, a better person or a better thinker—or yeah, a person having read it.’ And it clicked into some people’s minds that just really were not expecting it.” Rose focuses on the conversations she must continue to have with her students while helping them understand patience in learning and academia. “Learning—it takes a lot of work. It takes, especially when it’s hard for you or hard. Everyone’s going to hit something that’s hard. And that’s going to take a lot of patience to make a plan, figure it out. Goals take a long time.”

Amy is working on her doctorate in curriculum and instruction, and she focuses on the importance of critical race theory and the individual positionality of the writers of the curriculum. “I’m really interested in learning how the curriculum affects our kids. I am becoming more aware of who created whatever it is I’m teaching—what’s the face at the end of it?” This focus is a personal one for Amy since she grew up in a largely White and upper-economic suburb of a large city. As a White woman, she looks to understand the innate White privilege and racism of those in power.

After spending two years as an AmeriCorps volunteer working with a fifth-grade class and discovering, “I want to teach; I have to teach,” Amy returned home and began teaching in a

socio-economically disadvantaged middle school. She learned her first lesson very quickly that year. That lesson has been the basis for everything she has done since then in her classroom.

Her eighth-grade students took pride in the fact that they had already made a teacher quit within the first two weeks of the new school year. Now they were ready to make Amy quit. Amy explains that as she is writing on the board, one of the students asks, “Ms. C, what’s it’s gonna take to make you quit?” Amy turned around, chalk still poised on the board, “Not a goddamn thing.” Amy continued teaching but decided she would be fired by the end of the day. After dismissal, her principal called her into the office. “As soon as I hit the building, I’m crying. I walk in his office, just tears rolling down my face. And he turned around and said, “Sit your ass down. You’re not in trouble.” Amy was confused at this point. Wasn’t she fired? Hadn’t she cursed in front of the students? Her principal explained, “You just earned those eighth-graders’ respect. Because they all knew before the end of the day that you turned around and said, ‘Not a goddamn thing.’”

Amy explains that this was the moment that she learned the most important lesson of her teaching career. “That was the first time it dawned on me you have to be real.” She remains “real” in the classroom by sharing with her students what she is learning about privilege and race. Now that Amy is teaching in a more affluent, less racially diverse private school, she continued this work by creating a “Fast Belonging Committee” for the Black and Brown students on her campus. This committee’s mission is “what is making [her] finish the doctoral program” to support the needs of students who might originally be marginalized. Amy also looks to add diversity to the canon of authors her students read. However, her goal is not to teach them specific English skills. Instead, she wants her students “to like learning. I don’t care if they like literature. I don’t care. You don’t have to like literature. You don’t have to like to read, but I hope

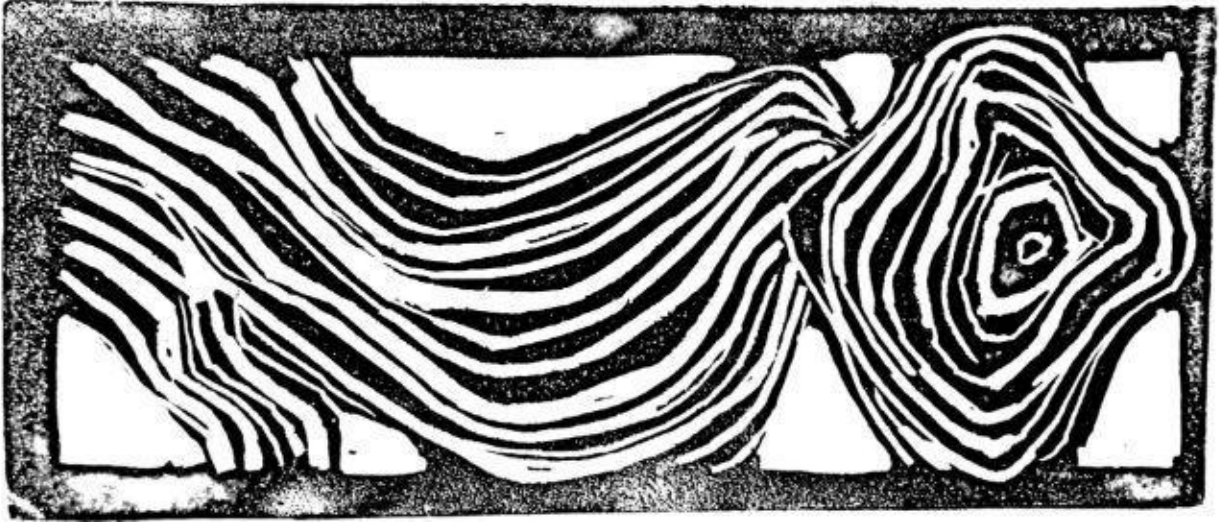
you like to learn because I don't think I ever really thought about liking learning until I got older." Lawrence echoes this desire. He wants "to see [his] students successful, whatever that looks like for them. As long as they're successful, productive citizens, I think I've done my job." In contrast, he does not look to have significant conversations with his students. Lawrence wants to offer his learned knowledge to his students and provide them with an example of a well-educated Black man. However, outside of school, he works to continue conversations by adding more "letters behind [his] name" or moving forward with conversations of politics and religion among friends.

The discussions around learning and teaching within and outside of the classroom community stirs Davis, Rose, Amy, and Lawrence to consider and reconsider the goals they have for their own learning and how those might connect to their students. The four teachers seek out academic discourse to bolster their own thinking and allow them room to reconsider their initial beliefs. Each of the teachers looks to learn more while considering what this learning does for them and how it might help their students.

Or Does It Flow?

Figure 4

Moving with excitement



While those deferred dreams can explode into anger, the ongoing learning of teachers provides excitement. Their passion for learning is a conduit for each participant to extend pieces of their identities and joyfully see their role as teachers entwined with their role as students. My linocut frames learning as movement, growth, and excitement.

Although all four of my participants see themselves as lifelong learners, they identify their learning throughout their lifetime more in the word “interests” instead of learning. Lawrence, Rose, Davis, and Amy note multiple interests that they hold outside of the classroom. Often these interests lead to creation as well. For instance, after winning a yard of the month contest in her neighborhood, Amy has recently focused on learning more about plants. She now looks to experiment with the pH levels of the soil to change the color of her hydrangeas. “And apparently the pH level can change from year to year. So they could be a totally different color next year.” She offhandedly mentions students were excited that she won the yard of the month award. Amy loves gnomes, and her students are always stealthily leaving gnomes in her yard, so many of them knew of her green thumb. However, she has not connected this interest specifically to her instruction. For instance, she highlights the importance of student choice when assigning projects and always offering artistic, interpretive, and scientific options, but Amy does not see the

art she creates within her garden as a method of leading her to design these specific projects. Instead, it is an interest and moves her forward--keeping her motivated and curious within and outside of the classroom.

Davis talks about the ways that he learns from his students, his wife, his daughter, friends, and his reading, “And it's beautiful. And so I've been fed by all those things, you know? And I think the National Board journey was amazing.” He wonders, “What do they say about learning in general? The further out you go in any branch of knowledge, the more you realize that it's just ever unfolding. And the more you learn, and you're just learning that, that there's endless possibilities.”

This passion for learning feeds into his classroom through his openness to learn from students, other teachers, and self-reflective practices. His memories of his experiences as a high school student provide a base of empathy and understanding for his students while his academic curiosities provide a willingness to experiment in his classroom and learn with his students. Rose jokingly explains that she is a “student of life. Every day I wake up I'm gettin' schooled. Oh, Yeah, oh, a hundred percent. I have not stopped education daily.” She focuses on reading for pleasure and often connects the interesting things she reads into her classroom. She does not think her students are impressed by the things she shares from her readings though. For instance, when she read an article about the grandmother shark of the sea who is over fifty years old, Rose was excited to share this information with her students. “The whole thing just was precious. And I'm talking about the grandma of the sea, but no one was super excited the way I was, like, what do you expect? I'm telling them—everything I'm supposed to be sharing with them is super exciting. So to them, it's just like, ‘Cool. What's next?’”

Although she shares some of her innate interests in her classroom, she more intentionally looks to learn about her students' interests and get excited about their learning. "I try to, I guess I try and find their interests, and it's easy to get excited about stuff a six and seven-year-old's doing. That's still really cool to me—like I like toys. I like toys and books and I love sports too." Rose's extensive quest for learning about her personal passions provides an unrestricted path for her parallel learning for and with her students.

This parallel learning folds into Lawrence's connections with his students. Outside of school Lawrence is "always learning. I'm always reading something. I'm always going on somebody's website." His learning expands to listening to many types of music and singing in a church choir as well as reading articles on social media. This learning is relevant to his students' lives and always shocks them when he demonstrates that he knows more than a small sliver of the world in which they think he resides. "I just happen to make a reference to something on Facebook or something I heard on the radio because they don't think I listen to [large city's best known hip hop radio channel]. Like I don't know about Yo Gotti and all of them? I guess they think I sit and listen to classical music all day." When Lawrence connects his learning to his students' outside worlds, "it literally shocks them because they don't expect me to know anything about that." Lawrence explains that he's always been very open-minded about learning, as when he was in high school learning about physiology in order to make websites for university students. "I've always been of the opinion that the more you learn about a lot of different stuff, that number one, it increases your mind, and number two, it helps you to move between worlds. It allows you to be able to speak on a whole lot of different things so that you are not so terribly one-dimensional."

Davis reflects on his passions in his writing on a screenshot I printed of his disc-golf number. He circled his number and wrote, “This is a low number. Players get their number when they join PDGA. Current new numbers are [boxed the number] 195,305. Point of pride for me to be in the first 20k. Like with Phish (61 shows), I had a lot of my identity tied up in disc golf before I really started pouring my heart and myself into my teaching.” He continues to reflect on the passion he poured into disc golf and considered how he transitioned his creative energy for a sport where he “called in sick most Fridays to travel for tournaments” to teaching. “To do that with teaching is such a gift.” As he considers what he might want to do after teaching in his reflections on the poetic transcripts, he writes, “I envision myself just super engaged in AA helping young dudes and drinking coffee later in life.” This connects to how he has spent time considering his experiences as a child and with his own alcoholism and co-dependency. “Emotional ‘sobriety’ or ‘balance’ is black belt, ninja shit. Something I’ll be working on for the rest of my life.”

As Rose reflected on the poetic transcripts, she considered herself as a learner. “I guess the word here is ‘resilience’. I love a get back up and fight personality. And a student/learner who doesn’t give up.” This resilience in learning then connects to her thoughts on teaching. Although she never thought she wanted to be a teacher, she now jokingly considers it a really good arranged marriage. She’s in love with teaching. She just didn’t know she would fall so hard.

Rose considers that resilience focuses on failure and trying again. “I have the same brain I walked into the room with and Brain and I are gonna figure it out together. I think that’s resilience. It’s like I’ve got this and it’s all coming with me every single day, so how can we get

it together? That's what I want my students to know. 'I fall and get back up. Because I have to, and I want to.'"

Although Rose is the only teacher to use the word *resilience*, this theme is implied throughout the passions and learning of each of the teachers. There is no "the end" to their stories. Each teacher continues to learn about self and student, interest, and motivation and connects all of this learning to identity and how that identity relates to the making of a teacher and the craft of teaching.

A dream ongoing

Amy, Davis, Rose, and Lawrence share interests in the world outside of teaching, both of family bonds and deep friendships, as well as personal levels of learning and growth through the praxis of critical learning and teaching as well as learning alongside, in spite of, and because of their students. This crafting and making of the noun teacher and the verb(al) teaching are continually examined by all four of the teachers who shared their stories. They all see their identity as both learner and teacher, but the largest part of their identity might be passion.

In their follow-up interviews, I asked questions to highlight some of their thoughts about the fluidness or rigidity of personal identity and passions and how these pieces might inform their teaching and learning. Davis and Amy view their identities as consistent throughout the roles of life while Lawrence and Rose view their role as teachers as one fairly separate from Rose's: learner, wife, and mother and Lawrence's: brother, son, uncle, learner, and friend. Although identities might be separate or combined all four participants teach and communicate using passion and curiosity.

4.2 Thematic Poetry

I consider the findings through the lens of the Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke's idea of the sensuality (Bridge, 2004; Caltvedt, 1999; Dodge, 2001; Metz, 2003; Pettingell, 2005) of "Things [and] Words" (Houe, 2004, p. 12) through the ability and inability of humans to describe objects, create portraits, and connect these objects to the actions of *being* and *seeing* the world (Ucok-Sayrak, 2017). Although Rilke stood on the cusp of two poetry movements, and therefore, wrote in multiple styles, particularly the romantic and modern, Rilke often used his poems as a way to create a visual image for the reader through his careful creation of words. My creation of words is not imitative of Rilke's poetry, but it is instead a shifting and shuffling of Amy, Davis, Lawrence, and Rose's reflections where I structure only the most salient and significant words into a part of being, head, hands, heart, and soul. These parts are not isolated. I do not envision hands flapping, heads nodding, souls hovering, and hearts contracting in four corners of a teacher's classroom and home. Instead, my participants are **all**. They are whole beings with all parts of their identity overlapping and creating venn diagrams of curiosity, development, love, and reflection. I work to use actions of being and the visions of my participants through their interviews and poetry elicitation in the production of the poems (Jones, 2010). These poems work to define a type of being as well as a part of a teacher's identity.

And before considering the pieces that make the whole, I return back to my Dad from Chapter One. He shared many statements that began with, "Remember, Sally." The one I consider while thinking of these sustaining pieces of my participants' experiences is this: "Remember, Sally. You have to clean the toilet in any job you have. You just have to find the toilet you don't mind cleaning." And with these living hands, heart, head, and soul working together within one whole and complex teacher body, the toilet becomes easier to clean.

Head: Action of Learning

A teacher's brain. Is it full of empty space for district leaders to fill? Or are synapses chemically transmitting, lighting up MRIs, flashing with engagement, inquiry, and learning? The learning is in and outside of the classroom. Sometimes these actions directly connect to a teacher's work in the classroom. Other times the curiosity that flourishes within a head sustains teachers through the challenges of school.

Head, Davis: Seeing a future with eyes wide, brain open

I envision myself:

Super engaged

Helping

Journey

Balance

Building

Something I'll be working on the rest of my life

Head, Amy: Curious and planning

I would love to pick your brain...

ideas for my research

My doctoral program

At the end: comprehensive exams/ submitting my dis. Proposal

Head, Rose: Thoughts on being a student, teacher, & mother

SUCCESS FEELS GOOD!!!

I liked seeing teachers' passion.

Still so true.

If I read a really good book,

then I will share it with my students.

100% picture books these days.

Mo Willems – ♡ him

Head, Lawrence: The balance of learning and envisioning other paths

I wasn't Dr. B there.

I read;

my friends read.

I don't know what else I would have done.

I mean, there's probably a plethora of things I could have done.

The learning is movement. Movement in thought and reflection. Reflection to change.

Reflection to curiosity and repeatable passion.

Hands: Lifelong Learning

The movement toward learning and questioning. Do we separate hands from heads? No, but sometimes the thoughts lead to more action and then returns to head. The hands move from passion to the doing. The teachers are looking to move toward action in learning. This is the gear shift moving forward through curiosity, vision, and action.

Hands, Davis: Branches to go and pages to turn

There's so much more for me to learn.

Yes! Still yes.

The further out you go in any branch of knowledge,
the more you just realize that it's just ever unfolding.
YEP.

Hands, Amy: Returning to the work

I forgot about this blog

I might need to start another one.

Hands, Rose: Joking through verbs while reading and writing

I've been reading a whole lot of just way too much stuff.

I read tarot.

Currently reading how to teach kids to read.

I love that I get to write
and get paid.

Hands, Lawrence: Action as statement

I'm always learning.

Heart: Careful Pedagogy

What is critical pedagogy? This was one of the questions I asked when I followed up with my participants. But here I only look at how they might have defined it in their thoughts about teaching, the classroom, and the students. How do they examine their role in the classroom and the needs of their students? What do they prioritize in their classrooms and teaching and how

might it connect to their learning? The love for students is there. Passion and curiosity tied with student growth and behaviors.

Heart, Davis: Loving enough to step away

Confidence to pour
creative energy/ passion
into teaching.

Such a gift.

My job is to facilitate learning.

Socratic method.

They'll figure out the rest.

They don't need me to tell them what to think,
Correct.

Teaching how to think/learn

Not what to think.

I can get with that.

“Be present

Consistent

Stable.”

Yes. This is a spiritual practice and element to the work.

Get out of the way!!

Provide: good content

choices

Parameters

Heart, Amy: Listening to self and others through compassion

Maybe we are always teachers at heart.

Some of us just actually listen.

I have never been afraid to tell a student

“I don't know.”

I want my students to feel I am there for them.

If they know you care, they care.

Heart, Rose: Love through teaching; love through mothering

I do really care.

Broaden their interests.

Heart, Lawrence: Seeing the ‘we’ instead of ‘they’ in students

To see my students successful,
whatever that looks like for them.

We're having a discussion,

we're doing a reading,

we can have that

intellectual conversation.

Soul: Identity

Identity shifts. Identity flows. How might identity shift along with the role that remains as a teacher? Does the role of teacher remain constant in the shifting of an identity?

Soul, Davis: Always grateful

Identity tied up
Always drinking/high
(NOW) pouring my ♥
and myself
into teaching
(BEFORE) poured creative energy/passions
into disc golf
Heros I met in AA
helped me get to thoughts of
emotional “sobriety” “balance”
Grateful.

Soul, Amy: The 2 teachers who were the the first

I felt they cared
My thoughts & ideas

Soul, Rose: Looking for others with souls that match

Yes, I crave depth with people I like. Other weirdos.
I love a get back up and fight personality.
I’m just one big WELL of emotion.
Slow to fall/very critical
Then once I’m in, I’m ALL IN.
CRAFT (writing)
LIFE (family)
JOB (teaching)

Soul, Lawrence: Giving a name to the identity of soul

Role model
Uncle
Dr. B magic
creator

Whole Body

I often hear the word “calling” embedded in an individual’s story of why they teach. I think I have used it myself, but I wonder if we first used that word or adopted it based on

responses from those who do not teach. Many people believe there must be a better reason than a paycheck to work in schools. Who would want to work with poorly behaved students determined to make class more exciting with paper wads and whoopie cushions? Well, that is what the public might imagine. However from my time teaching, I see those few teachers who actually feel “called” leave pieces of themselves at home. They embody the flat-side image of a teacher, floating down to change the world, one student at a time. Instead, my four participants and hundreds of other teachers I have interacted with in my experiences are round, rolling into place like marbles, and fit neatly and perfectly whole in a carved space just for them.

I say this because although all four of my participants are passionate learners, leaders, and teachers, their reasons for starting and staying in the profession are different and messy and can be complicated. Lifelong learning supports their resilience in the profession. Their identity has been shaped by their experience as teachers and learners, but they are also whole.

Lawrence, Amy, and Davis need the students as much as the students need them. Lawrence receives praise for his outstanding academic performance and laughs from his cutting jokes; Amy’s students embrace her on the anniversary of her brother’s death and shower her with gifts at the end of the year; Davis has an addictive personality, and although drugs and alcohol are no longer a part of his life, his students are—always. Rose works to be a teacher and mother, separately, but often those roles are together—mothering her students, teaching her sons.

Lawrence and Amy are not married and do not have children. Their students are both audience and children. Davis and Rose are married with children, and they work to separate their identity as parent and teacher; it is without success.

I share this because their stories of learning and interest, commonalities among each other and with their students are beautiful and keep them going in the profession, but this whole

person—the learner and student—head, hands, heart, and soul—is also whole with flaws and mistakes, pride and obsession. It is the full body of a teacher, seeing their work with and among, not because or in spite of.

Considering the embodied work of a whole teacher, I return to the themes in Chapter 4.1. It is the whole teacher who works to reflect on teaching based on student feedback, investigation of interests, and connection to student, learning, and discovery.

Conclusion

5.1 The Action of Learning as a Literacy

Gee (1992) explains that learning and thinking are “socio-mental practices that extend beyond the skin to include the world and society” (Gee, 1992, p. 1). The discourses around learning within social contexts create a unique literacy of learning where groups work to learn through conversation and text. “This includes abilities to work collaboratively in spaces where intelligence is shared among users and where multitasking, navigation, and negotiation of ideas to design texts are as important as decoding and summarizing texts. Such activities using a variety of texts ‘challenge traditional views that intelligence is an attribute of the individual (Jenkins, 2006, p. 37)’” (Hagood, 2009, p. 42). Instead, intelligence relates to the collaborative work of learning where the learning is socially created through discourse and text, representing the literacy of learning among individuals.

This literacy offers discourse through reflection, investigation, and reciprocal teaching while moving forward in curiosities and interests. Although I consider the literacy of learning within a teacher’s identity, the conversation framed around learning and interests throughout the socio-material and socio-cultural is broader than teachers. It is a framework that supports the growth of all within the conversation and reflection involved in learning and the connection to identity and being.

As scholars study learning, some adjectives are most often repeated: curious and creative (Hensley, 2004; Richardson et al., 2017), reflective (Foucault, 1988; Day, 1999), and thoughtful (Martin, 1988). These repeated adjectives highlight the action of learning as one spurred by internal motivation and desire, reflecting the individual actions of a learner in a more invisible literacy of learning. However, learning is also a social activity that encourages discourse and

relies on discourse to move individual and group understanding. These discourses work within the confines and openings of fluid identity focusing on “independence[,] . . . private lives of family and activities[, and] . . . the relations to self” (Foucault, 1988, p. 42). While discourses of an individual’s identity can focus on what Foucault (1973) names “the Double” (p. 340) where the dichotomy of identities must use the conjunction *and* in the “minuscule and yet invincible, which resides in the ‘and’ of retreat *and* return, of thought *and* the unthought, of the empirical *and* the transcendental” (p. 340). I offer another *and* in the process of identity and learning—thought and artifact (Goodyear, 2021). Paavola, Lipponen, and Hakkarainen (2004) define learning as a “collaborative effort directed toward developing some mediated artefacts, broadly defined as including knowledge, ideas, practices, and material or conceptual artefacts” (2004, p.570) These artifacts of learning provide social-material ways of examining the literacy of learning embedded among the interactions of learners. Not all artifacts are physical, but all can be noted by a learner in the discourse of investigation, interest, and identity.

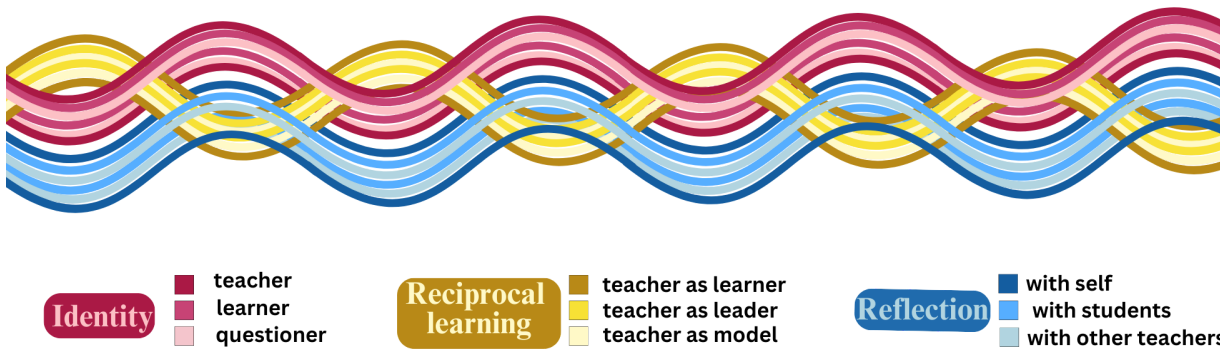
The process of learning is a multimodal language of demonstration. Individuals demonstrate through facial expressions, gestures, speech, writing, drawing, and discourse their understanding or confusion, as well as their curiosity or willingness to learn. Along with the adjectives listed in the paragraph above, education researchers also observe the process of learning as a conversation with self and others where communities work together to interact with the environment, people, and “artifacts of activity” (Paavola & Hakkarainen, 2005, p.545). For instance, Hedges (2015) notes the importance of “the pre-planned and spontaneous that arise from interactions, activities, and events in which teachers and students engage” (p. 84). In these conversations and actions of inquiry, teachers provide more authentic ways for students to engage with their learning (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010) and demonstrate the multimodal literacy

involved in the actions of learning. The discoveries of others can be shared and read, acted on faces and bodies (Ticknor, 2016), drawn, and danced. When teachers learn within/among/outside the classroom, this literacy is used by teachers to offer their students more authentic ways of demonstrating knowing, success, and interest.

I now think that these strands can be braided together in the following broad conceptual framework: The literacy of learning in reflection, where teachers use their layers of reciprocal learning as literacy to create their identity and thoughtful teaching. An individual's interest-driven activity changes throughout a lifetime, but there is a constant. This consistent part of the activity is learning in combination with interest. As teachers work to see their entire hearts, hands, souls, and heads within their classroom communities, these individual teachers cannot remove the layers of their learning and interests. These layers of passion help to create their understanding of their identity as individuals, how that identity also shapes their role as teachers and the goals each teacher might have for individual students. This understanding and movement toward learning offers teachers feelings of autonomy and power in their career and a critical understanding of their students' learning for a lifetime and of what those individual lifetimes might consist of.

Figure 2

Broad Conceptual Framework: The Literacy of Learning

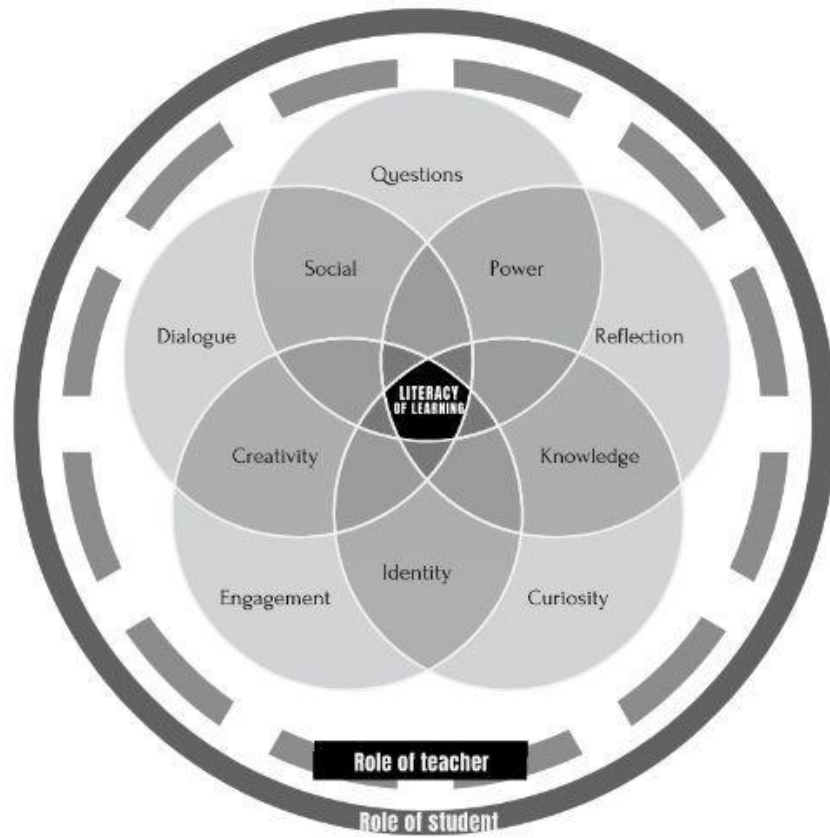


Alexander, Anderson, and Gallegos (2019) use the embodied literacy theory to highlight the disembodied work of teachers and provide an analysis of transitions by teachers to incorporate their entire being within the classroom more fully. This bodywork enacted by teachers is not only performative literacy but also literacy of learning and reflective instruction. The heart and soul of teachers (Freire, 1998; hooks, 1994; Palmer, 1998) are just as important for a classroom as head and hands. Through a focus on teachers' outside learning interests and how these passions connect to classrooms, community, and students, the body of a teacher is made whole and is not removed from the classroom and the passion held for teaching and learning. This offers teachers a way to remain fully engaged and motivated (MeElearney, 2020) in the classroom, school, and teaching identity.

I have included a graphic that represents the role of the learner as a solid line, indicating the significance of learning within the roles of teacher and learner. In contrast, the role of the teacher is a dotted line as one of the passable impermanence of the role. Which supports Carrillo and Flores (2017) and Jurasaitė-Haribson (2005) in their calls for additional research in the negotiated and passable boundaries of learner, teacher, and identity. Within the literacy of learning by teachers, the expectation is that the identity of teacher is not fixed but fluid within the learning with/because of/alongside students.

Figure 3

Diagram of Learning as Literacy



I opened with a reference to third spaces and second classrooms, and through these findings, I see that teachers carve out these places. These places are speakeasies where teachers use passwords like “fed” or “craft” to indicate a willingness to learn and grow. These private rooms of learning, the uniquely personal and deeply significant “professional development” rooms of teachers, provide space for “messy wonder” (Wohlwend, 2008, p. 127) that undergirds the literacies of learning for teachers while advancing the teaching craft.

5.2 Literacy of Learning, Reflection, and Professional Identity

When learning is literacy, it is communicated either within or among. All four of my participants noted the importance of listening and connection within the classroom, but Rose highlighted this throughout her reflections. The community of learning and the communication was prevalent in her discussion of her students and herself as learners. This communication is part of all three pieces of the braided literacy as learning: reflection, identity, and reciprocal learning.

The teachers in my study used all three of these parts when they voiced the significance of being the teachers they would have wanted, and still want, in the classroom while considering what they have discovered about the keys to learning through their own lifelong learning. All four participants focus on what has helped them be lifelong learners as the most significant skills they want their students to gain while in their classrooms. And the most salient of these skills is the reflection process in connection to curiosity.

In addition, they consider the feedback from students while making changes in the classroom and seeing these changes as examples of resilience within learning and teaching. Amy, Davis, Lawrence, and Rose see the concept of their learning as fairly narrow. They hover in the realm of professional learning through student conversation, professional podcasts, conferences, and books as well as investment in advanced education degrees. They use this learning to make changes in the actions within their professional identity, however, they do not identify passion-driven investigations as learning. These are only interests.

5.3 Interests, Learning, and the Differences

Throughout these chapters, I have also used the term *interests* when referring to outside lifelong learning endeavors. Considering the connotation of the noun *interests*, it is more

approachable and appealing. Adults have interests; they can discuss their interests at parties; interests are expected. However, adults do not ask other adults what grade they are in. Adults do not talk about attending school, and school is learning. And this acceptably narrow definition of learning leads back to the expectation by districts that teachers can only learn through additional workshops, adult-education modules, and instruction.

But interests lead to learning. Those with a curiosity or a desire to explore a topic learn through the process of investigating that interest. Just because the interest is something one views as pleasurable does not ensure that the learning is free of frustration, but it does sometimes help offer another example to an individual that “I can do hard things.” And although I am sure that learning can doggedly happen without the addition of interest, can it flourish?

Before the internet, there were home sets of encyclopedias, and in the Aa-Am tome, one might have initially investigated Alaska that would then lead to the following: the Bering Strait, Inuit people, blubber, and muktuk. It is through these inquiries where one might get invested in a topic and continue to research for a lifetime. With Wikipedia and Google replacing the encyclopedias, we can do this random pathway research now more easily. But interests do not stop there. Even a TV show can lead to a desire to learn more about a historical time period.

This directly relates to the model of unschooling, one where children can choose their own path in self-directed learning. Instead of connecting school and classroom so closely to learning, unschooling removes the building or connotations around school from the actions of learning. Considering the possible disconnect between interests and learning, the main model of unschooling makes sense.

5.4 Teacher Education, Schools and Unschooling

After 15 years teaching and learning with middle school students, I now work with first and third-year university students who plan to teach. The first question I ask my students each semester is, “What do you love learning about?” The answers are broad. I respond; I question. And return to their interests and learning. These are not connected interests to teaching and educational theory, but instead these are the current curiosities of preservice educators. Within the model of literacy of learning, I want to encourage my students to talk about their interests and organically connect these interests and struggles of learning to the classroom.

Table 2

Examples of responses from students and specific follow-up responses throughout the term

Answer	My follow-up responses
Agatha Christie novels	Have you seen the recent movies? Have you listened to the podcast about Christie’s temporary disappearance? I taught Christie’s <i>And Then There Were None</i> when I taught 7th grade English. Have you read it? What did you think about it?
History	Are you taking a history course this semester? What is your favorite time period to investigate? Do you listen to any history podcasts? (If they are interested, I share my favorites with them.)
Arts and crafts	Is there something you’ve created recently? I would love to see it. What are you working on now? Do you teach your friends how to do [specific craft]?

I also revisit their learning and passions and continue to ask follow-up questions about their interests and provide time for students to share their learning in class. This highlights the

importance of teacher as student and lifelong learner without teaching this trait as a static requirement or a series of checkboxes to mark off. In addition to offering support for my students' work as lifelong learners, I share my interests with my students and consider how this learning supports me as an instructor. Their curiosities will move these preservice teachers through the stumbles of late night grading and lesson planning. The passion for learning will protect them from whims and changes.

Goodyear (2021) investigates the multiple environments and significance of lifelong learning. "Paying close attention to learners' activities, their objects and outcomes and the meshworks of tasks, tools and people they bring together can reveal some intricate connections between skills and wider meanings: between what one can do and how one feels about the world" (p. 1609).

Henriken and Mishra (2015) note the importance of helping preservice teachers investigate their personal creativity and passions. Based on my research, I find this to be essential for midcareer teachers to continue to view their job as a passion-driven field that supports their work as a learning teacher.

As I mentioned in chapter two, too often school of education professors offer their preservice teachers a view on lifetime professional development work that is static and based on the required InTASC standards for K-12 teachers. Although some professors and teachers work on professional development projects together (Scheurman & Yell, 2023), the professional development still focuses directly on learning more about best practices of teaching. Instead, it is essential that education professors do the following: offer their own negotiations with new standards and material, share their research and academic interests, highlight the interests of their pre-service teachers, and encourage creative and passion driven academic endeavors. These

actions highlight the importance of wonder and wide-awakeness (Greene, 2014) that leads to aesthetically driven teaching that most effectively combats apathy in and outside of the classroom (Gaines, 2016).

Since teachers in my study viewed learning as “interests” more often, and I suggest using this word in a classroom of preservice teachers. Schools of education should highlight and honor the unique and unfolding interests of their students and help preservice teachers see their interests and the interests of their future students as learning

5.5 My Mistakes, head/hands/heart/soul

Maybe it isn't the best idea to dive into a doctoral program in order to prove a point, but I attribute that to my soul—one that is passionate, stubborn, and lights up at the idea of reading and writing. I love reading and writing. It provides a place of protection and comfortable control. But I am also spurred by new information and the challenge of how to write a story with my heart, head, and hands.

I am also whole and made many mistakes along the way. The first theme for mistakes would be technology. I erased my entire spreadsheet of notes for chapters one and two. I spent months recreating these. I wish I could say, “And there I learned my lesson.” But that would be a lie. I also deleted all of my interviews and dissertation. However, I suppose I did learn my lesson because after an unfruitful call with Google tech to help me with my spreadsheet, I had learned a series of tools that successfully retrieved my interviews and dissertation.

The second theme would be actions. I consider the times that I have spent time thinking, “Why is this happening?” and later, years later, I look back in the rearview mirror of my life and realize it is only because of the time I spent wondering “Why me?” that I am on this journey—this perfect path. So my actions will never be perfect, but helped me arrive at this place

where I see the significance more in the human connections among artifact and interest —this literacy of learning—that bolsters a teacher to put their whole body in their work. I do not know what direction the end result would have taken, but I think there would be differences had I asked my participants to share and talk about artifacts that represent their learning (interests). Giving my participants the choice to select their artifacts might have provided me with more of an understanding of how the participants’ interests show up in their lesson planning and instruction. I also think it would have been a different work if I had decided to do the follow-up interviews with the four participants together. Keeping them separate was a choice I made, but had they spoken together, I know that the conversation would have been rich. These conversations might have provided light on the final question of “Is there a difference between interest and learning?”

5.6 Next Steps for Research in Literacy of Learning

Considering the importance of lifelong learning for educators, I would like to begin a longer study with a group of preservice teachers. In this study, I would follow these teachers through their years of investigations and curiosity. How might their identities alter through their time in the classroom? From learning in the field to learner of the world?

In addition to beginning with preservice teachers, I would also like to investigate how curiosity-driven grants help sustain and motivate teachers already in a classroom.

Finally, the connections between the broad ideas of interests and learning and teacher and student can also be investigated. Considering the literacy of learning, how are interests and learning shared within a classroom?

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Appendix A

9/9/2021



This player's PDGA membership has expired. Individual statistics, including player ratings and tournament history, are a benefit of PDGA membership. Renew your membership online today!

#20177

This is a low #. Players get their # when they join PDGA. Current new member #'s are 195,305. Point of pride for me to be in first 20k (roughly)

Player Info

- Location:
- Classification: Amateur
- Member Since: 2002
- Membership Status: Expired (as of 31-Dec-2016)
- Official Status: Expired (as of 31-Dec-2014)
- Career Events: 29
- Career Wins: 2

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Like with Phish (61 shows), I had a lot of my identity tied up in disc golf before I really started pouring my ♥ + myself into my teaching

<https://dev.pdga.com/player/20177>

1/1

DG CourseReview

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Course Extinct

Course Info Hole Info Links / Files Media Wall Reviews

Memphis, TN

Reviews:	12	Rating:	3.08
Played:	141		
Favorited:	16		
Wishlisted:	17		

Course Conditions as of 12/29/2019

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNPLAYABLE	<input type="checkbox"/> BAD	<input type="checkbox"/> DECENT	<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> PERFECT
--	------------------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------

Course has been pulled *SUPER SAD* (Last updated by alberry2017)

Course Details

Course Type:	Permanent
Year Established:	2014
Designer(s):	Terence Ryan, Paul Taylor, Tray Desnoyer, Todd Grogan
Course Landscape / Terrain:	Mostly Flat & Lightly Wooded
Holes / Baskets:	18 / 18
Course Length:	6333 ft. - 6507 ft.
Par Info:	<input type="checkbox"/> 54
DGCR SSE: [?]	<input type="checkbox"/> 47.3
Multiple Tees / Pins:	No / Yes
Tee Type:	Rubber
Hole Type:	Mach X
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rounds Recorded / Average Score:	82 / 62
Discs Lost:	1
Course Guides:	1
Misc. Info:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Cart Friendly

Any of our users have a comment on this course? We can help you get your course cleaned up. We have clean carts provided at every tee area - so please keep the course clean!

I helped design this



Like 97 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

Share URL: <http://dgcour.se/7051>

Disc Golf Favorites
Skybreed Discs

Report Error/Abuse

Sorry!

Disc golf was huge for me. I played in
Nashville, starting in 1975. Always drinking/high.

As a teacher, I didn't get back into until I
got my driving license back in 2009.

I played heavily in [redacted] at first and met
some great people. I would call in sick most

Fridays to travel for tournaments. One year, I
played 36 weekend events throughout Southeast while
dating [redacted] Wild. I played in ~~two~~⁽²⁾ World

Championships. Ohio 2010 NY 2011. I poured my
creative energy/passion into that (worthy).

I really believe you + Elaine showed me how
(and gave me confidence) to do that with

teaching. Sincerely, Such a gift. Thank you Sally

(others' judgement and Davis's passion regarding teaching)

An intention, an empty intention
I got through high school telling people
"I want to be a doctor."
I'm scared of blood;
I hate chemistry--
broke down on that pre-med thing.
Sideways comments,
hurtful things:
"You could do anything."
"You're throwing it away--
Anybody could be a teacher."

My dad

↑

I'm fed through education.
There's a whole tapestry of stuff going on
(in the background)
with these kids. *Yes.*
Be present.
Aware.
Practice this craft.
Be present. *Yes.*
Consistent.
Stable.
It's such a huge ask to be a teacher--
Energetic, passionate, and engaged.
Mindful.

This is a spiritual practice and element to the work.

true! It was never right for me anyway. I don't know much my drinking factors into this, but in AA, I've heard: "Normal people work their drinking to meet their goals. I worked my goals to meet my drinking." That seemed true years back, and I DID drop pre-med. But I truly think it is what was best for me.

Amazing classes where
by giving kids total control of the classroom,
they did it.
It was beautiful stuff.
They made this thing happen.
It wasn't about me.
It was just magic.

1. This is all women's CLUE.

But... it's also a place I can go to now with my group of kids. Get out of the way!!

- Provide
- 1. Good content
 - 2. Choices
 - 3. Parameters

I'm so glad/grateful I had CLUE to see/experience that. Achievements unobscured and once seen can be replicated.

(connections to home and family)

A journey

To be an engaged father
and husband
and emotionally available...

Easier to be a
"Great-on-paper teacher
than a
husband and a
father.

One year...

Feeling I was a bad teacher
because I was doing less,
but my marriage was better.

I was building a relationship
with
my
daughter.
I had to balance.

Yeah. I don't get to thoughts
like this without getting sober.
This isn't "me". This is God
and the heroes I've met
in AA. Oh, and my hbs wife,

Emotional "sobriety"
or "balance"
is black hell, nig's shit.
Something I'll be working on the rest of my
life. I used
to swing from "1 to 10"
on this. Be total mess to
anxiously cleaning it up.
The goal is to be on the level
and sit "5" all the time. Today,
I hover around 4-6. Grateful.

Because of my childhood + Alcoholism, I can have codependency.
I want to perform for others (Leanne's 3). So... it's
really hard - for me to set boundaries w/ work and say "yes"
to family. I'm getting better every year. ♥

Presenting (little) microcosms of what real world struggles kind of feel like:

Teach kids how to have patience

To learn
 To get along with somebody
 To struggle
 To be more patient.

Learning -- it takes a lot of work --
especially when
 it's hard for you.

Everyone's going to hit something that's hard.

That's going to take a lot of patience --
to make a plan,
 figure it out

Goals

take a long time.

Modeling it

Telling stories

Maybe modelling it

Telling them about times

Asking them questions

Setting goals

Really Really High
Really

Rewarding and celebrating
goals

Giving them challenges--

that's the only way to keep someone
engaged.

I guess the word here
is "resilience".

I love a get back
up and fight
personality. And
a student / learner
who doesn't give up.

This is still how I teach.
And this year I gotta lean
in.



B/c the
device teaching
last year was

TWFL + these
kids are missing some key skills!!!

Rose's poetic transcripts

The Student ☆

(The teacher) ♥

Oops

I totally forgot that assignment

(There's a reason why you have to do homework.)

Never studied for tests

Scrambling through

(There's a reason why you have to study.)

My science teachers were extremely

Not engaging --

Intimidating

(“You’re feeling a lot” We would talk about it.)

Loved all my English teachers

I looked forward to that

(“She’s nice. She’s fun. She’s funny.
She listens to me. She makes it fun.”)

25% of my focus on learning

Very compliant - never going to be a problem

(We play games. I can talk to her.

She cares. I can tell she cares.)

Medium in the room

I got along really well with everybody

(He was like, “Do you want to hear about

What I’m doing?” Because you are somebody who actually cared.)

I was like a solid --

Sure bet for them

(Dude, I understand. I understand.

You’re not just kinda like the touch-and-go kind of kid,
You need the full embrace.)

I liked seeing teacher’s passion → still so true.

About what they were teaching

(You read. You climb up a hill of getting comfortable,

Wanting them to think in a certain way,

Talk in a certain way, listen in a certain way to each other.

And we had reached it.)

Girl always

ughh such a good word but also UGH.

grow up ppl are mainly just frakking (x that still a thing? frakin')

And the reason is... b/c success FEELS GOOD!!!



closed eyes laughing emoji - "FUN!"

Low. medium in like "I can see ghosts"? b/c I do read tarot.

♥ so true, still. I do really care. other weirdos, let's stay (as Gaga would say) in the SHALLOW.

9/9/2021

TIGER SAVE!!

I'm insta-famous

About 9,260,000 search results

135 Followers

Emily Jameson
Browse Topics. Currently, there is no content with this tag

Images

Who is this handsome young



View all

After doing trainings on social media & its effect on your job to the work place, I'm proud at the content that shows

up on me.

I'm very normal

Oh, I think this is an image MP used for 1 of my articles.

CRAFT

LIFE-

Job-

and others you may know. Facebook gives people the power to share and makes the world more...

www.facebook.com/...

Emily

Shelby County Schools offers educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, creed, age, disability, national origin, or genetic information.

Emily

Search results for "Emily Jameson"

- Emily Jameson - Memphis model
- Emily Jameson - Murder
- Emily Jameson - 2011
- Emily Jameson - Tennessee

yes, internet. this!

WTH??

ugh, internet.

https://search.yahoo.com/search?_ylt=A2KLIR1UXzphvslATSFXNyoA;_ylc=X1MDMjc2NjY3OQRfcgMyBGZyA2IjYWZlZQRmcjIzc2ItdG9wBGdwcmlk... 1/2

Appendix B

[*covert categories*: motivation and drive in the classroom, connection to learners, underpinning of personal teaching philosophy]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. When did you think you wanted to be a teacher?
2. How did you make that decision?
3. Do you think anyone was surprised by your desire to be a teacher?
4. What experiences have you had as a child that you think make you an effective teacher?
5. How do you think your students would describe you when they are in your class? How would they describe you five (or ten?) years later?
6. Do you remember a time when a student became very frustrated in your class? How did you interpret this frustration? What did you say or do?
7. Can you remember a very good day in the classroom? Could you walk me through that day?
8. What is your most important goal as a teacher? What is most important for you to do as a teacher?
9. What experiences have you had as an adult that you think make you an effective teacher?

Topic Domain: Connection between role of teacher and learner

Lead-off question:

1. If you hadn't been a teacher, what do you think you would have done instead of teaching? Tell me more about that.
2. Do you still view yourself as a student? Tell me about this."

[*covert categories*: teacher as learner, understanding feelings of student frustration, tapping into student excitement, honoring student interests through understanding own learning interests]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. What activities outside of the classroom do you love?
2. What things are you interested in learning?
3. How do you share this information about your interests in your classroom?
4. What are your greatest strengths as a *learner*?
5. What are your greatest strengths as a *teacher*?

Topic Domain: Identity

Lead-off question: 1. If you were to fill a box with objects that represent you, what would some of those objects be? Tell me about some of those.

[covert categories: identity, connections between identity, learning and teaching]

Possible follow-up questions:

2. If you put a box like this together 10 years ago, would it be filled with the same objects? Why?
3. If no, would those different objects still have relevance to you? Why?
4. If you were given the option to create several boxes, one for each role of your life (for instance, one as husband/wife, father/mother, teacher), would that make sense or would you like to put all the objects that represent you in one box?
5. What object would you like to add to a box like this? Why?
6. If you had some type of time turner and money was no object, what would you do? Can you tell me about this?
 - a. Family
 - b. Students

Topic Domain: Learning

Lead-off question: What is your favorite part of learning?

[covert categories: motivation and drive in learning, connection to learners]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. How do you learn best? How did you discover how you learn best?
2. Do you remember a time you learned something from a student in your class? Can you tell me about this experience?
3. How would you describe an environment where you learn best?
4. What about your students?

Topic Domain: Connecting life and learning to critical pedagogy

Lead-off question:

1. What do you think is the most important thing for your students to learn while they're in your classroom?
2. When did you learn that most important thing?

[covert categories: definitions of critical pedagogy, learners and classrooms, resilience]

Possible follow-up questions:

1. When you are teaching a new concept in your classroom, and no one is getting it or everyone looks distracted, what goes through your head? How do you handle this?
2. One of my participants noted resilience in learning as something she loves in other people.

Appendix C

theme	code name	definition	when to use	when not to use	example of a segment of text from study
Expecting change in the classroom based on teacher learning	being present	teachers, either self or others, who focus on the students in the classroom	Times where teachers speak about focusing on students	when the term present is used to demonstrate attendance or just being in a place, not focusing on the needs	Like your very first question, "what was the day in high school like?" Well, it was kind of turbulent, like the stuff that was going on at home for me, and the things that were going on at school—it was a lot. And I, I presented well, like I was in student government, and I could play the game. But there were a lot of things going on behind the scenes that I didn't talk about. And I'm really mindful of that, as a teacher, with kids that they're bringing everything into the classroom. There's a whole tapestry of stuff going on in the background with these kids.
	respect for students	identification of ways that the student is important and valued	experiences shared where the student has valid concerns or teaches the teacher	if students are not the focus of the story	It was just kind of a delicate balance of like, I have 13 other kids in this room. But you also really need way more. You're not just kinda like the touch-and-go kind of kid like, you need the full embrace.' So there was just a lot of like, armchair counseling with like a psych degree that I do not have.
Focusing on developing the craft of teaching	reasons for wanting to teach	stories connected to the desire to teach	connection to their teachers or teaching in connection to the desire to teach	times that they share stories of reasons people did not want them to teach	childhood play into the way I teach and practice this craft, I just am really aware of the fact that that was a difficult time for me. And so I feel blessed that I made it through first of all, and secondly, that I'm in a place now where maybe I can be like a Coach King and be present for kids
	learning through teaching	time where the teacher learned while teaching	teacher shares stories of learning while in the classroom	not when students are learning from teacher	"Wow, that opened up a lot of insight for me about what I do." And it just put me in a position to learn even more.
Encouraging academic discourse in the classroom to support learning	acknowledging others' expertise	valuing others' intelligence	Stories where others work with the teacher to strengthen their learning	do not include learning specifically from students here	And so we've butted heads on this the whole time. And it's gotten to where she's really pushed my thinking on it to where it's like, okay, I hear what she's saying. And I'm working now for the first time in a really young faculty to where I've been inspired, where it's like, I want to invite all of these young teachers, because [high school] is full of young people. I want to send that article to everyone and say, "Hey, y'all, what if everyone reads this article, and then we all after school one day, get on zoom and talk about it?"
	awakening desire to teach	defining passions for teaching	specific times where the teacher notes the process of passion	not focused on others' desire to teach, for instance, friends	And that I care about their needs.
Remaining passionate about learning	curiosity	intense desire to learn	looking to discover things that are not known by the teacher	others curiosity described by the teacher	I still really don't know what I'm doing. And I'm open to—that sounds bad, you know, I'm not saying I don't know what I'm doing—but that I'm open to going in new directions with this and trying new things.
	learner	describing themselves as a learner	Looking for stories of formal and informal education where the teacher identifies first as a learner	others' learning described by the teacher	I was a student that was curious, intellectually curious, and excited to have some attention because these are teachers I connected with. I was honest and outspoken and willing to engage in discussion and be flexible in my thinking

Appendix D



Appendix E

Research question	analytic questions	Data used to answer research question	Approach to analysis	Most connected Implied theories to conceptual frameworks
How might teachers' experiences with being lifelong students connect to being a teacher?	<p>What type of student were they while in school? Use their definitions and stories to discover the full answer to this question. Fluid because of changes made on poetic transcripts. How might these changes be important to their view of self and teacher?</p> <p>How do they connect their student-self to teacher-self?</p> <p>How are they different?</p> <p>What connections do they have between learning and being a student? If there is a disconnect, is this examined by the teacher? Why or why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews, both initial and follow-up (A & B) • Screenshot elicitation (C) • Poetic transcript elicitation (D) • Researcher memos (E) 	<p>Narrative (and poetic) analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Freeman, 2018; Leavy, 2020; Riessman, 2008)</p> <p>(Possible re-examination through arts-based/poetic thinking and autoethnography)</p>	Sociocultural (Heath, 1983 , Hedges, 2012; Zipin, 2009)
<p>How do the funds of identity held by teachers shape personal teacher decisions and critical pedagogy?</p> <p>Do teachers' outboard and learned outside interests shape the way they teach?</p>	<p>How does the participant define pedagogy? How does the teacher respond to confusion in the classroom or chaos? What type of environment does the teacher expect to exist within the classroom?</p> <p>How does the participant define themselves using personal objects? Does the participant separate roles or connect in one?</p> <p>How does the participant see teacher role as a student connecting to the role of the teacher? Does their learning connect to their teaching or the choices they have made in the classroom?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow-up interviews (B) • Screenshot elicitation (C) • social media observation (F) • Researcher memos (E) 	<p>Narrative (and poetic) analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Freeman, 2018; Leavy, 2020; Riessman, 2008)</p> <p>(Possible re-examination through narrative feminist methodology)</p>	Sociocultural (Heath, 1983; Hedges, 2012; Zipin, 2009), Sociopolitical (Street, 1984), Critical theory (Giroux, 1988; hooks, 1994), Spatial (Alexander et al., 2019)
How do the outside interests and teachers' work in third spaces shape their thoughts about teaching and student learning?	<p>How do the participants' current interests connect to their thoughts regarding learning? Do their thoughts connected to learning return to their thoughts focused on their interests? Do they look to separate their interests from their teaching or classroom? Connect them? Or do they not consider this? Is there space that represents roles outside of career and family/friends? How do those spaces align to their work within the classroom?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews, both initial and follow-up (A & B) • Screenshot elicitation (C) • Poetic transcript elicitation (D) • Social media observation (F) • Researcher memos (E) 	<p>Narrative (and poetic) analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Freeman, 2018; Leavy, 2020; Riessman, 2008)</p> <p>(Possible re-examination through diagrammatical thinking/post-figurative)</p>	Sociopolitical (Street, 1984), Critical theory (Giroux, 1988; hooks, 1994), Spatial (Alexander et al., 2019)

Appendix F

Full line by line analysis of both “Harlem” by Langston Hughes and rewrite

Original Poem	Analysis of “Harlem”	Response poem	Analysis of “Classroom”
“Harlem”/ “Dream Deferred”	Hughes originally titled the poem “Harlem” but later renamed it “Dream Deferred” (Hansen, 2000). The original title references a place where many Black artists lived in New York City. Hughes could have renamed the poem based on his desire to highlight racism throughout the country. Many black Americans were not able to fulfill their dreams because of racism.	“Classroom”/ “Ongoing Dreams”	I focus on the place where all four of my participants experience some of their identities. Their dreams are plans for their roles as teachers and learners. Each of the participants looks for ways to actuate his/her dreams.
What happens to a dream deferred?	This question considers how a person might respond when plans for the future must be abandoned.	What happens to a dream ongoing?	This question considers how teachers might reflect on actions, roles, and learning when they feel in control of their individual choices.
Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore—And then run?	Does the individual hide the original plan? Make it smaller? Does an unfulfilled dream infect the individual?	Does it flourish like a grape on the vine? Or mend like a bandaged wound—And then heal?	Does a teacher identify ways that he/she grows? Do actuated dreams create a salve for teachers? How can this learning protect them?
Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over—like a syrupy sweet?	Can the individual never forget the unfulfilled dream? Does the person act in a way that pushes others away? Does the dream still look desirable from afar but remain unattainable based on the length of time?	Is it aromatic like roasted meat? Or pour and pool—like a liquidy sweet?	Can this ongoing learning entice others? What sweetness is a part of lifelong learning for a teacher?

Maybe it
just sags
like a
heavy
load.

Is the person now depressed?

Maybe it
reclines like
in repose?

How might a teacher
change based on
learning and
growing? Would
these changes relax a
teacher?

Or does it
explode?

(There is a space, and the last line is
italicized.) Does Hughes italicize because
of intensity or because anger is the most
common response?

Or does it
flow?

How might a teacher
who is continually
learning work to
include others in their
learning and the
shaping of their
identities?

Note. “Classroom” by Sally Busby was written as a response mirror-poem based on “Harlem”.

Appendix G

Linocut work. April 30, 2022



Sally Busby

sb542@evansville.edu

EDUCATION

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Doctorate of Education, Literacy, Culture, and Language Education

certificates: Dyslexia Research and Qualitative Research and Inquiry Methodology
completed 54 hours, 4.0

Bloomington, IN
December 2023

UNIVERSITY of MISSISSIPPI

Master of Arts in Southern Studies

- Research area: Fieldwork, History, Art History
- Thesis: Using Photo-elicitation and Narrative Inquiry to Examine the Migration Patterns of One Southern Family from Rural to Urban over Three Generations.

University, MS
May 2002

UNIVERSITY of MISSISSIPPI

Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education

- McDonnell-Barksdale Honors College Graduate
- Magna Cum Laude, Phi Kappa Phi

University, MS
May 2000

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY of EVANSVILLE

Clinical Assistant Professor

Evansville, IN
August 2022 - present

UNIVERSITY of EVANSVILLE

Stem Coordinator & University Supervisor

Evansville, IN
August 2021 - May 2022

SNOWDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

English, 7th grade

Memphis, TN
July 2002 - July 2017

UNIVERSITY of MISSISSIPPI

Graduate Teaching Assistant

University, MS
August 2000 - May 2002

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

UNIVERSITY of EVANSVILLE

- Member, Curriculum Committee
- Member, School of Health Sciences and Education Safety Committee
- Member, School of Health Sciences and Education IPE Committee
- Member, CAEP Accreditation Committee
- Member, Admission to Teacher Education Interview Committee

CREDENTIALS

2023

Passport to Inclusion, University of Evansville

2020 - 2026

Language Arts Teaching License 5-12, Indiana

2020 - 2026

Elementary Education Teaching License K-6, Indiana

2008 - 2028

National Board Teacher Certification, Language Arts

2002 - 2018

Elementary Education Teaching License K-8, Tennessee

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

SNOWDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Memphis, TN

- Destination Imagination Team leader for 8 years. Teams attended state 7 of the 8 years. Successfully approached businesses for financial support.
- Drama Club Lunch Box Theater Club founder. Conducted auditions for each play. Led weekly rehearsals.
- Saturday Breakfast Book Club founder. Wrote grants to provide individual books and breakfast for members. Led discussions during bi-monthly book clubs.
- Organized and directed a yearly out-of-town trip for students.
- Film Society Founder. Daily lunch meeting for all interested middle school students

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Busby, S. (2022). Music and middle school literacy. *International Journal of the Whole Child*, 7(2), 68–78.

Busby, S. (2021). Characters, disability, and null sets: An examination of award-winning picture books from 2011-2020. *Indiana Literacy Journal*, 50(2), 37–47.

Busby, S. (2021). Reprints, review, and refusing ventriloquism of the ‘folk’: Providing tellability to the storied through a family’s photographs. *Social Alternatives*, 40(2), 46–58.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Busby, S. (2022, March). *Sally, Jack, and Ingrid through the pandemic*. The feminist research collective. <https://www.feministresearchcollective.org/march-newsletter>

PRESENTATIONS

S. Busby, “Intro to Canva” Lunch and Learn for Eykamp Center for Teaching Excellence, 2023.

S. Busby, “An Art-based Qualitative Research Study” Y521 Dr. Carspecken IU Bloomington, 2021.

S. Busby, “Designing a Qualitative Research Study by Accident” Y611 Dr. Carspecken IU Bloomington, 2021.

S. Busby, “DonorsChoose and Books” 2017 Middle School Conference, Memphis, 2017.

S. Busby and E. Walters, “Using Music and Video in the English Classroom” 2017 TAG Conference, Memphis, 2017.

S. Busby and E. Walters, “1100 Words You Need to Know and Vocabulary--Teaching with Interest and Games” 2017 TAG Conference, Memphis, 2017.

S. Busby and P. Raines, “Service Learning in a Multi-Age School” 2004 Memphis City Schools Grant, Memphis, 2004.

ARTICLES BEING WRITTEN

S. Busby, “Evaluation of Picture Books Using an Anti-Ableist Checklist”.

S. Busby, “Paperbag Dramatics in the English Classroom”.

S. Busby, “Google Docs and Co-Writing”.

S. Busby, “Using a Metaliterative framework in the English Language Arts Classroom”.

S. Busby, “Teachers as Learners”

ARTICLES IN REVIEW

1. S. Busby, “Characters with epilepsy and the authors who write their stories: Evaluating five young adult books through my #ownvoice”.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- Vanderbilt TRIAD training
 - Gifted Education Endorsement, Tennessee
 - Dr. John Taylor's Interventions for Autism and ADHD Workshop
 - OasysObservation
- Completed formal observations of four teachers at other Shelby County Schools using the TEM rubric.
Provided positive and supportive feedback in all post-conferences promptly.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- American Educational Research Association, SIGs: Literature and Language; Teacher Learning; Arts-Based Research; Narrative Research; Disability Studies in Education; Stress, Coping, and Resilience
- Association of Teacher Educators, SIGs: Inclusive Education; Literacy
- Indiana State Teacher Association
- National Council of Teachers of English
- International Literacy Association
- Children's Literature Assembly

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

- College of Science and Education Safety Committee
- IPE Committee
- Grant writing committees for the Lilly Preparation Grant (\$75,000), EVSC/UE Masters Grant (\$1,000,000)