"Don't Step on Each Other's Words": Aboriginal Children in Legitimate Peripheral Participation With Multiliteracies

by

Melanie A. Brice

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Elementary Education

University of Alberta

Abstract

This study is an examination of the multiple literacy practices of four Aboriginal children in a Western Canadian prairie urban classroom. It is framed using sociocultural theory that posits that the literacy learning of children occurs in a social environment through a co-constructed, culturally relevant landscape. The purpose of this study was to explore how First Nations and Métis children whose teachers had identified them as successful readers, used multiliteracies to support their reading in an elementary language arts classroom. This research drew on the work of sociocultural learning theorists Lave and Wenger (1991) and their concepts of community of practice and legitimated peripheral participation, and Moll et al.'s (1992) concept of funds of knowledge.

Statistics show an increasing literacy gap between Aboriginal students and other Canadian students, and there is an abundance of research on school failure and deficit language and literacy learning. However, Aboriginal children come to school with a great deal of knowledge and experience with different literacies, technology, and use language in ways that help them to successfully navigate school literacy. Therefore, the following research questions guided an exploration of the ways that the focal children used language, the knowledge and experiences that they brought with them into the classroom, and how they participated in literacy practices: (a) How did the funds of knowledge that the participants brought into the classroom support their literacy practices in the English language arts (ELA) classroom? (b) How the Aboriginal children's oral language support their reading? and (c) How did the Aboriginal children in a classroom community participate as legitimate peripheral participants in reading while integrating multiliteracies? The researcher investigated these questions by using interpretive case

study methodology and collecting data by observing and interviewing the participants and collecting student- and teacher-created artifacts.

This research adds to the field of literacy learning and teaching because it demonstrates the importance of multiliteracies as a means of including diverse voices, texts, and cultures in school literacy. The use of multiliteracies creates a bridge between home and school literacy by giving minority children who might not have access to privileged forms of literacy a means of acquiring school literacy. Multiliteracies bring Aboriginal perspectives into literacy learning and validate the knowledge and experiences that Aboriginal children and youth bring to school. This research also addressed the application of Rosenblatt's (1978/1994) reader response theory to all texts, including digital. The implications for teacher practice are the need for educators to move away from deficit theories of learning and stop viewing the literacies that Aboriginal children bring to school as problematic. Instead, educators need to provide spaces for Aboriginal children to talk about their lived experiences and acknowledge their knowledge as valid and valuable so that they can flourish.

Preface

This thesis is the original work of Melanie A. Brice. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliteracies," No. Pro00038050, May 16, 2013.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family.

My beautiful daughters: Ava, Kathleen, and Krystin.

Thank you for your patience and many sacrifices while I pursued my dream.

My wonderful husband, Trevor,

Thank you for your love and encouragement that helped me finish.

I love you fierce!

Acknowledgements

I have been very fortunate to take this research journey. It has not all been smooth sailing and without the help of many people I would not have been able to navigate through the changing conditions of wind and weather. I want to acknowledge those who have been my North Star, guiding winds, harbours of refuge, and provided me with a vessel to transport me on this voyage.

My co-supervisors: Dr. Heather Blair and Dr. Lynne Wiltse, thank you for helping me chart this research course and equipping my craft with its theoretical and methodological rigging. It is by looking at the stars that I was able to stay on course and you both helped me to know where to look.
My supervisory committee: Dr. Julia Ellis and Dr. Linda Laidlaw, thank you for your help trimming the sails. Your feedback propelled my work forward.
My examining committee: Dr. Claudia Eppert, Dr. Ethel Gardner, and external examiner Dr. Jan Hare, thank you for placing your hands on the tiller to guide my research to shore.

My research could not have moved from port without supporting winds:
my peers and instructors in the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education at the University of Alberta;
my colleagues at Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), Gabriel Dumont Institute, and Alberta Education;
funding from Indspire (formerly the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation), Gabriel Dumont College, and Queen Elizabeth II Graduate Scholarship.

My gratitude goes to the Ms. Reed and the children in Grade 3 at Belleheights School, whose stories wove together to create my mainsail. Without your willingness to open up your lives to me this research would not be possible.

To Trevor, when sailing was difficult and I didn't think I could stay afloat you were not only my PFD but you were also my keel providing stability and keeping me from becoming adrift.

To my girls, you were my harbour of refuge and gave me the strength to persevere. Thank you for being the sun bursting through the clouds, and the cool spray keeping me revitalized.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Prologue

The classroom teacher in my doctoral study would often remind students, "Don't step on my words!" This was a cue for students not to interrupt the speaker, but it was also about respect.

Not stepping on someone's words is respecting their space, their voice, and their ways of knowing. It involves honouring others, honouring place, and honouring self. It recognizes mutual reciprocity between the speaker(s) and listener(s). It involves relationships. It acknowledges the importance of learning from others and the power of words. In many Indigenous cultures, living by these attitudes is referred to as *walking the good way*.

I used the Indigenous teachings of walking the good way to organize the chapters. The first chapter is about respecting place and presents an overview of where literacy for Aboriginal children and youth is situated at this time. The second chapter is about honouring others and looks at the knowledge and wisdom that already exists in the field of literacy and learning and the theory that frames this study. The third chapter is about mutual reciprocity and identifies the process for the exchange of information and how the students shared their literacy lives with me. The fourth chapter is about respecting ways of knowing; here I present the literacy practices of the children. The fifth chapter is about relationships and how they set the context for the students to create and transform their identities as literacy learners through multiliteracies. The sixth and final chapter is Walking the Good Way; it brings all of these elements of respect together to support Aboriginal children and inform literacy learning.

CHAPTER 1:

RESPECTING PLACE: INTRODUCTION

> Most schools in North America are middle-class oriented
> and the teachers, teaching methods and curriculum
> naturally patronize middle-class children.
> The school system is built that it often
> cannot relate or respond to children
> whose backgrounds do not subscribe to middle-class culture.
> (Emma LaRoque, 1975, p. 58)

Emma LaRoque, a Métis scholar from Alberta, wrote *Defeathering the Indian* in 1975. She discussed the compensatory education that was in place to aid Native[1] children, who were at the time viewed as culturally deprived; this was the cause of their failure in school. The culture of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children was considered inferior. Children did poorly in school because they were seen as different and consequently felt that they were different. LaRoque claimed that the inclusion of First Nations, Inuit and Métis content in the curriculum would decrease the separation between them and other Canadians. Provincial curriculums across Canada now include First Nation, Métis, and Inuit content, perspectives, and contributions. However, there is still a gap between Aboriginal and other students in school achievement, especially in literacy. Perhaps more needs to be done than just include First Nations, Métis and Inuit content and perspectives in the curriculum.

Looking back at my teaching practice, I diligently planned lessons to ensure that I included First Nations, Métis and Inuit content and perspectives in all of the subjects I taught. I found that my Métis cultural perspective and experiences greatly influenced my teaching methodologies, my choice of resources, and even which aspects of the curriculum I emphasized. With that in mind, it is important to situate myself not only culturally but also acknowledge the journey that has brought me to where I am. In situating self, I will do in a narrative style to honour how I have come to know.

---

[1] *Native* is a general term for 'First Nations,' 'Métis,' and 'Inuit' that is rarely used today because it does not represent the diverse groups whom it encompasses. Currently in Canada, *Aboriginal* or *Indigenous* are terms used to refer to all three groups.

I was born in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. I am a mother of three amazing girls and a grandmother. I identify as Métis. I am a descendent of Cyprien Morin, who was considered the patriarch of Meadow Lake or Lac Prairie. Métis scholar, Brenda Macdougall (2010) stated that "Cyprien was one of the best remembered people in the entire region because he was the founder of Lac Prairie and a devoted Catholic who built the church there on his own land" (p. 114). I am also a descendant of Cuthbert Grant Jr. who is often referred to history texts as the Warden of the Prairie, as he successfully led the Métis in Red River in securing their land and resources. My kinship includes the Morin, Delaronde, Desjarlais, Ridsdale, Sansregret, Beauregarde, Sinclair, Ross, and Laliberte families. I come from over four generations of Métis families in Northern Saskatchewan, Batoche, and Red River settlements in Canada. Both my parents come from families of six, so I grew up knowing many first cousins, second cousins and even some third cousins. We had more get-togethers with my mother's family, so the Métis culture was always nurtured and nourished. I grew up identifying with my Métis heritage more than my father's Welsh/Dutch. This is not to say that my father's cultural inheritance was not as important, as he brought different traditions that were more of a culture of place than cultural heritage. bell hooks (2009) writes about "a culture of place" as a feeling of belonging and "choosing where and how to live" (p. 6). Identity is sustained through a sense of belonging either to a place, group, or community and is namely "encompassed in one's connection to home, which in turn, is definable by land and family" (Macdougall, 2010, p. 1). My father grew up at the lake, Jackfish Lake, which is where I grew up. Jackfish Lake, or more specifically Metinota, is where I call home. This life at the lake has greatly influenced my life. Before moving to the lake, I spent the first four years of my life living in Meadow Lake. I remember living in my great-grandparents' house, who we called Moshum and Kohkom[2]. Moshum and Kohkom homesteaded in the Island Hill area that is near Green Lake, Saskatchewan. My grandparents, uncles and cousins also ranched in that area. I grew up hearing a lot of stories in the form of oral narratives that were either for teaching or entertainment. I heard stories about the northern lights and roogaroos (shape-shifters), to name a couple. There were lots of stories, not just of strange things in the night but also of people lives,

[2] Moshum and Kohkom are Cree for grandfather and grandmother, respectively.

stories told in warning so you would end up like so-and-so who didn't pay attention to the warnings. I grew up enjoying stories, even sneaking out of bed to listen to my parents, aunties, uncles, and grandparents. This love of story led me to a love a reading. Reading took me to far off places, introduced me to new friends, and provided glimpses into the lives of others. After I was done my chores I could be found with my legs draped over one of the arms of my favourite chair and my head resting on one of its side wings. This chair, along with a good book helped me transcend time and space.

It has been a common practice for me to examine my life and experiences as inspiration for research. First as a classroom teacher, then as a teacher-librarian, with particular interests in children's literature and digital technology, much of my research interest has been on elementary-age children and literacy as well as teacher identity. When I decided on a topic for my master's thesis, I looked at my teaching practice and how my Métis culture and identity had impacted me as a classroom teacher. I was curious about whether other Métis teachers had classroom experiences similar to mine. Did other Métis teachers use personal stories in their teaching? Did they talk about their families? Did they share their fears, joys, anxieties, and excitement with their students?

This curiosity about how my identity influenced my teacher practice led to questions that fuelled my Master of Education research. Do other Métis teachers teach as I do? Do we use similar pedagogical practices? I identified a common feature between my teaching practice and that of the research participants as the use of story as a teaching method (MacLean, 2004). I created a child-centred classroom that honours identity and, like the research participants in my master's research, integrated my cultural background into the classroom. Similarly to the teachers who participated in my master's research study, I used cultural knowledge and stories from my family and cultural community to help students make connections to curricular content. I used stories in the classroom as a powerful tool to resist negative definitions and reclaim cultural identity (MacLean, 2004). This unearthing of the power of stories led to further research on how First Nations and Métis teachers use story as an instructional method (MacLean & Wason-Ellam, 2006), which includes five practices. Storytelling "fosters a caring community," "teaches through analogy," "indigenizes the curriculum," "facilitates culturally responsive teaching," and "professionalizes teachers" (p. 7).

Extending my previous work with story, I chose to focus on literacy as an area of further investigation in the context of my doctoral program. My doctoral program has helped me to become better acquainted with reading research (Adams, 1990; Allington, 2002; Britton, 1979; Ehri, 1996; Gee, 2001; K. S. Goodman, 1996; Y. M. Goodman, 2003; Halliday, 1969; Juel, 1996; Paley, 1997; Pressley, 2001; Rosenblatt, 1978/1994; Ruddell, 2006; Stanovich, 1996, 2004; Wells, 1989) and how children acquire reading as well as continue in their reading development through various subject disciplines. The latter area appeals to me because reading is a lifelong endeavour that I want my students to enjoy.

In considering the teaching of reading, I looked at myself as a reader in addition to considering research in the field. I have always been an avid reader and did well in school. For this reason, reading highly motivated me as a necessary practice to achieve my academic goals. Success in reading is certainly linked to academic success (Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2009; Ogle et al., 2003); conversely, those who struggle with reading often face school failure. Children who struggle with literacy learning risk school failure given the important role of reading in contributing to school success (Juel, 1988; Philips, Norris, Osmond, & Maynard, 2002; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Tunmer, 2008). In reflecting on my experiences as a classroom teacher, I came to realize that not all children find success with reading. I had students who struggled with interpreting the words of the author and/or bringing their own meaning to the text. Yet many of these students shared stories of taking care of their Tamagotchis™; organized, categorized, and knew complex stories of Pokémons™; and could discuss hockey players' statistics and game analysis on par with many adults. An abundance of literature exists on how children and youth participate in literacy practices outside of school that are not always recognized or utilized as part of school literacy (Dyson, 1997; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Tejeda, & Rivera, 1999; Heath, 1983; Hull & Schultz, 2002; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Low, 2005; Moll et al., 1992; Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, 2012; Stone, 2007).

My interest in the literacy practices of First Nations and Métis students fueled this research. In respecting place, as I have titled this chapter, I have acknowledged my relations and progression to this place in my research journey. It is also important to

understand and recognize the place of education currently for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth in schools and the place we need to go to support the literacy learning of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

Statement of the Problem

Canadian statistics show an increasing literacy gap between Métis, First Nations, Inuit and other Canadians (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007, 2008; Canadian Education Statistics Council, 2009). Contemporary external research has tended to emphasize the deficits compared to non-Aboriginal standards instead of the positive outcomes of Aboriginal learning (Niles, Byers, & Krueger, 2007; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987). An abundance of research on school failure and deficit language and literacy learning exists, but more research is needed on literacy practices that support First Nations, Métis and Inuit children's reading.

Different communities value different practices, and depending on to which community a person belongs, certain practices are valued over others. These sociocultural practices, which include language and literacy practices, determine how people will see themselves and form their identities. Many children and youth arrive at school using language and literacy practices that are not congruent with school literacy and thus face the challenge of navigating literacy practices that are discordant with their home or community literacy practices. Yet many children from these minority communities are still able to do very well in school. Society has given schools the role of determining which literacy practices have the most currency to secure employment, political power, and cultural recognition (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Schools need to do a better job of accounting for children's out-of-school identities (Pahl & Rowsell, 2012). Identity plays an important role in literacy learning, which highlights the importance of aligning school literacy practices with the identities of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children. Children bring language knowledge and abilities with them to school (Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988), as well as knowledge from their lives and communities that they can access to make connections and inferences to comprehend text (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). Many children come to school with a great deal of knowledge and experience with different literacies and technology and use language in ways that help them to transition to school literacies (Dyson, 1997).

Therefore, exploring the ways that children use language, the knowledge and experiences that they bring with them into the classroom, and how they participate in literacy practices framed the research questions of this study.

Purpose of My Study

The purpose of this research was to conduct a qualitative case study of the language arts classroom reading practices of selected students (i.e., First Nations and Métis children whose teacher identified them as successful readers) in a classroom where the teacher integrates technology as part of literacy instruction.

Although my approach to studying the students' reading practices was holistic—an important characteristic of qualitative case studies (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016)—I paid particular attention to the following aspects of the students' reading experiences in language arts.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study include the following:

1. How do the funds of knowledge that the participants bring into the classroom support their literacy practices in the English language arts (ELA) classroom?
2. How does the oral language of First Nations and Métis children support their reading?
3. How do Métis and First Nations children in a classroom community participate as legitimate peripheral participants in reading while integrating multiliteracies?

My previous classroom teaching experience has shown me that children become engaged in school literacy practices when technology is integrated into content areas; as well, I have observed their enthusiasm over using multimodal representations to share their knowledge and make meaning. Moreover, my previous research has demonstrated the importance of providing contexts that reflect Aboriginal children's culture and experiences (MacLean, 2004). Therefore, I was interested in the literacy practices that support the reading of First Nations and Métis children and whether these practices are congruent and responsive to their cultural identity.

Significance of the Study

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) has released several reports that describe the history and legacy of residential schools and the use of education as a tool for assimilation. The vestiges of residential schools have resulted in a high proportion of children-in-care of Aboriginal descent, which has a profound impact on language learning and identity. The TRC and other research (Adams, 1989; Battiste, 2000; Hampton, 1995; McKeough et al., 2008; Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples, 1996) demonstrated that Canada's Indigenous people have faced marginalization in educational systems across the country. It is disturbing that research results indicate that negative educational experiences contribute to THE widening literacy gap between Inuit, Métis and First Nations and other Canadians at all educational levels (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008; Richards, 2008). To contribute to the process of reconciliation, many parts of the educational system are indigenizing education by changing teaching practice, curriculum, research, and policy to include First Nations, Métis and Inuit ways of knowing, pedagogical practices, experiences, historical and contemporary contributions, cultures, and languages (Armstrong, 2013; Kitchen & Raynor, 2013; Pete, Schneider, O'Reilly, 2013). This research provides information that will facilitate education policy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth, influence pedagogy in literacy, and thus potentially impact the literacy learning of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. Additionally, I offer recommendations for future research.

The study involves First Nations and Métis children, which calls for an overview of the educational history and social environment that have impacted current realities, as well as a synopsis of the current demographics of the location of this study.

Aboriginal Context in the Western Prairies of Canada

This study was situated in a Western Canadian urban centre. In Canada, many people use the terms *Indigenous* or *Aboriginal* interchangeably. Indigenous peoples are defined as those who descended from the original inhabitants of a territory and have unique cultures and traditions from those of the settler population (United Nations, n.d.). Aboriginal is defined according to the Canadian Constitution of 1982, which allows three different groups to identify as Canada's Aboriginal people. The Métis, First Nations, and Inuit were constitutionally recognized as Canada's Aboriginal people in the 1982

Constitution Act. Within these three groups is a diverse range of cultures, beliefs, customs, and history. I have used the appropriate term wherever possible to acknowledge the diversity within these groups and to describe the focal children because they identify as Métis, Cree, or Dene. From time to time I use the term Aboriginal to refer to all three groups or to previous research or articles that have used the term.

In Canada, Manitoba and Saskatchewan have the largest proportion of Aboriginal people, at 14% of their population; Alberta is in third place, with 5% of its population identifying as Aboriginal, according to Statistics Canada (2005b) census data. Statistics Canada (2005b) predicted that the population of Aboriginal children in these three provinces will substantially increase by 2017. Furthermore, demographic projections indicate that, by 2017, 37 out of 100 children in Saskatchewan (26% in 2001) and 31 out of 100 in Manitoba (24% in 2001) could be Aboriginal. As for the proportion of the Aboriginal young adult population, it may almost double in Saskatchewan, reaching 30% in 2017, from 17% in 2001. In Manitoba, the proportion of young Aboriginal adults is projected to rise from 17% in 2001 to 23% in 2017 (Statistics Canada (2005b).

Literacy data on Aboriginal people are relatively scarce; although the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) provides information on Aboriginal people, it is not representative of the total population of Aboriginal people in Canada. The 2003 IALSS collected data from large enough samples of Aboriginal people in urban areas in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as Aboriginal people who lived in selected communities in the Territories, to answer key questions about the literacy proficiency of these populations (Statistics Canada, 2005a):

> Educational attainment tends to be lower among the urban Aboriginal population compared to the non-Aboriginal population. In 2001, 53 percent of Aboriginal adults in urban Manitoba and Saskatchewan had high school or higher, compared to 63 percent of the total non-Aboriginal population. (p. 56)

Because education potentially determines future employment and economic stability, it is essential to make changes to ensure that Aboriginal students have access to the same resources as students in the rest of Canada. The statistics reinforce the critical need for a transformation in education.

The road to low literacy, the high percentage of school dropouts, and school failure among Aboriginal people in Canada is the result of assimilationist practices in

education and colonization. Early schools in Canada were opened by either the Hudson Bay Company for children of their employees or by missionaries. Protestant and Catholic churches saw schools as a way not only way to evangelize and Christianize the Aboriginal people, but also to fulfill the government's desire to assimilate Aboriginal people. The federal government regulated the lives of First Nations people and thus limited their involvement in their own education, welfare, and economic survival. The Métis and non-status First Nations who did not sign the treaty were left on the fringes. Friesen and Friesen (2002) explained, "The Métis needed the same services in education, health and welfare as Status Indians, but were not served in this respect by the Indian Affairs Branch of the federal government" (p. 120). In what is now Saskatchewan, the First Nations people were required to attend residential schools or schools on their reserves. This left many Métis peoples without access to education unless they were landowners or willing to pay school fees. Some Métis people had access to education in their communities if the Protestant or Catholic churches established schools. Religious denominations operated schools for Métis people until Saskatchewan became a province in 1905. Not until 1944, when Tommy Douglas changed the Education Act to include access to education for all residents of Saskatchewan, were Métis people granted admission to public schools. The failure of the residential school system led the government to become more involved in the education of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children. First Nations students on reserves have access to education through schools that their reserve or band operates, but, ultimately, the federal government controls it. This control has shifted to the tribal councils or local First Nations, who gained control of band-operated schools with funding from the federal government in the 1970s (Friesen & Friesen, 2002). The prevalence of the move of First Nations, Métis and Inuit to urban centres over the last 50 years has required that school curriculum reflect the cultural diversity in schools. Conversely, many teachers in urban centres are ill-equipped because of their lack of knowledge of the culture or are unwilling to allow culturally relevant practices to accommodate First Nations or Métis children (Friesen & Friesen, 2002). As a result, many First Nation, Métis and Inuit students drop out of school. Yet, amidst the legacy of assimilation, many First Nations, Métis and Inuit become proficient readers and

writers and receive high school diplomas, and some go on to postsecondary education and training.

Terminology

Throughout this paper I use the following terms: *school literacy*, *out-of-school literacies*, *digital literacy*, *new literacies*, *multiliteracies*, and *multimodal literacy*. I define these terms as follows: School literacy refers to the ways of using language to enable students to have success to literacy events in school that are tied to learning outcomes. School literacy emphasizes reading and writing and the task of teaching students to read and write. This is usually based on texts that teachers select for children to read and specific written genres that teachers request. School literacies involve the practices of reading and responding to what students read. Students are usually asked to respond through writing. Children learn how to read and write and later how to use reading and writing to learn content-area knowledge. The purpose of school literacy practices is to enable students to meet curricular outcomes (Gee & Hayes, 2011). Students are assessed on how well they have acquired certain knowledge or skills.

Out-of-school literacies are the ways in which we use reading and writing in social environments, at home, and in community spaces. Out-of-school literacy practices afford avenues of communication for social or daily activities. With these out-of-school practices, children and youth make choices on the texts that they read and write.

With burgeoning technological and digital innovations, individuals need to be able to use digital technology to participate fully. As technology advances, so does the definition of digital literacy; the definitions include the technical competency to understand how meaning is communicated by using digital means. Littlejohn, Beetham, and McGill (2012) defined digital literacy as the "capabilities required to thrive in and beyond education, in an age when digital forms of information and communication predominate" (p. 547). Littlejohn et al.'s definition goes beyond defining the ability to use computers or digital technology; it also encompasses the ability to access, understand, create, and communicate in different digital forms and formats.

New literacies build on digital literacy. Advances in technology have created spaces for participation, collaboration, experimentation, and innovation, which have resulted in new literacy practices. Pahl and Rowsell (2012) explained that "new literacies

signal new kinds of texts, practices, and understandings that have arisen with increased use and prevalence of technology" (p. 15). The new literacies are the new literacy practices and texts that have arisen from the use of technology.

Multiliteracies are the multiple ways of knowing and using different literacy practices, depending on the contexts, culture, and social aspects (New London Group, 1996, 2000).

Multimodal literacy is the teaching and learning of various modes to represent meaning in all kinds of text (Kress, 2003, 2010; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Pahl & Rowsell, 2012). I further explore these terms in Chapter 2 when I discuss the supporting literature on literacies.

Overview

In this dissertation I began by respecting place by describing how I have reached this place in my research journey and what led to the research problem, the purpose of my study, and how it is a significant problem that needs to be addressed. Because my study was set in a particular place at a particular time, it was important that I provide a contextual backdrop with a historical overview of how First Nations, Métis and Inuit education has come to be at the place it is in the Western Canadian province where I situated this research. I also presented a glossary of terms that I use throughout the dissertation.

In chapter 2, I honour the work of others by outlining the theoretical paradigm that framed this research and the supporting literature. Chapter 3 is about reciprocity, and I describe the methodology of the research study, how the participants shared their literacy lives, the methods used in the exchange of information, and the incumbent limitations of the process. The focus of chapter 4 is on ways of knowing. I describe how the Grade 3 class became a community of practice and how the teacher used multiliteracies to support the literacy learning and reading of the students. Chapter 5 highlights the school literacy practices of the four focal students and how they co-constructed their identities through participation while they used multiliteracies and their funds of knowledge to make and negotiate meaning. In chapter 6, I conclude with a discussion of the importance of talk, multiliteracies, and funds of knowledge in students' literacy lives; how this research contributes to the field of literacy learning and teaching;

and how the relationships between participation and culture illuminate areas for further research.

CHAPTER 2:

HONOURING OTHERS: A SYNTHESIS OF THEORETICAL AND RESEARCH LITERATURE IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

In Indigenous education, learning occurs through listening and observing; and it is built on relationships. Similarly, sociocultural learning and literacy theories are also based on the relationship between social and cultural contexts. The title of this chapter is Honouring Others: It is important to honour the work of and give credit to the sociocultural learning and literacy theorists whose theories framed this research. In alignment with Indigenous education, I listened to their words through my reading and observed their work through reflection.

This chapter is a synthesis of the theoretical paradigm, conceptual framework, and literature on the language, reading, and literacies on which I have drawn to support my research, inform my thinking, and identify relationships between my study and the relevant literature.

Overview

The purpose of the first section of this chapter is to position my research and myself in the constructivist paradigm and introduce the theoretical framework of sociocultural theory. I refer to the work of Vygotsky in this study, but mostly draw from sociocultural theorists who have built on the work of Vygotsky, such as Jerome Bruner (1978, 1986) and Gordon Wells (1999). I also explain the conceptual frameworks that further inform this research study: Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger's (1991) legitimate peripheral participation and community of practice and Luis Moll et al.'s (1992) funds of knowledge. I discuss readers as legitimate peripheral participants in a community of practice and describe the funds of knowledge that children utilize as readers.

The second section is the literature review, where I synthesize the research literature on language, reading, and literacy as it pertains to the scope of this study through the work of James Paul Gee's (2001, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2014) on language and identity, Michael Halliday's (1975) language-learning theory, Gordon Wells' (1999) and Shirley Brice Heath's (1983) research on how language use influences success in school, Courtney Cazden's (2001, 2004) research on classroom discourse, and Kenneth

Goodman's (1996) and Louise Rosenblatt's (1978/1994, 1985, 1993) transactional theories of reading. These theorists connect in that their work demonstrates the importance of language in constructing identities and making meaning. I continue with a description of multiliteracies, new literacies, multimodal literacies, and artifactual literacies and how popular culture shapes literacy practices. I conclude with an explanation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis education and the importance of a holistic education that addresses the mind, body, and spirit to provide a context for Métis, Inuit and First Nations children to be successful in school.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Sociocultural Theory

The literacy learning of children occurs in a social environment through a co-constructed, culturally relevant landscape. Sociocultural theory is an idea from the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986), and others have extended and elaborated on it, resulting in diverse perspectives on sociocultural theory (John-Steiner & Holbrook, 1996). Sociocultural theory posits that children learn when their basic processes transform into higher psychological functions because they are engaged in social interactions and use culturally determined tools (Diaz, Neal, & Amaya-Williams, 1990). Speech is a culturally determined and mediating tool. The use of signs, symbols, or semiotic tools helps humans to mediate their actions. Language is one of these semiotic tools or artifacts that allows members of a culture to share beliefs, values, experiences, and practices. For this reason I used a sociocultural framework to situate my research: because it brings language as a tool to the forefront. The sociocultural language and literacy theorist that are relevant to this study are Gordon Wells' (1999) work on the relationship between learning and language. The role of language in meaning-making is salient to this study in that the participants used language in their co-construction of knowledge. Also, Michael Halliday's (1975) language learning theory is salient because children learn through language, and the participants used language to construct meaning and build relationships. In my work in Indigenous education, I have found the sociocultural theories on learning and language relevant because humans are social and cultural beings. People learn and make sense of the world through language (Cazden,

2004; Goodman, 1996; Rosenblatt, 1993) and share with others their identities through language (Gee, 2014; Heath, 1983).

Semiotic tools such as language are used to construct knowledge and are learned by engaging in social activity (Wells, 1999). Sociocultural theory positions language and literacy learning as a socially embedded act. It looks at the relationships "between mental processes and socio-cultural setting" (Wertsch, 1995, p. 57). This perspective views learning language through participation in socially mediated events with a more knowledgeable or proficient language user. It also points to the role of culture and history in shaping the language and literacy activities of a particular group.

People interact through language. When we observe or experience events, we are drawn to talking with others about what we have seen or what we think about the particular event. Language makes dialogue possible. Through talk and dialogue we are able to make sense of our experiences and the world around us. Similarly, when we read and then talk about what we have read, this talk helps us to make sense and construct meaning about what we read. Wells (1999) referred to social constructivist theory in emphasizing the role of dialogue in adult-child interaction, especially when we explore classroom dialogue. Prior to their enrollment in school, children's learning is informal. Wells reported that, in the early years, children learn about language "through participation in informal conversation in the context of everyday events and activities" (p. 20). Wells stressed the significance of the adult in a child's "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is a child's potential to develop, assisted by a more proficient person, usually an adult (Vygotsky, 1978). A significant feature of the ZPD is the child's ability to achieve in collaboration with an adult what he or she could not accomplish on his or her own (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, talk is a mediating tool; and, as Wells (1996) pointed out, it achieves a larger purpose.

Children are born and raised into environments that previous generations have shaped (Wells, 2000). Children's development is "immeasurably enriched and extended through the individual's appropriation and mastery of the cultural inheritance, as this is encountered in activity and interaction with other" (p. 3). Children learn the cultural tool of language by using it with others. They participate socially in conversations and learn

how language is used and how to negotiate meaning through the practice of talk. Children learn how to talk and behave like the other members of their community through language. Language becomes an available resource for communities to form their identities (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and support their practices.

Communities of Practice

Community can be defined in multiple ways: as a group of people who connect with a common purpose, a shared commitment, and mutually agreed-upon norms (Sergiovanni, 1994). Smith (2001) defined community as a geographical area, a particular place in which people live, or an area of common life. People who define themselves as belonging to a physical community hold a common belief with the other members of the community about who does and does not belong to that community according to a geographical boundary or location. When individuals gather as a group and engage in similar activities, they form a community. They become members of a community through their participation.

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) coined the term *communities of practice* to describe groups who construct and share an identity based on common practices. Lave and Wenger formulated identities as "long-term, living relations between persons and their place and participation in communities of practice" (p. 53). More experienced or mature participants are old-timers and less experienced, and younger participants are newcomers to a community of practice. At some point younger and less experienced participants will no longer be identified as newcomers, but as old-timers in the community of practice. Lave and Wenger referred to this as "continuity-displacement contradiction" (p. 118). The continuity of a community of practice over time requires *new* newcomers, and the old-timers are displaced by "newcomers-become-old-timers" (p. 117). This phenomenon also helps a community of practice to evolve over time. The newcomers need to identify with the community of practice for continuity, but they also bring with them their own viewpoints and experiences that will shape and evolve the community of practice over time. Identity development is central to a community of practice. Lave and Wenger's work was important to this research because the identities of the participants have influenced their participation in literacy practices.

Lave and Wenger (1991) developed a social theory of learning around the concepts of community of practice and legitimate peripheral participation to situate learning within lived experiences and social participation. They did not explore learning in relation to schooling because they did not want the concept of legitimate peripheral participation to be considered a pedagogical technique. Lave and Wenger looked at learners as apprentices and skilled workers as masters and then further considered the relationships between newcomers and old-timers in apprenticeship settings. This steered them toward an exploration of learning as situated and an essential part of social practice. A person learns through participation with the goal of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Learning is cultivated by placing inexperienced learners with more experienced learners. Equally, teachers as old-timers and children as newcomers create a community of practice in the elementary classroom. The participants in this study were engaged in learning through the process of becoming full participants in a sociocultural practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). For this reason, using a community-of-practice theory was significant to my research because I explored how First Nations and Métis children use multiliteracies and engage in literacy practices as a community of practice. The relationships that existed among the participants, the literacy activities, the literacy practices, and their identities were illuminated in terms of legitimate peripheral participation within a community of practice.

Although teachers are most often seen as old-timers, it is possible that with the burgeoning of new literacy practices other students might in fact be the old-timers who guide the participation of other students and the teacher. Wells (2000) affirmed that "participants with relatively little expertise can learn with and from each other as well as from those with greater experience" (p. 5). A classroom with various levels of knowledge and abilities highlights the potential for children to use their collective knowledge and skills to support one another and learn from one another in a community of practice.

In his more recent work, *Communities of Practice*, Wenger (1998) laid out four assumptions to draw attention to the theory of learning as social participation. First, he stated, we live as social beings as part of our survival. Second, as we interact socially, we create groups based on our abilities and interests. These groups share certain

knowledge and experience as part of their existence. Third, by participating in life, we create meaning from our experiences. And, last, "meaning—our ability to experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful—is ultimately what learning is to produce" (p. 4). Our participation in social communities and the identities that we construct as part of these communities shape "not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do" (p. 4). Identities are formed through participation in social groups in that we take on identities as members of a particular group, as particular people who say and act in accordance with the group(s) to which we belong.

According to Wenger (1998), the obvious signs of belonging to a community of practice include, but are not limited to, language, roles, criteria, procedures, conventions, cues, sensitivities, and a shared worldview. Sharing a language and an understanding of language creates a community because the meanings are socially negotiated and accepted. Wenger noted that the negotiation of meaning is apparent in a community of practice and that as living beings we are constantly in the process of negotiation of meaning. Each member brings to the negotiation his or her own history, identity, and feelings.

The members are shaped by the practice; and, in turn, their participation shapes the practice. They actively participate and form a connection to the other members. Through this participation, the members form an identity as a community of practice. Wenger (1998) referred to the concept of reification to "describe our engagement with the world as productive of meaning" (p. 58). In engaging with the world, we "project meanings into the world and then perceive them as existing in the world, as having a reality on their own" (p. 58). The process of reification is evident in representing a person's thoughts and feelings as signs, symbols, or other modes of representation.

Wenger (1998) identified three dimensions of a community of practice: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. These three dimensions or characteristics create a frame through which to determine whether a group is a community of practice or just a community.

Mutual engagement is a dimension of a community of practice. It requires that its members be involved and included in what matters to the community of practice. With regard to reading, the members know and understand what is going on and work toward

belonging to the community. They know and understand their roles as readers or writers. Another characteristic of mutual engagement is diversity. The membership is not homogeneous, which means that the members differ in gender, age, interests, abilities, or knowledge.

A second dimension of a community of practice is joint enterprise. The action of coming together for the practice of reading reflects the members' identity as a collective. For example, readers become readers by the act of reading and doing readerly things. Wenger (1998) pointed out that "the enterprise is joint not in that everybody believes the same thing or agrees with everything, but in that it is communally negotiated" (p. 78). To emphasize this point, the community of practice of readers has agreed what it means to be readers and what that looks like.

The third dimension of a community of practice is a shared repertoire. Wenger (1998) explained that in a shared repertoire the participants engage in routines, words, tools, ways of doing, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted as part of its practice. To illustrate, a community of practice of readers transact and interpret texts as their shared repertoire. Readers engage in the practice of reading, and texts, such as books, become part of the practice. Similarly, the way that readers talk about texts becomes part of the practice, whether they are discussing images, metaphors, or characters.

In summary, the dimensions of a community of practice illustrate that our identities are formed as well as rooted in our practices. The classroom is a confined location by grade as well as walls and can be viewed as a community. A classroom is not just a community of similarly aged peers in a confined location, but also a community of practice in that they have a shared mutual agreement to engage in the practices of the group. Teachers and students take on their roles within a classroom to become readers and writers. Second, the teachers and students join together in reading books, discussing books, and representing their knowledge of what they read in writing, drawing, or other representational practices. This joint enterprise in the act of reading and responding to reading supports the creation of a community of practice of readers and writers. Last, the shared repertoire of locating books, language used in books, and reading, including genre, characters, setting, and plot, continues to characterize a classroom as a community of

practice. Students immersed in literacy practices can learn from those around them by listening and watching more proficient peers. Students have access to literacy practices even if they are not active agents in a particular event.

Legitimate Peripheral Participation

Legitimate peripheral participation gives children access to a community of practice as they continue to learn. Lave and Wenger (1991) described legitimate peripheral participation as a process in which "learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners; . . . the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practice of a community" (p. 29). Children learn language by doing. They participate in practices that give them opportunities to use skills and accumulate knowledge on how language is used and works. The practices are situated in a sociocultural context where others assist learners to integrate those sociocultural practices into their identity. Likewise, children begin to see themselves as readers because they are doing the things that readers do, even if they are not full members.

Children who learn through participation as they engage in reading with others around them are legitimate peripheral participants in a world of readers. Lave and Wenger (1991) asserted, "Viewing learning as legitimate peripheral participation means that learning is not merely a condition for membership, but is itself an evolving form of membership" (p. 53). Readers bring with them previous knowledge and experiences, and the text that they are reading brings with it a history of shared social and cultural meanings. Children are granted access to this community of practice as legitimate peripheral participants even before they can demonstrate that they have developed thorough competency in the skills, abilities, and knowledge of reading.

More proficient members of the community of practice can scaffold beginning readers by sharing a variety of print, reading books aloud, participating in shared reading, engaging in conversations about books, and giving them opportunities to practice reading. Bruner (1978) first presented the concept of scaffolding and advised that, for learning to take place, social structures must be in place that build on children's knowledge and skills. Beginning readers can learn through involvement as integral parts of engagement in a social practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Members of the community

of practice of readers share understandings of language and the organization and use of language, as well as a worldview of how texts are organized. Shared experiences in reading mean that all members learn through legitimate peripheral participation.

Funds of Knowledge

Children learn language and cultural knowledge from home and bring this knowledge with them when they enter school. It is important to discuss the knowledge that children bring because they use it to further their learning about language in school; as well, the children who participated in this inquiry draw on this knowledge when they read, respond to what they have read, and participate in literacy practices. *Funds of knowledge* refers to the "idea that every household is, in a very real sense, an educational setting in which the major function is to transmit knowledge that enhances the survival of its dependents" (Moll & Greenberg, 1990, p. 320). The sharing of knowledge is vital to the development and sustenance of households. Moll et al. (1992) sought to develop "innovations in teaching that drew on the knowledge and skills from local households" (p. 132) by studying Mexican families in Arizona. They claimed that, by "capitalizing on the household and other community resources, we can organize classroom instruction that far exceeds" (p. 132) what many of these children were already experiencing in school. Using ethnographic and case-study methods, Moll et al. found a diverse body of knowledge that families and individuals use as part of their day-to-day living and survival. They used the term "funds of knowledge to refer to these historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 133). They also studied how families and individuals use their funds of knowledge to meet the challenges that they encounter socially and economically as well as the networks that facilitate the exchange of resources among households. These networks form "*social contexts* for transmission of knowledge, skills, and information, as well as cultural values and norms" (p. 321). Moll and Greenberg contended that students can access their funds of knowledge during school literacy practices as a means of bridging what they already know from their family or community to support learning and using school literacy practices. Therefore, teachers can give students opportunities to access their funds of knowledge to further support their literacy learning.

The more information that a classroom teacher has about his or her students' funds of knowledge, the more that he or she is able to use this information to transform classroom practices that help students to access their funds of knowledge. According to Moll and Greenberg (1990), it is "unnecessary and unfeasible for individuals or households to possess all this knowledge; when needed, such knowledge is available and accessible through social networks" (p. 323). By extension, these funds of knowledge can apply to multimodal literacies. Research studies (Gee, 2007) have demonstrated students' use of multiple modes in out-of-school literacies, such as video games, that develop their funds of knowledge specific to digital technology (Pahl & Rowsell, 2012). These digital funds of knowledge from outside school can then percolate into school literacy practices. Additionally, because it is unfeasible, as Moll and Greenberg stated, for an individual to possess all the knowledge, it makes sense for teachers to tap into the collective knowledge of their students to make learning in the classroom authentic and meaningful. Using students' funds of knowledge emphasizes the value of the knowledge they possess and of sharing that knowledge to benefit the group.

Funds of knowledge also bring students' knowledge and experiences to the forefront. According to Giroux (1992), "Students have memories, families, religions, feelings, languages, and cultures that give them a distinct voice. We can critically engage that experience and we can move beyond it. But we can't deny it" (p. 17). Students need to understand their collective knowledge and have opportunities to share with others. Giroux (1992) suggested that students' experiences need to be "recognized as the accumulation of collective memories and stories that provide students with a sense of familiarity, identity, and practical knowledge" (p. 104). Tapping into students' funds of knowledge honours this collective wisdom that shapes their identity.

In the previous section I described the sociocultural paradigm. Sociocultural theorists such as Vygotsky (1978, 1986), Wells (1999, 2000), and Wertsch (1990, 1995) have stated that learning is mediated and that language is a tool used to mediate learning. Children's literacy learning occurs in a social environment; they interact with others socially in their cultural community. I addressed the sociocultural theory of learning through the writing of Lave and Wenger (1991) to describe children's learning of language through communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation. I also

discussed reading as a community of practice in which children engage in literacy practices through legitimate peripheral participation. In addition, I referred to Moll et al.'s (1992) research on funds of knowledge to emphasize that the language, culture, and digital skills that children develop in their homes are assets that support literacy instruction in the classroom.

Literature Review

Language

In this next section I discuss language from a sociocultural perspective and how language use determines identity by referring to the work of James Paul Gee (2001, 2004, 2007, 2008) and his ideas on Discourses. Gee's work on Discourses centres on the role of language, how language forms identity, and how we use language as part of our identity. Language is also tied to culture, so it is also important to discuss how culture influences English-language variation (Heit & Blair, 1993; Stezruk, 2008). Michael Halliday's (1978) language-learning theory further emphasizes the important role of language in learning. This is supported by the seminal work of Shirley Brice Heath's (1983) *Ways With Words* and Gordon Wells' (1999) *Dialogic Inquiry* and their research on how language use determines success in school literacies, especially in reading. These language theorists—Gee, Halliday, Heath, and Wells—have built on the work of Lev Vygotsky and his sociocultural theory of language as a mediating tool in learning.

Discourses and identity. James Paul Gee (2001, 2004, 2008) started his scholarly work in linguistics and then shifted his focus to the role of language in literacy and education. Gee (2001) stressed the "connection among language, embodied experience, and situated action and interaction in the world" (p. 714). He began his discussion by describing the function of language as to "scaffold the performance of action in the world" and, second, to "scaffold human affiliation in culture and social groups and institutions through creating and enticing others to take certain perspectives on experience" (p. 715). This means that the meaning we take from language is situated in particular contexts or actions. Gee illustrated this point by using a sociolinguistic framework to discuss the meaning of coffee, which changes depending on the context in which it is used. For example, 'grind the coffee,' 'mop up the coffee,' or 'coffee is a big

business'; although they all utilize the same word, the meaning of coffee changes depending on the context.

As a further illustration, I will share a personal anecdote. I attended a conference at which the speaker asked everyone to imagine that they were standing at the edge of a lake and then what they would do next. He asked various participants to share what they imagined. Several responded that they got into a boat or canoe, and others that they got into the water and swam. My answer was met with laughter. I said, "I would walk across the lake." Some around the room joked that I must have a God complex, but when I replied "The lake is frozen," the mood shifted from amusement to understanding. It was evident that everyone in the room was situated in the particular context of a lake in summer, so my response seemed quite preposterous. However, once I explained my context of winter, then my response was logical. Canadians in a prairie province face very cold winters in which water freezes, and walking on a frozen lake is a shared experience or activity to which everyone can connect and use to make sense of language. Therefore, language is social in that meaning is socially negotiated and situated.

The social nature of languages leads to the notion that we learn languages through participation. People construct languages socially in a cultural environment and carry the practices and values of the people within it. Gee (2001) explained that human language is complex in that it is made up of various social languages that are connected to certain social activities and specific socially situated identities. Social languages are embedded in Discourses (Gee, 2001). Gee (2008) used the term Discourses to describe the "distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, thinking, believing, with other people and with various objects, tools, and technologies, so as to enact specific socially recognizable identities engaged in specific socially recognizable activities" (p. 155). We use language to communicate to each other how we see ourselves and how we want to be seen by using our primary Discourse and secondary Discourses. Gee (2001) described Discourses as "identity kits" (p. 720). When we possess the words, values, actions, and thoughts of a particular identity kit, we can engage in specific activities associated with that identity (Gee, 2001). The primary Discourse is the culturally specific one that we learn early in life and use as everyday language (Gee, 2008). The secondary Discourses are those that "we acquire later in life, beyond our

primary Discourse. . . . They are acquired within institutions that are part and parcel of wider communities, whether these be religious groups, community organizations, schools, businesses, or governments" (p. 157). Schools impart a secondary Discourse that is often not in line with minority groups and their primary Discourses. For example, a common instructional technique that teachers use is to ask questions, elicit responses from students, and then respond to the students' answers. I will discuss some problems with this common technique in teaching many children. Without "essentializing" Métis, First Nations and Inuit learners, some "regularities" can be extended across the group (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 21). First, many Inuit, First Nations and Metis children do not like to feel uncomfortable, but would rather share their thoughts and ideas in small groups. Second, the wait time that teachers allow between their questions and the elicited answers does not allow for deep thinking. Many Métis, First Nations and Inuit communities cultivate an understanding of the power of words and are thoughtful about how they use words, but the few seconds of wait time is not a long enough interval to put together a thoughtful response. People from different sociocultural backgrounds have different ways of making sense of their experiences and communicating those experiences with others (Gee, 1985). It must also be noted that variation are evident among the individuals in an ethnic group because the communities are composed of unique individuals with various traits and personalities (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Gutierrez and Rogoff suggested that educators need to look at the common experiences of children who share a cultural background without attaching common traits to the individuals. So even though we can look at practices that might support Inuit, First Nations and Métis learners, we must also consider the diversity within Métis, Inuit and First Nations groups, communities, and, ultimately, their experiences. Therefore, educators need to recognize and account for the primary Discourses of Inuit, Métis and First Nations students that do not align with the secondary Discourse of school literacy (Heit, 1987).

Our primary Discourse imparts a particular understanding of who we are. Who we are or our way of being is determined through our language; according to Gee (2010), this is one of the three functions of language. Language helps us to communicate, inform others, and do and be things (Gee, 2010). Another function of language is doing, which

describes how language gets its meaning from what we use it to do (Gee, 2010). Taking on the language of a particular activity (e.g., sailing or carpentry) is language as being. This can also extend to language use among some Western Canadian First Nations and Métis. For example, *ho-LAY*[3] or other such words can represent surprise, humour, or disbelief based on how we use it and when, but it also signifies belonging to the group who use that word. Language gets its meaning from how it is used. As a result, language is tied to ways of doing and ways of being (i.e., practice). Rules govern how we use language. As an illustration, I will explain the use of the word *ho-LAY*, which is a common exclamation in some First Nations and Métis communities. Rules determine when and how we use *ho-LAY*. For example, we use *ho-LAY* at the beginning of a sentence or as a response, but not typically at the end of sentence. Similarly, language use requires that we follow the rules and use those rules to advantage. However, the rules change over time. For example, with the proliferation of digital technology, the language use required to be a good student in the 21st century differs from the language use required to be a good student in the 18th century.

Gee (2001) purported that language has meaning through and in social practices. Therefore, we need to study language when we use it. Gee used discourse analysis to better understand "how we use language to say things, do things, and be things" (p. 3). Ultimately, looking at language through its use, we can learn about different ways of doing, being, and saying things (Gee, 2010). Identity and culture connect through language, because through language we make sense of our world.

Linguistic differences. Many First Nations, Métis and Inuit from communities across Canada have a particular way of using language that is a variation of English, also referred to as Indigenous English (Heit & Blair, 1993). Variations of language are often called *dialects*. Genishi and Dyson (2009) defined dialects as

> systematic variations in a language's grammatical rules, associated with geographic, social, and cultural boundaries. These variations are audible in the way speech sounds are combined and pronounced (phonology), the ways words are combined to form grammatical sentences (syntax), the meanings of words (semantics), and the way speech varies among situations (pragmatics). (p. 36)

[3] *ho-LAY* is an interjection that expresses emotion. Many Aboriginal communities use it to communicate amazement, surprise, or shock.

Genishi and Dyson explained that people who have the most power are considered to speak standard dialects even though "they are no more systemic than the dialects labeled 'nonstandard'" (p. 37). Heit and Blair (1993) found that Indigenous English speakers are viewed as having inferior language skills because their variation of English does not have the same value or hold the same power that Standard English carries. Heit and Blair commented that, although many First Nations and Métis students enter school fluent in English, they still run into problems at school because the teachers do not understand the amount of exposure that the students have had to the secondary Discourse used in school. Teachers' instruction must be in the language that the children use when they enter school as a bridge to acquire Standard English. A nonstandard variation of English is not inferior to what is considered Standard English; it is just different. Sterzuk (2011) pointed out that there is no basis to judge a language against others, because no one language is more developed or involves more complex thinking than other languages. However, when children from Inuit, First Nations and Métis communities enter schools where they are expected to use Standard English, they are considered at a disadvantage because their primary Discourse is not close enough to the secondary Discourse in schools. A personal example of primary Discourse that would not be viewed as 'right' or 'correct' in school is that my *kohkum*[4] spoke Cree, Michif, French and English. When she spoke English, the influence of Cree, her first language, was evident in her use of pronouns. In Cree pronouns are not determined by gender; therefore, she would use the pronoun *she* regardless of whether she was referring to a man or a woman. For example, when she talked about her neighbour, she said, "A nice young man; she sweep the doorstep." Even though she was referring to a man, she did not use the gender-specific pronoun. Her language use would be considered incorrect through the lens of Standard English. However, her use of language was congruent with her identity as a Cree/Métis woman who spoke Cree as a first language. In her community this way of using language was considered acceptable and normal. Sterzuk (2011) emphasized that some English-language variations are privileged more than others. This is similar to Pierre Bourdieu's (1991) cultural capital theory, which considers culture capital or an asset. Bourdieu explained that certain cultural knowledge, skills, and language are passed down

[4] *Kohkum* is Cree for 'grandmother.'

to subsequent generations; and if the culture that has been passed down to a child is closer to the dominant culture, then it is an asset. The child will have access to resources that the dominant culture values. Particularly, the child holds cultural capital that he or she can use rather than cultural resources that are not of value and cannot use. Furthermore, Giroux (1992) commented that schools become sites where certain knowledge is legitimized and others are denied, and this includes language. Again, Sterzuk's (2011) exploration of Indigenous English revealed that the accent of some First Nations and Métis "are *perceived* as marked," incorrect and detrimental to learning print literacy, where what is viewed as standard English is "*never* named" or seen as anything but proper (p. 20 [emphasis added]; Heit & Blair, 1993). Children who enter schools using language in a manner that is not viewed as appropriate or valued as acceptable face acquiring the normed language to have access to school literacy or experience school failure. Ball (2009) acknowledged whether educators and speech-language pathologists were accepting Indigenous dialects of English or French when working with Indigenous children given the importance of language in school readiness or success. Because language is a carrier of culture and identity, when someone's language is considered inferior, it is easy for him or her to extend that view to his or her self-image.

Furthermore, some dialects of English are considered more superior than others. Oftentimes English dialects that non-White speakers use are viewed as inferior; consequently, those speakers are also considered to have lower intelligence or language difficulties (Delpit, 1995). I discuss deficit theories of language and learning later in the section on Aboriginal literacies. In the next section I discuss the pivotal role of language in learning.

Language and learning. Learning is making meaning, and as children learn language, they also learn how to make meaning (Halliday, 1993). Michael Halliday (1975) offered a language-based theory of learning based on his observations and the work of colleagues in the field of linguistics and language development. He stated that the "ontogenesis of language is at the same time the ontogenesis of learning" (p. 93) and described language as "the essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience *becomes* knowledge" (p. 94 [emphasis added]). In his studies of the functions of language, Halliday (1993) affirmed that meaning is constructed with others. He

explained that language has two functions, action and understanding. When people talk, they choose the function and why they want to say something and then make another choice on content or what they want to say. Halliday referred to this as the "metafunctional principle": that "meaning consists in simultaneously construing experience and enacting interpersonal relationships" (p. 101). Halliday noted that the combination of experience and relationship results in an "act of meaning" or learning (p. 101). As children learn language, they develop the ability to share what they know with others and ask for information in return. The exchange of information helps children to "expand their meaning potential" and create "text that is open-ended and functional in some context of situation" (p. 107). Children can then produce and understand discourse and move from experiential referents to abstract entities (Halliday, 1993). Halliday emphasized that "until they learn to exchange abstract meanings, children cannot gain entry to education because without this, one cannot become literate" (p. 109). He described writing as a system in which symbols represent another semiotic system and learners have to learn two sets of abstract entities and recognize the relationship between them. Therefore, to read and write, children need to move from the general to the abstract (Halliday, 1993). Language is reconstituted in a new form that requires mastery of a new form of knowledge (Halliday, 1993). Learning requires being able to reconstruct and represent experience and knowledge in more than one way.

Halliday (1993) proposed a theory of "learning language, learning through language, and learning about language" (p. 113) and explained that all learning is a semiotic process of learning to mean. In this way, children learn through language. They learn culture, language, and about their environment through the use of language. Through their social participation, they are socialized into using language in accordance with the social group to which they belong. For example, an adult who talks to children while performing actions or pointing out things in the environment while interacting with them creates an authentic and meaningful context in which to use language. Social interaction is a means of using and learning through language, which has significant implications for children when they enter school. As Halliday (1978) explained, "certain ways of organizing experience through language, and of participating and interacting with things" (p. 26) have become essential to school success:

> Whether a child is so predisposed or not turns out not to be any innate property of the child as an individual, an inherent limitation on his mental powers, are used to be generally assumed; it is merely the result of a mismatch between his own symbolic orders of meaning and those of the school. (p. 26)

Thus, often when children struggle with learning at school, educators examine them to determine what is wrong with them. However, educators must also look at the children's social and cultural environments to decide how the school can adapt its practices to better meet the needs of these students rather than seeing their language as a problem that needs to be fixed.

Language use and school. The role of culture in language learning is pivotal in exploring literacy through a sociocultural lens. A number of researchers have studied how families use language with their children and how the literacy practices that they use in the home determine how the children come to know about, use, and learn through language (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Gallimore, Boggs, & Jordan, 1974; Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). Many of these researchers have pointed out that children from minority or marginalized backgrounds face a mismatch between their home or community language use and the way that language is used in school.

The seminal work of Shirley Brice Heath (1983) in *Way With Words* recognizes that the closer that family literacy practices are to school literacy practices, the more successful children will be in learning to read and write. Heath's ethnographic study of children using language at home and at school took place in three communities in the same geographic region. Roadville is a White, working-class community; Trackton is a Black, working-class community; and town, where many of the townspeople are managers at the sites where the residents of Roadville and Trackton work. The differences among these communities are steeped in their histories and social environments. Heath discussed the history of the area and the influence of the textile factories and farming on the social and economic environment. The environment of these communities has changed over time as people have moved, factories have closed, and the options for employment have become limited.

The parents of Roadville want more for their children than they had, and they believe that this is possible with hard work and a good education. The Roadville parents

prepare their children for school by purchasing alphabet books and reading Bible stories and nursery rhymes. They read their children bedtime stories when they are preschoolers. The children learn to sit and listen to the stories, and they become passive recipients of the information. Once the children approach kindergarten age, the parents purchase workbooks for them that require them to connect dots, draw lines, colour within lines, and paste shapes. Heath (1993) explained how the parents engage their children in what they consider school-like behaviours before they enter school, but once the children are in school, the parents do not assist them with schoolwork, reading, or writing. Furthermore, the children do very little reading at home for pleasure.

Heath (1983) noted that the families of Trackton have moved into rented houses to stay out of 'the projects,' which have rules and restrictions. Trackton residents consider "their stay in Trackton as temporary and choose not to spend money and effort on their present home" (p. 57), which they do not own. The families anticipate that times will change, and they will be able to purchase homes of their own, and they see "schooling and success in school as the way to make these hopes and dreams come to reality" (p. 58). Some families enrol their children in nursery programs or the Head Start program prior to their attending school. The Trackton children learn to perform orally, which the community values. Heath (1983) explained that "Trackton adults believe the young have to learn to be and do, and if reading is necessary for this learning, that will come" (p. 234). Heath's observations reveal that the ways that the Roadville and Trackton communities structure their families determines the ways that children learn to use language. The literacy practices of the children from Trackton at home are different from those at school. Therefore, when the children of Trackton enter school, they face culture shock. Their use of language and ways of communicating are not evident, valued, or acknowledged in the classroom.

In comparing the family literacy practices of the communities, Heath (1983) found that, "for Roadville, the written word limits the alternatives of expression; and in Trackton, it opens up alternatives. Neither community's ways with the written word prepare it for school ways" (p. 256), whereas the family literacy practices of the townspeople create opportunities for their children to "acquire the habits of talk that are associated with written materials, and they use appropriate behaviors for either

cooperative negotiation of meaning in book-reading episodes or story-creation before they are themselves readers" (p. 256). The townspeople use language and literacy practices that are aligned with the literacy practices that schools value. Heath emphasized the power of language and the importance of valuing what children bring into the classroom because of how closely their ways with words are linked to their home culture, which has been transmitted over generations and will not change quickly. The transition from home to school is difficult for students whose family and community literacy practices are not valued in the school settings. Wells (1999) affirmed this premise: "Modes of discourse that tend to be privileged are precisely those that are least familiar to non-mainstream children; as a result, a situation is created in which these children become educationally disadvantaged" (p. 40). However, minority students are successful in school literacies regardless of the lack of congruence between their family and community literacy practices and the school's literacy practices. These students have managed to negotiate their way through the complex values, skills, and knowledge required to be successful at school.

In *Dialogic Inquiry*, Wells (1999) connected language use and school achievement and compared the views of Vygotsky and Halliday on language learning. Wells outlined Vygotsky's view that individuals' interactions with their social environment need to be acknowledged with regard to intellectual development. This means that the environment in which children grow up determines not only how they learn language, but also how they use language. Wells found similarities in Halliday's theory on social development and the implications to children who are entering school of language learning and language use. They come to school with particular knowledge of language and the use of language based on the social environment. Wells explained that children's effective engagement in school tasks depends on whether they have "internalized the sociosemantic functions of the specific modes of discourse that mediate these tasks, both inter-mentally and intramentally" (p. 39). The internalization of these particular functions depends on whether those functions were emphasized in their interactions at home (Wells, 1999). Therefore, if children have not internalized the modes of discourse privileged in school or have not appropriated the semiotic tools necessary to be successful in school, they will most likely find school tasks difficult.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning, as well as those who have built on his work, have greatly influenced learning and teaching (Hicks, 1996). Hicks stated that a "child's participation in a culture-specific social event" teaches him or her "how to *be* a student" (p. 105). She maintained that "these culture-specific ways of being entail the use of socially appropriate discourse genres and, indeed socially appropriate ways of acting, valuing—and thinking" (p. 105). Language plays an important role in learning, because, through discourse, "new understandings are negotiated among participants" (p. 105). As children engage in discourse, they internalize ways of being while constructing meaning and learning.

Learning how to be a student or the appropriate ways to act in the classroom entails knowing when and how to contribute to classroom conversations. Students are socialized to raise their hands if they want to talk or to wait for the teacher to call upon them. This practice is normally reserved for school; however, when my children were in the primary grades and we would engage in family conversations around the dinner table, many times they would raise their hands to talk. Additionally, I have attended many meetings where adults who wanted to share their thoughts have raised their hands to indicate that they would like to have the next turn to occupy the conversational floor.

In many classrooms, class discussions look more like a ping-pong match between the teacher and selected students, who volley the topic back and forth (Erickson, 1996). Erickson related his experience of observing classroom interactions in which children's talk overlaps or one child takes a turn to speak away from another; "the ebbs and flows of mutual influence in the conversation are not just between one student and the teacher at a given time but rather among many students—sometimes among teams of students—and the teacher" (p. 32). Students and teacher participate in a conversational dance in which the movements or, in the case of classroom discussion, talk of one person influences another. The participants in the classroom conversation must then determine the appropriate time to step into the dance or conversation by watching nonverbal cues and listening to verbal cues. A difficulty arises for students whose conversational etiquette according to their cultural practices is different from what is considered appropriate for the classroom, or they read the cues differently. For example, Erickson described the observations of Italian American students and their interactions at home when speaking

while someone else was speaking demonstrated interest. Erickson identified overlapping talk or interrupting others in the classroom context as a strategy to take a turn away from the teacher-designated student who was speaking. Erickson referred to these turn takers as "turn sharks" (p. 37). He also noted that students in the same grade will not all have the same level of expertise in student conversations and that students unfamiliar with classroom conversational structures are ideal targets for turn sharks, who look for speakers to hesitate, pause, or respond to a teacher with silence as an invitation to attack. Turn sharks take over conversations and give others little room to engage in the conversation or rescue students who are called upon but do not know the answer (Erickson, 1996). Regardless of who answers the teacher's question or shares information, the conversation or talk is a context for learning. Students who give the right answer or elaborate on another student's answer function "as the teacher's expert voice" (p. 50). Erickson added, "The work of voicing or revoicing as scaffolding provided by the expert to the novice . . . can be done by various parties in the classroom, not just by the teacher" (p. 5). All students in the classroom can learn, whether they all participate in the classroom conversation or not. Social interactions create an environment for learning in which the participants influence one another (Erikson, 1996). In classroom talk, when a student talks, the other members of the classroom socially interact through verbal or nonverbal cues. Talk or classroom discourse creates an environment for collective knowledge that everyone can use as part of the meaning-making process.

Courtney Cazden (2001) studied classroom discourse as "a kind of applied linguistics—the study of situated language use in one social setting" (p. 3). She introduced the topic of classroom discourse with a discussion of traditional and nontraditional lessons. Traditional lessons are characterized by "Initiation/Response/ Evaluation (IRE)—that best fits the transmission of facts and routinized procedures" (p. 5). The IRE pattern has traditionally ruled classroom discourse in that the teacher initiates the process, usually with a question, a student responds, and then the teacher evaluates the response. Even opportunities for informal sharing in the early years of schooling socialize students to use a traditional format for sharing. Sharing time is a special and exciting time for many students, because it is sometimes the only opportunity

that they have to "compose their own oral texts, and to speak on a self-chosen topic that does not have to meet criteria of relevance to previous discourse" (p. 11); it might also be the only time when sharing personal stories is considered appropriate for school (p. 11). However, with changes in society, teachers are being petitioned to develop students' thinking through the use of nontraditional lessons that emphasize talk to better serve them.

Even with teachers being encouraged to create more opportunities for student discourse to develop their higher-order thinking skills, they still occupy a position of control and authority. In normal conversation the storyteller has the floor, and the listeners do not end the storyteller's turn until that person has given up the conversational floor. This is not the case in school. Teachers determine how long a student will speak and on what topic. As well, teachers usually need to respond after a student shares rather than leaving the discourse student focused. Cazden (2001) noted that "most teachers make some response to each narrative, and their responses can express appreciation, confusion, or criticism" (p. 13). A teacher's having the last word inhibits students' conversation and impedes true collaborative discourse. Teachers need to realize the benefit of a discourse-driven classroom.

Cazden (2001) pointed out that in the early socialization of children, their caregivers scaffold them through the use of dialogue. Cazden agreed with Bruner's (1978) idea of scaffolding and emphasized that asking questions can further develop a child's language learning. Similarly in the classroom, teachers scaffold children by asking questions, modelling, calling their attention to things, and prompting (Cazden, 2001). The use of think-alouds is a strategy that many teachers use to scaffold learners by talking through their thinking process while they perform an action. The type of discourse that takes place, the roles of the teacher and the students, and the social interactions among the students affect the effectiveness of the dialogue in constructing new knowledge. Through discourse, the teacher can rephrase or revoice a student's contribution in a way that makes it accessible to other students. Teacher-led discussions are very different from the discussions that take place among a small group of students who are working collaboratively on a project. The teacher also has the authority and control to shut down any discussion or change its course. Some students choose to

participate in discussions; others, because of shyness, lack of knowledge, or lack of interest, choose to be either passive or nonparticipants. This leads to the question about how the level of participation in classroom discussions influences reading proficiency, and, if the level of participation is a factor, how do students identified as struggling readers compare to those identified as proficient or successful readers? Cazden (2004) shed some light on the influence of participation in asserting not only that talk supports oral-language development, but also that in conversations children utilize higher-order thinking skills that help them to develop reading competencies. Cazden emphasized that, by "using pictures in the book, and drawing out the child's experiences, . . . the teacher can simultaneously help the child construct a new conceptual understanding and contribute to her reading comprehension of the new book as well" (p. 4). Conversations about a book topic or words in the text increase the conceptual base on which students draw in future readings. Speech becomes a mediator of learning, and talk helps to construct knowledge (Cazden, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, the use of talk in the classroom is significant to the development of reading.

Reading

In this section I discuss reading through a sociocultural lens by referring to the writing of language and literacy theorists and researchers, particularly Michael Allington (2000, 2002), James Paul Gee (2001, 2007, 2008, 2014), Kenneth Goodman (1996), and Louise Rosenblatt (1985, 1993, 1978/1994). Learning theories have guided or influenced several different theories of reading by over the last two centuries. Reading theories have continually transformed and evolved over time, some building on elements of others and some pulling a common thread across time. Because reading is a complex process and the theories are not tightly bound categories, some views of reading continue to influence the thinking about and instruction of reading today. Reading is regarded as a set of skills to be learned, an innate language ability, a computer-like form of information processing, an individual ability to acquire and modify knowledge through explicit instruction, a literacy practice that is socially situated, and a process of engagement with a variety of texts, to identify a few theories (Alexander & Fox, 2004).

Reading viewed from a sociocultural perspective defines it beyond print text and encompasses multiple modes to communicate meaning while attending to the particular

social and cultural contexts of readers as they transact with the text. Reading involves constructing meaning from multiple modes of representation; for example, print, images, gesture, and/or video. Social experiences and cultural knowledge that create mental representations from which to draw meaning help to interpret print, images, gestures, or video.

Reading as a literacy practice has evolved from a narrow view of reading written text or print. Traditionally, reading was considered the ability to take meaning from print only. This traditional view resulted in research on reading that explored the skills required as well as what needs to be in place to determine success in reading; for example, phonological awareness, or the ability to distinguish speech sounds, letter recognition, and the ability to make connections between letters and sounds as predictors of reading achievement in English (Adams, 1990; Ehri, 1996; Juel, 1996). However, reading is a complex process that involves so much more than alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension to be a proficient reader across multiple modes of representation. Additionally, viewing reading narrowly undervalues the literacies that children bring with them, as well as the literacies that marginalized groups use (Street, 1995). I discuss this more fully in the section on Aboriginal literacies.

Reading and written language. Kenneth Goodman (1996), a seminal researcher and theorist in the study of reading, contended that language is socially constructed and developed because humans "are capable of symbolic thought" (p. 12). Language evolved based on the needs of human culture. Goodman explained that "we become readers and writers when we have functional needs that require us to read and write" (p. 16). Writing, and thus reading, was invented as a form of communication when oral language was no longer sufficient to meet the needs of a society (Goodman, 1996). Goodman indicated that both oral and written languages "are authentic only in their social-cultural contexts" (p. 27). He illustrated this point by referring to shopping lists, which, like all written texts, have a reader in mind. If the reader is the writer, then perhaps the writer will use certain abbreviations; but if the reader is relatively unknown to the writer, then the writer will include more information in the list. For example, because my husband is from England, we use different words to describe the same thing. If I wrote *biscuits* on a

grocery shopping list for my husband, he might come home with cookies instead of small bread types of baked rolls. We do not share the meaning of biscuits as cookies, which is the meaning that is common in England but uncommon in Canada. Therefore, the reader can interpret the writer's written text logically only if they share social meanings. Goodman affirmed that "language is at work when we read and it is through transacting with language that we construct meaning" (p. 42). Reading as a sociocultural process acknowledges the role of social and cultural knowledge in transacting with text. That is to say, reading is a shared activity among the reader, the history of language, the writer, the written text, and cultural conventions. These transactions can be applied to digital texts as well as conventional print texts. Reading occurs when meaning attached to a symbol is interpreted and that interpretation realizes the intention of the author or creator and is consistent with the cultural context in which the text was created. The meaning is dependent of the perspectives and experiences of the socially and culturally bound person(s). Goodman found that children bring knowledge and all of their experiences and thoughts with them to the practice of reading. This knowledge is socially and culturally constructed and situates the reader's experiences and thoughts in a particular social and cultural context.

Reader stances. Prior to research on the social and cultural influences on reading, the focus was on the individual and how he or she obtained information from written texts. Louise Rosenblatt (1978/1994, 2004) brought another view to the field of reading that not only emphasized the knowledge gained through reading, but also included what else the reader experiences in relation to the text; for instance, feelings and emotions. Rosenblatt (1978/1994) contended that how readers respond to a text depends on their purpose in reading and what they bring to the activity of reading.

Louise Rosenblatt's (1978/1994) transactional theory of reading describes reading a text as "an event occurring at a particular time in a particular environment at a particular moment in the life history of the reader" (p. 20). Rosenblatt explained that a "person becomes a reader by virtue of his activity in relationship to a text, which he organizes as a set of verbal symbols" (p. 18). Readers bring their experiences and identity to the reading event, which influences what they take away from the event (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). The information that they carry away from the reading event

Rosenblatt defined as "efferent" reading (p. 24), and the "associations, feelings, attitudes, and ideas that these words and their referents arouse in them as "aesthetic" reading (p. 25). Readers approach the text from a particular stance that determines how they respond (p. 42). Rosenblatt (2004) clarified that "the efferent stance pays more attention to the cognitive, the referential, the factual, the analytic, the logical, the quantitative aspects of meaning. And the aesthetic stance pays more attention to the sensuous, the affective, the emotive, the qualitative" (p. 1374). From a purely efferent stance, readers read for information, facts, or specific details; whereas, reading from a purely aesthetic stance, the reader reads for enjoyment or pleasure. Although these stances are defined, they are not distinctive spaces, but instead exist along a continuum. Elements of each stance might be distinguished from one another, but they are not separate entities (Rosenblatt, 1985). Readers move back and forth along the continuum of efferent and aesthetic stances and pay more attention to a particular meaning.

Readers construct meaning from a text by drawing on their language and experiences. Rosenblatt (2004) explained that the meaning does not reside in the text or solely within the reader, but occurs with the transaction between the text and the readers and is determined by the context and the readers' purpose. Readers approach a text with some expectation, feeling, idea, or purpose while using their "linguistic-experiential reservoir," which "reflects the reader's cultural, social, and personal history" (p. 1370). The social and cultural context informs the meanings that readers attach to the text, and the readers' purpose affects the stance.

Rosenblatt (2004) also stressed that readers' interpretations must be connected with writers' intentions, but not necessarily the same. The readers' interpretations are unique to them at that particular time, and meaning construction occurs during the transaction. Most readers seek the author's intention (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). The transaction becomes one of reader and text to include reader and writer. Writers, like readers, draw on their social and cultural experiences and knowledge. Writers approach the task of writing with a purpose and their readers in mind. In effect, writers adopt a particular stance that determines whether the focus is on public or private meanings. If writers and readers share similar meanings or their linguistic-experiential reservoirs are close enough, then the readers will probably interpret the writers' intentions (Rosenblatt,

2004). Socially and culturally situated meanings influence the transactions between readers, texts, and writers.

A transactional theory of reading supports this research in that "there is an individual human being choosing, selectively, constructing meaning, and consciously or unconsciously responding in terms of factors, contextual and human, entering into that particular transaction" (Rosenblatt, 1993, p. 385). The identity of the readers and their social and cultural experiences and background knowledge affect how they respond to reading. In regard to this research, exploring whether students' First Nations or Métis identity influences how they read and use multiliteracies in responding to reading was salient, as well as the cultural and social experiences that they bring into the classroom that support or hinder their reading development. First Nations, Inuit and Métis students carry with them culture, which creates unique transactions with text. An illustration of this is the associations, feelings, or thoughts that arise during the reading of a particular text. It is important to know the experiences and cultural knowledge that children bring with them into the classroom to support their reading, because they affect the meanings attached to the text.

Situated meaning. James Paul Gee (2001, 2004, 2008, 2014) shifted his work from linguistics to language and literacy and "how language and learning work at school and in society at large" (Gee, 2004, p. 3). In his explorations of reading, Gee found that difficulties in reading arise in "learning to read and learn in academic content areas like mathematics, social studies, and science" and that what is "hard about learning in academic content areas is that each area is tied to academic specialist varieties of language" (p. 4). Gee defined these specialist varieties as secondary Discourses. Reading involves a secondary Discourse and in many areas requires "complex and technical ways of thinking" (p. 4). Readers utilize several different strategies to read, which thus underscores the complexity of the reading process.

Reading is more than just the cognitive process of decoding text and applying meaning. According to Gee (2001), reading can be situated beyond just a cognitive process, within a broader context that integrates "cognition, language, social interaction, society and culture" (p. 714). Reading is a social practice that reflects the values of the culture in which it resides. When children's language and culture correspond with the

language of reading taught in schools, they will find it easier to make connections. Gee informed us that "a vast majority of children enter school with large vocabularies, complex grammar, and deep understanding of experiences and stories" (p. 724). Children who have opportunities within their families, communities, and school to interact with adults "and experience cognitively challenging talk and texts on sustained topics" (p. 724) develop language abilities that help them to become successful in school. If they do not have these opportunities, they have a greater distance to traverse to connect their cultural experience and knowledge to the cultural experiences that are valued in the practice of reading.

Gee (2004) contended that children from privileged groups gain access to these academic varieties of language or secondary Discourses before they go to school and that they receive more support outside school than do children from less-privileged groups. Even though many students face difficulties in learning the specialist varieties of language associated with school content, Gee found that children are able to acquire specialist varieties of language that require complex thinking that is not alienating, such as in video games. Gee compared students who struggle with reading academic language in school with children who read the complex language of *Yu-Gi-Oh* with ease. If children are interested in what they read, then they will read something as complex as academic language.

A difficulty with acquiring specialist varieties of language can be associated with word meanings that might or might not be shared across Discourses or with words that hold multiple meanings that are tied to the context of a Discourse. Meanings of words vary across contexts and are "tied to negotiation and social interactions" (Gee, 2008, p. 10). These contextually specific meanings are *situated meanings* (Gee, 2004, 2008, 2014). According to Gee (2014), "Meaning in language is tied to people's experiences of situated action in the material and social world" (p. 137). The meanings of words are contextually bound and are situated in the lives and experiences of language users. Experiences are embodied in our minds and provide the meanings that we attach to a word when we hear it (Gee, 2014). Using the metaphor of a library of videotapes, Gee illustrated that experiences are stored in the brain like images on a videotape. We access these videotapes, add to them, and edit them based on our experiences to assist us in

making sense of the world. The mental representations that include "feelings, attitudes and embodied positions" (p. 138) give meaning to our experiences. For example, thinking of the word *boat* brings a particular image to mind based on our experiences of what a boat is known to be, or perhaps pictures of a boat that we have seen if we have not had any direct experience with boats. Perhaps we imagine a rowboat, a canoe, a sailboat, a fishing boat, or a cruise ship. If we have had experience only with a rowboat and then encounter a different type of boat, say a cruise ship, the existing image or representation needs to change to encompass the new information. If we encounter the word boat in a different context—for example, a gravy boat—the existing image does not help to make meaning of the word. The information must be stored by using another mental representation; perhaps the image or representation of a bowl, a large cup, or a small pitcher. Gee affirmed that "the meaning of a word (the way in which we give meaning in a particular context) is not different than the meaning of an experience, object, or tool in the world" (p. 138). Children can access their vocabularies, experiences of how language works, and storied experiences to read.

Also, if children are able to utilize multiliteracies as part of their reading, such as accessing multiple ways of knowing and using different literacy practices (New London Group, 2000) that acknowledge their cultural identities, out-of-school literacy practices, and funds of knowledge, then reading becomes more meaningful and perhaps more interesting.

Gee (2014) emphasized that the reason that children learn to read challenging and complex texts from out-of-school literacy practices is that they engage in those practices socially. They watch others, others mentor them, and they view other media that connect and support their understanding of those texts. The social element of using language or the saying and doing of language facilitates competence in reading. When children enter school, they need to apply specific language abilities to acquire the ability to read (Gee, 2014).

Effective reading instruction. Effective reading instruction needs to incorporate talk in addition to students' engagement in authentic practices of reading and writing. Pressley and Allington (2015) pointed out that the research on exemplary literacy instruction (Allington & Johnston, 2002; Pressley, Allington, Wharton-

McDonald, Block, & Morrow, 2001; Pressley, Wharton-McDonald, Hampston, & Echevarria, 1998) has demonstrated the use of balanced instruction even though the classrooms that they observed varied considerably. A commonality among these classrooms was the high number of conversations and discussions about texts, which highlights the importance of talk in developing the ability to read. Authentic literacy practices and social engagement support effective reading instruction for all students, especially those from minority groups, who often do not use their home literacy practices in the classroom. Incorporating authentic literacy practices from their community and giving students spaces to socially engage in ways that are congruent with cultural or family practices are culturally responsive teaching methods. An example of this is in the research of Au and Mason (1981), who found that when a teacher used a familiar literacy practice from Hawaiian children's homes—that is, talk-story—the children were more involved in discussions and were able to make more inferences. Effective reading instruction uses what children already know and can do and builds upon that.

Readers' access language to construct meaning; therefore, reading instruction should be "organized in a manner responsive to and accepting of students' home culture and language" (Au, 1997, p. 189). A way to bring minority children's sociocultural practices into the classroom is to use culturally relevant instructional methods. Culturally relevant or culturally responsive teaching involves applying the students' culture to their learning (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2001). Understanding the importance of culture and community in education has led to opportunities for success for some minority children in school (Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Culturally relevant teaching strategies honour students' sense of self and humanity (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Hawaii's Kamehameha Elementary Education Program (KEEP) has utilized a sociocultural approach to literacy instruction that is culturally responsive. Au explained that "when instruction is culturally responsive, students are not asked to reject the values of their home culture to experience academic success. Instead, teachers seek to adjust instruction to create learning situations that students will find comfortable" (p. 195). Teachers in KEEP utilize a discussion technique by which, after they ask a question, they do not call on one student to respond, but instead allow the children to collaborate to generate the answer. The teachers might paraphrase a child's response to keep the

discussion on track, but the children control who speaks and when. This talk is similar to "a Hawaiian community speech event known as talk story . . . [in which] the participants engage in co-narration (i.e., they speak in rhythmic alternation to present a narrative to the group" (p. 197). Including the collaborative and cooperative practices with which children are familiar is responsive to their cultural and language needs. Au discovered that students are more engaged in academic content when their teachers use the talk-story-like participation structure. Au gave an example of how students from culturally diverse backgrounds can achieve in literacy when the instruction is culturally responsive. Thus, students can read successfully when they are involved socially with an authentic, culturally responsive literacy practice.

Talk and reading. Oral language is a prerequisite to acquire the ability to read. Lawrence and Snow (2011) reviewed research on talk or oral discourse in the classroom to identify relationships between talk and reading. Their synthesis of their research reveals that "oral language is a developmental precursor to reading acquisition" and "crucial to participating in instructional interactions" (p. 320). The focus of participation in oral discourse is the use of pedagogical practices to scaffold learners through interaction and experiential learning so that they can eventually use those skills independently. Language learning begins at home through interaction, and these early language experiences set the stage for reading development.

Lawrence and Snow (2011) also reported that several studies have confirmed that talk related to books improves children's vocabulary if they take more of the responsibility for talking and if open-ended questions facilitate their talk. What this means for teacher practice is that, to support reading outcomes, teachers need to facilitate and scaffold through talk, because "when students have extended time for engaged conversation about text, they are likely to comprehend what they read better, and build autonomous comprehension and writing skills" (p. 331). Even though research and a variety of practices and programs have supported the inclusion of talk, very few classrooms incorporate rich and lengthy discussions into the routines. Instead, many teachers focus on teaching explicit skills without giving their students spaces to practise those skills in meaningful and authentic ways.

Literacies

In this section I review the literature on literacies, specifically multiliteracies; new literacies; multimodal literacies; and artifactual literacies. I also discuss the role of popular culture and culturally relevant literacy practices in literacy learning.

The definition of literacy has altered over time and across different contexts. Depending on where we live, we construct different meanings for concepts or practices. For the purposes of my research, I have viewed literacy as a social practice of mediating text in various media, both print and nonprint (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1996; New London Group, 1996). Even though the definition takes into account multiple forms and modes that are better described as literacies, to avoid confusion with the different literacies, I prefer the term *literacy* to refer to multiple literacy practices in general. Accordingly, Lankshear and Knobel's (2006) definition of literacy as "socially recognized ways of generating, communicating and negotiating meaningful content through the medium of encoded texts within contexts of participation in Discourses (or as members of Discourses)" (p. 64) is useful to my research. Literacy as a social practice is embedded with beliefs and attitudes that a particular group share, as well as the inclusion of multiple texts, contexts, and Discourses. Therefore, literacy research from a sociocultural perspective involves the exploration of relationships between texts' cultural location, their social creation, and the transactions among the text, author/creator, and reader.

Multiliteracies. The New London Group (1996) expanded the meaning of literacy to include "[the negotiation of] a multiplicity of discourses" (p. 61). The two aspects central to their inclusion of multiliteracies in defining literacy pedagogy and learning are the "context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasing globalized societies, for the multifarious cultures that interrelate and the plurality of texts that circulate," and the "burgeoning variety of text forms associated with the information and multimedia technologies" (p. 61). Multiliteracies involve the multiple ways of constructing and representing meaning.

As I stated earlier, the New London Group (1996) coined the term *multiliteracies* to describe the shifting and evolving way that digital technology, globalization, and cultural diversity have changed literacy learning and teaching. Multiliteracies also

describe the "what" and "how" of literacy pedagogy that is required to meet the demands of an ever-changing world (New London Group, 2000, p. 19). Kalantzis and Cope (2012) identified two parts of multiliteracies: The first involves social diversity, and the second involves multimodality. Because many definitions of literacy have traditionally focused on only a singular meaning-making system with oral and print texts, we need a way to describe the various modes of representation that vary with the culture and context and have "specific cognitive, cultural and social effects" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 5). Some modes of representation can be more powerful than others. With the advancement of technology, modes of meaning have increased in production and use. Cope and Kalantzis explained that "meaning is made in ways that are increasingly multimodal—in which written-linguistic modes of meaning are part and parcel of visual, audio, and spatial patterns of meaning" (p. 5). The multiple modes of representation and the numerous possibilities of how these modes can be used led the New London Group to develop a theory of design with three parts. First, as designers we have Available Designs with which to make meaning; these are the systems of practice that are already in place (New London Group, 1996, 2000) and the resources that we inherit from our cultural environment that we use to make meaning (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). The second area, Designing, refers to reading, viewing, and listening; it "transforms knowledge by producing new constructions and representations of reality" (New London Group, 2000, p. 22). Kalantzis and Cope (2012) emphasized the process of designing as a reworking and revoicing of the world that we find around us. Third, the Redesigned says that "the outcome of designing is a new meaning, something which meaning makers remake themselves" (New London Group, 2000, p. 23). The New London Group (1996) asserted that meaning-making involves re-presentation and recontextualization, which transform available resources into the ReDesigned. The ReDesigned is transformed meaning and a product of human agency (New London Group, 2000). The pedagogical practices of design theory are *situated practice*, *overt instruction*, *critical framing*, and *transformed practice* (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Kalantzis and Cope, who were members of the New London Group, reformulated the terms that the New London Group coined into more recognizable "knowledge processes" (The Historical Roots of Literacies 'Knowledge Processes' section, para. 3), whereby situated practice becomes

experiencing, overt instruction becomes conceptualizing, critical framing becomes analyzing, and transformed practice becomes applying. Situated practice immerses students in the experience and use of available designs of meaning (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Overt instruction means providing explicit instruction in the design elements of different modes of meaning (New London Group, 1996, 2000). The New London Group (1996, 2000) identified several modes of meaning: linguistic, audio, visual, gestural, and spatial. In critical framing, students interpret and analyze what they are studying (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Transformed practice requires students to transfer meaning between contexts and results in redesigning (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Kalantzis and Cope advised that using the four knowledge processes of experiencing, conceptualizing, analyzing, and applying emphasizes what students are doing to know, which thus gives teachers and students "more control over the relationships of their instructional choices and their learning outcomes" (The 'Knowledge Processes' in Classroom Terms section, para. 1). The New London Group (1996, 2000) discussed multiliteracies with regard to the design and purposeful production of texts. Leander and Boldt (2012) considered the New London Group's view text-centric, in which the production of texts informs the subjective identity of the individual and the text is examined to investigate the practice. Leander and Boldt took a nonrepresentational approach to exploring literacy activities to view the relations and connections through and across signs in unexpected ways. They considered texts not as products of literacy practices, but as participants in the world. Their rereading of multiliteracies pedagogy has given us new ways to look at students' interactions with and around texts.

The use of multiliteracies helps students to bring their own experiences, backgrounds, and practices into the classroom and highlights that different meanings are possible depending on the contexts, individuals, and cultures (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Students can share different meanings and knowledge by using new literacies, different or multiple modes of representation, and artifacts.

New literacies. New literacies are "new kinds of texts, practices and understandings that have arisen with increased use and prevalence of technology" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2012, p. 15). New literacies are constantly evolving as technology advances. Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear, and Leu (2008) defined new literacies as "the rapid and

continuous changes in the way we read, write, view, listen, compose and communicate information" (p. 8). Earlier I cited Lankshear and Knobel's (2006) definition of literacy as "socially recognized ways of generating, communicating and negotiating meaningful content through the medium of encoded texts within contexts of participation in Discourses (or as members of Discourses)" (p. 64). This definition is important to my discussion of new literacies. Lankshear and Knobel used the term *Discourses* from the work of James Paul Gee (2001). Building on the work of Gee, they explained that, "from a sociocultural perspective, literacy is matter of social practices. Literacies are bound up with social, institutional and cultural relationships, and can only be understood when they are situated within their social, cultural and historical contexts" (p. 12). New literacies are also bound to social and cultural relationships by the very nature of their creation in social and cultural contexts.

I must differentiate between new literacies and New Literacy studies, which is "a particular sociocultural approach to understanding and researching literacy" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 23). It is a theoretical paradigm compared to new literacies, which are social practices that are different from conventional literacy practices in that they "involve new and changing ways of producing, exchanging and receiving texts by *electronic* means" (p. 25). According to Knobel and Lankshear (2007), new literacies involve not just accessing information online or using technology to read or write in traditional ways; rather, new literacies put their users in spaces where collaboration, participation, and distribution are hallmarks. Online literacy practices allow "participants to make their own meanings, find collaborators who share these meanings, and build relationships based on shared perspective" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 48). New literacies use elements from traditional literacy practices in new ways and offer opportunities to those who use new literacies to negotiate how they want to participate and collaborate with others.

A definition of literacy that moves beyond the traditional reading and writing creates spaces to honour children's literacy skills and the abilities that they build within their families and communities, as well as when they engage in digital technology. As they experiment with new literacies, they come to know themselves and their world by interacting with texts. The content in oral, print, visual, and digital texts becomes

meaningful when the text and the recipient interact. A text is "any kind of entity from which an individual makes meaning" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2012, p. 4). The author or creator of a text articulates his or her message, whether through oral, written, or visual representation, and the interpretation is left to the listener, reader, or viewer. The articulation and interpretation are negotiated socially within the literacy practice (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006).

New literacies are evolving as technology becomes more mobile. Mobile technology such as tablets and smartphones helps students to access information at their fingertips, as well as communicate in multiple modes. Mobile devices keep students connected to the world by giving them access to instant and up-to-date information and the latest news. Students can use applications (apps) on mobile devices to create presentations, take notes, send messages, participate in game-based learning, watch videos, and read e-books. Teachers can use mobile devices and apps to conduct real-time assessments. In my teaching practice I have used Socrative™ to engage with students through online polls and quizzes. New literacy practices favour collaboration, participation, and distribution. The proliferation of weblogs, wikis, online forums, and social networking sites underscore these literacy practices. A plethora of software is available that helps online users to create their own weblogs, participate in wikis, and share digital products, whether video, audio remixes, or memes. Lankshear and Knobel (2006) emphasized that "the more a literacy practice privileges participation over publishing, distributed expertise over centralized expertise, collective intelligence over individual possessive intelligence, collaboration over individuated authorship, dispersion over scarcity, sharing over ownership, experimentation over 'normalization'" (p. 60), the more it should be considered a new literacy. It is important to note that new technology is not sufficient to describe new literacies because people can use new technology to create conventional products, such as book reviews. The important features of new literacy practices are collaboration, participation, sharing, and distribution. Examples of new literacies are instant messaging, which can include texts, videos, photos, and emojis; participation in social media and networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; and participation online in fan fiction. An understanding of new literacy

practices remained salient to this research, because the students engaged in new literacy practices in their classroom community of practice.

Multimodal literacies. We have many modes through which to communicate and represent knowledge. Gunther Kress (2001), in his book *Multimodal Teaching and Learning*, remarked that language is considered the dominant mode of communication and that "image, gesture and action are generally considered illustrative supports" (p. 42) to communication. School has legitimized some modes of communication over others. Writing has been the focus of instruction for students to communicate their ideas and thinking to others. However, Kress reminded us that "*image* has been part of human culture longer than *script*"; in addition, "gesture is a presence in all cultures, even if in quite different ways" (p. 5). Humans have always communicated in multiple modes.

Students can communicate their ideas and knowledge in print through writing, orally by speaking, graphically via images, visually using artistic means, audibly with sound, through gestures by means of facial expression, spatially via body movement, and in video by means of combining sound and image. Similarly,

> multimodal literacy refers to the meaning-making that occurs through reading, viewing, understanding, responding to and producing and interacting with multimedia and digital texts. It may include oral and gestural modes of talking, listening and dramatizing as well as writing, designing, and producing such texts. (Walsh, 2010, p. 213)

Technology has bombarded students with multimodal texts. Digital multimodal texts consist of audio and visual texts such as images, pictures, logos, signs, art, sound, and music. However, before technology, the first visual sign was gesture, a visual text that communicates meaning and is contextually bound. Seeing someone point is meaningless unless the viewer knows why he or she is pointing and what the referent is. For example, in Cree, gestures are pivotal in conveying meaning while talking. Instead of pointing with a finger, Cree speakers gesture by positioning their lips in the direction that they are indicating. As a visual language, gestures are culturally created semiotic tools used to mediate action.

Multimodal means of communicating in face-to-face communication utilizes voice, body language, facial expressions, and gestures. Gestures and facial expressions are symbolic and embodied representations of meaning. For example, a furrowed brow

can mean anger, confusion, puzzlement, or disagreement. Waving a hand at someone can mean "Hello," "Stop!" or "I need your attention!" Gestures symbolize different things depending on the social and cultural environment in which they are used and the gesturer's purpose. Gestures are a large field of study on their own, but I will discuss them as one facet of multimodal literacy.

Kress and van Leeuwan (2006) clarified that "any text whose meanings are realized through more than one semiotic code" (p. 177) is multimodal. Different modes offer better means of communicating particular messages. Robertson (2010) agreed that "a multimodal text integrates more than one mode to express a message by drawing on the affordances of each mode to create a new meaning" (p. 70). For example, in creating a tweet on Twitter, the creator can use script text or visual text with images or emoticons or even attach a video. Twitter also affords creators an opportunity to send their messages out to a large audience within a short time. Pahl and Rowsell (2012) explained that "affordances are the possibilities that a particular form offers a text-maker" (p. 31). Kress (2003, 2010) described affordances as the potentials and limitations of a mode and added that modes constantly reshape their affordances along the social needs of the meaning maker. As with Twitter, the potential of hashtags allows users to participate or follow conversations on a particular topic, access real-time updates, or watch events unfold. Twitter also constrains creators to 140 characters in their tweets. These constraints limit or restrict the message from being interpreted. Also, the fact that tweets are public is both a potential and a limiting affordance in that millions can see the tweet, but this could also constrain the content of text creators' tweets.

Jewitt (2008) claimed that "how knowledge is represented, as well as the mode and media chosen, is a crucial aspect of knowledge construction, making the representation integral to meaning and learning" (p. 241). Students need to learn how to use, interpret, and critically analyze modes of representation and their meaning. Equally, students need to understand how the chosen medium will affect their message; for example, the media of paper and ink compared to instant messaging; the latter distributes the message in a shorter time span over greater distances. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) elucidated that, "when looking at meaning makers' intentions, a multimodal text also needs to acknowledge what lies behind the meaning; that is what meaning makers bring

to the text" (p. 5). Different modes of representation contribute to meaning-making in particular ways (Harste, 2010). What is important in exploring multiple modes of representation or multimodal texts is what they allow us to do (Harste, 2010). Students need to learn which modes are most appropriate for certain contexts or particular messages. Therefore, multimodal literacy also teaches which mode is appropriate to communicate a particular message within a particular context to a particular group of people (Kress, 1997). Different sign systems allow us to do different things (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). Consequently, students also need to know and be able to choose the mode and medium that are best suited to a particular message to a particular audience. Multimodal texts, as any texts, are created for a specific purpose. To read a multimodal text, a reader needs to share with the creator or author the social meanings of the signs used, have an idea of the creator's purpose or intention in creating the text, and understand the social and cultural context.

Pahl and Rowsell (2010) argued that "multimodal has been proposed as a solution to bridging the gap between in-school and out-of-school literacies because multimodality lets in the visual and allows for a wider range of meaning-making systems" (p. 133). This makes the inclusion of multimodal and multiliteracies as areas of research not only relevant, but also timely.

Rowsell, Kress, Pahl, and Street (2013) explained that reading is making meaning from texts and that "making sense of texts has always been multimodal" (p. 1183). Even reading some print-based texts involves pictures, fonts, drawings, and colour. The resources to create texts depend on the message and purpose. To remember something, a person might write a note on a piece of paper; whereas if that person wants to tell a friend who lives far away about an experience, he or she might write a letter or send an e-mail or a text message. A text message on a mobile phone is probably not the best means to send longer messages. Shorter text messages or emojis seem more appropriate because they are easier and quicker to type on the small keyboard of the mobile device. However, this thinking might reflect my age, because my daughters send me fairly lengthy text messages, whereas I would phone them if I had that much to say. Kress (2010) pointed out that multimodal resources are constantly being reshaped and adapted based on the social needs of those who are making meaning. Rowsell et al. (2013) explained that

"texts take their meanings from contexts and the discourse and practices that circulate in that context" (p. 1186). Different groups interpret texts based on their cultural and social context. For example, my youngest daughter sent me a text about something that she was doing, and I replied with the letter *K*, an abbreviation for *Okay*, to let her know that I received her text and accepted what she had said. She promptly texted back, Are you upset?" I discovered that using only one letter as a response indicated an angry or upset tone. I was not familiar with this texting convention, which illustrates that my daughters and I did not share some social meanings with regard to text messaging. Rowsell et al. (2013) pointed out that "those below, say, the age of 30 tend to have a distinctly different position in social organization and arrangements and hence a different stance toward texts, compared with those above that age group" (p. 1188). They extended this position to include not only the creation of texts, but also the practice of reading. Today, hybrid texts include traditional texts that are found on a page but not on a screen. Even text messaging is multimodal, with the use of written language, emoticons (images), pictures, and videos to convey a message.

Digital technology has changed the way that we read as texts have become more multimodal. Walsh (2010) reported that reading on screen involves processing different aspects simultaneously and cited a research study (Bearne et al., 2007) from the United Kingdom that showed that the "navigation of screen-based texts frequently involves 'radial browsing' that is quite different from the left-to-right, linear reading of print-based texts" (p. 214). The OECD (2011) noted that in the 2009 PISA, proficient digital readers knew how to navigate digital texts effectively and efficiently. Rowsell et al. (2013) observed that "contemporary texts draw on a number of modes: speech, image (still or moving), writing, music, and action" (p. 1188). Like novels, we approach print-based texts from a different stance than we do more contemporary texts on screens (Rowsell et al., 2013). The arrangement, composition, and appearance of texts all "habituate readers to distinct forms of reading" (p. 1189). Therefore, how a text is arranged determines how a reader approaches and engages with it.

Pahl and Rowsell (2012) described literacy "as an embodied practice that requires movement and action (e.g., scrolling, tapping, reading, sliding) and as an embodied experience [that] requires more modes of representation than ever; i.e., multimodality"

(p. 4). Websites or digital texts contain images, hypertext, sound, and images that require readers to scroll, click on links, interpret visuals, listen to audio, watch moving images, and read print text. Many children and youth are involved in these literacy practices outside the classroom. For example, Rowsell and Burke (2009) each conducted a case study on the digital reading practices of middle-school literacy learners. They sat alongside and interviewed the youth as they navigated a favourite website. Digital reading is on the rise as mobile digital devices become more accessible. UNESCO (2014) conducted a study in developing countries and found that increasing numbers of people, particularly women and girls, carry digital devices that display text in areas where access to books is limited. They also found that people read more on mobile devices and enjoy reading on mobile devices. Rowsell and Burke reported that digital reading involves different skills than print; for example, readers of digital text need to attend to complex discourse, layers of complex visuals, dynamic storylines, multiple related texts, and supporting genres. They also found that digital reading requires an understanding of how texts are constructed; that is, the design principles that are used. Rowsell and Burke's findings on middle-school literacy learners can be extended to elementary-school literacy learners, who also need to attend to complex discourses and layers when they navigate digital texts. Digital texts are multimodal representations of meaning and become artifacts because they involve social, cultural, and historical practices.

Artifactual literacies. Artifacts are objects that a person creates. For the purposes of my study, I considered artifacts not just part of the data, but also as representing the lived experience of the children (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Pahl and Rowsell described artifacts as "an embodiment of lived experience, . . . [as] it symbolizes and represents relationships and events that matter" (p. 1) and as possessing "physical features that make it distinct; created, found, carried, put on display, hidden, evoked in language, or worn; embodies people, stories, thoughts, communities, identities, and experiences; valued or made by a meaning maker in a particular context" (p. 2). Pahl and Rowsell built on their premise that artifacts represent culture, lives, histories, and stories to conceptualize a theory of artifactual literacies: "Artifactual literacy acknowledges that everyone has a story to tell, and they bring that story into their learning" (p. 3). Children find objects at home or create them in school that link to stories from their culture or

family. Artifacts that they bring from home to school connect the home and school. They tie together out-of-school literacy practices and school literacy practices. Pahl and Rowsell revealed that artifacts "bring the today-ness of their lives into their meaning-making and thereby make connections across domains of home, community, and school" (p. 16). Students' meaning-making in their writing, drawing, or other forms of representation comes from their experiences, regardless of whether these experiences are at home or in school. Pahl and Rowsell observed that "children growing up in neighborhoods experience the textual and artifactual nature of the space they are born into. Their lives are meshed with the experience of the neighborhood, its boundaries, its lived experiences" (p. 25). Whatever children encounter in sights, smells, and feelings they will translate into texts when they make meaning (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). These researchers suggested that "artifactual literacy brings students into a more agentive space in relation to meaning-making that goes beyond the digital into the embodied, sensory, and everyday" (p. 134). It creates spaces for students to connect, share, and witness the lived experiences of others, all while acknowledging their own identity and place in the local or global community.

The use of artifacts in the classroom creates a space for students to share their stories and opportunities for learning, empowering students, and acknowledging identity. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) acknowledged that artifacts "open up modalities and subjectivities" (p. 72) and give students a space in the classroom to learn from one another, to talk, and to listen, using the artifacts as a springboard. Thus artifacts become resources for learning in creating spaces for students to tell their stories and have their stories witnessed (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Also, by creating artifacts in the classroom, students can "create new representations of identity, those that can move forward in inclusive ways to honor new identities" (p. 70). The identities of the artifacts that students create are embedded in them and therefore help students whose identities are usually marginalized to move into more mainstream school literacy. The literacy activities that involve talk and discussion are also artifacts that reflect students' identities. Not only is talk a tool to share lived experience, but it also carries the identity of individuals and their communities' accumulated cultural knowledge. It is an artifact from their homes and communities that enables them to make meaning from other texts.

Artifactual literacy bridges out-of-school experiences and school literacies. In the next section I discuss popular culture and how popular texts serve as a conduit to literacy learning in the classroom and as bridges between out-of-school lives and school literacy.

Popular culture. Children bring into the classroom cultural knowledge that also includes popular culture. Children's popular culture, like adult popular culture, includes music, sport, computers and related merchandise, books, magazines, television, and film; but it also incorporates websites, toys, games, comics, stickers, cards, clothing, hair accessories, jewellery, sports accessories, oral rhymes, jokes, word play, food, and drink (Marsh, 2012; Marsh & Millard, 2000). In the book *Literacy and Popular Culture,* Marsh and Millard discussed the use of popular culture in the classroom to draw "on [popular culture's] linguistic and cultural appeal rather than suggesting they have any currency in their own right" (p. 2). They recognized that it is not promoting one type of text or genre over another, but having "a general sensitivity to children's culture that will allow teachers to create more powerful language work from the currency of pupils' own preoccupations" (p. 2). Marsh and Millard explained that books, comics, toys, dolls, video games, apps, interactive CD-ROMs, Disney websites, songs, television show adaptations, and their own imaginative play still introduce even children who might not have seen a particular Disney movie to the characters and story.

Marsh (2012) pointed out that children's cultural interests and practices are embedded in new technologies because of the prevalence of digital media. Marsh and Millard (2000) also stressed that the rapid change from a print-based to a screen-based "hyperlinked mode of communication" changes the way "in which we communicate with each other to express our intentions and even feelings" and has "a profound effect on the way we respond to texts and make meaning from them" (p. 5). Therefore, popular media influence how children approach school literacies such as reading and writing. Marsh and Millard acknowledged that the use of mass media in classrooms, particularly texts designed for children, can produce insightful work. Marsh contended that to "build on the richness of children's media literacy backgrounds" (p. 213) requires more similitude between home and school. Popular texts are fertile grounds that children can unearth and transplant into other landscapes. Children are engaged and interested in popular culture

out of school, and asking them to leave those voices and stories behind when they enter the classroom devalues a large part of their lived experience.

Popular culture can be viewed as an "everyday culture," and the texts associated with it are "part of students' everyday literacies" and thus "hold powerful and personal meanings for students" (Alvermann & Xu, 2003, p. 150). Children are immersed in popular culture as part of their daily lives as they come to know characters who traverse between print and screen; share in the lives of television, movies, and music personalities; and appropriate words from songs, movies, and television shows.

Anne Haas Dyson's (1997, 2003) research on the literacy experiences of children demonstrates how cultural and social factors, as well as children's personal interests, are fuelled by popular media influence literacy. Dyson (2003) reported that "children appropriate the symbolic stuff of those media genres (e.g. sounds, images, ways of talking) and adapt it to their own childhood practices, including storytelling, dramatic play, group singing, and informational display" (p. 329). Children experience popular culture and reconceptualize it through their own representations and meaning-making. In play, children become superheroes, Disney princesses, or a favourite pop star and enact their own versions of stories, reframing words and voices into their own worlds (Dyson, 2003). Over the years I watched my students, daughters, and now my granddaughters take on roles of favourite characters and transpose them into shifting landscapes.

Popular culture also provides a rich garden of characters, plots, and settings for children to transplant into their school literacy experiences. Dyson (2003) identified "children's experiences with popular media as integral to the formation of contemporary childhoods"; it creates alternate "pathways through which children enter into school literacy practices" (p. 330). Children negotiate how popular texts enter their childhood experiences as "textual toys" that give them a "sense of their own agency, their own possibilities for action" in imaginative and real worlds with friends (p. 331). By bringing popular texts into classroom literacy experiences, children extend their out-of-school identities into school literacy practices. Popular texts are not limited to resources for writing, storytelling, and dramatic play, but are also repositories for shared experiences, information, and diverse perspectives. Dyson noted that "not only did the children use unofficial genres to organize their official writing efforts, they also reframed media

resources with school expected voices" (p. 356). When I taught a Grade 8 unit on mythology, I was surprised to learn how much the students already knew about Greek gods and goddesses. An animated television show called *Class of the Titans* (Nakashima, 2005) portrayed descendants of Greek mythological characters as high school students. The teenage descendants had qualities and abilities that linked them to their particular Greek mythological ancestor. This animated series, as well as Disney's *Hercules* (Dewey, Musker, & Clements, 1997), presented a wealth of information to which the students could connect. When children bring their out-of-school lives into official school literacy experiences, it is another means of validating their experiences and making school literacy practices meaningful to them (Dyson, 2003; Hull & Schultz, 2002). Many children engage in reading and writing through popular texts rather than school-based texts that are not part of their lived experience. Dyson pointed out that a curriculum open to children's popular culture is important to children of lower socioeconomic status who might not have the same cultural and communicative resources as children from higher socioeconomic demographics do. Marsh and Millard (2000) also contended that a large number of children in schools do not have home literacy experiences from the books and story experiences that White middle-class families value and that are also aligned with school literacy practices. Marsh and Millard underlined the need "to make more teachers familiar with some of the literacy practices experienced by children in their homes and communities and to support teachers in using these to motivate positive learning experiences in school" (p. 4). Using popular texts in the classroom is another means for all students to engage in classroom literacy practices. Marsh (2012) noted in her earlier work that "using children's popular texts, practices, and artefacts in the classroom promotes creativity" (p. 215). She also stated that children's cultural practices and interests motivate them more to engage in reading and writing. Popular culture plays a huge role in the lives of children and can be used to connect out-of-school literacy practices to school literacy practices.

Métis, First Nations and Inuit children are growing up with many of the same popular texts that their peers read through mass media. Media industries use mass media to communicate to the general public for the purposes of sharing news and current events, entertaining, and advertising. Educators unfamiliar with the family and cultural literacy

practices of Métis, Inuit and First Nations children can utilize popular culture and its associated texts to make connections to Métis, Inuit and First Nations children's lived experiences. Because popular texts are part of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students' lived experiences, these connections make literacy learning relevant to them (Dyson, 2003).

Gaining access to school literacy. Culturally relevant practices bring students' culture, language, and knowledge into the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Ladson-Billings (2001) encouraged the use of culturally relevant practices in the classroom to bridge the divide between home and school. McKeough et al. (2008) stressed that educators need to pay attention to culturally appropriate practices, especially in regards to language citing Leavitt (1995) because "language leads to fundamental differences in how the world is viewed, how knowledge is conceptualized and categorized, and how one relates and interacts with others (p.149). Children's language and culture "become a vehicle through which they acquire the official knowledge and skill of the school curriculum" (p. 100). Children need to learn the language of school and school literacy to be successful in school.

In addition to using culturally relevant practices, Delpit (1995) stressed the importance of children from nondominant cultures learning the "culture of power" (p. 24). This entails schools' providing minority children with the "discourse patterns, interactional styles, and spoken and written language codes that will allow them success in the larger society" (p. 29). First Nations, Inuit and Métis children need to be able to traverse between their Aboriginal literacies and school literacies to be successful in school.

In Myra Dunn's (2001) journal article "Aboriginal Literacy," she discussed the connection between power and literacy. She began by citing statistics in Australia, which were similar to the Canadian norms, to compare the low literacy scores of Aboriginal to the higher scores of non-Aboriginal people. Dunn commented that power and literacy, as well as powerlessness and illiteracy, are complex issues that require attention. Australia, similarly to Canada, has used education as a means of oppression and control of Aboriginal peoples. Negative school experiences and often the lack of qualified teachers have left their mark on Aboriginal people's literacy experiences. Dunn revealed that "the

effects of poor literacy teaching in the past result in negative attitudes toward schooling and had a direct bearing on poor literacy standards amongst Aboriginal people in the 1990s" (p. 678). These negative experiences of parents and caregivers have affected their children and subsequent generations. Dunn stressed that literacy initiatives fail to address the social problems that have manifested in Aboriginal children's low literacy scores. Dunn pointed out that "'pumping' up basic skills in Aboriginal literacy programs is not likely to improve literacy levels or participation levels in schools because this treats the symptoms rather than the underlying causes of the disease" (p. 679). Dunn referred to the deficit model of thinking: Many teachers believe that Aboriginal children are not equipped to be successful readers or writers because there is something wrong with their language, culture, and lifestyle. These attitudes of failure can become self-fulfilling prophesies for the children in their care. She also emphasized that language differences do not mean a developmental problem in literacy learning and that institutions should not use them as justification for low literacy abilities. However, the discontinuity between home and school literacy practices creates an issue for literacy learning. Dunn highlighted that "this situation is not the result of some cultural deficit on the part of these communities but the social effect of cultural difference" (p. 679). She cited Shirley Brice Heath's (1983) seminal work *Ways With Words* as the best illustration that students whose language and literacy practices at home are more closely matched with school practices will be more successful in language and literacy learning at school. Dunn emphasized that if teachers incorporate students' primary Discourse into their classroom teaching, the children will be more successful.

The deficit view of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children's language and literacy portrays the language that children bring to the classroom as insufficient and literacy as absent. Some educators might acknowledge that First Nations, Métis and Inuit children come to school with language, but they regard it as something that needs to be corrected (Delpit, 1995; Dudley-Marling & Lucas, 2009). Dudley-Marling and Lucas acknowledge that, "unfortunately, many teachers, administrators, and policy makers have been persuaded to view poor students as culturally and linguistically deficient" (p. 362) and use it to explain reading struggles and school failure. Because many minority children, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit children, come from low socioeconomic

environments, school failure and being poor are also linked. A deficit-based explanation of student failure does not take into account the rich language and literacy that children from minority cultures bring to school and puts the onus on the child and family rather than demanding that schools reexamine the literacy practices that marginalize certain language use and privilege one language over another (Dudley-Marling & Lucas, 2009).

Dudley-Marling and Lucas (2009) called on educators to avoid looking at linguistic difference as linguistic deficiencies, which usually occurs when the language of the White middle-class is considered the standard and anything else is seen as inferior. Dudley-Marling and Lucas suggested that educators begin by recognizing "the linguistic, social, and cognitive resources all children bring with them to school" (p. 368) and utilize these differences as strengths. They must also make spaces for children to bring their linguistic and cultural experiences into the classroom and use them to make connections to school literacy practices (Dudley-Marling & Lucas, 2009). The inclusion of literacy practices from minority children's home in school is considered a culturally relevant practice (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2004) and gives them access to school literacy.

For First Nations, Métis and Inuit children to gain access to school literacies and be successful in school, the whole child needs to be considered. Education needs to address the learning needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students through by developing the whole child, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. The failure to address the needs of the whole child inhibits literacy learning.

Aboriginal Education

This final section is a synthesis of the literature on Aboriginal education and the importance of a holistic education that addresses the mind, body, and spirit to provide a context for Aboriginal children to experience success in school; it concludes with a review of how the integration of Aboriginal literacies into school learning recognizes the cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal people.

The learning and teaching of Indigenous children comes out of Indigenous knowledge systems that have governed the lives of Indigenous people since time immemorial (Dei, Hall & Rosenberg, 2008). Castellano (2008) characterized Indigenous or Aboriginal knowledge as situated in personal experience, transmitted orally, experienced subjectively, holistic, and communicate through story. Traditionally,

Aboriginal children learned experientially on the land and knew how to speak their languages. This becomes problematic when Aboriginal children do not have access to the land for learning and cannot communicate with Elders in their language. Not only does learning happen through language, deeper understandings are inscribed within Indigenous languages that cannot be translated (Ball, 2009). Castellano pointed out that not only has the intergenerational transmission of knowledge been disrupted due to residential schools and other systems of oppression and assimilation, but so has the creation and refinement of knowledge. She cites Art Solomon's metaphor of fire to describe sacred knowledges in that they are ever-changing and have to be fueled by what is on hand. Aboriginal people are now faced with "how to adapt their traditions to a contemporary environment" (p. 25). Castellano concluded that aboriginal knowledge must be living and dynamic in order to support Indigenous learners in the future.

Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children in school requires that learning be holistic. The whole child needs to be considered, and this includes the mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects of learning (Cajete, 1994; Paulsen, 2003). Archibald (2008) commented that holism involves achieving balance and harmony among our intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical selves and the world around us: "To attain this goal, ways of acquiring knowledge and codes of behaviour are essential and are embedded in cultural practices" (p. 11). Aboriginal education focuses on the holistic education of the child.

An important model to develop the whole child is the Circle of Courage, co-founded by Drs. Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg, and Steve Van Bockern (1998). It is built on the foundation of Native American philosophies that are formulated on the belief that "the central purpose of life was education and empowerment of children" (p. 44). Brendto et al. used the sacred number four to identify belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity as central values. The number four is significant to many First Nations people, but especially so to the Cree people, who are named the number four, *Nehiyawak*. Four is a sacred number in that we find it all around us, and we need all four components to achieve balance. For example, the number four is found in (a) the four parts of a person: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual; (b) the four stages of life: child, youth, adult, elder; (c) the four seasons: spring, summer, fall, winter; (d) the four

elements: earth, air, water, water; (e) the four directions: north, east, south, west; (f) the four types of animals on Earth: four legged, two legged, winged, and water based; and (g) the four sacred plants: sweetgrass, tobacco, cedar, sage. Additionally, the number four is also part of many ceremonies that involve the four directions, four braids of sweetgrass, the medicine wheel divided into four quadrants to symbolize the four directions and four stages of life, or the ceremonial pipe that is passed around four times, to name a few. The four values of the Circle of Courage utilize the sacred number to achieve a moral balance. Based on traditional Native American child-rearing philosophy, these four domains support children's growth and flourishing while acknowledging cultural knowledge. Brendto et al. recognized that promoting "self-esteem is a primary goal in socializing normal children as well as in specialized work with children and adolescents at risk" (p. 44). They explained that traditional Native education addresses self-esteem by nurturing children's significance in a cultural environment that celebrates the need for belonging, giving children opportunities to build competence and achieve mastery, encouraging children's independence through opportunities to demonstrate their power, and teaching children to reflect generosity in their actions. The goal of Native education is to develop mental, physical, social, and spiritual competence. Cultural knowledge, traditional practices, and language are essential components of development and are interconnected. To support the learning of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children in a holistic manner requires a connection among culture, language, and individual gifts.

Education for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children needs to acknowledge the different ways of knowing and teaching inherent in belonging to a particular Indigenous group and that each child comes with certain gifts. Toulouse (2011) proposed several strategies to ensure Aboriginal students' success in schools. She urged teachers to incorporate strategies that emphasize the spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual domains in their classroom instruction. Including Aboriginal culture in each lesson and making connections to the real world support a holistic model (Toulouse, 2011). She emphasized that Aboriginal students learn best in a collaborative and interactive environment. It is interesting that these recommendations align with hallmarks of new literacies, which are collaboration, participation, and distribution (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007). The need to understand and employ best practices to promote the success of

Aboriginal children and youth in school is crucial to diminishing the achievement gap between Aboriginal students and their peers. Ball (2009) reiterated the call of Indigenous leaders, parents and educators that Indigenous children are provided with a foundation in language that is necessary to succeed in school, as well as learn their own languages.

Some researchers have identified successful or promising practices in Aboriginal education by analyzing targeted programs or examining entire school communities (Bell et al., 2004; Canadian Council on Learning, 2007, 2008; Jones, 2003; Niles, Byers, & Krueger, 2007; Richards, Hove, & Afolabi, 2008). These studies have revealed similarities in that Aboriginal students need to learn in an environment that values their culture and identity, recognizes their individual needs, and has the resources to help them to succeed. However, more studies are needed to explore how Aboriginal children become successful in the classroom to better understand their literacy achievement and identify effective strategies that other children can use to support their literacy development.

Aboriginal Literacies

Aboriginal literacies refers to Indigenous people's use of multiple texts from the environment and their experiences to develop relationships. Some of these texts are dreams, visions, oral stories, and artifactual objects in the environment (Little Bear, 2009). Therefore, Aboriginal literacies are more than just reading and writing; they include relationships with the environment and community (Antone, 2003) and interpreting visions, negotiating the meanings of stories, communicating with nature, and reading the landscape, to name a few (Little Bear, 2009). Aboriginal literacies are characterized by holism, the inclusion of culture and language, and the development of an oral tradition of storytelling (Antone, 2003; Archibald, 2008; Cajete, 1994; Cordoba, 2005; George, 2003; Paulsen, 2003; Weber-Pillwax, 2001). Cordoba suggested that "embracing literacy from a wholistic perspective requires that we understand education as a life-long process that re-affirms Aboriginal identities, cultures, and epistemologies" (p. 2). Indigenous epistemology is grounded in the idea of coming to know oneself through relationships with the land and environment (Ermine, 1995). Indigenous scholar, Shawn Wilson (2008) described Indigenous epistemology as "systems of knowledge and relationships" (p. 74). Indigenous systems of knowledge include "processes that are

intergenerational, experiential, and tied to narrative and relational way of ensuring the continuity and relevance" (Hare & Davidson, 2016, p. 244). Oral narratives provided a means for teaching about relationships, as well looking for relationships in dreams and connections to the land. Literacy for Aboriginal people is "located in the symbolic systems that are deeply encoded across many dimensions of their environment" (Hare, 2005, p. 247). Children are shaped not only by their parents, but also by the cultural and social environment in which they live and develop. This view of learning also connects to the sociocultural theoretical framework of this research in that individuals are products of their history and culture and learning involves building on the engagement of history and culture (Daniels, Lauder, & Porter, 2009). Language connects people to their history and creates a sense of belonging through culture.

The language of Indigenous communities connects the people to the land (Bear Nicholas, 2008; Cajete, 1994), and connection to the land is extremely important because it is part of Indigenous ontology. For Indigenous people, the earth is alive and must be respected as a living entity (Cajete, 1994). According to McKeough et al. (2008) Aboriginal knowledges and ways of knowling are "based on a natural order of life" and that all things are connected. Cajete presented an overview of tribal education and explained that foundations of Indian education "teach us that learning is a subjective experience tied to a place environmentally, socially, and spiritually (p. 33). Learning occurs alongside living; they are not separated from the "natural, social, or spiritual aspects of everyday life" (p. 33). The learning process is "founded on the continuous development of self-knowledge" through participation and awareness in the natural environment (p. 33). A relationship with the land is important for the survival of all living things. Cajete explained that "the active focus of maintaining or striving for a harmony between one's self and one's natural environment was the most essential principle for applying knowledge" (p. 88). This is the basis for understanding Indigenous literacy with regard to First Nations, Métis and Inuit learning to read and make meaning from the landscape as part of their cultural practice (Cajete, 1994; Hare, 2005). Paulsen (2003) affirmed that "native literacy embodies factors of culture, tradition, language, and ways of knowing and being" (p. 24). The ways of knowing, or epistemology, and ways of being are communicated through story or objects. Both story and physical objects are

artifacts that embody epistemology and ontology. Art and other cultural artifacts, as examples of Aboriginal literacies, symbolize culture and traditions. Cultural artifacts that were passed down had lives and stories of their own. Different owners altered some artifacts such as clothing as they were passed down, sold, or traded; and these edits shifted or changed the story (Racette, 2004). Clothing as cultural artifacts can connect, evoke and trigger stories, identities, and emotions while providing information about its creator (Racette, 2004). For example, Métis beadwork can be read as social text that fosters insight into the resourcefulness and strength of Métis women (Racette, 2004). Racette described dress and the decorative arts as objects with histories that become words in a story, because "they were created within the contexts of the lives of people who created, wore, and used them" (p. 15). Visual art is a way to communicate, and artifacts' aesthetic properties bring people together (Racette, 2004). Art and cultural artifacts become another means of incorporating Aboriginal perspective into education while validating the knowledge and experiences of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal literacy scholars have begun to articulate the need to recognize Aboriginal perspectives in literacy learning (Hare, 2005; Laderoute, 2005, McKeough et al., 2008, Noll, 2000) and to validate the knowledge and experiences that youth bring to school and incorporate them into the classroom. Noll (2000) found that validating different ways that meaning is constructed and "legitimizing multiple sign systems" that Aboriginal children use would support educators in building on students' strengths. In summary, Aboriginal literacies are characterized by holism and the integration of culture and language, which attests to its value for Indigenous learners. They are multiple and are built on relationships between the environment and community, which helps us to learn in a variety of ways.

Summary

To recapitulate, the theoretical framework and synthesis of literature position language and literacy learning as socially embedded acts. Language learning occurs through legitimate peripheral participation in socially mediated events with more proficient language users. We learn language socially, and how we use it depends on the social and cultural contexts. Children's environment determines how they use language, and the closer their home literacy practices are to school literacy, the more successful they will be in school. I concluded the literature review with a discussion of Aboriginal

education and explanation that the integration of Aboriginal literacies into school learning acknowledges the culture, language, and perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit and serves as a bridge to school literacies.

CHAPTER 3:

RECIPROCITY: RESEARCH DESIGN

The importance of reciprocity helped me to design my research study. I did not want to enter a classroom and gather data; rather, I wanted to ensure that I would give something in return. I honoured reciprocity in co-planning and team-teaching a unit of study with the classroom teacher, as well as participating in school events. To gain an insider view of the literacy lives of the students, I had to become involved in the school lives of the students who participated in my study. My involvement included assisting the children with their literacy tasks and attending dance and drama performances. Mutual reciprocity was fundamental to the design of this study. In this chapter I describe how I designed the research study to access the literacy lives of the students in Grade 3 at Belleheights School (pseudonym).

Overview

In the second chapter I describe the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that I used to inform this research. The theoretical paradigm of sociocultural theory frames how I came to understand the literacy lives of the focal children. Sociocultural theory is situated within the constructivist paradigm, which acknowledges that children experience a reality and that, by interacting with this environment, they construct meaning. What we know about reality is relative to how it is socially constructed. Creswell (2013) explained that "conducting a qualitative study means that researchers get as close as possible to the participants being studied" and that "knowledge is known—through the subjective experiences of people" (p. 20). The constructivist paradigm positions my philosophical orientation and desire to understand the experiences of the children in my study.

In this chapter I present my design for gathering information on the literacy lives of the Grade 3 students at Belleheights. I provide my rationale for undertaking qualitative research using interpretive case study and multiple data-collection methods. I also describe the research site, how I selected the focal children, my role as researcher, the data-collection methods, the data-management and data-analysis strategies, the trustworthiness features, the ethical considerations, and the limitations of the study.

Qualitative Research

I chose to do qualitative research because I am interested in learning about how students make sense of and experience the literacy practices in an English language arts classroom. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) defined qualitative research as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible" (p. 3). It creates opportunities for the participants to share their stories and spaces for the researcher to interpret these stories inductively and expose them. Merriam (1998) described qualitative research as an "umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that helps us to understand and explain the meaning of social phenomenon with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (p. 5) while we describe the phenomenon as richly as possible. Creswell (2013) identified some characteristics of qualitative research. First, the researcher collects data in a natural setting in which the participants experience the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2013). Second, the researcher collects data usually by using multiple methods and organizing the data into themes through inductive processes (Creswell, 2013). Third, the researcher focuses on the meaning that the participants hold about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Finally, the research design evolves from an initial plan through changes in the questions, the types of data collection, or modification of the site (Creswell, 2013). The goal of qualitative research is to present a holistic picture (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research best supported the exploration of my research questions because it permitted me to look for a deeper understanding by focusing on a specific entity to gain a complete picture of the phenomenon.

Ways of Knowing

Research is situated within a particular philosophical paradigm. A paradigm "is framework or philosophy of science that makes assumptions about the nature of reality and truth, the kinds of questions to explore, and how to go about doing so" (Glesne, 2011, p. 5). The beliefs that shape this research are in the interpretive philosophical tradition. The interpretive research paradigm includes the constructivist ontological framework in which reality is socially constructed and an exploration of "how people interpret and make meaning of some object, event, action, perception, etc." (p. 8). To come to know how people interpret and make meaning, the researcher needs to interact with the people

in their social contexts and talk with them about their perceptions (Glesne, 2011). Creswell (2013) affirmed that constructivist researchers "focus on the specific contexts in which people live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants" (p. 25). The phenomenon under study occurred in a social, cultural, and historical environment.

The interpretivist framework includes several types of qualitative research or methodologies. A methodology is "a theory to how inquiry should proceed" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 193). Some interpretivist research methodologies include, but are not limited to, action research, case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative inquiry, and phenomenological research. The methodology offers a way to think about the research problem because it defines and frames the object of study, the questions, and the methods. Therefore, with case study as a methodology, the research study focuses on a particular case; in my study, on Aboriginal children who were participating in a language arts classroom. Case study methodology required questions that would concentrate the study to gain insight into the literacy experiences of a particular group of Aboriginal children.

Case Study

A case study sets itself apart from other qualitative methodologies because the focus is on providing a rich description of a bound unit (Creswell, 2013; Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1989). This inquiry involved the examination of an elementary classroom in which the classroom teacher created a literacy-rich environment to support reading instruction while integrating multiliteracies such as multimedia technology. It was further bounded by the fact that I observed and conducted interviews with focus children who identified as First Nation or Métis and whom the teacher recognized as proficient readers. These criteria are the rationale for identifying this inquiry as a case study. The decision to use case study "stems from the fact that this design is chosen precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation" (Merriam, 1998, pp. 28-29). The goal was to use "holistic description and explanation" (p. 29) to reveal an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Yin (1994) defined case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries

between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). The phenomenon of the children's use of the funds of knowledge that they brought to school to support the use of multiliteracies, as well as their use of multiliteracies to express meaning when they read, overlapped with the classroom context in which the teacher used multiliteracies pedagogy to support reading instruction.

Yin (1989) explained that case study research is useful when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control" (p. 20). This research is driven by the question of how incorporating multiliteracies, such as multimedia technology, in an elementary classroom supports Aboriginal students' reading. These children occupied a place where traditional reading practices and digital technology co-existed. They brought their personal, sociocultural, and Aboriginal literacies to the practice of reading in the classroom, whether they were reading traditional print or multimodal texts.

Merriam (1998) characterized case studies as particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic. This study focused on a specific entity and a particular phenomenon; hence, it is particularistic. I sought answers to the research questions by collecting in-depth descriptions of the complexities in a language arts classroom; thus, the study is descriptive. This case study is also heuristic in that it "illuminates the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study. [Case studies] can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader's experience, or confirm what is known" (p. 30).

All research designs have strengths and weaknesses. The advantages of using case study are its rich description of a complex entity set in real life and its ability to add to existing knowledge to support further study and inform educational policy (Merriam, 1998). Merriam explained that "the case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon. Anchored in real-life situations, the case study results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon" (p. 41). The rich descriptions required in case study research also limit the design. Substantial amounts of time are required to gather data to produce rich descriptions.

Another aspect that needs to be considered is the researcher, who comes to the study with beliefs that will affect what he or she observes, how he or she will analyze the data, and how he or she will share the data as evidence to support the research questions. I have situated this research within the constructivist paradigm, which recognizes that knowledge is co-constructed. As a researcher I needed to be mindful of how the theoretical framework would inform the type of data collection, as well as my interpretation of the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). My beliefs about what is valuable knowledge and what I could come to know through inquiry affected the research process. Merriam (1998) cited reliability, validity, and generalizability as further limitations of case study research.

The purpose of case study research is not to generalize (Hays, 2004); rather, "case study researchers examine each case expecting to uncover new and unusual interactions, events, explanations, interpretations, and cause-and-effect connections" (p. 218). The use of multiple sources of data afforded me the creation of rich descriptions of the phenomenon that would offer insight into the complex lives of readers. In case studies, "researchers are interested in the meaning people make of their lives in very particular contexts" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 9). I describe the context of this study at the research site below and include details of the location of the study, who was involved, the tools that I used to collect data, and my role as researcher.

The research site: Setting the context. I conducted the study in an urban elementary school in a Western Canadian city. Case studies are bounded by time and space (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 1989) and include a unit of analysis (Hays, 2004). In this case study the unit of analysis was a literacy-rich elementary classroom with a community of practice of readers who used multiliteracies during a language arts unit of study. I selected the classroom and participants by using "purposive sampling" (Merriam, 1998, p. 61). The classroom teacher, who planned the literacy learning, and the students in the classroom participated. The purposive sample was based on the following selection criteria:

1. A literacy-rich classroom characterized by a wide variety of reading materials to accommodate a variety of interests and reading levels and organized and labelled to ensure easy access; print-rich walls with charts, students'

resources, and samples of their work; a classroom arranged for both small- and large-group work, as well as quiet spaces for reading and conferencing; materials for writing, drawing, or visually representing; a balanced literacy program of read-alouds and shared, guided, and independent reading and writing; and a classroom teacher who offers meaningful and authentic learning experiences and integrates skills and knowledge across subject areas (McGee & Richgels, 1996).

2. An elementary classroom teacher who integrated technology into reading and literacy instruction and used the following practices: integration of conventional and new literacies, teaching of critical thinking, promotion of learning to learn, integration of literacy instruction with content-area instruction, opportunities for social interaction and collaboration, differentiation of instruction, equal access to technology, creation of a learning community within the classroom, preparation for lessons and units in a multifaceted way, and instruction that was flexible and responsive to students' needs (Watts-Taffe & Gwinn, 2007).
3. A literacy-rich classroom with a minimum 15% of students who identify as belonging to an First Nations, Métis or Inuit community and/or culture. Because funds of knowledge were salient to this research, it was also important that the children come from homes and a community in which they acknowledge their First Nation or Métis identity.

Merriam (1998) asserted that "the criteria you establish for purposive sampling directly reflect the purpose of *the study* and guide in the identification of information-rich cases" (p. 62). The Grade 3 classroom that I selected was a suitable case for inquiry into the community of practice of readers in a classroom in which the teacher integrated multiliteracies through the incorporation of technology into literacy instruction.

I designed the study to spend several months in a classroom that met the three criteria above. I required a literacy-rich classroom because reading is a sociocultural process and therefore requires places, time, experiences, and the planning of meaningful social interactions (Braunger & Lewis, 2008; Gee, 2001; Halliday, 1975; Vygotsky, 1978). Braunger and Lewis (2008) informed us that

> learners in purposefully arranged rooms demonstrate more creative productivity, greater use of language-related activities, more engaged and exploratory behaviour, and more social interaction and cooperation than do learners in randomly or poorly defined settings (Moore, 1996; Neuman & Celano, 2001). (p. 67)

The classroom teacher also played a critical role in learning. Braunger and Lewis (2008) cited researchers (Allington & Johnson, 2002; Langer 2002; Pressley et al., 2001; Taylor et al., 1999) who underlined the need for teachers to be "able to design instruction to meet their students' individual needs; employ scaffolding strategies to promote higher-level thinking before, during, and after the reading process; and model, demonstrate, and explicitly teach a range of strategies in a variety of contexts" (p. 74). Therefore, it was important to work with a classroom teacher who exhibited these traits as part of her teaching practice.

I located a literacy-rich classroom by submitting applications to conduct research within several urban and rural school divisions. I received positive responses from several superintendents and directors in school divisions with schools in cities and towns that were comprised of a minimum of 15% Aboriginal students. I chose 15% as the approximate population of Aboriginal people in the province is close to 15%. In some cases I was unable to connect with the classroom teachers whom they suggested, and in one case I made several visits to determine whether the classroom would be an ideal site. One particular middle-years classroom in a rural context had an remarkable teacher with an effective literacy instructional program. However, because his current unit of study did not incorporate technology, the search continued.

Based on my criteria for the classroom and the classroom teacher, I contacted an inner-city school principal. The need for a classroom teacher who integrated technology was salient to this study because "new technologies change the very nature of what it means to be literate" (Watts-Taffe & Gwinn, 2007, p. 3). I met the principal at the inner-city school, and we discussed my research proposal so that she could ask particular teaching staff whom she felt would fit my research criteria if they would like to participate. Dyson and Genishi (2005) emphasized that "this permission-granting is a critical first step and bodes well for the kinds of trusting relationships that underlie case studies that engage and inform both participants and researchers" (p. 61). It is interesting

that the classroom teacher who granted me permission and invited me into her classroom did not view her literacy instruction as integrating technology; instead, she viewed this area of her teaching practice as lacking.

School and classroom context. Belleheights School is a prekindergarten to Grade 8 community school located in the west central area of an urban prairie city. A community school delivers an educational program that involves the wider community through partnerships and collaboration. Community schools receive additional supports because of their critical needs with regard to health, socioeconomics, justice, or transience issues (Saskatchewan Education, 2012). Belleheights is an older area of the city and identified as a lower-income inner-city neighbourhood. For this reason some residents benefit from affordable housing, and community economic development initiatives have improved the lives of the residents in the area. A community association organizes leisure and social activities. Activities often took place at Belleheights School, which also has an outdoor rink. Two high schools are nearby, one a few blocks west in the same neighbourhood and the second a few blocks east in the next neighbourhood. Businesses, stores, and restaurants are located a few blocks south of the school on a very busy street and arterial road.

The demographics of Belleheights School consisted mostly of lower socioeconomic families; specifically, 51% of the students self-declared as First Nations or Métis, and 13% as English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) students. In addition, a growing number of immigrant families were from Asia and northern Africa. The school offered a nutritional program of breakfast and lunch for those who needed it. As well, all students could eat a morning snack that the school provided. The nutrition program fed about 90-100 students each day of the over 260 registered students. A jigging group performed at community and school events, and the school also offered a dental program and an after-school program with a variety of recreational activities.

The school practiced the Circle of Courage model to guide its learning community. Each value of the Circle of Courage has outcomes that guide the students' and staff's actions. The Circle of Courage model that Belleheights School (Figure 1) used outlines the outcomes for students. They are written in student-friendly language and organized according to each of the values in the Circle of Courage.

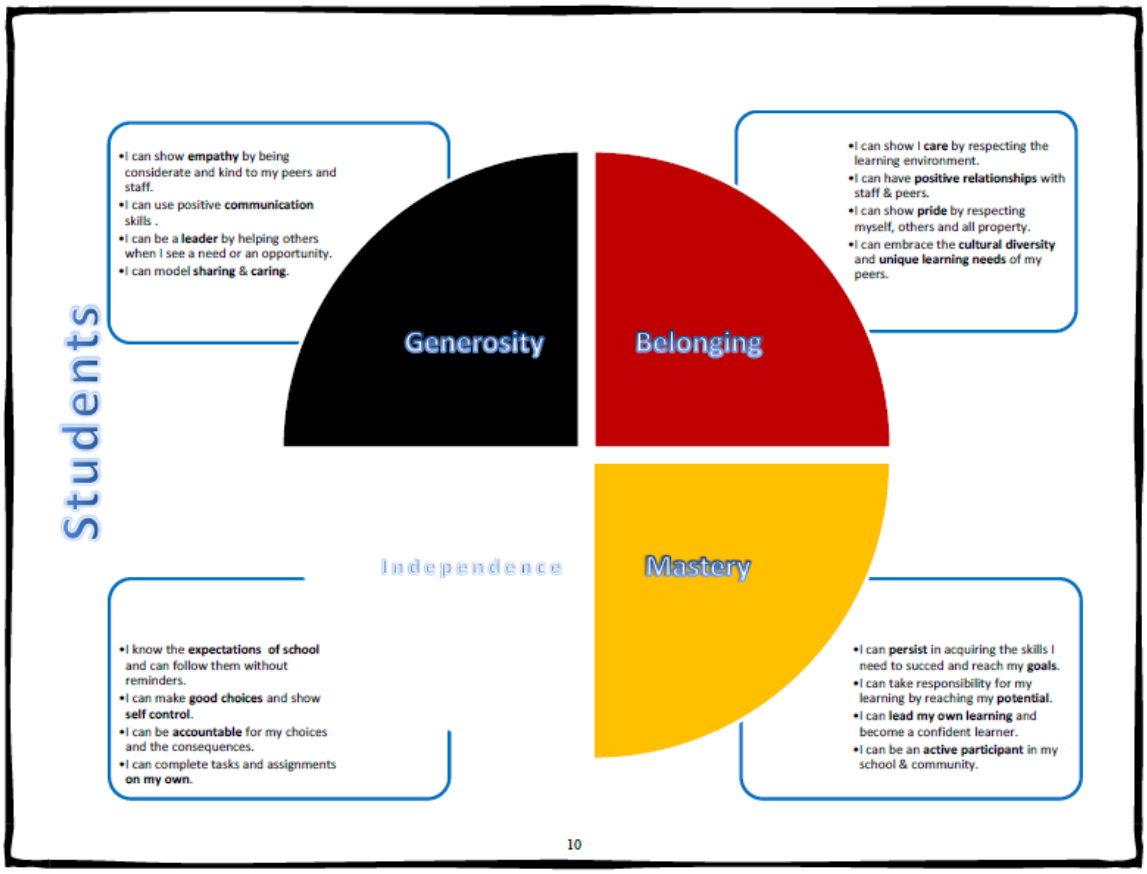


Figure 1. Circle of Courage model at Belleheights School.

The students demonstrated the values through 'I statements.' For example, the value of generosity has four statements: "I can show empathy by being kind and considerate toward my peers and staff"; "I can use positive communication skills"; "I can be a leader by helping others when I see a need or opportunity"; and "I can model sharing and caring." A similar graphic presents the outcomes for staff and teachers.

The Circle of Courage was more evident in Ms. Reed's (all names are pseudonyms) Grade 3 classroom than in the others. Her classroom was situated on the second floor and had 22 students who varied in ability and ethnicity. In the Grade 3 classroom, 52% of the class identified as First Nations or Métis, 33% identified as EAL students, and 14% required the assistance of an educational assistant (EA). In some school jurisdictions, the EA has also been known as a teacher's assistant. The EA supported students who were categorized with cognitive needs and required additional

academic supports and thus additional funding. The EAL students came from Uzbekistan, Iraq, Ethiopia, India, Thailand, and the Philippines. Two of the students were diagnosed as autistic, and one student was labelled cognitively delayed.

Ms. Reed structured the week by using a balanced literacy instructional framework. A balanced literacy program incorporated all of the language arts strands of reading, listening, viewing, writing, speaking, and representing and included modelled, shared, guided, and independent aspects in the receptive and expressive domains. Children learn through the medium of language (Halliday, 1975), and teachers use scaffolding, explicit teaching, and meaningful reading and writing experiences. Ms. Reed organized the literacy learning through a combination of Daily 5™ (Boushey & Moser, 2006) and workshop routines. She also integrated literacy instruction into the content areas of social studies, science, arts education, and math.

Participants

The Grade 3 classroom consisted of 22 students and the classroom teacher, who participated in the study and were members of the community of practice. Consultation with Ms. Reed solidified my choice of six Aboriginal children as the focal participants. Ms. Reed was in the process of completing reading assessments by using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. Heineman (2014), who published this system, described it as a "comprehensive system for one-on-one assessment reliably; . . . [it] systematically matches students' instructional and independent reading abilities to the F&P Text Level Gradient™" (para. 1). The classroom teacher invited students to participate in the study who self-identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit and who demonstrated competency as proficient readers: They checked for understanding, made predictions, made connections, made inferences, used prior knowledge, visualized, determined importance, and asked questions according to the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System and the classroom teacher's observations. Ms. Reed also considered these students ideal focal participants because they enjoyed talking about themselves as readers and writers.

I invited three boys and three girls to be focal participants in the research. I met with each student privately to explain what the research study was about and how he or she could help me in the study. The children were excited about being involved. I

wondered whether this special attention and the ability to work one-on-one with someone influenced their assent to participate. I had arrived at the school for my initial visits to build rapport and become familiar to the students. A student always asked me to sit with him or her. They all appreciated the individual attention.

The six identified children and I read the information letter together, and I gave them an opportunity to ask questions. We also read the letter of assent. I asked them to tell me in their own words what they thought the study was about and what I was asking of them. I believed that if they could articulate the study in their own words, then they fully understood what was involved. Consequently, they could also campaign on my behalf to their parents and guardians. I gave letters of information to the focal children to take home to their parents or guardians, as well as two copies of the letter of consent and one copy of the letter of assent. I kept the signed copy of the assent letter from each focal child. However, it took several reminders to the parents to sign and return the consent letters, and in a couple of cases I had to send another copy of the letters and consent forms, along with a pen because the parents of one student were unable to sign because they did not have a pen, and another student misplaced the envelope. Four of the six focal children returned signed consent forms from their parents or guardians, although all were eager to participate. Tanya was eager to participate, but her mother would not grant consent. It was unfortunate because Tanya kept asking me when it was her turn to go out into the hallway and work with me. Therefore, from time to time I would invite Tanya to read or draw with me in the hallway.

Portraits of the focal children. I introduce the four focal children involved in this research by drawing on the multiple sources of data that I gathered from observations, conversations with the classroom teacher, preinterview activities, and conversations with the focal children. The focal children were two boys and two girls, Connor, Karl, Margaret, and Shayla.

Connor. Connor is an energetic and loquacious boy who identified as First Nation but did not specify a specific tribal group affiliation. He was the biggest boy in the class. In our interview he said that he wanted to play football and confidently told me, "*I have the size for it*." Ms. Reed commented on Connor's willingness to help. I witnessed his alacrity to help others several times during my visits. For example,

Ms. Reed needed to move a student's desk to make room for the audiovisual cart that transported her laptop and projector. Connor was ready to assist and picked up the desk to move it out of the way. To depict this more vividly, Connor did not simply slide the desk out of the way or pick up one end to move it; he grabbed the edges of the desk and lifted it as high into the air as he could, over the top of the other desks, to move it to the other side. This was no easy feat for a Grade 3 student, but because Connor was bigger, he had a physical advantage over his classmates. Connor enjoyed reading illustrated novels and informational books about the war. During our interview he told me that he did not read at home, but he knew that reading would help him to do well in school. It was also evident that he was well regarded among his peers, because he was the leader in the classroom and assisted many of them in the computer lab. Connor used computers proficiently, which his classroom teacher acknowledged. Ms. Reed would ask Connor to assist other students who struggled with navigating their way on the computers. She remarked on Connor's outgoing nature and placed him in a position of influence with his peers. He liked to make jokes and had a good sense of humour, which made him a favourite among his peers, and they would follow his lead or imitate him. I also observed Connor working diligently during learning activities. Rarely was he diverted. Ms. Reed would inform the students that completing an activity was their passport to the outside, and Connor would make sure that he finished his work so that he could be dismissed for recess. During class discussions Connor always contributed. He was quick to raise his hand to share ideas, make connections, or ask questions.

Karl. Karl is a middle child in his family and has an older sister and brother and a younger sister and brother. He identified as Métis and remarked during our interview that his favourite class was culture, where a majority of the learning activities involved the Cree and Métis cultures. Karl also participated in jigging and square dancing with the school dance group. During our preinterview activity, Karl reported that his grandma and poppa spoke Cree. He knew the Cree words for 'come' (*astum*), 'go away' (*awas*), and 'sit' (*api*). Karl's family moved frequently, and he commented that he had left many of his possessions in his old house. I wondered whether Karl's family had left possessions behind because they had to leave in a hurry, there was a break-up in the family, or they had financial difficulties and were unable to regain access to the dwelling to collect their

possessions. He further elucidated his family's financial challenges when he told me that the family often sent its laptop to the pawnshop to be fixed. Karl did not seem to understand why they took the laptop to the pawnshop; his parents might have been shielding him from the truth about how they managed to cope financially.

Karl had been in Ms. Reed's Grade 2/3 class the previous year and was very familiar with her expectations and routines. As part of the preinterview activity, Karl created a daily schedule in which he outlined his role and responsibilities at school during both the before- and after-school care program and school hours. Following the rules and fairness were important to Karl; he made sure that his fellow students were also aware of the rules and would point out any situation that he deemed unfair. It was easy to engage Karl in conversation because, notably, he was the first student to come over to talk to me. I observed his curiosity about everything that was going on around him. He would constantly survey the room to see what other students were doing, and many times he would check to see what other students were doing. Even when I would work with other students, Karl would stop by to see what was happening or find out whether there was a way for him to be involved. He often peeked out the door into the hall when I was working with another focal child.

Karl was always very quick to interact in whatever he found interesting, and he always had something to share or questions that he wanted answered. I observed him access the numerous movies that he has watched and several video games to make connections to other texts. On my first visit to the Grade 3 classroom, Karl was reading an informational book on artists. It was evident that he enjoyed sharing his connections of text-to-text and text-to-self. Karl made sure that his teacher heard his thoughts, whether she elicited them or not. Being the first at or in the centre of activities was important; he would always try to be at the front of the line, make sure that his books or pages were in front or on top of everyone else's, and often leave his home base to sit at the table or desk in the centre of room.

Margaret. Margaret is a thoughtful and considerate student who volunteered every day to pick up the morning snack for the class. Margaret lived with her mother, father, and an older sister. She did not limit her family in the city to whomever she lived with, but included an aunt and cousins with whom she went to movies. She was very

proud of being Dene and enjoyed visiting her grandparents in the northern Dene community where they lived. Also, she knew a few words in Dene. She owned two dogs and a cat and told me during our preinterview activity that she loved animals. Margaret owned her own laptop, which was a gift from her grandmother. Her grandmother featured in many of her stories about family and her Dene culture. The pride in her Dene culture and background was evident in her stories of family.

Margaret had been in Ms. Reed's Grade 2/3 class the previous year. Ms. Reed informed me that that year Margaret rarely contributed and struggled with reading and writing, but that she had witnessed considerable change in Margaret's literacy skills over the last couple of months in Grade 3. Ms. Reed told me that Margaret had created her own dictionary to assist her with spelling. I observed Margaret's ability to express herself poetically and her enjoyment of learning words. She loved animals, which extended into her choice of animal books to read, and she also expressed the desire to be a veterinarian when she was older. In addition, she enjoyed reading illustrated novels such as *Geronimo Stilton* in class. Margaret was a consistent contributor to and participant in classroom discussions. She asked good questions and offered explanations to others. It was apparent in her contributions to class discussions that she noticed the connections between texts. The classroom teacher informed me that Margaret was rarely absent and had missed only a couple of days of school because of illness. During our preinterview activity, Margaret remarked that she loved school.

Shayla. Shayla is a large, shy girl who identified as belonging to the Cree nation. Shayla and her mother lived with her grandmother, to whom she referred by using the Cree term *kohkum*. Shayla loved to talk one-on-one and tell stories about her cousins and *kohkum*. She consistently arrived at school late, often not until 10:00 a.m. At school she did not participate in class discussions. She participated in the literacy activities through independent reading and writing, but would often ask for help with her work when she was required to write. Shayla would ask me to sit beside her when she was at school. I took advantage of these invitations because she was often late or absent during my visits. When I sat with her, she was talkative. She loved to tell stories about her family, talk about her cousins—what they had done on the weekend or the previous evening—and spend time with her *kohkum*. These stories evidenced the importance of family in

Shayla's life. I asked her why she did not share her stories with the rest of the class, and she informed me that she is shy. During my observations I noted that Shayla did not become involved in class discussions but would spend most of her time looking at something or turning away from the teacher. When Shayla arrived late and the class was in the middle of a literacy activity, Ms. Reed would make her way over to Shayla's home base and explain what the activity was and what the students were required to do. She would start Shayla on the literacy activity and then move on to assist other students. Shayla would start the work while Ms. Reed was there, but once the teacher left to help other students, Shayla would not continue on her own. I did not observe her completing literacy activities by herself, but usually with the support of more knowledgeable others. The EA, Ms. Reed, or I would assist Shayla; or she would look at the work of her table partner to complete the minimum requirements of the literacy activity. When I sat with her to assist her on a literacy activity, she preferred to tell me stories about her family rather than complete the task.

I created these portraits through observations, conversations with the classroom teacher and the focal children, preinterview activities, and interviews with the focal children. In the next section I describe my data-collection methods and the tools that I utilized to help me to explore how the students used multiliteracies as part of their literacy learning.

Data-collection methods and tools

Case study involves in-depth study over a period of time, and researchers collect data by observing and interviewing their participants, as well as collecting artifacts for analysis (Glesne, 2011). I collected data over approximately 12 weeks of visits to the classroom during ELA instruction. I collected the data in three phases. First, I visited the classroom to build rapport and a relationship with the students. Second, I conducted a reading survey with the entire class and did preinterview activities with each focal child. Third, I had conversations with students, conducted informal interviews with the focal children, observed the students during literacy activities, and made copies of student and teacher artifacts. I used observations, field notes, a reflective journal, photographs, video recordings, drawings, artifacts of students' work, artifacts of the teacher's lesson plans, conversations, and informal interviews as multiple sources of data. Furthermore, I

employed a multitude of methods that Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 2000) defined as *bricolage*. I brought together my observation field notes, interview transcripts, and reflective journal; student- and teacher-created artifacts; photographs; classroom maps and diagrams; and video recordings to interpret and analyze how multiliteracies supported the reading of these four Aboriginal children. In the third phase I participated in and observed an ELA unit of study that incorporated technology. I followed the students' steps as they created multimodal artifacts by using digital photographs and notes to record their work and participation.

In this section I outlined the research activities of each phase, and the following is a fuller description of the data-collection methods and tools.

Relationship building. For approximately 12 weeks I visited Belleheights School every morning from the beginning of the school day until the morning recess break. I required "immersion in settings over time to understand what and how particular events matter to the people involved, including any local or emic labels for social events and any discourses evoked when particular events are discussed" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 25). The morning was an ideal time to visit because it was the scheduled literacy block. Occasionally, I visited in the afternoon during the class's scheduled computer time when they worked on literacy activities in the school computer lab.

I started my visits prior to the Christmas break and spent the first week in the new year in the classroom helping out and continuing to get to know students. In qualitative research rapport and trust are important in gathering data in the field (Glesne, 2011). These early visits were essential to my discovery of the Grade 3 classroom routines to ensure that I behaved accordingly and did not draw attention to myself. For example, it helped me to learn the classroom procedures and rules to fit in better. Glesne (2011) suggested that researchers "consciously reflect" on their appearance, speech, and behaviour to be "respectful of the customs and expectations of the group" (p. 142). The first couple of weeks during my visits, I sat with different children in the class during the scheduled Read-to-Self and either asked them read to me or read to them from their selected books. I used these early visits to ensure that I was "equitable in the time" (Glesne, 2011, p. 143) that I distributed among the students, because I knew that later I

would direct most of my attention toward the focal children. I did not want any students to feel that they were not worthy of my time or valued.

An important part of my data collection was the creation of relationships. I wanted to form positive relationships with the classroom teacher and students. Relationship building is very important in working with the children, and I wanted the students and teacher to be comfortable with me in the classroom and interacting with them. Reciprocity is also very important. I believe that it was imperative to give back to the community members who shared their knowledge and experience with me. In reciprocation, Ms. Reed and I agreed to collaborate on planning and teaching a unit. The Winter Olympics were approaching, and we decided to work together and teach an ELA unit based on the Olympics.

Reading survey. In the past as a classroom teacher I would conduct reading interest surveys to find out what my students liked to read, what they thought about reading, and the interests that they pursued outside school. It was essential that I get to know my students and their preferences and interests because the information enabled me to develop learning activities that addressed the students' interests and favourite topics. I also learned about their reading practices so that I could provide additional supports and expose the students to a variety of formats and genres for reading. I distributed the survey, similarly to a directly administered questionnaire, to a specific group for a specific purpose (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenson, 2006). Surveys can be a research method of data collection from a large group or sample of the population (Ary et al. 2006; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009) or an informal tool in a research project. I conducted a reading survey with the entire class early in the research. I reintroduced my role of researcher to the children as someone who was interested in what they could teach me about how they viewed reading. Ary et al. (2006) pointed out that "subjects are more inclined to respond to questions they perceive to be relevant and meaningful than to questions whose purpose they do not comprehend" (p. 440). I wanted to emphasize their cooperative role so that they would not think that I was there to assess or evaluate them for academic purposes; for example, for report cards or tests. The purpose of the reading survey was to solicit information on the students' perceptions of reading, whether they liked reading, what they like to read, whether they thought that they were good readers,

whether they thought that reading was something that helped them or could help them in the future, and what kind of reading they did at home. The construction of a survey requires clear questions at an appropriate level for the students to understand and that are easy to respond to (Gay et al. 2009). In addition, I read each question aloud so that all of the students could participate, regardless of their reading ability. The benefit of conducting a survey as a directly administered questionnaire was that I was present "to provide assistance or answer questions" (Ary et al, 2006, p. 416). After the students completed the survey, I made copies of the four surveys of students who had had given their assent to participate and whose parents or guardians provided consent. I then gave all of the original surveys to the classroom teacher for her own purposes. I read the students' survey answers to gain a sense of how they felt about the activity of reading and how they saw themselves as readers, and I used the reading survey information as a springboard to my interview questions with the focal children.

Preinterview activities and interviews. Prior to interviewing the focal children on their view of reading, I met with the students to introduce some preinterview activities to give me a sense of the whole child and continue to build rapport with the focal students.

> Although the researcher may be focused on one component or dimension of a child's experience, she or he needs to have a sense of the wholeness and complexity of the child's life in order to interpret the significance of what the child says or shows regarding the research topic itself. (Ellis, 2006, p. 118)

The preinterview activities informed me on how the children saw their daily lives, including life outside school. I offered each focal child a choice of preinterview activities to allow "space for a child to choose what to share, how, and when" (Ellis, 2006, p. 118). The preinterview activities required that the focal children draw, diagram, or list different events or aspects of their day. Ellis identified four benefits of preinterview drawings: (a) The drawings can express things that are difficult for the child to verbalize; (b) the drawings become a platform for stories, and "stories are the main vehicle for communicating one's experience to others" (p. 120); (c) the drawings create an opportunity to find a shared language; and (d) talking about the drawings is a means of expressing interest in what a child says. Ellis also emphasized that preinterview activities facilitate friendly, comfortable conversations. As I stated above, I gave the focal children

the choice of drawing, diagramming, or listing different aspects of their day, and they chose to create a schedule of their typical week or day. I conducted three pre-interviews and collected three pre-interview artifacts.

Interviews are another method of data collection. Gay et al. (2009) explained that "interviews permit researchers to obtain important data they cannot acquire from observation alone" (p. 370). I conducted three interviews. I used the interviews to follow up on the students' answers in the reading survey, as well as to ask questions as they arose to gain a better sense of their perspectives based on their background or prior (Gay et al., 2009). I conducted open-ended, flexible, exploratory conversations (Merriam, 1998) with the teacher and students to focus on the interactions between the students and the multiliteracies practices, "beginning with open-ended, general questions and advanc[ing] to more specific questions about strategies, processes, and consequences" (Hutchinson & Wilson, 1994, p. 303). I wanted the interviews to be open and conversational; however, I referred to a set of questions to guide the conversations. Ellis (2010) acknowledged that, "because experience is communicated through story, it is important for interviews to include questions that invite anecdotes or stories" (p. 485). The questions also helped me to learn about the children beyond the classroom context and provide a fuller picture of their storied lives. Using a "specified set of questions . . . elicits the same information from the respondents" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 371). I conducted structured interviews with questions to guide me, as well as unstructured interviews when I sat beside the children in the classroom and asked them quick questions (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Gay et al., 2009), complementarily. I also conducted informal conversational interviews with the students after I observed their participation in a literacy activity or to ask them to explain a literacy artifact. These conversations helped me to gain deeper insight into the children's thoughts and processes when they used multiliteracies in the classroom. Weber (1986) noted that, "through dialogue, the interview becomes a joint reflection on a phenomenon, a deepening of experience for both interviewer and participant" (p. 65). The interviews offered the time and space to explore the children's thoughts and ideas as well as to clarify my observations. Interviews "deepen an understanding of what we observe in the classroom and sometimes help to interpret observed activities from participants' perspectives" (Dyson & Genishi,

2005, p. 76). I audio-recorded the more formal, structured interviews but recorded the informal interviews and quick questions in field notes. As part of the protocol in structured interviews, I recorded the name of the interviewee, the date, and the time at the top of the question sheet. I wrote the focal children's answers in a space between the questions. During the informal interviews and conversations I wrote quick notes in my field notes journal, along with the date and the name of the child who participated in the conversation.

Observations. Observation is a data-collection method that involves watching the participants. Creswell (2013) stated that observation is a tool that involves the researcher's senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. In a sensory experience the researcher is involved with the participants in the activities, conversations, and interactions. Throughout the study I undertook three types of observation. Sometimes I functioned as a "complete participant" (p. 166), when I was involved and building a relationship with the students. Most of the time I was a "participant as observer" (p. 166), when I participated in activities as a teacher, assistant, and even alongside the students to gain an emic view. In this role, I participated "in the situation while observing and collecting data on the activities" (Gay et al, 2009, p. 366). Also, from time to time I was a "nonparticipant/observer as participant" (Creswell, 2013, p. 167), when I sat back, watched, and recorded what I was observing. Nonparticipant observation involved recording the behaviours but not interacting with the participants. Glesne (2011) described participant observation as moving along a continuum ranging from "mostly observation to mostly participation" (p. 64). I moved in and out of these roles throughout the duration of the study. The purpose of my observations, regardless of my level of participation, was to understand "the natural environment as lived by participants" (Gay et al. 2009, p. 366). I observed the participants every morning during the school day for 12 weeks, so approximately 50 days. I tried to focus my observations on the students' experience of literacy instruction with multiliteracies and the integration of technology and explore how they viewed the multiliteracies practices that they used in the classroom to elucidate how these practices support students in reading. I did not focus my observations on one focal student for any length of time, but instead attempted to observe and record field notes on the behaviour and practices of all the focal

participants throughout the morning. However, when conducting informal conversations that particular participant received my full attention.

My observations took place during the implementation of the Winter Olympic unit. Regardless of the type of observation, I still needed a protocol and plan for what I needed to record (Creswell, 2013). Merriam (1998) offered a checklist for observations: the physical setting, the participants, activities and interactions, conversations, informal or unplanned activities, symbolic or connotative meanings of words, nonverbal communication, and the researcher's own behaviour. It was important that I keep all of these elements in mind as I documented my observations to create a descriptive and holistic account. The written account of the observations formed my field notes. Merriam affirmed that "an important component of field notes is observer commentary; comments can include the researcher's feelings, reactions, hunches, initial interpretations, and working hypotheses" (p. 106). The field notes were comprised of two parts: "(1) descriptive information about what the observer has directly seen or heard" and "(2) reflective information that captures the researcher's personal reactions to observations, the researcher's experiences, and the researcher's thoughts during the observation sessions" (Gay et al. 2009, p. 367). As part of the observational protocol, I recorded the date, the time as it elapsed, the names of the children involved in my observations, the topic or area of instruction, and a descriptive account of the literacy activity that I observed. I also created a map of the classroom layout to record where the literacy activities occurred and where the focal children were located during the literacy activities. This was extremely useful in analyzing the data because it revealed, for example, how often Karl moved about to be part of what was going in the classroom. The field notes that I wrote during the observations also served as a catalyst for reflection. Reflection was important in that it allowed me, the researcher, to reexamine earlier interpretations (Leavy, 2009). I included this reflection component in my reflective journal.

Researcher's journal. The researcher's journal is a written document in which I recorded my reflections and made some "analytical notes" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 448) on my observations. Gay et al. urged researchers to "consciously paus[e] during the research process . . . to guide your data collection efforts as well as to allow for early

hunches about what you are seeing so far" (p. 448). The journal became a space where I could record my feelings, questions, and interpretations throughout the research process (Glesne, 2011). It was a place to think about my field notes and record emerging themes or patterns. I wrote in my researcher's journal two to three times a week during the course of my observations, and throughout my analysis and interpretation when I was no longer visiting the classroom.

Reflexivity involves critical reflection and examination of the researcher's personal and theoretical assumptions (Glesne, 2011). Throughout the data-collection phase and analysis, I asked myself questions about the literacy activities, the children's involvement, and the data-collection procedures. I would record questions, thoughts, and happenings that I believed relevant to the study as well as those I found interesting but was not sure at the time whether they were salient to the study. The reflective journal was a space for me to extend the descriptive notes by adding my feelings and early interpretations. In the journal I could later explore my feelings and use them to help me to become aware of relationships and understand more fully what was going on in the classroom (Glesne, 2011). The researcher's journal was a place not only to reflect on observations and field notes, but also to reflect and ask questions about the artifacts and documents that I collected.

Artifacts and documents. I also collected both researcher- and participant-created data (Glesne, 2011). The researcher-created data consisted of photographs, diagrams, and videos to document aspects of the community of practice. Using the photographs of the literacy-rich environment, print-rich walls, classroom libraries, and the organization of student materials and the classroom, I analyzed the data after I left the research site. The diagrams of the classroom layout and students' movements during the literacy activities facilitated recollection during the reflective journaling. The videos were a means of collecting data during the literacy activities, which involved the students' performance in complex activities that I could not chronicle in written observations. I used the photographs, diagrams, and videos in conjunction with the field notes to help my recollection during the analysis as well. I gathered the drawings and work that the focal students created so that I could later discuss them with the children. I collected 12 samples of students' work from the focal participants. Similar to photo-

elicitation, which involves the use of photos to invoke comments or memory, the use of the participant-created documents helped the children to recall the process of creating their artifacts. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) explained that "gathering children's texts and finding out where the ideas came from in the text is a good way of developing a lens that connects the home and school artifacts" (p. 27). I took digital photographs of the classroom to document the lived space in which the students interacted to create a contextual element. I digitally recorded the students' created artifacts during the creation process and then the final product. Data-collection instruments such as a digital audio recorder to record interviews and a digital camera to photograph the layout of the room and document literacy activities and participation in multiliteracies were sources of rich description. Case studies are holistic descriptions that require multiple sources to yield a comprehensive portrayal.

Researcher's role

As a qualitative researcher, I am interested in how reality is socially constructed. I stated in the introduction to this chapter that my philosophical orientation is in the constructivist paradigm. This interpretive framework guided my research and my role as a researcher. Within the constructivist paradigm the researcher and the participants are linked in that knowledge is subjective and created through transaction (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, my role as researcher was multifaceted in the process of creating understanding with my participants of their literacy lives. I had to enter the classroom to conduct interviews, observe, and gather artifacts. The case study relied on interviews, observations, and artifact analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Merriam (1998) affirmed that "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (p. 7). I needed to respond to what was occurring by analyzing data immediately to clarify the additional data that I would require as the study evolved (Merriam, 1998). I became a *bricoleur* while observing the classroom teacher and students, paying attention to what was going on while thinking about what was happening and searching for patterns. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated, "The qualitative researcher as bricoleur . . . uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, and empirical methods are at hand" (p. 4). As a bricoleur I collected, wrote, and presented the multiple forms of data while exploring possible themes. It involved a

complex process of negotiating my role as researcher and participant observer with my participants while acknowledging my own values and experiences.

I functioned as an observer in the classroom as well as interacted with the teacher, EA, and students during literacy instruction. The role of the researcher "influences what kinds of data she can gather" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 50). I was a helper, assistant, instructor, and learning companion; I was not able to keep a low profile and function solely as an observer. My identity as a teacher limited my observations. The students saw me as another adult in the room who could assist them, and I asked them to call me by first name in the hope that this would eliminate any student-teacher dynamics. However, during my time in the classroom the students continually asked me for permission to leave the room or even referred to me as Teacher. I would often tell them to ask their teacher, thinking that this would remove me from a place of authority, but realizing that I was still an adult who was telling them what to do. They needed to view me as an insider to help me to find answers to my research questions. In my proposed research design I had not planned to be involved in teaching or disciplining students while gathering data. But, when I negotiated my role with Ms. Reed, rather than teaching a collaborative unit after the completion of the study, we decided to make the collaborative unit an integral part of the study. Even though she introduced me as someone from the university who wanted to learn from them, the students saw me in the role of teacher, which evolved after we finished teaching the collaborative unit into one in which the students considered me an adult friend and invited me to join them in classroom activities; for example, I sat beside them on the floor during the Book Club meeting. It also meant that I engaged in activities that were not directly the focus of the research but added important information about the participants. For example, a child asked me to square dance with her at a school event in the evening. As my appearance became habitual, the students would often corral me into the closet as I took off my jacket in the morning with requests to read with them. I was elated to have such a positive relationship with so many students. Glesne (2011) stressed that "developing and maintaining rapport and trust with children and adolescents adds an extra dimension to the research process" (p. 145). These relationships facilitated my interviews of the

children so that they did not find my questions threatening and were willing to engage in conversations.

As an active observer, I also asked questions to better understand the phenomenon. Boostrom (1994) revealed several methods of observation and characterized the observer as "videocamera, playgoer, evaluator, subjective inquirer, insider and finally reflective interpreter" (p. 53). I took the stance of a subjective inquirer because I would "not [be] looking for the justification or legitimation of an action, but for its moral significance, for what it said about aims, beliefs, sentiments, and convictions" (p. 57). I worked to be more than a video camera who was recording a mass of data with no particular focus, while also realizing at times that I occupied the position of a playgoer by watching stories being lived; this resulted in emotions and empathy for those whom I was observing (Boostrom, 1994). I did not take on the stance of an evaluator who was sitting back in judgment, evaluating or comparing the teacher's actions to what I would have done in his or her place. Rather, during visits to the classroom I became a "skilled observer" (Merriam, 1998, p. 950) who not only paid attention to what was being said and done, but also wrote descriptive field notes and reflected.

I also decided it was important for the students to know me as Métis. I found as a classroom teacher that when I shared with my students that I was Métis, they would inevitably seek me out to reveal their identity as Métis. I believed that if the children knew that I was Métis, they might be more forthcoming about their own experiences as First Nation or Métis students.

As an Métis educator, woman, wife, mother, daughter, granddaughter, niece, and researcher, I wear many hats. These subjectivities I carried with me. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) explained that "the gendered, multiculturally situated researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology), that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that are then examined (methodology) in specific ways" (p. 11). As a Métis raised in my culture with ties to my Métis community, I have strong ideas about what it means to be Métis. Being Métis involves understanding and exemplifying the importance of place and kinship. The role of culture in my life and experiences has influenced how I perceive events. Researchers "might also reflect on particular aspects of our selves that influence the lenses we look through" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 57).

I realize that my experiences are just that, my own, and are not generalizable to all Métis people. This insight has helped me to understand that the Aboriginal children who participated in this study also have their own perspectives based on their own experiences and that they are not generalizable to other Aboriginal children. However, this emic perspective perhaps also helps me as a researcher to see things that another researcher might miss or not recognize as significant. Understanding my role or the many roles that I occupied in the classroom during the study was significant to how I positioned myself. Who I am figured greatly into how I collected, analyzed, and interpreted data (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). It influenced the questions I asked, my field notes, and my reflections. My lived experiences position me within a particular history and as part of a particular cultural and social identity.

Although my methodology is situated in a western worldview, I cannot leave my Métis sensibilities outside of this research. There were aspects of Indigenous methodologies that were intrinsically part of my research. My cultural knowledge guided my observations, analysis and interpretation. Also as I stated earlier, relationships and trust were very important. Kovach (2009) identified the importance of trust and respect in building a relationship between the researcher and research participants for stories to emerge. Relationships, respect, reciprocity, and cultural protocols are Indigenous methods (Kovach, 2009). Additionally, a valuable source of data was conversation. Conversations with the participants alongside their literacy activities were open and allowed for the participants to share their stories, thus honouring oral narrative tradition (Kovach, 2009).

Data-management strategies. I managed and organized the data according to date, activity, participant, and method and the field notes and researcher's journal chronologically. Each day I was in the classroom, I would record the date and time of my observations. The habit of recording the date and time made it easy to look back through my observational records to further analyze my observations based on the particular literacy activities in which the students were involved as the unit of study progressed. For example, the unit plan organizer specified which days the students would use Glogster; therefore, I was able to refer to that date in my observational field notes to help me to recall what took place and guide my reflections and analysis. As I

stated earlier, my field notes consisted of a descriptive account of what I saw and heard and a reflective portion in which I recorded my thoughts and feelings about what I observed (Gay et al., 2009). I utilized a checklist to ensure the consistency of my observations based on Merriam's (1998) checklist (see p. 85 of this dissertation). I recorded the time, the literacy activity, the children whom I observed, and the activities or incidents that appeared significant. Gay et al. (2009) noted the importance of following an observational protocol to "provide a common framework for field notes, making it easier to organize and categorize data across various sets of notes" (p. 367). I also used a diagram of the classroom to map the movements of the students whom I was observing and record the children's interactions to complement my descriptive notes. I organized these diagrams chronologically in a binder.

I had planned to make digital notes using my iPad while I observed, but introducing this technology would have been a distraction, so I kept a notebook-style journal. I continued to use a reflective journal on my computer and managed the notes and transcripts mechanically with digital files and folders to facilitate access (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). This made it easier to locate key words that fit within themes because of the word processing program's Find feature on the task bar. I could type a word or phrase into the Find tab, and the program would search through documents and locate the word or words. The digital format allowed quick access to documents that fit into a particular theme. I saved the transcribed interviews and digital copies of the participant-created artifacts in folders according to each child's name. I also organized photocopies of the reading surveys and samples of students' work in a binder based on a pseudonym for each child, and then chronologically, and copies of the teacher-created handouts chronologically in a binder. In addition, I organized the video recordings and digital photographs that involved more than one child in folders based on the literacy activity.

Analysis and interpretation. In qualitative research data analysis is inductive. A "researcher starts with a large set of data representing many things and seeks to narrow them progressively into small and important groups of key data" (Gay et al. 2009, p. 449). The researcher analyzes the data to construct meaning through a process of "organizing, categorizing, synthesizing, analyzing and writing" (p. 449) and must read and reread the data to identify themes or patterns.

Data analysis and interpretation occurred both during and after the data collection because, as Merriam (1998) pointed out, "data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity" (p. 151). The reflective journal was a method of data collection as well, and it captured my early analysis and interpretations. The analysis was an iterative process in an attempt to better understand and describe what was going on in the literacy class. Ary et al. (2006) asserted that "analysis involves reducing and organizing the data, synthesizing, searching for significant patterns, and discovering what is important" (p. 490). I read through the field notes, transcribed interviews, and student artifacts, recording questions and thoughts in a reflective journal as I did so. Analytic questions helped me to make sense of the data. I asked myself some questions while I observed and analyzed the data that I collected: What helped these students to be successful? Was it something in school? Was it something that they brought from home? How did the students see themselves as readers? How did being First Nations or Métis influence their literacy practices? How did they bring their cultural identity into school literacy? How did the students approach reading with the use of technology? What did the students do when they had access to technology? I used these questions inductively to look for words, ideas, or occurrences that could potentially answer my research questions and then looked for recurring ideas. I flagged ideas that I thought were relevant to my study, brought the recurring ideas together, and organized them into themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Braun and Clarke (2006) explained that a "theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question" (p. 10). I then colour-coded the artifacts and notes according to the recurring ideas or "patterns of meaning" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) that resonated within me during the analysis. Coding is "the process of categorically marking or referencing units of text with codes and labels as a way to indicate patterns and meaning" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 451). The colour coding was a means of determining at a glance which notes and artifacts supported certain themes. Grouping observational notes, reflections, and artifacts according to themes and their corresponding colours, I easily brought all of the data together to further analyze a particular theme, identify relationships, and make interpretations. I analyzed the data for patterns and themes that helped to answer the research questions, supported by the literature review. The analysis of data was "interpretive" in "explaining relationships,

theorizing about how and why relationships appear as they do, and reconnect[ing] the new knowledge with what is already known" (Ary et al., 2006, p. 490). Writing also served as a method of analysis and interpretation. Ellis (1998) identified the significant role of writing in the process of interpretation: "Writing invites reflection and deliberation: reflection on meaning as we search for the right words, and deliberation about the relationships among experiences or ideas as we evaluate the argument or interpretation we put forward" (p. 6).

Writing about the literacy experiences helped me to interpret the events, make sense of them, and further reflect on the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) also identified writing as an integral part of analysis, starting with the "jotting down of ideas and potential coding schemes" (p. 86). During my observations I tried to record as much as I could in my field notes; therefore, reading through my notes later, reflecting, and writing enabled me to question what I had not recorded, and insights emerged. During the data-gathering process I was concerned with recording what I thought was most important or would be most useful in assisting me in answering my research questions. The writing process gave me the space to step back and ponder elements that I might have missed or overlooked and thus to look at the events in a different way.

I analyzed the reading surveys by reading the responses and clarifying them in the interviews to get a clearer and holistic picture of how the children viewed reading and themselves as a reader. The interpretation of the reading survey resulted in inferences on the general attitudes and beliefs of the children about reading and themselves as readers. I analyzed the interview transcripts by reading them, writing notes on initial my thoughts, jotting down possible themes, and categorizing the notes into themes. I then analyzed the field notes, reflective journal, and artifacts according to these themes and categorized them according to the patterns that emerged; for example, practices, behaviours, attitudes, or repeated words. After I reread the field notes and reflective journal, I wrote key words and ideas on index cards and later organized the notes according to themes. This process helped me to identify similarities among the focal children, and I began to ask questions about how the themes were related. The activity of creating a visual thematic map permitted me to see patterns and make connections. Braun and Clarke (2006) explained that thematic maps are a useful tool to see connections and relationships between themes

as well as organize thinking about subthemes and overarching themes. The goal of interpretation is "to find meaning in the data; it is based heavily on the connections, common aspects, and links among the data, especially the identified categories and patterns" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 456). The literature review helped to identify and supported the categories. Throughout the analysis and interpretation stages, I focused on the research questions to guide my thinking as I identified significant ideas and organized them into themes. The interpretation resulted in my making sense of the data with regard to what I deemed significant, why it was significant, and what it told me.

Discourse analysis and interpretation. The analysis and interpretation of the talk transcribed in the following chapter is informed by Wells' (1999) dialogic inquiry and Gee's (2010) discourse analysis. I wove elements of dialogic inquiry and discourse analysis into it to aid my analysis and interpretation of the classroom discourse. Beginning with Wells' dialogic inquiry and continuing with Gee's discourse analysis, I highlight the components that were instrumental in my analysis and interpretation, and then I explain how I wove them together to form my own method of analysis and interpretation.

Wells (1999) wrote that dialogue transforms both the participants and knowledge. Although dialogic inquiry is not a method, it emphasizes the acquisition of knowledge through talk. During a discussion, a speaker shares an experience to which other participants add. As the discussion progresses through responses and attempts to understand, the participants build knowledge that leads to enhanced understanding. Wells illustrated this process in what he called the *spiral of knowing*. In the spiral of knowing, the learner uses personal experience to make sense of new information that might come from someone who is sharing an experience, explaining something, or reflecting on something heard or seen. For this new information to be useful, it needs to be transformed into knowledge, and social interaction transforms this knowledge into understanding. The participants in the discourse socially co-construct knowledge so that it becomes a shared understanding. Thus, talk can be analyzed by (a) identifying the experience that the participants are sharing, (b) recognizing what information has been added and the potential source of that information, and (c) determining how the responses and attempts of the speaker to reformulate or consolidate the experiences or information

that the other participants have shared might support the participants' knowledge building and potentially add to their understanding (Wells, 1999). Gee's (2010) discourse analysis includes seven building tasks of language: significance, practices, identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge. Thus, talk can be analyzed by (a) acknowledging how language is used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways they might or might not be significant, (b) recognizing the particular way in which the practices come together and how language is used to enact those practices, (c) determining how language is used to enact or attribute an identity to a speaker or writer, (d) identifying how language signals an existing or desired relationship to the person with whom we are communicating, (e) using the lens of politics to ask what perspective on social goods this piece of language is communicating, (f) exploring how a piece of language connects or disconnects things, and (g) understanding how different languages or sign systems are used to communicate and that some are privileged over others (Gee, 2010). Accordingly, my analysis and interpretation of the talk weave together these two ideologies through an examination of the talk to determine the significance of the experience being shared and then explain the significance of the experience. I then explore how the students' identities shaped the talk and their knowledge building and clarify the role of identity in their talk and the construction of knowledge. Last, I question how their language practices privileged certain sign systems to better explain their language practices. I demonstrate this process in chapter 4.

As a researcher, the interpretations that I make are subjective and based on personal experiences, beliefs, and biases. In social constructivism, "researchers recognize that their own background shapes their interpretations" and therefore researchers need to "position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their personal, cultural, and historical experiences" (Creswell, 2013, p. 25). How I was positioned in the classroom as a teacher, helper, or adult friend influenced the data that I collected. Regardless of how I wanted the children to view me, I was still an adult in a place of power. Therefore, during the data analysis and interpretation I needed to recognize that the children chose to share with me what they did because I am an adult and because we had a certain relationship. These relationships influenced how I interpreted the words, behaviours, attitudes, and lived stories of the

children. In many of my journal entries and field notes, I used the voice of a teacher. These subjectivities required that I reread the data as a researcher, try to recall what I observed, and question the notes that I recorded. I had to forgo assumptions that I made based on my subjectivities and the biases that those subjectivities carried.

Trustworthiness features

Issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability are common concerns in case study research. I addressed validity and reliability by using several sources of data to answer the research questions. The strength of case study research lies in the use of many different sources of data (Yin, 1989). Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 2000) attested to the use of multiple methods "as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation" (p. 2). Furthermore, Ary et al. (2006) noted that "a combination of data sources such as interviews, observations, and relevant documents" (p. 505) ensure that researchers will find support for their observations and interpretations in more than one data source. The design of the study incorporates multiple methods of data collection to add rigor and construct interpretations that are reasonable.

The biases and integrity of the researcher need to be considered. As I noted earlier, the subjectivities of the researcher play a significant role in what and how the data are collected, why certain data are collected, and how the data are analyzed and interpreted. During the analysis and interpretation, I continually questioned the significance of the data, as well as how the children would perceive what I had written about them. They trusted me with their stories, and I wanted to represent them honestly.

The findings from this research study are not representative of all Aboriginal children. In terms of generalizability, researchers "concern themselves not with the question of whether their findings are generalizable, but rather with the question of to which other settings or subjects they are generalizable" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 33). Therefore, I did not undertake this study to solve the literacy issues that all children face; rather, I attempted to offer some insight into the literacy lives of a few Aboriginal children that possibly could help others by informing either practice or policy. The contextualization of literacy experiences provided a space to situate the particular lived realities of the focal children in the broader world (Dyson & Genishi, 2005).

Ethical considerations. For this study I received the approval of the Research Ethics Board (REB) in the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education and the approval of the school division in which the students attended school. I discussed this research with the school division superintendent and the school administration. This school division had its own research approval process and procedures that I followed. I submitted an application form for permission to conduct research within the school division, I described the proposed study and provided copies of the ethics approval letter from the REB; a lay summary of the proposed study that I sent to the REB; the study objectives that I sent to the REB; information letters and consent/assent letters for the classroom teacher, parents/guardians, and student participants; consent and assent forms; a literacy interest survey; preinterview activities; interview questions; and a recruitment letter that I sent to the school division as part of the REB application, as per the school division's application guidelines. I conferred with the classroom teacher on the nature of my research and its purpose and selected a research site that fit most of my criteria based on the willingness of this classroom teacher to participate. Once the classroom teacher agreed to allow me to visit her classroom, I again discussed the nature and purpose of the research with each focal student, both orally and in letters. I wrote letters of consent to the teacher and the parents and letters of assent to the children. It was a challenge to describe the purpose of the research, its procedures, and how the study would affect the children in language that was clear (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). I needed to use words that clearly illustrated what would take place and why without using jargon or terminology that might have been difficult to understand. I obtained informed consent from the parents, guardians, and classroom teacher, as well as informed assent from the children. The focal children who participated had the permission of their parents or guardians.

The children's participation was voluntary, and I informed them that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty while I collected data. I also explained that I would destroy all of the data that I had collected if they chose not to participate. I made all of the information available in the letters of consent for the parents/guardians of the students and the classroom teacher, as well as the letters of assent for the children who were willing to participate. I gave copies of all of the letters to the classroom teacher and the school administrator. I did not omit the students who

did not consent to participate from any of the literacy activities, because most of my research involved their regular language arts lessons. I administered the survey to the entire class, but made copies for only the focal children who had assented to participate and whose parents or guardians consented to their children's participation. I gave all of the original surveys to Ms. Reed for assessment purposes. I then made a copy or took a photograph of the work that the students did and left the original at the school in the possession of Ms. Reed or the student. I always asked for students' permission before I made copies, took photographs, audio-recorded, or video-recorded. I believe that it is important that students have agency in their own lives (Ellis, 2006).

I protected the anonymity of the children by using pseudonyms and removing any distinguishing attributes from the photographs. Nevertheless, members of the school community knew that I am a researcher and saw me working with the students. Although it is feasible that they can identify the school and the students in my written descriptions, this is beyond my control as a researcher.

I protected the confidentiality of the children by meeting with them one-on-one during the interviews and conducting the interviews outside the classroom, where we could not be overheard. I stored the data in digital files that were password protected and organized the copies of the artifacts in a binder according to the pseudonyms; as well, I removed or blacked out any identifying information.

The focal children identified as either First Nation or Métis. As a Métis person, I am keenly aware of how we use stories to express who we are and what our perspectives are based on our backgrounds or prior experiences (Kovach, 2009). Sharing stories requires a relationship of trust. I needed to earn the trust of the children to make them comfortable with sharing their stories and trust that I would represent them truthfully. James (2007) argued that, although children who participate in research as participant-observers speak about their experiences, this might not be enough to ensure that those children's voices and views are heard. Therefore I needed to be cognizant of how I would represent these children and their voices. They were unique individuals with diverse personal stories and experiences. I wanted to ensure authenticity and represent their experiences in their own words; nevertheless, my subjectivities and biases limited me. As the researcher, I chose which of the children's word I would include to further

illustrate and support my ideas. Any misinterpretation or misrepresentation is solely my fault.

Reciprocity is very important in the research process, and I wanted to make sure that I gave back to the community and the children. I achieved reciprocity by helping at a schoolwide community event in the evening, collaborating on a unit of study with the classroom teacher, and giving the teacher and students books at the end of the study as a symbol of gratitude. I will also make available a copy of my research to the school division, the school administrator, and the classroom teacher.

Limitations. The design of this case study was based on an ideal: a research site that fit my entire criteria. I envisioned conducting this research with a group of students who were older, perhaps in Grades 5 or 6. I anticipated that older students would be better able to talk about themselves as readers and would have had more experience with digital technology. Finding that ideal site was difficult and unrealizable. In spite of the younger age of the students and their lack of experience with digital technology, I was able to gather data that supported my query.

Another limitation was that the digital literacy of many of the students had not developed to a level that enabled them to use the computers proficiently at school. This might have been a result of the low socioeconomics and the children's lack of access to computers outside school. Only a few children owned a laptop, but they had no access to the Internet at home and limited use of the family's laptop for games. I spent a great deal of time in the computer lab explaining, directing, helping the students to utilize the different programs, and moving among the computers to help the students, which also affected my ability to record observations on the spot. I am not sure how I could have circumnavigated this dilemma.

My role of teacher was also a limitation. As I stated above, because I often assisted the students, I was unable to record my observations at that moment, not only in the computer lab, but also in the classroom when the students were working on literacy activities. The more time that I spent in the classroom, the more the students demanded my attention. Many students struggled with reading and writing in the classroom, which took time away from working with the focal children. However, it did foster a deeper understanding of the classroom context.

A limitation that was beyond the control of the children and myself as the researcher was the lack of time for the students to use the computers at school. They were scheduled to visit the computer lab only twice a week, and they spent an inordinate amount of time waiting to log in because the computer's processor was very slow. An hour scheduled in the computer lab gave the students approximately 40 minutes to work on a literacy activity before they were required to log off. Sometimes some of the students were not even able to log in and use the computers because of a computer problem or system error. The students did not have access to a computer in the classroom; the classroom teacher was the sole operator of the laptop and projector.

My data collection was limited to the students' time in school. I had not requested ethical consent to visit their homes so was unable to observe their out-of-school literacy practices. In hindsight, this would have been a valuable source of data. The duration of the visits also limited my data collection. I was able to visit for only part of the mornings and occasionally during the afternoons. I was also not able to return to the research site to gather more data after I had begun the analysis and interpretation stage. This would have been a good opportunity to follow up and clarify interpretations. The data collection was further limited during the video and audio recordings of the literacy activities. When I attempted to digitally video record the students, they were easily distracted and wanted to see what I was recording more than they wanted to be recorded, or they wanted to use the device. I wanted to participate with the students during their literacy activities, but still be an observer. I found that the use of my iPad, camera, and digital recorder was also a distraction. I had hoped that this fascination would subside, but it did not. Often I had to put them away so that the students in the classroom would pay attention to the literacy lessons. Even when I talked with the focal children one-on-one in the hallway, they wanted to investigate the digital recorder. One participant asked to push the buttons, wanted to know what each button did, talked right into the built-in microphone, and played it back to hear himself talking.

I began to bring in a hardback notebook-style journal to keep track of my observations and make field notes. Yet even this was of interest to the students, who wanted to see what I was writing, read what I was writing, or asked me to tell them what I was writing. I was very forthright with the students and willingly shared what I was

writing. A couple of students also asked whether they could write or draw a picture in my journal. I believe that my open attitude sustained the positive relationships and trust that I had built with the children.

This inquiry focused on a specific group. However, I acknowledge that any insights that I gleaned into the literacy lives of these children might or might not help other Aboriginal children, because the contexts, situations, values, and experiences of children differ. Another limitation is my role of researcher. As a Métis woman, I brought my subjectivities to the data collection, interpretation, and analysis. I diligently ensured that I did not oversimplify or exaggerate an event and was aware of how my biases would affect my choices.

Summary

In this chapter I explained my research methodology and why I undertook qualitative research by using a case study. I described the Grade 3 classroom at Belleheights School as my research site, as well as the 22 students and classroom teacher who participated in my study. I explicated how I collected and managed the data and how I interpreted and analyzed them. I concluded with the trustworthiness features, ethical considerations, and limitations of the research study.

CHAPTER 4:

RESPECTING WAYS OF KNOWING: EXPLORING THE LITERACY LIVES IN A GRADE THREE CLASSROOM

Children come to school with knowledge and experiences. As they enter the classroom, they bring with them their cultural ways of knowing and want to share their lived experiences through personal narratives. It is teachers' responsibility to facilitate children's talk and create a social environment that is conducive to learning while honouring the voices and ways of knowing of their students. The data collection gave me a glimpse into the school literacy lives of the children in Grade 3 at Belleheights School. To explore their literacy lives, I recorded and collected as much information as I could to create a rendering of the students' school literacy practices that is my own while still honouring the children's representations of their ways of knowing.

Overview

In this chapter I describe the community of practice of the Grade 3 class at Belleheights School and the literacy practices in their classroom. The community of practice concept is situated within a sociocultural paradigm in which reality is subjectively constructed and learning depends on the social and cultural context. My examination of the literacy practices through a community of practice lens revealed how the students came together to construct knowledge as social and cultural beings. The analysis of the data resulted in several findings: (a) The students joined as a community of practice using the Circle of Courage values; (b) the students talked about themselves as readers to form a community of practice; (c) the students' participation in the community of practice influenced their literacy development; and (d) the teacher used multiliteracies pedagogy to teach multimodal literacy, which in turn honoured the students' voices and provided spaces for them to construct meaning using multimodal designs and use their collective knowledge to negotiate meaning.

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which the children who participated used oral language, the knowledge and experiences that they brought with them into the classroom, and how they participated in literacy practices. In this chapter I describe the Grade 3 class in Belleheights School as a community of practice and explain

how the classroom teacher organized learning to facilitate the community of practice and create spaces for the students to use multiliteracies as they co-constructed meaning. Throughout the chapter I use italic font to weave in a narrative thread as a means of better contextualizing the data.

A Learning Community

The Grade 3 class at Belleheights School was a community of practice of literacy learners within a larger learning community. A learning community is a group of people who come together for the purpose of learning; it includes administrators, teachers, students, support staff, and families. A community of learners is made up of adults and children who share the responsibility for the community's activities and take on asymmetrical roles that vary depending on the situation (Rogoff, 1994). Members might have a leadership role or complementary roles; regardless, they participate in a shared endeavour (Rogoff, 1994). Communities of learners can exist in formal and informal learning situations. Learning occurs through collaborative and social participation in a community of learners. Rogoff's "perspective on human development . . . takes as a central premise that learning and development occur as people participate in sociocultural activities of their community" (p. 209). In a community of learners, the participants collaborate to carry out activities that are important to the community based on valued practices (Rogoff, 1994). The excerpt below from my research journal illustrates the collegial and caring nature of the school environment. The warm and welcoming disposition of the principal at Belleheights School established this friendliness:

> *Walking into the school on this very cold December day, I was warmly welcomed by the principal. Ms. King wore a bright smile, with her blonde hair tucked behind her ears. She was busy with a student and asked me to wait while she wrote a note for a student go to the nutrition room for something to eat even though it was already past the time they usually served breakfast. The office was a hub of activity, with teachers walking through to get paper or photocopy things in the supply room located behind the office; the secretary was on the phone, and the home-school liaison worker leaned on a desk with a cup of coffee in her hand while talking to a student who wanted to go home, and she was inquiring if his mother had a mobile phone. A parent with two small children walked through the front door, waved to the secretary, and walked down the stairs. Throughout all these coming and goings, everyone had a smile and was very pleasant. It was an extremely welcoming atmosphere.*

This extract from my journal paints a picture of the warm and inviting environment. Unfortunately, no matter how warm and inviting a school might be today, the legacy of residential schools, which is also "reflected in the intense racism and the systemic discrimination Aboriginal people regularly experience" (TRC, 2016), has resulted in many Aboriginal people avoiding schools, gymnasiums, classrooms, or administrative offices because they elicit negative memories or trauma. The TRC heard many testimonies from residential school survivors who were traumatized by the sight of the large buildings:

> *Belleheights School, a red brick historic building built over a century ago, had large windows spanning over three floors. These windows reflected light over the houses that lined the street. The large elm trees fenced the road while creating a canopy over the streets. The beauty of this building continued into the interior with hardwood floors and high ceilings. Wide staircases at each end of the school transported students between the floors. The hallways were wide with light arching on the polished wood floors from the windows near the staircases. The lives that have passed through these halls and rooms were now sentinels in the pictures that framed the walls by each staircase.*

This narrative from my researcher's journal portrays the beauty of the building, but no matter how architecturally striking a structure might be, negative experiences can overshadow its beauty. Even though it is an attractive building, some Aboriginal people might find it distressing. Therefore, it is even more important for school staff to be warm, caring, and inviting. Belleheights School staff were friendly and welcoming in their pursuit of a community of learners. Rogoff (1994) explained that a community of learners involves members collaborating through social participation in a shared endeavour, and at Belleheights School the shared endeavour was the education of children. Compared to a community of practice, a community of learners is more formalized in its composition, and its members intentionally come together in pursuit of a common goal (Hoadley, 2012). As I stated in the previous chapter, the Belleheights is in an older area of the city; the school and many homes were built after the turn of the century. The learning community was proud of its long heritage and had two large display cases filled with historical artifacts from the time that the school opened; at the same time, they honoured its contemporary occupants with cultural artifacts to reflect the high number of First Nations and Métis students in attendance.

Belleheights School, like many schools, functions as a community of learners. It is a place where learning occurs by sharing and constructing knowledge. A community of learners is organized by a division of labour, a formalized schedule, and rules (Hoadley, 2012). The alignment of a school's members at set times to learn and identify themselves as either students, teachers, or staff members make the school a community of learners. Belonging by being able to identify as a member of a particular community or others' ability to recognize someone as a member of a certain community is important. Having a sense of belonging also demonstrates that relationships exist among the members of a community. Therefore, belonging maintains subjective identities and the identity of the community.

How the Grade 3s Were a Community of Practice

Attending the same school or working in the same location, however, does not constitute a community of practice. As I stated in chapter 2, a community of practice requires mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998). Lave and Wenger (1991) developed the theories of community of practice and legitimate peripheral participation to understand learning outside the institution of schooling. They made a point of not focusing on learning in schools, because in the school context knowledge acquisition is viewed as something that can be decontextualized. Even though learning does take place in schools, Lave and Wenger wanted to create a general theory of learning. I used their learning theories of community of practice and legitimate peripheral participation in a school setting—more specifically, classroom literacy learning—because these concepts helped me to identify the relationships among the literacy practices, the participants, and their social participation. Therefore, I use the concepts of community of practice and legitimate peripheral participation to illuminate the literacy practices and participation in literacy events in an elementary school classroom. At Belleheights School I witnessed several communities of practice. For example, the students who attend ESL or EAL classes; the culture classroom in which all of the students receive First Nations and Métis cultural teachings, activities, and instruction; and the different classrooms, including the Grade 3 classroom, are all communities of practice. Each of these communities functions within the larger community of learners both in the school and in society. For example, the students who

attend the ESL classes share the history of ESL learners, and they share tools and resources with other ESL learners at Belleheights School or at other schools. Lave and Wenger described communities of practice as not being confined by walls, but existing across sites. They recommended that newcomers to a community of practice engage in the existing practice that has evolved over time and participate in the practice to become full members. It does not matter whether a student is a new immigrant who has been in Canada for only a couple of days or an immigrant who has been in Canada for a year; they are both ESL learners and have the same opportunity to participate in the community of practice of ESL learners. ESL learners invest themselves in the practice because it becomes part of their identity (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They share in the same practice of learning English as a second language.

The students of Belleheights School belong to many different communities of practice, but the focus of this study was on Ms. Reeds' Grade 3 class as a community of practice. Ms. Reed was the classroom teacher in Grade 3. A paraprofessional in the role of EA, Miss Bea, assisted her. Miss Bea assisted with photocopying; distributing notebooks, handouts, or supplies; and reprimanding students for inappropriate behaviour. She also monitored the entire class if Ms. Reed had to step out intermittently. The following narrative excerpt from my researcher's journal paints a picture of how the classroom was physically arranged:

> *As I walked in through the door I was met with desks in the centre and large windows on the far wall. There was a closet immediately on the left with a shelving unit for students' indoor shoes and hooks for their jackets. Their winter boots were tossed haphazardly beneath their coats. This closet had a shelving unit near the far end that divided the teacher's coat and storage space from the students. There was another entry way into this closet further along the wall that only the teacher and EA used. The desks were chevron-shaped tables with chairs. The tables were arranged in oval so the students all faced one another. The use of tables allowed for flexible arrangement of students into large or small groups. There was a desk and a table in the middle of the oval. The table held a container of pencils, and it was also the place where students would place their papers or duotangs when they finished a literacy activity that involved writing or drawing. Each student was assigned a home base where his or her chair resided. Each student had a cloth bag draped over the back of their chair that they called a back bag. A nameplate identified each student's home base. Ms. Reed had carefully written each child's name on a themed-nameplate that adhered to the desk by the use of a clear adhesive covering. Every few months Ms. Reed moved the students*

around so they were sitting in different places and shared a table with a different person.

The physical arrangement of a classroom is important because how desks or tables are arranged can either enable or hinder participation in literacy practices. The configuration of the classroom influences how students construct meaning, because the physical arrangement creates different relationships that yield different discursive meanings (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Some spaces provoke conversations more than others do (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012).

However, the physical arrangement is not the focus of the Grade 3 class's community of practice, but I needed to note it because the classroom teacher made a deliberate decision to arrange her classroom in a particular way to suit her pedagogical practices and perhaps the needs of her students. Similarly, the classroom teacher planned and organized literacy instruction in a manner that she felt would create an effective learning environment. Ms. Reed organized her classroom and literacy activities to support the existence of a community of practice, and her classroom as a community of practice shared with other elementary school classrooms many of the same instructional methodologies and practices. Most elementary school classrooms consist of desks or tables arranged in a particular way, and teachers use the same types of tools—for example, whiteboards, paper, pencils and books—to create a shared repertoire. The school days are routinized by the sound of bells and organized according to subjects, which gives the day a particular rhythm and creates a joint enterprise. The teacher and students negotiate how the day unfolds to create mutual engagement.

Using Circle of Courage Values to Create a Community of Practice

Ms. Reed's use of the Circle of Courage values established her Grade 3 classroom as a particular community of practice. Brendto et al. (1998) created the Circle of Courage model based on traditional Native American child-rearing philosophy, which highlights four values to support the growth and development of children while acknowledging cultural knowledge. Belleheights School uses the Circle of Courage model to foster a respectful environment, and in an informal discussion Ms. King, the principal of Belleheights School, revealed that the Circle of Courage was most evident in Ms. Reed's classroom (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Circle of Courage on the bulletin board.

Ms. Reed had a print-rich classroom with charts, signs, a word wall, students' work, and shared writing on chart paper posted about the room. These were visual resources that the children could access when constructing meaning. She wrote the daily schedule on the whiteboard and the date, providing yet another visual resource to support student learning. She had a large reproduction of the Circle of Courage fittingly on the bulletin board at the front of the room. The Circle of Courage was divided into four quadrants each with a different colour and labelled with a value from the Circle of Courage development model. Inside each quadrant were photographs of students. Ms. Reed took pictures of students as they participated in activities and she witnessed them demonstrating a particular value from the Circle of Courage. She then placed the photos in one of the four quadrants depending on what value the student(s) of focus were demonstrating in the photograph. The black quadrant was labelled 'Generosity—I show that I care' and had photos of students doing things that demonstrated them sharing or caring. The red quadrant was labelled 'Belonging—I show that I am part of a team' and contained photos students working together, respecting one another and the environment. The white quadrant was labelled 'Independence—I have the power to make decisions' and contained pictures of students working independently or demonstrating they had completed an activity. The yellow quadrant was labelled 'Mastery—I can succeed' and contained pictures of students reading, writing, drawing, and engaged in other school activities. This Circle of Courage model not only served as a reminder of the values but also celebrated the students' accomplishments and how each one of them was part of something special.

Ms. Reed used the Circle of Courage model to create a "shared point of reference" (Wenger, 1998, p. 83). The four values of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity were interwoven into the learning and social endeavours of the classroom.

The Circle of Courage anchored the daily routines and was also a visual focus in the classroom. As Figure 2 shows, Ms. Reed's large Circle of Courage uses the four colours of the medicine wheel. Each quadrant has a value from the Circle of Courage where Ms. Reed displayed a multitude of pictures of the students that exemplify the values. The daily happenings are captured in the photos of the children demonstrating the values. This teacher practice of displaying pictures of students demonstrating the values from the Circle of Courage assured the students that they belonged through their participation. Even though the classroom teacher prescribed the values and literacy activities, the students negotiated how the practice unfolded (Wenger, 1998). Participation in this community of practice required the members to embody the values that are part of the Circle of Courage model.

Like many elementary classroom teachers, Ms. Reed spent time crafting units of study that she felt were engaging and interesting for her students, making sure that they were interdisciplinary and met curricular outcomes. Ms. Reed and I collaborated on creating and teaching a Winter Olympic unit (See Appendix C for an overview of the unit) and incorporated the Circle of Courage model into the literacy unit and the mini-Olympics. Ms. Reed also integrated science into the Olympic unit by asking the students to study different types of structures by referring to Olympic venues, and during her physical education class time the students participated in Olympic-inspired physical activities as part of the mini-Olympics, which thus made the unit interdisciplinary. Her organization of the classroom and literacy activities impacted how the students negotiated the literacy activities and subsequently how the activities unfolded as part of the students' social practice. For example, in a literacy activity in the Winter Olympic unit the students wrote an Athletes' Pledge prior to participating in the mini-Olympic events. As a class, we watched a live streaming of the Sochi Winter Olympics opening ceremony. Ms. Reed focused special attention on the Olympic Athletes' Pledge and the words in the pledge, and the class discussed the words and their meaning. Then she gave each student a handout to write his or her own pledge. Afterward the students shared their pledges and

worked collaboratively to write a Grade 3 Students' Olympic Pledge, pictured in Figure 3, by using the values from the Circle of Courage. The words of the Grade 3 Athletes' Pledge held meaning for the students. The school community accepted "We will not use hands on" to describe the importance of respecting the personal space of each individual. "No hands on" as a concept of practice "includes what is said and what is left unsaid; what is represented and what is assumed" (Wenger, 1998, p. 47) to guide the students' behaviour. It encompasses the understanding that it is not acceptable to hit or push someone.

Figure 3. Grade 3 students' Athletes' Olympic Pledge.

In the school's Circle of Courage model, outcomes of independence are showing self-control and making good choices, and outcomes of belonging are showing pride in respecting others, the environment, and self. The students' words represented these values. The students did not have a list of things to do or not do regarding the Circle of Courage, but they embodied the values, which were "crucial to the success of their enterprises" (Wenger, 1998, p. 47). For the mini-Olympics, Ms. Reed told the students that they could nominate each other for awards based on the values of the Circle of Courage. At the conclusion of the mini-Olympics, the students received gold medals for exhibiting one of the Circle of Courage values during the events. When Ms. Reed

presented the students with their gold medals at the closing ceremony, Connor announced, "W*e are going to become rich; too much gold."* Even though the students received paper gold medals, they were very proud of their accomplishments, and Connor's declaration embodied the shared acquisition of wealth that was not just material. The students' engagement in the Circle of Courage resulted in certain experiences because they paid attention to the exhibition of mastery, independence, generosity, and belonging. They were recognized as members of the community of practice because they acted and behaved like members. The students and the teacher came together to partake in the daily happenings that created spaces for the Circle of Courage to exist and held one another mutually accountable. Wenger (1998) pointed out that mutual accountability plays a large role in determining whether the members feel concerned or not with what is happening. Mutual accountability was also evident in the students' engagement in the joint enterprise of Read-to-Self:

> *Each day began with students reading silently during Read-to-Self providing students with an opportunity to practice and demonstrate the values of Generosity, Belonging, Independence and Mastery. Students either read books (Belonging) they had already chosen (Independence) and were keeping in the bags on the back their of chairs or they looked for a new book on the shelves in the reading corner or on another shelf of books that personally belonged to Ms. Reed on the opposite side of the room near the teacher's desk (Generosity). Ms. Reed regularly conducted a conference with a student about their reading during this time (Mastery).*

As this narrative shows, the routines had been established, and the children knew their roles and responsibilities within the classroom context. They also had an opportunity for the collective process of negotiation in the joint enterprise, which kept the community of practice together (Wenger, 1998).

The children's attempts to adhere to their roles and responsibilities demonstrated that, as members of a community of practice, they understood what was going on and generally worked to belong. As the students entered the classroom, they removed their jackets and boots in the closet area. Because each day started with Read-to-Self, the children knew what they were expected to do. In some classrooms the students are required to sit in their desks when the morning bell sounds and then must wait in their desks until the teacher gives them direction to start the school day. However, this was

not the case in Ms. Reed's Grade 3 classroom. Starting the day with Read-to-Self was relaxed because the students who arrived a few minutes after the bell sounded did not interrupt the instructional time. As the students trickled into the room, they would pick up their books, choose a place to read, and then begin to read. Ms. Reed did not insist that they being the school day at their home base, but gave the students an opportunity to practice independence by deciding where they would read. For example, they could choose to read at their home base, in the reading corner, at the desk in the middle of the room, or at the table at the back of the room by the windows. In the process of participating in Read-to-Self, the students collectively negotiated their responses (Wenger, 1998) by determining where and what to read:

> *In one corner under a couple of large windows were bookshelves and a bench that served as the reading corner. There was a large fabric leaf canopy to distinguish this special area and added to the cozy-ness of the corner. The shelves held bins that were labelled and organized with a variety of reading materials thus accommodating various reading levels and interests. Three to four students would gather here to read silently or read to one another. They would sit on the bench or on the floor with their back against the bookshelves. The classroom was organized in a manner that encouraged independence and generosity. The students shared the resources that were available.*

As part of their belonging, the students needed to demonstrate respect, so choosing a place to read also meant that they had to respect those around them. For example, if they sat next to someone on the floor or on a bench in the reading corner, then they needed to position their arms or legs to avoid interfering with those around them. Even when they were independently engaged in an activity, such as reading to themselves, the students still belonged to the community of practice because they were engaged in an activity that had meaning as part of a larger social practice (Wenger, 1998). The students belonged because they engaged in the practice of reading, and they negotiated what the practice involved, whether it was individual reading and sitting close to each other to form a small group or sharing a book. The students were able to identify themselves as members of the Grade 3 classroom because of their participation in and reification of the literacy practices (Wenger 1998), as well as exemplifying the values from the Circle of Courage.

The value of independence entailed giving the children autonomy and thus agency and power over their own lives. Children learn autonomy by having "opportunities to be dependent, learn to respect and value elders, and be taught through explanation for desired behaviour" (Brendto et al., 1998, p. 52). In the school's Circle of Courage model, the children showed independence in their ability to follow the rules without needing reminders and exhibited self-control. Giving the students access to and choice in the books that they could read and the time to read independently supported independence in this Grade 3 community of practice. Ms. Reed kept a variety of books available at different levels for the students to read: chapter books, illustrated novels, picture books, nonfiction books, and informational books. Favourites included *Geronimo Stilton*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Zombie Kid Diaries*, *Big Nate*, *I Spy*, *Ripley's Believe it or Not*, and *Usborne* books. They also enjoyed reading 'Blue' books from a bin in the reading corner, a collection from Fountas & Pinnell's (F&P) Leveled Literacy Intervention System. The Blue books corresponded to levels C through N according to the F&P Text Level Gradient™, and the books ranged from Grade 1 to approximately mid-Grade 3 reading abilities; the students were limited to reading books within this range. They could access the books on the bookshelves or keep them at their home base in their backpacks on their chairs. The students determined whether they would continue or discontinue reading a book. If they found a text uninteresting or too difficult, they could return it to the shelf and choose another book. For example, Connor was reading a *Goosebumps* book that he found too "creepy," so he searched for another book for us to read together. The students came into the classroom each morning and found a book to read and a place to sit, which demonstrated their independence.

The value of mastery requires attaining competence as motivation for further achievement. This aligns with Wenger's (1998) second assumption that "knowledge is a matter of competence with respect to valued enterprises" (p. 4). To emphasize, Ms. Reed projected a video recording of the students choral reading a story by children's author Jane Yolen. She had recorded the choral reading on an SD disk from her point-and-shoot camera and used her laptop and a projector to present the video to the class. Ms. Reed asked the students to pay attention to stars and wishes, which is an *Assessment for*

Learning[5] practice that requires that students reflect on a learning experience either for self-improvement or to provide peer feedback. Stars indicated what they saw themselves doing well in the video recording, and wishes, how they could improve. Ms. Reed then used her laptop to show them a previous video recording of their choral reading of the poem *Flanders Fields* by Lt. Col. John McCrae at a school assembly for Remembrance Day. The class noted that they practiced many times to build fluency and read in unison. She asked the students to compare the videos to determine what made them read clearly and fluently at the assembly versus how they had read the story by Jane Yolen on the previous Friday. The class practiced reading each stanza as a class and then with table partners. The students came together as a group to reach a goal that they valued. Therefore, they considered success not only personal achievement, but also an accomplishment that they attained as a group (Brendto et al., 1998). Ms. Reed organized the literacy activities to mutually engage the students in a joint enterprise with the Circle of Courage values at the heart.

Ms. Reed's pedagogical practices and organization of literacy activities created a context for the community of practice. For example, her use of open-ended questions and encouragement of peer interaction fostered class discussions that gave the students an opportunity to adopt and practice the values of the Circle of Courage. Ms. Reed asked the students to "take a learning risk" and collaborate with others to share what they knew or could do. Their attempts demonstrated values from the Circle of Courage; namely, belonging and mastery. Sharing knowledge and experiences, helping one another, and showing one another how to do things also reinforced the value of generosity from the Circle of Courage. Using talk, this Grade 3 class shared their observations and experiences with one another. Oracy is a literacy practice that brought all of the students together as a community of practice.

Talking as Readers to Create a Community of Practice

It was clear throughout my observations of the Grade 3 Class at Belleheights School that Ms. Reed created an environment in which students' voices were valued. She created a context that encouraged talk, and this enabled the students to construct identities

[5] Assessment for Learning, also known as formative assessment, is a classroom practice to improve student learning. See Black and Wiliam (1998).

as readers. The way that we use language expresses a particular identity. Gee (2010) referred to these ways of using language as *Discourses*. Gee (2004, 2008) described Discourse as identity kits. The students enacted and produced identities based on their Discourses. The way that we use language recognizes us as belonging to a particular group (Gee, 2004, 2008). Through language, the students learned how to talk and behave like others in community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wells, 2000). Ms. Reed apprenticed her students into the community of practice of readers by focusing on the processes of reading and giving the students the resources to discuss and identify these processes (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Ms. Reed had a print-rich classroom with visual resources from which the students could draw and that would support their construction of meaning. The classroom was a multimodal space because it was configured with print, images, and a particular physical arrangement that resulted in linguistic, visual, and spatial meanings (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). The use of print and images in the classroom influenced how the students constructed meaning. The characteristics of what good readers do were prominently displayed on a bulletin board (Figure 4). The "What do good readers do?" bulletin board itemizes some of the complexities involved in reading and uses words that the students knew.

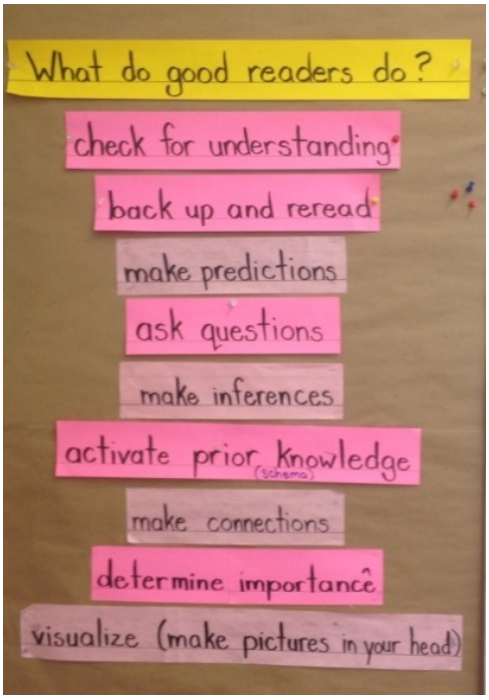


Figure 4. List on a bulletin board of what good readers do.

For example, "Back up and reread" is a very clear direction if the students had difficulty reading. They learned what good readers do while they are engaged in the practice of reading. The students' membership in a community of practice of readers was continually evolving as they learned more about reading (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Learning does not involve acquiring information or facts; rather, it involves the process and the learner's engagement in the practice (Wenger, 1998). The practice of reading has a history of "mutual engagement, negotiation of an enterprise, and development of a shared repertoire" (Wenger, 1998, p. 95); and through their engagement in this literacy practice, the students were defining their identity as readers. They used the terminology posted on the bulletin board to describe themselves as readers. For example, when I sat beside Li (an EAL student), we talked about reading, and she said, "*I am good reader because I go back and read again. I do that until I get it.*" This illustrates her understanding that reading involves gaining meaning from text. Ms. Reed instructed her students on how to find texts that they could read independently, as well as the importance of reading texts that are at an appropriate level; she did not leave the students feeling frustrated with the practice of reading. The list on the bulletin board (Figure 4) "What do good readers do?" reified the practice of reading. Reification solidifies the complex process of reading into particular attributes that can be named and assessed (Wenger, 1998).

The students in this community of practice also used the "What do good readers do?" lexicon to describe what they were doing as they participated in literacy events. For example, Ms. Reed worked on establishing a connection between reading and viewing to enable the students to understand that these literacy practices use similar strategies. This is illustrated in the following interchange:

> *Ms. Reed: What is viewing?*
> *Connor: If you view, you are watching.*
> *Ms. Reed: What kinds of things can you view or watch?*
> *Margaret: You can look at a sculpture or watch someone make one.*
> *Connor: You could be looking at someone's math.*
> *Karl: At McDonald's they have—you look at— [pointing up] . . .*
> *Ms. Reed: A menu.*
> *Margaret: Watching a concert. Watching the Olympics.*
> *Karl: You know what is outside the library [gesturing with his arms].*

> *Ms. Reed: Ah, the display case or the bulletin board. Viewing is a lot like reading. We can do the same things when we view something just like when we read. When we read we make connections, so we can make connections when we view.*

In this discussion, three of the four focal children, Connor, Margaret, and Karl, drew on their understanding of what it means to view something (the fourth focal child, Shayla, had not arrived at school yet).

This discussion was typical of many of the class discussions. Even though many people view a well-ordered classroom as one in which the students sit quietly, waiting for their turn to talk and/or patiently observing the back-and-forth between a selected student and the teacher, this was a rare occurrence in Ms. Reed's classroom. Erickson (1996) pointed out that

> much classroom interaction is far messier. . . . Children stumble over each other in conversation. They complete each other's clauses and turns at talk. They may take turns away from each other. The pullings and counterpullings, the ebbs and flows of mutual influence in the conversation are not just between one student and the teacher at a given time but rather among many students—sometimes among teams of students—and the teacher. (p. 32)

In the classroom discussion above, several things happened that illustrate that this Grade 3 class was a community of practice. First, Ms. Reed used the pedagogical practice of asking an open-ended question to promote opportunities for class discussions and students' voices to be heard; thus, this is another way in which Ms. Reed organized literacy activities to support the existence of the community of practice. She asked the class "*What is viewing?*" and scaffolded their understanding of what it means to view by referring to Connor's words and following up with another open-ended question: "*What kinds of things can you view or watch?*" which also modelled that the words *view* and *watch* can be used synonymously. Cazden (2001) identified scaffolding through questioning as a means of building on students' existing knowledge.

A second aspect of this community practice is the class's use of collective, distributed, and shared knowledge, which I discuss more fully in an upcoming section on multiliteracies practices. In this particular interchange, the students built on each others' comments and created shared knowledge. Connor shared his understanding of the meaning of viewing by interchanging *viewing* and *watching*. This led Margaret to add

watching the process of creating a sculpture to her experience of viewing a sculpture. Connor continued the negotiation and construction of meaning by using synonyms for viewing such as *looking* and tied it to an experience he would have had in common with his classmates; for example, looking at someone's math. Karl added to the knowledge building by identifying the historical and cultural artifacts displayed outside the library as things that are viewed, which brought a common or shared experience into the discussion. Even students who did not verbally contribute ideas added to their knowledge about what it means to view by participating through listening.

Last, this interchange also revealed the use of gestures to represent meaning. Karl used gestures to communicate and represent meaning when he had difficulty remembering the words for *menu* and *display case*. Gestures, or the movement of hands and arms, often accompany talk or speech in an unconscious and synchronous manner (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). When gestures accompany speech, it becomes a multimodal means of communicating (Walsh, 2010).

Ms. Reed used the lexicon of "What do good readers do?" in asking the students to describe the cognitive strategies that they used in viewing. We watched several videos over the course of the Winter Olympic unit and used analysis to unpack the elements of design—specifically, multimodal meaning—to determine how we configure visual elements, audio elements, linguistic elements, and gestural elements to communicate a message (New London Group, 1996, 2000). For example, when the students watched a tourism video of the city, Karl asked "*Why did they make the video go so fast?*" which referred to the video's showing an entire day, from morning until night, in a few seconds. Ms. Reed pointed out that Karl was "*asking questions*," which was "*What good readers do*." Then Connor interjected, "*If it was long, it would be lame!*" He recognized the visual design in relation to the audience's attention. A commercial could not show an entire day, but accelerating the images would create the effect of time passing over the duration of a day. Karl's observation on the speed of the video demonstrated that he understood that elements in a video are not by chance but there because the creator made deliberate decisions. Ms. Reed did not answer his question, but instead directed the students to consider the strategy that Karl used to construct meaning. Connor answered Karl's question when he shared his understanding of the time-lapse technique, which

further exemplified the students' co-construction of knowledge. They assisted each other in constructing meaning. The student voice was valued and validated. The lesson continued with the class's discussion of the viewing strategies they used to construct meaning. Connor offered, "*I made a prediction: I thought it was going to be about the whole city*." The students embraced the ability to talk about themselves as readers, so it became a valued enterprise. Karl added that "*asking questions*" and "*checking for understanding*" helped him to construct meaning. When Connor asked "*Why did they show the room?*" Ms. Reed pointed out that good viewers go back and look again. She did not share her interpretation of why the video showed the hotel room; instead, she directed the students to utilize comprehension strategies, so they replayed the video and watched again. The students made the inference that the room was in a hotel for visitors. The students discussed the importance of providing places for visitors to stay when they come to the city. This knowledge could have come from their own personal experiences with hotels or perhaps from building their Olympic village and learning that the athletes needed a place to stay because they came from different places around the world to compete in the Olympics. Ms. Reed facilitated the class discussions by focusing on the appropriate strategies that they could use to assist them in constructing meaning.

Truly collaborative conversations hinge on the teacher's facilitation. Ms. Reed attempted to involve all students in class discussions, but some were more willing than others. Ms. Reed continually encouraged the children who chose to participate to contribute by asking them to elaborate, pointing out the strategies that they were using as a method of praise, or by gesturing, such as nodding to show her agreement:

> A teacher's manner of interacting with the children is thus at the heart of his or her style of teaching, for it is the collaborative approach—a willingness to negotiate meanings—that encourages children to explore their understanding of a topic and gives them the confidence to try out their ideas without the fear of being wrong. (Wells, 2009, p. 129)

Ms. Reed also encouraged her students to use the resources in the room to help them to construct meaning and suggested vocabulary from which the students could draw. She pointed to posters and words on bulletin boards when she discussed topics to make connections across subject areas and visually reinforce ideas. Pointing and using visual aids to enhance talk were other examples of multimodal literacy. Gestures build

meaning when we point to something to direct attention (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Ms. Reed frequently modelled the use of gestures and talk, which the students adopted when they were discussing and making connections.

The following discussion continues the students' conversation on how the practices of viewing and reading utilize similar cognitive strategies; it demonstrates the use of available resources and multiple sign systems:

> *Karl: At my house—because when I was reading, and then I had to go back and look at the picture again. Because I didn't understand what the picture was about.*
> *Margaret: Like if you are watching a movie and you can pause and go back and watch it over again.*
> *Karl: Re—view, and look at it again because we learn more. [At this Karl got up from his chair and walks over to the bulletin board where "What Do Good Readers Do?" was posted.] You also can make inferences.*
> *Ms. Reed: Can you give us an example Karl?*
> *Karl: I don't know.*
> *Connor: Checking for understanding.*
> *Ms. Reed: Can you think of an example?*
> *Connor: When you keep watching and think about it.*
> *Karl: I know another, but I don't know this word. [Pointing to the word* importance*, Karl tries to sound it out, and then Connor helps him.]*
> *Connor: Importance, determining importance.*
> *Ms. Reed: Remember that determining importance is when you look for the main ideas, and details.*
> *Karl: They find out stuff.*

The discussion demonstrates that Ms. Reed had given the students a common vocabulary from which to draw when they talked about themselves as readers or viewers. This vocabulary was a resource that they used to negotiate meaning as part of their shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998).

The ability to talk about themselves as readers and describe what they were doing as readers was part of the practice. As Wenger (1998) pointed out, "The repertoire of a community of practice includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures . . . that the community has produced or adopted . . . as part of its practice" (p. 83). This excerpt shows that the students were part of a community of practice in that they used particular words, used gestures, and drew from popular culture and lived experiences to create shared knowledge. A few examples will clarify the concept. To begin with, the experiences that Karl and Margaret shared came from their out-of-school

lives. Two things make this significant: First, reading and watching movies are both practices that also exist in school; and second, Karl and Margaret thought of viewing in terms of out-of-school activities. They brought their out-of-school identities into the discussion by sharing something that they had done at home, particularly reading and viewing popular texts. Margaret talked about watching movies during our interview when we discussed what she did on her laptop: "*And my laptop can watch movies, because you can press a DVD on the side.*" Karl, Connor, and Margaret enacted their roles as key participants in the discussion and their identities as competent students by building upon their ideas and assisting each other when they faced difficulties. Ms. Reed enacted her role as teacher when she sensed that the students needed more support than they received from their peers, and she reiterated key ideas to scaffold the students. The talk highlighted their identities as students and teacher, as well as their relationship in supporting one another in their learning journey. Learning is relational because of the interdependence of the participants, the activity, and the cognitive and experiential knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Moreover, Margaret's connection between viewing and rewinding and watching a movie again made her experiences relevant to the literacy practices in the classroom. She moved her subjective experience into participation in a social practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Last, this discussion privileged the use of three sign systems in that these three children used to assist them in constructing meaning: talk, gesture, and visual print. By pointing to the bulletin board, the students reinforced the value of linguistic, gestural, and spatial meanings and visual texts (words both written and spoken, images and gestures) as sign systems.

The students used a common lexicon when they discussed the practice of reading. Their use and acknowledgement of the words posted on the bulletin board not only demonstrated the value of the visual and written texts, but also elevated their status as readers when they used words that they found in the room. They would get up and look at the bulletin boards, posters, and word walls to support their learning as well as take books from the book shelves or their backpacks to demonstrate the connections that they were making among the texts.

Multimodal literacy was another way in which the students constructed meaning, whether orally or through gestures, images, pictures, or written texts (Walsh, 2010). The previous dialogue represents what usually took place during class discussions. Ms. Reed continually encouraged her students to use a variety of resources.

To determine how the Grade 3 class was a community of practice, I explored elements of Ms. Reed's pedagogical practices in which she created shared repertoire, joint understanding and mutual engagement to help the students to talk about themselves as readers. Using common vocabulary, the students could work through texts together and construct meaning as members of a community of practice. Ms. Reed's continual underscoring of what they were doing gave them the necessary vocabulary to identify the processes that they were using to co-construct knowledge and equip them with the lexicon to produce the identity of a good reader. The students in this particular Grade 3 class were able to identify themselves as good readers by doing the things that good readers do and transferring the same strategies to the practice of viewing. They understood the value of using the appropriate words to describe what they were doing. The students used the resources of 'what good readers do' to co-construct their identity as good readers and good viewers.

Participating in a Community of Practice

Ms. Reed's Grade 3 classroom in Belleheights School carried the school's history and social, cultural, and institutional conditions. But even though these conditions shaped the classroom, a community of practice came to life with the children's responses to these conditions to create their own enterprise. Ms. Reed's classroom had 22 students registered, and they all participants in the daily classroom practices, but negotiated how these practices unfolded as part of their joint enterprise. When the students engaged with one another, they were in the process of negotiating meaning (Wenger, 1998). The sharing of beliefs and worldviews came from negotiating meaning.

The students collectively negotiated what they thought the task was through their responses of cooperation and compliance (Wenger, 1998). Over the course of the day they cooperated and actively or passively participated in the scheduled activities or were compliant and not actively engaged, while still behaving within the confines of the classroom structure. For example, Zedan would join his classmates in the story corner

but would not turn toward the teacher. He would sit with his back against the wall and not participate in the discussion or follow along by viewing when Ms. Reed read a book. He would either look in the direction of his peers sitting in front of him or stare beyond them. He was not disruptive and did not bring any attention to himself. Lave and Wenger (1991) pointed out that an analysis of learning in school contexts often assumes that the teacher and students are equally motivated in pursuing a shared goal. They argued that, instead, learning needs to be analyzed by examining the entire practice and that conflicts arise through the negotiation of shared experiences (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The students moved along a continuum between active and passive members of the classroom literacy practices. Most students were actively engaged in classroom discussions as speakers, listeners, or both and completed the literacy activities. Some students would actively participate in the literacy activities only when they were working at their home bases or desks. Communities of practice demonstrate various degrees of participation from nonparticipation to full participation. Legitimate peripheral participation is the process of becoming a full member of a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Legitimate peripheral participation enabled the students in Grade 3 at Belleheights School to have an evolving, dynamic, and fluid membership in the community of practice. They formed an identity through the various degrees of participation (Wenger, 1998). Lave and Wenger considered "identities as long term, living relationships between persons and participation in communities of practice" (p. 53). The active contributors to class discussions took on the identity of competent and engaged learners. Gee (2010) defined identity as the "ways of being in the world at different times and places for different purposes" (p. 3). Gee used the word *identity* to explain that language helps people to be a certain way, that it does not mean who they are at their "core self" or who they take themselves to be "essentially" (p. 3). The activity of classroom discussions was valued and acknowledged, and participating by sharing experiences or talking about themselves as readers shaped the identity of the students.

Margaret, Karl, Connor, Raphael, Jasim, and Analyn were the main contributors to class discussions and led small groups. The social structures in the classroom involved relations of power that influenced the degree of *peripherality* in their participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 37). The main contributors held positions of influence within the

community of practice in that other students would follow their lead, accept their reasoning with little confrontation, and seek most of them out for assistance. Their peers recognized three of the focal students, Margaret, Karl and Connor, as knowledgeable, which also helped the three students to see themselves as knowledgeable and act accordingly or have the agency to enact those identities (Moje & Lewis, 2007). For example, in the computer lab Connor's peers often asked him for advice, in class discussions other students would not contradict Karl even if his statement was erroneous, and some students would consider Margaret's work an exemplar and attempt to emulate it. In addition, Margaret, Karl, and Connor were usually among the first to complete the literacy tasks, and Ms. Reed would call on them to help their peers to finish the tasks in a timelier manner. They formed identities of competent students by engaging in valued and privileged activities such as participating in class discussions and completing literacy assignments in a timely manner. Wenger (1998) asserted that identity is formed through participation and engagement with others in social practices. Other students also formed identities through their nonparticipation (Wenger, 1998), as I explained earlier with regard to Zedan and will further discuss with regard to Shayla, a focal student, in chapter 5, where I discuss the focal students' participation. Identity is a way of being in the world (Wenger, 1998). They learn to raise their hands, answer the teacher's questions, or act in any other student-like way in the process of becoming students; they carry in that identity the history of schooling (Wenger, 1994). Therefore, how the students participated shaped their identities.

Ms. Reed facilitated and guided the discussions, and "through guided participation in desired activities, [the] children [were] led to adopt the patterns of use of the cultural tools characteristic of a given" group (Addison Stone, 2004, p. 8). The behaviour of contributing to discussions as active participants was important in the practice of classroom discourse. Gee (2010) described a practice or activity as a "socially recognized and institutionally or culturally supported endeavor that usually involves sequencing or combing actions in certain specified ways" (p. 17). The students' understanding that they had roles as speakers and listeners and that if they wanted to speak, they needed to relate to the current topic and support the endeavour of constructing meaning as a group, which supported the classroom discussions. Therefore,

participation in a social practice involves negotiation (Wenger, 1998). Wenger explained that negotiation is the ability and competency to contribute, take responsibility and shape the meanings that matter within a social group. In participating in the community of practice, the students negotiated meanings to come to know more about the Winter Olympics. For example, we introduced the Winter Olympics through the use of a KWL graphic organizer (Appendix C) and watching the video *The Best of the Olympics* on YouTube. The KWL was organized into four columns: What I Know, What I Wonder, What I Learned, and Where I Found It. This was an adaptation of traditional KWL charts that have three columns that correspond to each letter: What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I Learned. Ms. Reed asked the students what they knew about the Olympics, and we recorded their responses on the whiteboard. We watched the video several times and recorded on the whiteboard the names of sporting events that the students were able to identify and the questions that they posed. Then, we discussed as a class some of the questions that the students wrote on their KWL and re-viewed the video to locate the answers. For instance, subsequent re-viewing gave the students enough information to infer that the game with the concentric circles was curling. The students recorded what they knew about the Olympics and their questions on their own graphic organizers. We used subsequent viewings of the videos and class discussions to answer most of the students 'what I wonder' questions and the Google search engine for other questions such as "*Who is the boss of the Olympics?*" We were not able to answer every student's question from the 'what I wonder' column, but we did answer the questions of those who were willing to share them with the rest of the class. Some students who had more knowledge of the Olympics than others used evidence from books or videos to fill in the gaps and answer other students' questions. For example, Tina wondered, "*Why is there fire?*" Some members of the class remembered information from the *Geronimo Stilton* book and the Olympic torch and answered her question. Additionally, the class watched the opening ceremonies and remembered the Olympic torch and the lighting of the ring. The viewing activities served several purposes. First, the videos provided information and background knowledge about the different sports to enable the students to use that knowledge to design their own winter mini-Olympics. Second, watching the videos gave the students visuals and new vocabulary that they could use later in

discussing the Olympics. Third, viewing gave them examples that they could use to create their brochures for their mini-Olympic bids. These first three purposes gave the students more experiences from which to draw when they represented meaning as part of the co-construction of knowledge. Last, viewing the videos gave the students an opportunity to practice the cognitive strategies that they used when they read. In the class discussions after the students viewed the videos, they contributed to, took responsibility for, and shared in the negotiation of meaning to build their collective knowledge.

Internet search engines became valuable tools to access videos, stream the opening ceremonies, and search for information that the class members did not have in their collective knowledge. For the most part, they pooled their knowledge and, through dialogue, created answers that satisfied their curiosity. Wells (1999) stressed that children "learn with and from each other as they engage together in dialogic inquiry" (p. xii). Speech mediated the students' thinking, planning, and problem solving (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, Cazden (2001) pointed out that "interactions allow students to share and distribute the cognitive burdens of thinking" (p. 75). Therefore, students do not have to struggle with reading alone if they have someone else who not only brings his or her knowledge and experience to the practice of reading, but is also there to share in the endeavour. Children learn through social participation, so in reading or, as in the example above, viewing and talking about texts demonstrated that it was a valued enterprise.

The students who participated in the discussions drew on their experiences and knowledge to meaningfully connect with their peers, make connections to their peers' stories, and add to the stories of others. They worked together to fill the gaps, create a collective voice, and used the contributions and knowledge of others to create mutual engagement (Wenger, 1998). For instance, Ms. Reed had been reading aloud Jane Yolen's (1998) *Welcome to the Ice House* and had written several words from the story on index cards. Previously, the students were each responsible for locating a word in the story that they found interesting, wrote these words on index cards, and explored them in discussions. Sitting in the author's chair in the corner of the classroom, Ms. Reed led the students as they discussed as a class what each word meant; categorized the words as nouns, verbs, or adjectives; and attached them to the bulletin board. The students talked

about the words on their index cards and made connections to the word and what it meant to them. Ms. Reed created an opportunity for the students to engage and develop social relationships while they learned. This discussion was an activity of mutual engagement that called upon the students' knowledge and encouraged them to interact meaningfully (Wenger, 1998). The students gave examples from their own experiences and other books, used their imaginations, and drew on past learning activities. Kalantzis and Cope (2012) identified *experiencing* as a knowledge process in which learners bring what they know from their own experiences to a learning situation, as well as one in which they come to know by experiencing new situations or information. The class had made a model of a North Pole village that required that they research climate and life in the Arctic; as well, they used their imaginations to add fantastical features that corresponded to the mythical entity of Santa Claus residing in the North Pole. The students read several books on life in the North and the Inuit and made connections to the knowledge they learned in exploring these books to construct meaning about the figurative language used by the author in *Welcome to the Ice House* and *Owl Moon*. For example, trees were "giant statutes" (Yolen, 1998, p.3) and "black and pointy" (p.8); the night was "quiet as a dream," (p. 4) and the snow was "whiter than milk" (p. 16). The students also tapped into their own experience of living in a northern climate with winters characterized by snow, ice, and cold winds and to experience the new with new vocabulary or new ways to think about what they knew (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). In constructing knowledge, the students moved back and forth between the familiar and the new (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). They created a word cloud with their wintry words on ABCya.com (2016), a Web 2.0 application that creates visual representations based on word frequency. They used words such as *blizzard*, *snow fort*, *snowfall*, *snow drift*, *frozen*, *hockey*, *icicles*, *skating rink*, *frost*, and *icy*. Particularly during my visits the temperatures were extremely cold, which resulted in many personal anecdotes about frigid temperatures and links to the crunching and cracking sounds of walking on snow and ice in the bracing cold. The students built on each others' ideas and filled in the gaps for one another when someone could not think of a word. The New London Group (1996) highlighted the cultural and linguistic diversity of children as a classroom resource to develop their metacognitive and metalinguistic abilities in literacy learning.

The linguistic diversity as a classroom resource was especially important considering the diversity of needs among the English language learners in this classroom. Seven of the 22 students in Grade 3 were identified as EAL learners and received EAL support through a pull-out model. When someone used words that were not part of many of the EAL students' vocabulary, some would ask questions to help them to understand, and other students would explain in their own words. Ms. Reed facilitated discussions so that the students defined words as a joint enterprise in this community of practice. Often she would use the word in a different sentence and scaffold the students toward a correct definition. Ms. Reed supported the students by using dialogue as a scaffold (Bruner, 1978; Cazden, 2001). Only two of the EAL students rarely spoke unless the teacher or EA called upon them; three of the other five were main contributors, and two participated along a continuum between active and passive participation. The students would also rephrase their classmates' ideas to check for understanding or to help another student construct meaning. Learning occurred with the students' increased participation (Lave &Wenger, 1991). The EAL students learned about and through language how to use words according to the socially and culturally accepted meanings in this particular community (Halliday, 1993). The social nature of the experience was instrumental to the students' learning the appropriate language to make them "a member of society and this particular section of it" (Halliday, 1978, p. 26). Ms. Reed served as a guide in these discussions, which were mostly a back-and-forth among the students until they negotiated an appropriate meaning. Most of the talking occurred among the children, and Ms. Reed furthered the discussion by asking the students to elaborate, explain, or describe their thinking.

Vygotsky (1978) asserted that speech assists children's development of memory and attention, both higher psychological processes. Talk is an important part of the literacy learning of children. Throughout my visits to Ms. Reed's Grade 3 classroom, I observed the use of dialogue to construct meaning. Cazden (2004) proposed that children who talk more learn more because talk not only supports oral language development, but also requires that children use higher-order thinking skills. A traditional approach to classroom discussions is an I(nitiate)–R(espond)–E(valuate) structure (Cazden, 2001). In I-R-E the teacher initiates a topic of discussion usually by asking a question, the teacher-

selected student responds, and the teacher offers an evaluative statement of the student's response. Cazden explained that this traditional format is an idealized script in the teacher's head that is the residue of her teaching experience and many years of an "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 40) as a student herself. Although this happened occasionally when Ms. Reed stood at the front of the class and the students sat at their home bases, she rarely used I-R-E when she occupied the author's chair, which was situated in the corner diagonally from the reading corner. From this chair Ms. Reed delivered book-club and literacy events while the students sat on the floor at her feet. When students shared their own writing, they would occupy this special chair and read to Ms. Reed. Even though the students considered the author's chair a place of authority, this did not inhibit their student-focused exchanges. I accompanied the children on the floor when Ms. Reed was in the author's chair to give me an opportunity from the students' vantage point to witness the interactions among them during the discussions. I also did not want the students to view me as a teacher, but as a co-participant in the classroom activities. I believed that sitting alongside them would decrease the teacher-student dichotomy. The students' attention was not always on the teacher; they would also look at the child who was speaking. The Grade 3 students existed in a social structure that removed the teacher from the centre in many of the literacy activities, empowered by their legitimate peripheral participation. There was more eye contact among those on the floor than between the child who spoke and the teacher, and a few students would turn and face their peers when they talked. A student's dynamic and fluid involvement through legitimate peripheral participation created various access points for learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Learning occurs when meaning is constructed, and the construction of meaning requires a mediating tool. Language is a semiotic tool that humans use to construct meaning (Vygotsky, 1978). The children who spoke would usually look at the other children sitting next to them, and their peers would either nod in agreement or use another gesture or facial expression to show understanding or a lack of understanding. This demonstrated that the children honoured and validated each others' voices. Legitimate peripheral participation is characteristic of a community of practice where learning occurs in relationship to others (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Some children did not engage visually and listened passively, and others appeared to focus on something

other than the learning activity. When there was a lapse in the talk or silence, the children would return their gaze to Ms. Reed in the author's chair, almost as though they were asking, "What do you want *us* to talk about next?"

Ms. Reed gave the Grade 3 students many opportunities to talk and engage in dialogue by using nontraditional classroom discourse (Cazden, 2001). The nontraditional method of classroom discourse focuses less on the product and more on the process of how students come to understand or build meaning. During these nontraditional episodes, the students held the conversational floor and directed the discussion. Ms. Reed's role was to scaffold the talk by asking students to elaborate, rephrase, give examples, and make connections to the curricular content. She would also assist by offering appropriate and expanded vocabulary as well as build on the students' use of gestures. Cazden (2001) referred to these types of scaffolds as *reconceptualization*, whereby the teacher repeats, rephrases, or expands on what a child says based on his or her own assumption about what the child meant (p. 72).

Equally important in the classroom discussions was how the students scaffolded one another through *recontextualizing* what they were saying (Dyson, 2003, p. 330). The students would often use the strategy of making connections to other texts, whether oral (stories that classmates share), print (independent reading, read-alouds, or environmental print), or texts (online webpages, video games, television, and movies). Ms. Reed socially negotiated with the students how the discussions would unfold by relinquishing the traditional teacher power to determine who spoke. Cazden (2001) referred to this as "speaking rights," which "refers to the ways by which students get the right to talk—to be legitimate speakers" (p. 82). Even though Ms. Reed would remind students to take turns or select students to speak, the more boisterous students dominated the discussions, and three of the four focal children occupied the conversational floor more than others did. The students who dominated the classroom conversations were also "turn sharks" (Erickson, 1996, p. 37) who took over the conversations. Ms. Reed accepted responses from teacher-selected-students and the responses of students who shared out of turn during teacher-directed literacy activities. She would sometimes make a general comment to the class about the need to raise their hands before talking, but she never individually reprimanded them if they did not follow this rule. Even when overzealous

students interrupted Ms. Reed, she gently reminded them, "*Don't step on my words*." This was a very concrete awareness of stepping into someone else's space, almost like stepping on someone's toes. Their words and talk extended their personal space into a shared space. The students needed to be aware of and respect one another's personal space when they talked and listened.

The students had more control over their discussions during sustained talk. They held the floor longer and looked at one another more frequently. Six of the average number of 17 students in attendance each day (out of a total of 22 registered Grade 3 students) were dominant contributors to the class discussions. Not only did they give the majority of the verbal responses, but some also physically positioned themselves either closer to the teacher or in front of other students in an attempt to ensure that the teacher could easily see them and call on them. Margaret, Karl, Connor, Raphael, Jasim, and Analyn were the main contributors and held the floor for the longest periods of time. Other students would contribute from time to time, but there was a definite lack of equality in turn taking. Cazden (2001) used an example that Vivian Paley gave to illustrate how teachers can give up their positions of power and control to create spaces for more conversation among the students. Cazden referred to this self-selection of speakers as "'deregulating' classroom discourse" (p. 83) and acknowledged that it comes at the cost of inequality. Ms. Reed would try to foster a more equitable environment by selecting students to speak or asking students who did not contribute targeted questions. However, these teacher-selected students would answer briefly and not engage in sustained talk.

There was also a gender imbalance in that many of the main contributors were males, but the return of Analyn from her visit to the Philippines halfway through my field observations added another active female voice to the class discussions. Blair (2000) studied the construction of gendered talk with middle-school students and found that boys talk more than girls and that boys' talk serves several social functions such as gaining attention, maintaining control, or acquiring power. This was evident in the male focal children's use of language to make others laugh and their need to be the centre of every discussion. The gendered nature of talk might be evident even in primary classrooms.

Margaret, Karl, Jasim, and Analyn had been students in Ms. Reed's classroom the previous school year in Grade 2. This might have had an impact on their degree of participation in the learning activities. These students were old-timers (Lave & Wenger, 1991) with regard to understanding how the classroom discussions were organized. Perhaps they contributed more often because they were more comfortable with Ms. Reed; perhaps their familiarity with one another and the classroom routines promoted their participation. Similarly, the students who chose to be silent might have done so as a result of their earlier encounters. It might have felt safer to them to remain on the periphery than to take the risk of contributing. Further exploration of these ideas would be a worthy pursuit, especially in determining whether students' success in reading is tied to their degree of participation and the number of contributions to classroom discussions.

Analysis of the Grade 3 classroom literacy practices through a community of practice lens enabled me to view learning as active and social. Participation in this community of practice required social interaction (Wenger, 1998). The students looked to one another for reassurance and support and supported others who were struggling readers. They finished each others' sentences, clarified ideas, and built upon each others' ideas. The community of practice lens also revealed in the analysis that everyone was a participant, even if it was through nonparticipation. Membership in a community of practice is an evolving membership that can change in shape and degrees of involvement (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The identities of the children, relationships, and agency were forces that shaped the involvement of the students in the community of practice.

Multiliteracies and Teaching Multimodal Literacies

As I stated earlier, Ms. Reed and I collaborated on creating and teaching a Winter Olympic unit that integrated technology, software, and web applications that supported multiliteracies pedagogy. I attribute multiliteracies pedagogy to Ms. Reed's pedagogical practices to highlight the multiple literacies that were evident in her use of both technology and multimodal literacy to honour diverse ways of knowing. Multiliteracies are the multiple ways of knowing and using different literacy practices depending on the context, culture, and social aspects (New London Group, 1996, 2000); therefore, multiliteracies pedagogy does not privilege one mode of representing meaning over another.

As part of multiliteracies, multiple modes of meaning are continually reproduced to achieve different cultural purposes (New London Group, 1996, 2000). We included multimodal literacy in the Winter Olympic unit of study by using and creating multimodal texts. The intersection of the multimodal elements helped the students to create artifacts that represented their identities, out-of-school lives, and cultures. Kalantzis and Cope (2012) explained that multiliteracies pedagogy is emancipatory because of the central role of agency in the meaning-making process and that "meaning-making is an active, transformative process" (Design Pedagogy section, para. 2), which makes it pertinent to the diversity of society. Multiliteracies pedagogy involves the integration of situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice (New London Group, 1996, 2000), which Kalantzis and Cope renamed *experiencing*, *conceptualizing*, *analyzing*, and *applying*, respectively. I use both the New London Group's and Kalantzis and Cope's terms to describe the pedagogical practices that I observed. The New London Group's (1996) terms are useful to describe specific aspects of Ms. Reed's pedagogical practices, and Kalantzis and Cope's terms are useful to describe the students' engagement in the literacy activities. Ms. Reed used multiliteracies pedagogy to deliver overt instruction and critical framing in reading and viewing with available designs of texts in print, oral, video, and web-based formats; thus, the students learned concepts that would assist them in analyzing the design or meaning-making process, received overt instruction in writing mechanics (spelling, punctuation) and creative writing with pen and paper, and used a digital word processing program. With overt instruction, the students acquired conceptual knowledge to describe what they were doing when they co-constructed meaning and talk about the processes that other text creators used to communicate meaning. Situated practice relies on a community of learners immersed in meaningful practices (New London Group, 1996, 2000).
Ms. Reed's situated practice in reading and writing included guided, shared, and independent reading and writing; the students thus gained experiences in the familiar and the new. Ms. Reed applied critical framing when she discussed authors' craft and explained how texts deliver messages with colour, images, various fonts, and sound by investigating videos, brochures, webpages, and books. The analysis of various print and digital texts led Ms. Reed to create texts as models to which the students could refer

when they created their own representations of meaning in the process of redesign. In one of our early conversations, Ms. Reed said that integrating technology was not a strong area of her teaching practice. However, I witnessed several examples of her integration of technology into literacy instruction prior to the Winter Olympics unit. Her laptop and projector became fundamental means of integrating technology into literacy instruction. Ms. Reed used her laptop to bring into the classroom the traditional or conventional literacies of reading and writing, as well as new literacies texts as available designs for multiliteracies pedagogy.

Meaning making with available designs. Ms. Reed used conventional literacies to integrate technology with her laptop and projector during brainstorming sessions or class discussions. Typing in a word document on her laptop, she recorded words and ideas that the students could share aloud. She projected the words onto a screen at the front of the room while she typed and used what she had typed during the class discussion to create a handout for the students (Figure 5). These handouts included words and examples that the students could use in their writing. For example, during the Olympic Athletes' Pledge activity, Ms. Reed projected the pledge that the Olympic athletes used at Sochi onto the screen and asked the students to take a 'learning risk' and read the Pledge. Wells (2009) stressed that risk-taking is a necessary part of learning, especially "where errors as well as successes can be productive" (p. 129). The class discussed the word meanings and contributed synonyms (Figure 5) to which they referred when they wrote their own pledges. The Circle of Courage values and the Olympic Athletes' Pledge were resources or available designs that the students used to create their own pledges, as well as the Grade 3 Athletes' pledge.

Connor's writing artifact (Figure 6) demonstrates how he incorporated the synonyms (Figure 5) into his writing. He used the available designs of the Athletes' Pledge and the synonyms to create his own pledge and common language that the class developed to create his sentences. An interesting point is that Connor used the first person plural pronoun *we* instead of the first person singular pronoun *I*. He started with

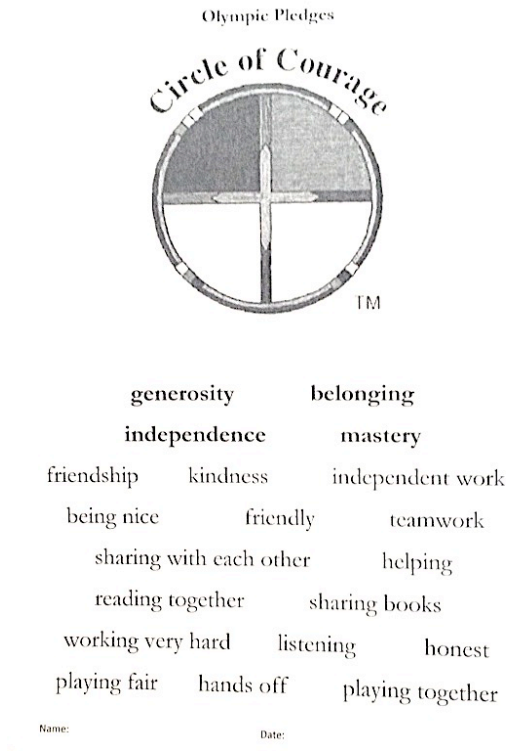


Figure 5. Class-generated list of synonyms.

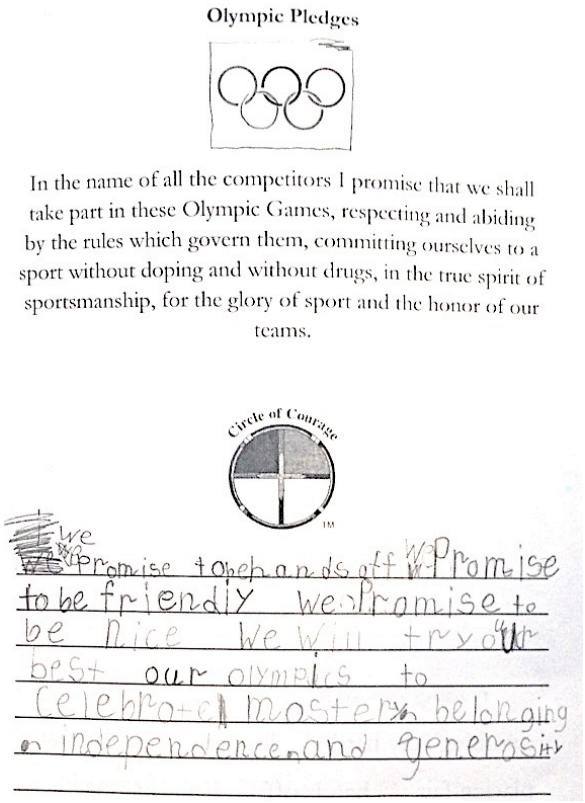


Figure 6. Connor's Olympic Pledge writing template.

we, changed it to *I*, and then used *we* again. The Olympic Athlete Pledge, which included both pronouns, might have influenced him. Connor's Olympic Pledge demonstrates his thinking when he chose the appropriate pronoun and his understanding that is some cases *I* and *we* can be interchanged, depending on the context. Other students used the first person singular pronoun in writing their pledges. For example, Karl's Olympic Pledge (Figure 7), demonstrates the use of the first person pronoun. The students' synonyms were a redesign that resulted from making new meaning; these synonyms then became resources that the students could use in future redesign (The New London Group, 1996/2000).

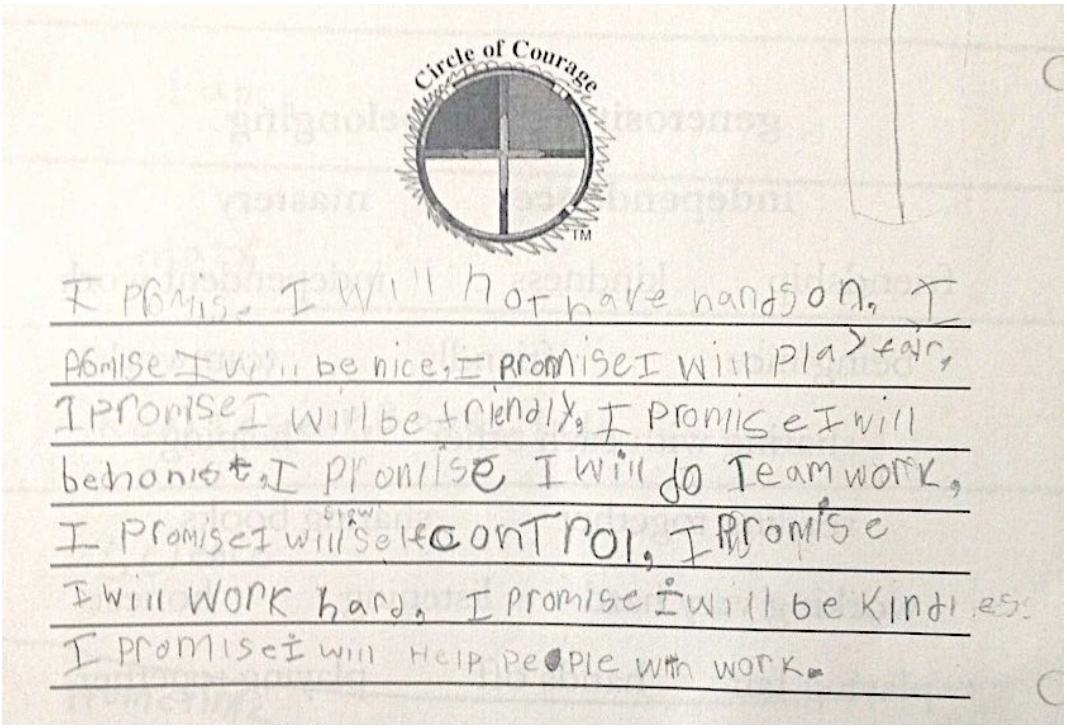


Figure 7. Karl's Olympic pledge.

Karl wrote:

> I promise I will not have hands on, I promise I will be nice, I promise I will play fair, I promise I will be friendly, I promise I will be honest, I promise I will do teamwork, I will [show] selfcontrol [*sic*], I promise I will work hard, I promise I will be kind, I promise I will help people with work.

In Karl's pledge he used not only the common language from the synonyms that the class had generated, but also some of his own language, and he tried to write as many statements as he could to fill the allowed space. Perhaps he wanted to use as many of the class-generated words as possible. An interesting feature of Karl's writing is that he used language that was congruent with the values of the Circle of Courage. The student model of the Circle of Courage shows that playing fair and using self-control demonstrate mastery and that being nice and honest and helping people demonstrate generosity. It was important that the members of the Grade 3 class model the values of mastery, belonging, independence, and generosity, and we praised them for demonstrating these values. The class brainstormed the words *friendly* and *nice*, among others, and many of the students used them in their pledges; they were part of the collective knowledge of the class. Students' use of these words demonstrated that they belonged to the community of practice. The students used shared writing to create a Grade 3 Athletes' pledge (Figure 3) prior to writing their own pledges. They used their collective knowledge to write the pledge and incorporated it into their personal pledges.

The handouts scaffolded the students so that they could write their own pledges. Many of the students in the class would have found it difficult to write their own pledges if they had not had the Olympic Athletes' Pledge as a model. They were able to talk as a class about what to write and use words in their writing that were accessible to them. The Olympic Athletes' Pledge, which Ms. Reed replicated on the handout (Figure 6), was a resource or available design that they used to make new meaning. The students transformed their knowledge to create new meaning and produce synonyms as a redesigned pledge (New London Group, 1996, 2000). The students drew upon the Circle of Courage's highlighted values as they negotiated meaning through the co-construction of knowledge. These student-generated list of synonyms also revealed social goods that the class valued. The Circle of Courage values were an available design that the students could access. The students transformed the meanings of the values in thinking of synonyms when they co-constructed meaning and wrote their own Grade 3 Athletes' Pledge. These values were important commodities for the students as a community of practice to possess and exhibit. In the process of meaning making, the students

continually drew on resources available to them from their cultural and environmental heritage (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012).

Ms. Reed used overt instruction in creative writing, which requires that the teacher actively intervene and scaffold student learning (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Overt instruction focuses students' attention on a particular part of an experience or activity so that they can acquire information that they can use to guide future practice and build on what they already know (New London Group, 1996, 2000). Ms. Reed scaffolded the students in their creative writing by using an ice cream cone metaphor: One scoop of ice cream represented a story with basic facts; two scoops of ice cream with two different flavours represented a story with facts and some supporting details; and three scoops of ice cream with three flavours, chocolate sauce, strawberry, sprinkles, and whipped cream represented a story with interesting words and many details. The students analyzed three different stories using the ice cream scoop metaphor. The one-scoop story was very short, contained spelling errors, and lacked some punctuation; the two-scoop story had a few more sentences with only a few errors; and the three-scoop story had twice as many sentences as the two-scoop and no errors in spelling or punctuation. After the analysis, Ms. Reed directed the students to "*do the extraordinary and write a three-scoop story*." She gave them names of characters, but they had to decide on the setting, problem, and solution. The students had participated in previous literacy activities in which they learned that stories have the four story elements of characters, setting, problem, and solution. Ms. Reed taught these concepts to the students when they read other texts and discussed authors' writing, and they could apply them to their own writing; she also taught them to include these ideas in their own writing so that they could identify them when they analyzed the texts of other authors.

The New London Group (1996, 2000) identified critical framing and transformed practice as two of the four components of 'how to do' multiliteracies pedagogy. As I mentioned earlier, Kalantzis and Cope (2012) renamed these knowledge processes analyzing and applying, respectively. The processes do not have to be done in any particular order; some learning situations might require more work on conceptualizing before experiencing (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Therefore, the teacher's responsibility is to determine the best method to help students to meet the learning outcomes. Ms. Reed

made this pedagogical choice in teaching the students about analyzing texts; they learned and then applied particular concepts. For example, she read Jeanette Winter's (2008) *Wangari's Trees of Peace* aloud to discuss and analyze the author's craft in using powerful words, story elements, and examples of how authors attract readers' attention. Ms. Reed wrote on chart paper, "How do authors start their books?" with a few points that explained the author's intention in using certain techniques; for instance, introducing the setting and/or characters, as Jeanette Winter did in her book. In a class discussion of author's craft, Karl referred to the visual text posted on the bulletin board and commented "*Gets your attention*" with regard to what good authors do. Ms. Reed listed several techniques with a couple of book titles for each technique as a reference for students when they talked about author's craft. Prior to reading aloud, Ms. Reed focused the students' attention on what she wanted them to listen for or pay attention to during viewing. The students analyzed the elements of design that the author used to communicate meaning (New London Group, 1996, 2000). They needed to apply these same concepts to writing their own stories or reading in a different context. The students read and viewed tourism brochures, and Ms. Reed asked them to pay particular attention to linguistic and visual meanings (New London Group, 1996, 2000). She taught the students to read analytically various tourism brochures to determine essential features that they could imitate in creating their own brochures. For example, the photographs in the brochure had captions. During the class discussion on the brochures and how they shared information, Karl noted, "*You look at a picture and need to . . . check for understanding, . . . so read the caption*." Karl also accessed language as a reader by checking for understanding from the visual resource "What good readers do" on the bulletin board to talk about the practice of viewing. He applied a concept from reading and transferred it to another literacy practice. Karl emphasized to the class the importance of writing captions under pictures. Reading a brochure for its linguistic meanings is not sufficient (New London Group, 1996, 2000); readings also need to attend to the visual elements to construct meaning; otherwise, they can form only a partial or incorrect interpretation. The students applied the elements of linguistic and visual design when they made meaning for themselves and communicated that meaning through redesign. For example, they used captions beside pictures when they made their own

brochures in Glogster. The students used books and websites as resources in the process of designing through reading, viewing, and listening and drew on these available designs to make new meaning or transform meaning for themselves (New London Group, 1996, 2000).

Transacting with digital texts. Websites, apps, and computer games are some of the available designs that the students used to engage in the acts of reading, listening, and viewing (New London Group, 1996). The children in the classroom co-existed with traditional literacy practices and digital reading and writing. Digital texts on websites include print, but it is accompanied by links that lead to another page or are embedded with sound and movement (Pahl & Rowsell, 2012). Reading and viewing on a webpage do not occur line by line, in a linear fashion; instead, the reader is required to follow several paths and sometimes has to take them off the page entirely to a related but separate page (Pahl & Rowsell, 2012). The children in this study learned how to navigate digital texts through implicit and explicit instruction.

In reading multimodal texts, especially digital texts, readers attend to symbols that represent specific information and that might require that they perform particular navigational tasks such as scrolling or clicking on links. They might include images or words that move, sound, videos, and a variety of fonts and colours. The words, sounds, or images might provide certain information or evoke a particular response from readers, depending on the previous experiences and knowledge that they bring to the event. Rosenblatt (1978/1994) described the concept of transaction as a "relationship with, and continuing awareness of, the text" (p. 29). This is especially salient to digital texts, because readers must selectively draw on previous knowledge and experience while attending to multiple signs that might have a variety of referents. Readers navigate through digital texts based on their particular purpose and stance. Rosenblatt identified two stances, aesthetic and efferent, of the reader in relation to the text. Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading describes reading a text as "an event occurring at a particular time in a particular environment at a particular moment in the life history of the reader" (p. 20). Readers transact with text to create a relationship with authors. Authors choose certain words to communicate their message, and these words evoke a response from their readers. Rosenblatt's work focuses on reading print text, but her theory can

extend to reading and viewing various types of text. She wrote about reading and responding to literary works of art and explained that, through selective attention, synthesis of various cues, and interpretation, the activity of reading becomes a "creative adventure" (p. 52). Likewise, with digital texts readers must be aware of the different symbols and their possible referents, select and synthesize these symbols by using previous knowledge and experience, and, through interpretation, determine whether they will scroll, click on a link, or shuttle back and forth between webpages. Readers of digital texts might not even read the text in the way that the author intended; they might attend to only a small portion before they move to another webpage. This is reminiscent of the follow-your-own adventure books in which, although readers cannot determine how a story ends, they can choose a path.

Multiliteracies are pivotal in transacting with text. Using web tools or reading webpages required that the students use different literacy practices and multiple ways of knowing to construct and represent meaning. Ms. Reed included hyperlinks on her classroom library webpage to approved websites and online computer games that the students could access during their computer time. They also used interactive websites and web tools to write or represent their ideas. The digital texts afforded more opportunities for the students to represent their multiple ways of knowing. They had limited individual access to the computers—two scheduled visits a week—in the computer lab, and they worked on typing, math, or literacy activities during their scheduled computer time. Fortunately, we were able to access more time in the computer lab during the Winter Olympics unit of study by negotiating with other classroom teachers.

Ms. Reed used one of the computer lab times for the students to explore Scholastic's Story Starters, an online interactive creative writing prompt generator for K to 6 students. The student selected a theme, typed their name, and picked their grade level. The difference themes and grade levels resulted in different prompts, and the students could click on four levers with a mouse to change the prompt. The first lever determines the action (e.g., describe, list, write a story, write a postcard, or draw a picture); the second, the adjective (e.g., careless, disappointed); the third, the noun or subject of the writing (e.g., insect, lemon, robber); and the fourth, the qualitative

statement about the noun (e.g., who travels by canoe, who searches the rainforest for medicine). Therefore, a possible writing prompt could read "Write a postcard to a careless robber who travels by canoe." The students could click the levers as many times as they wanted, or they could click on the large spin lever to change all four at once. When they were content with the prompt, they could click on the Next button, which would take them to another screen where they could choose the format (e.g., notebook, letter, newspaper, or postcard) and determine whether they wanted to include a picture. The students could then type into the selected format, and they could choose to include a picture. To do so, they would go to a paint program, where they could use the mouse to draw, select different colours, and determine the thickness of the drawing line. Once they were satisfied with their drawings, they could insert them into the selected format (e.g., notebook, letter, newspaper, or postcard).

During the one hour in the computer lab that day, not one student reached the writing stage in the story prompt generator. Some students used the drawing tools, but the drawings did not appear to be associated with the writing prompts; rather, the students drew whatever they wanted and played with the different drawing tools. Many students had difficulty reading the words in the prompts or would not attempt to say the words, perhaps because they found the language too complex. Therefore, Ms. Reed and I spent a great deal of time moving from computer to computer, reading the prompts for the students. The website was an available design that engaged the students in designing. The redesign was in the talk about the students' playing with the Scholastic Story Starter. They created new meaning as they talked with one another about what they were doing and viewing on Scholastic Story Starter, as well as during their play. Playing with the digital tools meant that the students could explore how the different tools functioned, thus gaining new knowledge that they could apply to other situations and contexts by using similar digital tools. Even though many students struggled with reading the prompts, talking to one another helped them to navigate and make the experience meaningful.

During my observations of the focal students Margaret, Connor, and Kyle, they did not ask for assistance in reading the story prompts; however, Shayla asked several times. She repeatedly raised her hand and solicited support. Shayla rarely participated in class activities through talk; I suspect that she was unwilling to take risks and be wrong,

that she wanted to make sure that her reading was accurate rather than make a guess that might be incorrect. Because Margaret, Connor, and Kyle regularly took risks in the contributions to class discussions, they might have been more willing to make guesses about what they were reading; if they did not get it right, they would just continue. Regardless, it appeared that Shayla was interested in the activity and was engaged as an active participant rather than residing in the shadows.

The students liked spinning mainly and seeing the different choices. For example, when Karl sat next to Sean, they chatted about the different story choices. They had figured out the pattern, so they knew when to click/spin until they chose one that they preferred to make their story prompts match. Even though the students did not use the generated prompts to write a story, they were introduced to new words and complex sentence structures by clicking the various levers to change the prompt. This web tool might have appeared to be a waste of the students' limited time in the computer lab because many students were not able to read the prompts, and none of the students reached the stage of writing a story. However, they were learning how to navigate the digital tool, which they could apply to other web tools or digital applications on tablets and online that require similar abilities. The purpose of the story prompt generator was to start the students' story writing. The creators and perhaps some educators might find this tool useful for students who find it difficult to generate their own ideas for stories. The focal children in this study and some of their peers enjoyed telling personal narratives. They would have less need for story prompts if they could talk about and then write some of the stories that they shared orally. Scholastic's Story Starters presents conventional literacies of reading and writing in digital platform. Students can use many digital tools and platforms to tell their stories, which would increase their knowledge of new literacies. For example, using a digital camera or iPad and multimedia applications such as Animoto, Photo Story, or VoiceThread, to name a few, would give students opportunities to be creative and innovative and make learning culturally relevant and meaningful.

Ms. Reed used different software programs and web tools to incorporate new literacies, such as Glogster and iMovie. In the computer lab the students used Glogster for two different projects in which they integrated image, text, sound, and video to

convey and distribute a message. Glogster is an online platform whose users create multimodal posters that incorporate text, audio, video, graphics, and images. They can use it publicly or privately in an online classroom. We set up a classroom account and username for each student. Prior to their time in the computer lab, we demonstrated how to reach the Glogster website, sign in, go into the online classroom, access the project page, and start their own glogs or digital posters. Ms. Reed posted a hyperlink on her classroom library page. The students knew how to locate Ms. Reed's classroom library page on the school website and select from the variety of hyperlinks that she had posted for the students to access during their computer lab time.

Time in the computer lab was limited and therefore valuable. Unfortunately, it took addition time to log all of the students into the Glogster online classroom, because many of the computers took a long time to load and move beyond the initial login screen. The students were assigned a number to log onto the computers to access programs or the Internet. To facilitate the students' logging on to the computers quickly, Ms. Reed created a small booklet like a Canadian passport for each student. On the front of the booklet was the title Computer Lab Passport and a space for the student's name and computer login number; and their passwords were written on the inside of the booklet so that they did not have to memorize the login number or password; however, many had memorized them and did not use the passport booklet.

When we set up the students' usernames in the classroom account on Glogster, we made a point of using the same password as their computer login for ease of access. Once all of the students had accessed Glogster, only a couple of them had remembered that their task was to create a visual representation of an Olympic value. Glogster was new to the students; it is a digital playground that they could explore as they learned how to build a digital poster. The students used play to navigate and explore all of Glogster's features to create a digital poster. In their excitement, they might have lost sight of the purpose of the activity. Having time to play with the digital tools allowed them to explore their functions before they began their assignments, but we hoped that they would play for only a little while and then begin the assignments. To be able to work on their glogs immediately during the limited computer time, the previous day the students had worked in small groups to create an Olympic value poster to scaffold their creations

on Glogster because they had already thought about it and drafted ideas on paper. The students took their draft posters to the computer lab to refer to them. However, a majority of the students began to attach what appeared to be random images and graphics to their glogs, but on further analysis I realized that these images and graphics resonated with the creators of the glogs. For example, Karl's glog was about peace, but he chose images based on his interests and what he thought looked "cool." In chapter 5, I discuss Karl's and the other three focal participants' glogs more explicitly when I address their use of multiliteracies. Ms. Reed gave the students time to become immersed in the literacy practice of representing their identity and experiences through the creation of their glogs. Ms. Reed used explicit instruction and modelling to scaffold the students so that they could transfer what they knew to another context. She taught them that images symbolize ideas—for example, the dove's symbolization of peace—and showed them how to make posters as a paper draft so that they could transfer their symbolic representations to a digital format that incorporated multiple modes.

The students' second use of Glogster was to make a digital poster as part of their city's bid to host the Winter Olympics. Ms. Reed modelled creating a glog using her hometown in an eastern province. She demonstrated the importance of selecting images that would give viewers information about the city and made connections to the tourism videos and brochures that the students had analyzed earlier. Ms. Reed emphasized that "*a successful poster is the kind of poster that will help teach people something new about your topic*." She made connections to an earlier writing lesson in which she had utilized the metaphor of ice cream cones to illustrate that the difference between a two scoops and three scoops was the addition of details. With the teacher's support, the students brainstormed what makes their city special so that they could use the words or images in their glog.

The students made a list of ideas for a three-scoop poster that became a checklist that Ms. Reed posted on the class webpage to which they could refer when they created their glogs on Glogster. This was another demonstration of employed and interwoven conventional and new literacies. Ms. Reed facilitated the discussion, but the students generated the words, which she used to emphasize the value of student voice and validate their knowledge. Using generated ideas, the students seemed to take more ownership of

their work and made sure that they met the criteria on the checklist. Ms. Reed reviewed the steps in finding images for Glogster, saving them, and then uploading the images into Glogster. The students learned multimodal literacy by creating multimodal texts, and multimodal literacy was a key element in the Olympic-bid project. The class discussed and explored different venues for the Winter Olympics on the Sochi Olympics website and chose a venue that they would create as a model as part of their bid to host the Winter Mini-Olympics. The students drew a venue design and listed the materials that they required to construct the venue, and using shoeboxes and other small boxes, they created physical models. They set them on the floor to form a replica of their city, which demonstrated spatial meaning making. They wanted to reveal to the Olympic bid committee that their city had the potential to host the Winter Mini-Olympics.

I did not visit the classroom when the students investigated structures in science class or created their models; the construction occurred during the afternoons when I was not able to visit. However, I viewed all of the structures and heard the students talk about their models.

Ms. Reed obtained the school's set of seven iPads for the students to use in small groups and take turns recording their descriptions of their Olympic venue. They would compile the recordings to make a video as part of the Olympic bid. Ms. Reed planned to use the video editing software iMovie with the iPads, so she gave the students enough guidance to get them started and then trusted them to work on the iPads. The students were interested in creating the videos and using the iPads, which is important because learners must be interested in what they are learning and willing to take risks and trust one another. Ms. Reed wrote the "List of Things to Share on the Video" on the whiteboard, and the groups continually referred to it and used the questions when the student who was being video-recorded talked about their venue. Karl suggested, "*You need to explain . . . [that] there is a swimming pool, because athletes can use it to relax*." Ms. Reed focused on the use of the word *because*, because the word-wall word helped to explain why they were making the Olympic bid. She also asked another student to point to *because* on the bulletin board to bring together oral, linguistic, visual, and gestural modes through talking, printed text, and pointing. Ms. Reed encouraged the students to take risks by focusing their attention on the words and processes that the students used

without making evaluative statements about them. She modelled what she wanted the students to do, which helped them to support each other and take learning risks. For example, Karl took control of his group's iPad to record Jashim talk about his structure. However, Jashim became silent and did not offer information once the recording began. Karl prompted him, "*What building is it?*" and probed by pointing to a particular part of the venue model. He said, "*Tell me about that.*" Karl supported Jashim by asking him questions about his structure, just as Ms. Reed had modelled to the class. Multimodal literacy existed in the talking, designing, and producing of texts. The students talked animatedly about their venues, used gestures, and pointed to parts of their venue.

Another class then used the iPads and accidentally erased all of the videos that the Grade 3 class had recorded. Ms. Reed rescheduled use of the iPads. She was not angry about the loss of the videos that the students had recorded because she considered it a good practice session; however, during the next video recording session the students who were video-recorded were shy and did not offer information about their venue models. Very little prompting occurred, and even when students were prompted, they would answer, "*I don't know*." Time constraints did not allow the students to use the iPads again to create their class's Olympic bid video, so Ms. Reed recorded the venues herself with her camera without student involvement.

Ms. Reed's variety of literacy experiences of producing a video, creating tourism brochures, and writing letters as part of the petition to host the Olympics appealed to a variety of learners. The Olympic-bid project is just one example of how she incorporated print and digital resources into literacy learning. The project made learning meaningful and created a context and purpose for planning and making videos, constructing models, writing letters, and creating brochures by using multiple modes.

Multiliteracies address the shifting and evolving nature of literacy that has resulted from technology, global, and cultural changes (New London Group, 1996, 2000). The new texts and literacy practices that have arisen with technology are referred to as *new literacies*. Leander and Boldt (2012) criticized the New London Group's (1996, 2000) pedagogy of multiliteracies and asserted that new literacies are not the result of changes in technology solely. Similarly, my research participants were also "heavily invested in practices, consumption, and representations from global media" (Leander &

Boldt, 2012, p. 23) that are characteristic of multiliteracies. The New London Group privileged texts, and the goal of literacies is therefore the production of texts. Leander and Boldt contended that the New London Group's view presupposes intentionality in the use of texts, whereas they focused on the representation of embodied knowing more than on the production of texts. Consequently, they saw more spontaneous and improvisational actions in their participants' behaviour. This was also evident in the students in Ms. Reed's Grade 3 class. She routinely used Google Earth to engage her students with new literacies. Google Earth is a virtual globe and map that uses 3D images and employs very different elements of design as a multimodal text. Ms. Reed used her laptop and projector to demonstrate Google Earth. The class liked to use Google Earth to see their location in relation to other places in the world—to construct spatial meanings (New London Group, 1996, 2000). For example, one of the students was visiting family in the Philippines, and Google Earth helped the class to better understand the distance between their city and the Philippines, not only in terms of travel, but also the difference in the time of day. Google Earth also became a valuable resource to show the location of Vancouver, British Columbia, the host of the 2010 Winter Olympics; and Sochi, Russia, the host of the 2014 Winter Olympics. It also showed the students where Vancouver and Sochi are located in relationship to their community. When the camera zoomed in, the students would yell and wave their arms as though they were falling toward the Earth from space. They responded to the multimodal text with their bodies in a multimodal representation. The students engaged with new literacies and made their response meaningful through movement and sensation; it was not text-centric (Leander & Boldt, 2012). The students embodied meaning.

How the Grade 3s Made and Expressed Meaning Using Multimodal Designs

Multimodal literacy involves making meaning through various modes and combines visual, audio, and gestural modes. This Grade 3 classroom used multiple modes such as gestures, talk, visuals and artifacts to construct and represent meaning. This community of practice also used gestures frequently. Karl gestured when he was unable to think of the appropriate vocabulary to describe his thinking about the information that he viewed on a menu. His pointing upwards symbolized that a menu at McDonald's requires looking up to view it. Just as written or visual design have a

grammar, so do gestures that describe the intricate designs in communicating meaning and overlay talk; however, that is a study unto itself (Kalantzis & Cope, 20102). The grammar of gestures reveals that we use them to point out things in important ways (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012), just as Karl pointed upwards to communicate what he could not by using only talk. Margaret also used gestures when she could not think of the word to describe what she was thinking. She told me about fancy dance in pow-wow and explained, "*You need a shawl, and you need to go like that*" (she moved her arms outward as in flying). She also used gestures to explain the word for 'harness' when she talked about taking her dog for a walk:

> *Margaret: Because we bought a little thing, you hold right there and here [gestures around her chest].*
> *Me: Oh, a harness.*
> *Margaret: Yeah. And then you put a leash right there [gestures towards her back]. It is a little bit too big, but I make it tight because there is a little extra right there [gestures around her chest], so I make it tight, and she is skinny.*

When Margaret and Karl could not think of a word, their gestures illustrated supports for speaking to communicate meaning (Kress, 2001). The use of gestures was commonplace for many of the students when the word that they were seeking was unavailable to them or they wanted to share their ideas with the rest of the class. Karl used gestures whenever he talked. During our interview, when he talked about playing a video game on the computer, he moved his fingers as if he was pressing the arrow keys. Also during the interview, when Karl talked about books that he liked to read, he referred to an art book that he had been reading and described what he liked about it: "*I like the one that looks like, you know, those ones that—they have that—like, if you get—the squiggly one—that stuff that—that black and white one.*" It is difficult to understand what Karl said without being seeing his gestures and hand motions to simulate drawing. His gestures provided more information than speaking could on its own. Thus, gestures are an important sign system. Ms. Reed and the other students were adept at reading these signs, and the discussion was never at a standstill. Ms. Reed also used gestures when she talked as visual signs to support students' comprehension. For example, she would stroke her chin with her thumb and forefinger and say, "*I wonder* . . . ." The students would imitate this behaviour to symbolize that they were thinking about

something or when they asked 'curiosity' questions about new ideas or things. As a sign system, gestures represent and communicate meaning. Pointing, facial expressions, and the use of arms to act out words added to the students' lexicon. Using gestures also provided spaces for the students to make connections. Gestures connect words to visuals to further reinforce ideas. They have meaning in the time and space in which we use them. Prior to advances in technology, gestures could not transcend time and space. Writing was the only way to communicate beyond a particular time and space until the advent of audio and video, which have facilitated the use of talk and gestures to communicate beyond the current context.

Multimodal literacy was also evident in the texts that Ms. Reed used in the classroom. The multimodal texts included both linguistic and visual elements. The students watched the video *The Best of the Olympics* via YouTube to activate and build on their prior knowledge about Winter Olympic sports and note important ideas in the video. They were able to better understand how images, the use of different fonts and colours, text, and sound worked together to convey a message through exploration, discussion, and analysis of the video. They then wrote their observations on a Visual Response graphic organizer (Appendix C).

We watched another video on YouTube called *Countdown to Sochi 2014*. The first viewing helped the students to build more knowledge about the Winter Olympics. Videos are multimodal, and this particular video used colour, black and white images, moving and still images, text and fonts of various sizes, colour, music, and sound effects. During subsequent viewings we asked the students to pay attention to how the images, words, and music conveyed a message and evoked an emotional response. If the students watched the video without sound, they would have had different aesthetic responses because multimodal texts intersect multiple modes. Rosenblatt (1978/1994) stressed reading involves a transaction between readers and texts in which the readers interpret the textual cues and carry meaning through their current expectations and past experiences. This can be extended to new media texts, in which viewers can adopt an efferent or aesthetic stance based on the expectations and experiences that they bring to the literacy activity. Likewise, in texts created through new literacies, the creators invest personally and perhaps emotionally, because they contribute to and collaborate in its creation. The

linguistic, visual, and gestural meanings are essential to the available design to represent meaning (New London Group, 1996, 2000). The students recorded on their Visual Response graphic organizer what they saw, heard, and felt and what it made them think. This activity required that they shift from the efferent end of the spectrum to the aesthetic stance.

Using Collective Knowledge to Negotiate Meaning

Moll and Greenberg's (1990) ethnographic study of families in a Hispanic urban American community revealed that members of households share knowledge and that the transmission of this knowledge ensures families' survival. In my study I observed the Grade 3 students participate in literacy activities by sharing their knowledge with one another. They shared personal narratives by making connections to what they read, viewed, and heard. The classroom became a repository of knowledge and experiences upon which any of its members could draw. The students brought into the classroom their family and community knowledge and shared it with their peers, and the distributed experiences and knowledge became collective knowledge. Moll and Greenberg (1990) referred to reciprocal relationships as *social networks*. Their ethnographic study revealed that, through social networks, the household members had access to household or automotive repairs that would be costly if they hired outside companies. Social networks gave its members access to employment opportunities, as well as emotional and familial support when they helped one another. Moll and Greenberg concluded that "these networks form social contexts for the transmission of knowledge, skills, information, as well as cultural values and norms" (p. 321). The Grade 3 students' social networks gave them access to information and skills. The students knew who to approach if they needed help in the computer lab, who to ask if they wanted to have something drawn, or who to seek out if they needed help with carrying or moving something. The knowledge and ability to do certain things was distributed among the students in the Grade 3 class. Wells (1999) affirmed that, through collaborative participation, learning occurs with and from others. In the practice of reading, this community of practice used collaboration and their collective knowledge to co-construct and negotiate meaning when they read both print-based and digital texts. Even though the students used the practices of reading and

writing in conventional ways, they were still experiencing multiliteracies that they could apply in other contexts.

The use of graphic organizers emphasizes conventional literacies; however, collective and distributed knowledge, as well as collaboration, were key to the students' successful use of the graphic organizers. The New London Group (1996) explained that "the notion of Design recognizes the iterative nature of meaning-making, drawing on Available Designs to create patterns of meaning that are more or less predictable in their contexts" (p. 76). The students used a variety of available designs in the process of designing to construct meaning. Talk was both an available design and a redesign, and through talk the students were able to construct meaning about what they read, heard, saw, and wrote.

Classroom discussions supported the students' reading in that they could put the words into another context or expand on them. For example, when they read Olympic athletes' mottos, even though they might have been familiar with some of the words, the meanings shifted because the words were used in different contexts. Their combined experiences and knowledge helped them to construct meaning of what they were reading and use their combined knowledge to negotiate the meaning of the mottos. Allington (2012) described the value of talk in reading. He gave an example of two people reading a news story. In a conversation after their reading, the two readers "will try together to make some sense. [They] will hypothesize and weigh the evidence and draw on [their] combined experiences as readers, as well as [their] combined experiences with the [topic]" (pp. 122-123). Allington emphasized the use of authentic conversation about texts rather than the typical interrogation with regard to texts: "Outside of school settings we engage in conversations about the adequacy of texts and authors to inform, engage, and entertain us; in school we engage in interrogation around what was in the text" (p. 125). This means that teachers need to move beyond comprehension questions that interrogate students about texts and instead engage them in meaningful conversations on texts. The children's discussions in this study gave meaning to texts. As Bruner (1986) wrote, the meaning of texts does not reside solely in the author's words—Bruner referred to Wolfgang Iser's "virtual texts" (p. 6)—but also in the virtual texts that readers create in

their thinking while they read. These virtual texts became the fuel for the class discussions that propelled the students' literacy learning forward.

We created a research grid (Appendix C) as an organizer to support the students' research process as well as class discussions. In addition to learning about the Winter Olympic sports, they researched a Canadian athlete who was participating in the Sochi Olympics. Unfortunately, they did not have enough time to use the Canada Olympic Team website in the computer lab, so we printed athlete profiles from the website. The students used these profiles to read and complete their research grid, and their repository of knowledge grew through talk and their collective knowledge. They had access to a wider breadth of knowledge than they would have had if they approached the practice of reading alone. These readers in this community of practice worked together to construct meaning. We created the research grid to scaffold students in creating a trading card for their athlete. The headings and subheadings on the research grid corresponded to elements of the trading card, and the students could easily transfer information from the paper draft into a digital format. We planned for the students to access a trading card–creator tool on the website readwritethink.org (National Council of Teachers, 2016), but this did not come to fruition.

We introduced the students to winter sports with which many were unfamiliar beyond hockey and skating, which are the most common in the prairie province and well-known Canadian sports. We explored the different sports by reading and viewing. Shared reading and read-alouds make texts accessible to all readers, regardless of the complexity of the text or the reading ability of the student. Their legitimate peripheral participation in shared reading and the read-alouds the students gave the students an opportunity to discuss as a class the content of each text. Additionally, the benefits of reading aloud are well known; "hearing stories and discussing stories encourages reading, which in turn promotes literacy development" (Krashen, 2004, p. 78). Krashen cited several studies that showed that "children make significant increases in vocabulary knowledge after just a few hearings" (p. 78) during read-alouds. Read-alouds make texts that are above a child's reading level accessible. On the Canada Winter Olympic website the students read about the materials involved in each sport, the appropriate behaviours or actions required in the sport, and who represented Canada in each sport. They worked

with partners to investigate the different sports in the Winter Olympics. Ms. Reed projected the Sochi Winter Olympic website and Canada's Olympic Athletes' webpages, which are digital texts, for shared reading to help the students to work on fluency and comprehension. The Sochi Olympic website shared information about the different Winter Olympic sports and venues. The students chose a sport about which they wanted to know more, and they used a graphic organizer (Appendix C) to jot down ideas about this sport. They could record ideas while they watched the videos on each sport on the Sochi Olympic website, but most wrote down their ideas during the discussions that took place after they watched each sport on the websites. Using their notes, the students then wrote a sentence and read it to the class. They used the available designs on the websites in reading and viewing and then transformed them to create new meaning (New London Group, 1996, 2000).

Ms. Reed used graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams, KWL charts, research grids, story planners, and writing templates to facilitate the students' construction of meaning, planning, writing, and production of literacy artifacts. The students socially negotiated meaning with the graphic organizers and accessed the collective knowledge of the class. They wrote on their individual copies, but worked in collaboration with others by discussing their work, sharing ideas, negotiating what to write, and looking to others to see what they had written. Vygotsky (1986) emphasized that understanding between minds is not possible without some mediating expression. The students' thinking was represented in their talk and writing, and language in the form of talk was an available design for them to represent their knowledge through writing. Accordingly, the graphic organizers coordinated the students' thinking as well as serving as a communication tool.

Summary

In this chapter I shared my findings based on the data that I collected during my visits to Belleheights School. I described the Grade 3 class as a community of practice according to Lave and Wenger's (1991) communities of practice theory, which creates a lens through which to view classroom learning as a dynamic and social enterprise. This lens illuminated everyone as a participant, whether through active, passive, or nonparticipation. I discussed the classroom teacher's pedagogical practices and the use of multiliteracies in literacy instruction to support the co-construction of meaning.

CHAPTER 5:

RELATIONSHIPS: CO-CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES

Sociocultural theories of learning and literacy posit the role of social interactions and culturally determined tools in the course of intellectual development. Thus, the relationship between language and social interaction is significant. As learners, we create relationships with others through language and social interaction. Similarly, we negotiate and co-construct our identities through language and social interaction. This chapter is about four focal Grade 3 students at Belleheights School and how they co-constructed and negotiated their identities as literacy learners.

Overview

In the previous chapter I described my findings on the literacy practices of the Grade 3 class in Belleheights School. My analysis and interpretation of the data produced several findings. First, the Grade 3 class came together as a community of practice by using the values of the Circle of Courage model and by talking about themselves as readers. I described their participation in literacy activities to make the community of practice come alive. Another finding is that Ms. Reed employed particular pedagogical practices for the community of practice to exist, while honouring diverse ways of knowing by using multiliteracies. The Grade 3 students used multiple modes to construct meaning and communicate with each other while they developed shared and collective knowledge.

In this chapter I explore how four Aboriginal children used talk to construct meaning and identify themselves as readers. I discuss how their participation in literacy activities shaped their identities, how they used multiliteracies in response to reading both digital and print-based texts, and how they used their funds of knowledge to support meaning-making and identity construction. I elucidate the findings within the context of sociocultural learning and literacy theories. Sociocultural theorists and researchers Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) argued, “Few other theories attempt to account for such a wide range of mediators in human literacy learning and practice” (p. 3). Thus, the sociocultural theories of learning and literacy cast “light on the education of people whose language, literacy, and very being have traditionally been marginalized or

disenfranchised in schools and societies" (p. 3). The four focal students identified as Cree, Dene, or Métis and carry with them the history of marginalization in education. Bell et al. (2004) conducted case-study research on 10 different schools with successful Aboriginal education programs and concluded that "Aboriginal students need to learn in a setting that recognizes their needs, values their culture and identity, and challenges and equips them to succeed" (p. 325). They stressed the need for culturally relevant teaching and resources to support literacy learning. Several themes emerged from my interpretation of the data with regard to the central motif of identity, such as talk, agency, and culture, that supported the focal students' becoming proficient literacy learners. They made choices about how they participated, how they used language, and how they behaved. Their language and behaviour were rooted in how they saw themselves and shared their experiences, as well as in how they wanted others to see them, which thus influenced the lived experiences that they brought into the classroom. The focal participants used agency, multiliteracies, and culture to co-construct and transform their identities. The theme of identity, like a musical canon, repeated throughout the research findings, stringing the themes together.

Negotiating Identities

We do not have just one way of being, which means that identity is dynamic, complex, multilayered, and transformed through negotiation. Wenger (1998) noted that when we view identity as "negotiated experience," it means that "we define who we are by the ways we experience ourselves through participation as well as by the ways we and other reify our selves" (p. 149). The four focal students, Karl, Margaret, Connor, and Shayla, socially constructed their identities as readers by doing the things that readers do. I begin by describing how they saw themselves as readers.

Shayla is a quiet girl who kept to herself during class. I did not have a chance to interview Shayla formally because she often arrived late. However, when I sat beside her during the literacy activities, I took the opportunity to ask her questions about her reading. For example, the following excerpt from my researcher's journal is one of my conversations with Shayla:

> *I decided to sit between Shayla and Gavin as they worked on their writing. Shayla has gotten more comfortable with me and began to tell me about her weekend. It was her cousin's birthday; they had a party, played with bingo*

> *dabbers, and got to camp[6] at Kohkum's[7] house. I asked her if she liked reading. She said "Yes." I probed, "Do you see yourself as a good reader?" and Shayla replied "Yes" and then quickly continued talking with a story about her hair. Shayla showed me how her Kohkum cut her bangs because they were so long. She explained that her Kohkum wanted to cut them shorter, but Shayla wanted them long, and Shayla's mom said to Kohkum "Good luck."*

Shayla enjoyed telling personal narratives, as this excerpt shows. She did not seem interested in talking about herself as a reader, but redirected the conversation to a topic of her choosing. Her forthright answers demonstrate either her confidence in her identity as a reader or perhaps her desire to get on with her story and placate me with a suitable answer. Shayla's culture is evident in her narrative. She used language such as *kohkum* and *camp*, which made visible her connection to the Cree culture. Shayla's sense of self is evident in her animated talk about her grandmother's desire to cut her hair shorter, and her mother's comment "*Good luck*" reveals that it would be difficult for her grandmother to change Shayla's mind.

Their classroom teacher, Ms. Reed, identified the four focal children as proficient readers, although I observed many instances in which Shayla's reluctance to participate demonstrated that she struggled with literacy activities. However, Shayla must have demonstrated to Ms. Reed that she was a proficient reader, because Ms. Reed selected the focal participants based on what she knew about the students from her assessments and observations.

The other three focal students identified themselves in their interviews as readers and said that they enjoyed the practice of reading. Margaret, like many children, dreamt of the future and what she wanted to be when she grows up. She expressed the desire to become a veterinarian and a snowboarder and recognized that doing well in school would help her to meet these goals. Margaret believed that being a good reader would help her to read charts when she was older, as well as read about how to become a better snowboarder. I also asked her about her reading practices, and she shared with me what it meant to her to be a good reader:

---

[6] Many Aboriginal people use *camp* to refer to sleeping overnight at someone's house. It does not involve camping in the sense of using tents or sleeping outside.

[7] *Kohkum* is term for 'grandmother' in the Cree language.

Me: When you think about yourself as a reader, what kind of reader do you think you are?
Margaret: Ah, . . . good.
Me: What makes you a good reader?
Margaret: I find just-right books to read.
Me: How do you know it is a just-right book?
Margaret: Sometimes if I check a book, I use the five-finger rule.

Margaret identified herself as a reader according to her ability to find books at an appropriate level and read independently. The significance of sharing her ability to find a "*just-right book*" reveals the importance of students' being able to describe what they did as readers to become members of the reading club (Smith, 1988). Margaret also referred to the five-finger rule when we discussed her preinterview activity: "*I look at the cover, because if I'm reading a chapter book and I don't know if it's right for me, then I do the five-hand thing; you know, the five words. Then you can't read it.*' Margaret talked about the "*five-finger rule*" in two different interviews, which demonstrates her understanding that if she encountered five words that she did not know or understand, it would make it difficult for her to transact with the text. Again, she used a shared lexicon with many readers as part of her evolving membership in the community of practice of readers (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Margaret's lexical choice revealed her identity as a reader and a competent student.

Connor was the largest child in the class and much taller than some of his peers. He used his size to his advantage and often helped to move large items around the room. When I interviewed Connor, I asked him what he would like to do when he became an adult, and he replied, "*Football. . . . I have the size for it.*" We talked about his enjoyment of playing football, and then our conversation took us into a discussion of the movie *Blindside* [Motion Picture] and the protagonist's having to work hard at school to be able to play football. During the interview we also talked about how Connor saw himself as a reader. Not only did he identify as a good reader, he also articulated the strategies that he used to become a proficient reader. His responses demonstrate that he understood that the purpose of reading is to acquire meaning:

Me: When you think about yourself as a reader, what kind of reader do you think you are?
Connor: A good one.

Me: Yeah. What do you think makes a good reader?
Connor: Listening to the words

When I probed about other strategies that he used, Connor replied, "*Like when there is no pictures and I don't understand the word, I use my imagination.*" Connor's responses of "*listening to the words*" and "*us[ing] my imagination*" demonstrate his capacity to use mental images to construct meaning when he reads. Kalantzis and Cope (2012) explained that when we read for meaning, we bring our knowledge, experiences, and interests to the practice by applying mental models. Connor described the cognitive process that he used in reading as "*listening to the words*," which might refer to his listening to his inner speech and to others using language to develop as a language user. Halliday (1975, 1993) theorized that humans learn about language by using language. The social nature of languages leads to the notion that we learn languages through participation. We construct languages socially in a cultural environment and carry the practices and values of the people within it. Connor was a member of a community of practice of readers because he engaged in the practice of reading when he interacted with texts by "*listening to words*" and using his imagination to bring meaning to texts from his own experiences.

Karl was a very busy and active student. He made sure that he was involved in any classroom activities that he considered important. Several times I would sit next to other students, and Karl would come over to see what we were doing. I had brought in my iPad in the hope of video recording the students as they participated in a literacy activity. I sat next to Gavin, and he asked to see the iPad. When I handed it to him, he began to touch the different icons and asked whether there were any videos. Because I had no videos on my iPad, Gavin continued to explore by touching and swiping. Soon a large cluster of children gathered around us, and some asked for a turn. Karl was one of the first children to arrive and ask for his turn. Karl was curious and wanted to belong. Even when I interviewed Margaret and Connor in the hallway during Read-to Self, Karl would peek his head out the door several times to see what we were doing.

In my interview with Karl on his reading, he articulated what he thought about reading but did not describe it in terms of cognitive processes that the students commonly used in the classroom when they talked about themselves as readers:

Me: So what kind of reader are you?
Karl: Like, a Geronimo Stilton reader.
Me: Do you think of yourself as a good reader?
Karl: Yeah. Do you?
Me: Yes, I think you are, but what do you think makes a good reader?
Karl: Looking at words and reading them.

Karl identified the kind of reader that he was based on what he liked to read. The Geronimo Stilton series was very popular with the Grade 3 students. An adventure genre that included different fonts and colours, its format as a graphic novel is highly engaging for children. Being "*a Geronimo Stilton reader*" demonstrates that Karl enjoyed this genre and type of book. When I asked him whether he thought of himself as a good reader, he said "*Yeah*," but quickly solicited my opinion of him as a reader. Karl wanted to do well and sought ways to be at the front, ahead of his peers, and first. In soliciting my opinion, Karl demonstrated that the opinions of certain people were important to him. Perhaps he saw me in the same way that he did his teacher, whom he worked hard to impress. Karl enjoyed contributing to class discussions and relished any time that Ms. Reed acknowledged his actions as a good reader. For Karl, Ms. Reed's public recognition of his exhibiting what good readers do fuelled his desire to continue to contribute. Making connections is something that good readers do, and Karl would make connections to books he was reading, movies or television he watched, and other lived experiences. He liked to receive the positive and public attention attached to doing what is valued in a classroom.

Karl worked hard at the literacy activities and made sure his voice was heard. He liked to share when he had completed his work and was competitive in wanting to finish before his peers did. An example of Karl's desire to be first occurred during a spelling test. After he wrote each spelling word, he would announce "*Done*!" as though he was in a competition with the rest of the class to determine who could write each word the fastest or finish first. He needed to be first, central, and in front of his peers. Karl always made sure that his Duo-Tang was always in front of everyone else's Duo-Tang each time that he put it away. Ms. Reed had placed baskets for each subject on a side cupboard, where the students kept their Duo-Tangs for different subjects. Even when he stood in line to leave the classroom, Karl would take the opportunity to move his Duo-Tangs to the front of the bin, and sometimes during class he would get up to make sure that his

Duo-Tangs were in front of the others. They could be found at the front of these baskets at any time during the week. These examples illustrate how important it was to Karl to be first and how that influenced his participation in literacy practices.

Karl's graphic organizer (Figure 8) reveals information about his identity. it is significant that Karl underlined all of the words typed on the page. He remarked to me that he read all of the words, and "*that line shows it*." Karl wanted to do well in school and understood that reading helped him to meet this goal.

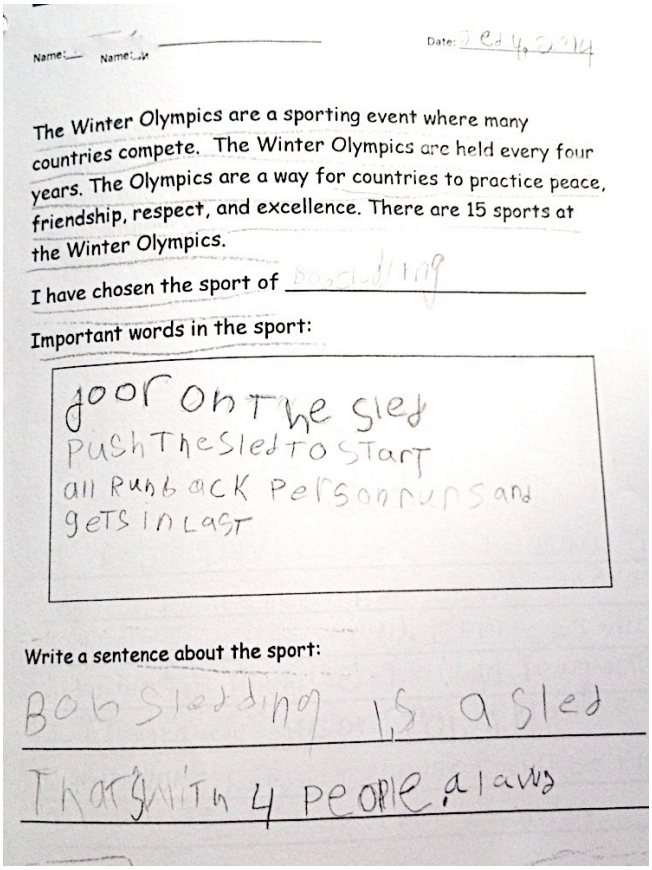


Figure 8. Karl's Winter Olympic Sport organizer and writing template.

Figure 8 also shows a graphic organizer that the students used in the meaning-making process when they read and viewed information about the Winter Olympic sports. The graphic organizer supported the students' organization of their ideas when they wrote a statement about the sport. When they explored the different Winter Olympic sports, Karl was assigned bobsledding. He drew on his own experiences to

co-construct meaning when he wrote about bobsledding. Because of his own experience on a sled and what was required to make it go down the hill, Karl made an inference about the bobsled although he had had no direct experience with one. Kalantzis and Cope (2012) referred to this as a mental model. Karl's personal experience with sledding was an available design that he was able to recall and connect to the new situation (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012) of bobsledding. Making connections is also a valued enterprise, because it is what good readers do to gain meaning from reading. He had no direct experience with bobsledding, but had experience with sledding and had watched a video of Olympic athletes participating in bobsledding. He was able to construct new meaning from the textual experience of watching a video (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Karl willing shared his connections aloud with the class and was the first person to volunteer to read the sentence he wrote on bobsledding to the class.

Prior to the interviews I met with the focal students to conduct preinterviews, which was a nonthreatening way to get to know them (Ellis, 2006). I asked the focal children to create a product or artifact as part of the preinterview activity and then to bring it with them the next time that we met. I created folders for each focal student that included drawing paper, markers, and a sheet that explained the different preinterview activities that they could choose. I had hoped that the focal children would take their folders home to work on the activities, but none did. Instead, I took each of them into the hallway in the morning during Read-to-Self and talked with them while they worked on their preinterview artifacts. I also conducted the interviews with the focal students during Read-to-Self, because this time was the least disruptive to their participation in classroom literacy activities. Shayla rarely attended Read-to-Self, which was the time when I had an opportunity to meet with each focal child individually. Therefore, she did not complete a preinterview activity, and I was unable to interview her.

Margaret, Karl, and Connor each transformed an aspect of their lived experience into an artifact during the preinterview activity. These multimodal artifacts contained drawings, written text, and spoken texts, because they talked while they created their visual representations. Margaret created a weekly schedule (Figure 9) during the preinterview activity that represented her daily life and symbolized her identity as a student, pet owner, and digital-technology user. This artifact told several stories (Pahl &

Rowsell, 2010). Margaret's weekly schedule symbolized her various roles and told the story of the importance of school. Eight of her 10 daily entries were about school and illustrated Margaret's value for school. She said during the preinterview activity that she loved school, which she exemplified in the number of entries on her weekly schedule related to school. Although "Wake up" and "Go to my bed" do not specifically mention school, they are related to her role as a student. She had to get up to go to school and then go to bed so that she could wake up the next day.

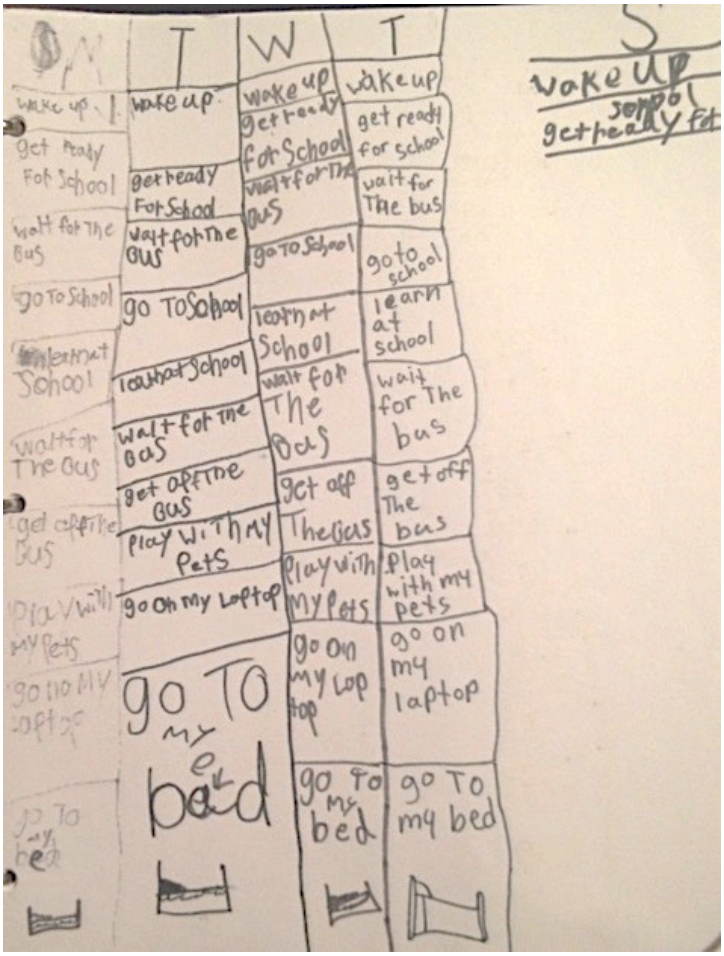


Figure 9. Margaret's weekly schedule.

Six of Margaret's daily entries were about school: "Get ready for school," "Wait for the bus," "Go to school," "Learn at school," "Wait for the bus," and "Get off the bus." The two entries following "Play with my pets" and "Go on my laptop" were symbolic of her personal identity and tied to her interests. The first represented her love of animals and desire to become a veterinarian, and the second her enjoyment of watching shows,

creating texts, participating in online environments, and playing games on her laptop. She described some of the things she did on her laptop:

> *You dress the person up in different stuff, and, and there is like, there is a lot of things, like weddings, or babies, and dress up or cooking, or jobs, or dress up woo-hoo. And I like to go on Paint. I can draw, because my mom used to pay for the Internet. And yesterday I went on Paint to draw and play chess. And my laptop can watch movies, because you can press a DVD on the side, and I go on YouTube, [watch] shows, because I watch Extreme Makeover because it is not on today. Last time it wasn't on, so I would go on YouTube and watch TV—and wait! And I go on Facebook.*

Margaret talked about watching TV and playing with dolls in the interview, but she did not identify either of these afterschool activities on her weekly schedule. She tied together her out-of-school literacies with her school practices and itemized them in chronological order. Even though she listed them as separate items, they were all part of her lived experience and shaped her identity.

The four focal children used language to enact their identities (Gee, 2010). Being able to talk about themselves as readers reinforced their identities as readers. Gee explained that "we use language to signal what sort of relationship we have, want to have, or are trying to have with our listener(s), reader(s), or other people, groups, or institutions about whom we are communicating" (p. 18). Three of the four focal children enjoyed participating in class discussions and sharing their experiences and knowledge with the entire class, which thus signals the relationship of collaborative learning. One of the focal children chose to not to talk about these things with the entire class. However, her oracy skills still demonstrated her identity as a proficient user of language. Connor, Karl, and Margaret readily engaged in class discussions and employed the secondary Discourse of academic language. Shayla was not predisposed to doing so, which was not a reflection of her ability. Halliday (1978) acknowledged that children's inclination to learn does not reflect their ability to learn but is potentially an incongruence between their own ways of using language and school literacy. For children from minority cultures to be successful in school requires that teachers support them in building bridges between the sanctioned school literacies and the family literacies that students bring with them. Fortunately for the students in Grade 3, Ms. Reed created spaces to value their experiences and knowledge through talk.

Using Talk as Meaning-Makers

Vygotsky (1978, 1986) theorized that basic cognitive processes transform into higher psychological functions with the use of culturally determined tools while children are socially interacting. Talk is one of these culturally determined tools and was a pivotal means of success in literacy learning for the children in this study. Oracy, or talk, mediates experiences as part of the meaning-making process. Halliday (1978) explained that, through language, we organize our experiences and interact in certain ways. The sharing of stories and personal experiences helps children to organize their thinking and construct meaning about those experiences and stories. Connor, Karl, and Margaret were the main contributors to classroom discussions, and their use of talk helped them to construct meaning during the reading process throughout the study. Shayla also liked to talk, although in this study she did so only in a one-to-one setting. She did not share her stories with the class, whereas her peers used their stories to make connections during numerous literacy activities. Shayla used talk to organize and synthesize her thoughts when she shared personal narratives.

The focal children used their oral language to share their experiences and make connections to the range of texts available. Margaret, Connor, and Kyle demonstrated their meaning-making when they talked about what good readers do in relation to their reading. For example, when the students watched the tourism video, Ms. Reed asked them to identify the strategies that they were using to help them learn. Karl responded "*Asking questions*" and then walked to the bulletin board with its list of what good readers do and continued, "*When at the beginning I didn't know, but then I don't know, so . . .*" while he pointed to "Check for understanding" on the bulletin board. Ms. Reed asked the students, "*How do we check for understanding?*" and Connor replied, "*Keep watching and think about it.*" Connor, Karl, and Margaret recognized the value of talking about themselves as readers in the Grade 3 classroom, and Ms. Reed's encouragement entrenched the value and reinforced their identity as readers. The vocabulary of what good readers do supported the students' meaning-making while at the same time made them members of the community of practice through a shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998). The students' language and behaviour determined how they were recognized, "and those recognitions shape how people see themselves" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 20). The

students' use of the lexicon of what good readers do helped them to identify as good readers.

These students' use of language, which they developed through talk, gave them the means to bring together their knowledge of the world and their knowledge of language to support their reading development. Wells (2009) explained that children

> talk in order to achieve other ends: to share their interest in the world around them, to obtain things they want, to get others to help them, participate in activities of the grown up world, to learn how to do thing or why things are as they are, or just to remain in contact. (p. 59)

Three of the focal children used talk to share their thoughts about what they were reading, offered ideas in the process of constructing meaning as a class, and asked permission for special activities such as getting the snack, handing out books, or leaving the classroom. Talk was an enterprise that they valued, as was doing the things that good readers do, such as making connections.

During class discussions Connor, Karl, and Margaret made connections to other texts that they remembered reading or viewing. These connections required that they use their memories as well as know the aspects to which they needed to pay attention to make meaningful connections. For example, Margaret made a personal connection to a photo of pow-wow dancers when she read a tourism brochure. She pointed at the picture and said, "*This is culture. . . . Culture is about where you are from*." The students based many of their connections on their lived experiences. The focal children recollected personal experiences to construct meaning and organize their thinking. Through talk, they made sense of their experiences and organized their thoughts and ideas.

The children collaborated in constructing meaning and acquired new terminology by listening to each other. They did not have to have a particular lived experience to understand or appreciate new topics of discussion. Talk helped the students to witness the lived experiences of others and use those experiences to build their own knowledge and add to their linguistic repertoire. Shayla, however, did not appear to understand how sharing her stories and experiences with the class would add value to everyone's learning.

The success of these focal students in creating an identity as readers and participating in the practice of reading as part of their evolving membership in the community of practice was that they were able to use different ways of knowing to

co-construct meaning depending on the context. The students' identities as readers were dynamic and evolved as they participated in the practice of reading from peripheral to full participation. Even though they were not full members of the community of practice of readers, they still had access to the community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The four focal participants all saw themselves as good readers but participated in the school literacy practices to varying degrees.

Role of Participation in Shaping Identities

Learning occurs when members of a community of practice are legitimate peripheral participants in a sociocultural practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The focal students' legitimate peripheral participation socialized them into the world of reading (Lave & Wenger, 1991). They participated in practices that gave them opportunities to use literacies and accumulate knowledge on how language is used and works. The opportunity to learn requires that children "have the space and support for agentic action" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 20); that is, they remake their identities and relationships based on new ideas or practices (Moje & Lewis, 2007). The degree of participation not only determined how the students engaged in the literacy practice, but also shaped their identities.

The focal participants engaged in the literacy activities by listening and contributing to class discussions and completing literacy tasks such as creating glogs and writing. I noted on several occasions that Margaret, Connor, and Karl would raise their hands to share their ideas, make connections, and ask questions. Margaret participated in discussions, raised her hand to answer questions, and shared ideas with the students next to her. She would sometimes share ideas without raising her hand, or she would voice an idea and then raise her hand. Margaret and Connor diligently completed assigned tasks, because they both liked to volunteer to help Ms. Reed with other activities when they finished. Karl also liked to help, but he often did not quickly enough ask Ms. Reed for the privilege because, even though he finished his tasks quickly, he would walk around the classroom to see what others were doing. Connor participated in discussions and raised his hand to share ideas. Karl also participated in discussions, often moving about the room from his home base to the desk in the middle of the room or pulling his chair to a location to maintain a central role in the discussion. Margaret, Connor, and Karl

regularly engaged in the class discussions, whether their contributions were solicited or not. However, this was not the case for Shayla. The focal students' levels of participation differed, and as Moje and Lewis (2007) pointed out, "some participants in discourse communities may have better access to or control over tools, resources, and identities necessary for full participation" (p. 17). This appears to have been true for three of the four focal students.

Shayla did not participate in class discussions. She never offered ideas or asked questions, and even when Ms. Reed attempted to elicit an answer, Shayla responded with silence. Shayla's behaviour endorsed the stereotypical image of an Aboriginal student who is unmotivated and/or unwilling to participate. Aboriginal children and youth are often labelled unmotivated or, because of their lack of participation, identified as lacking competency in school literacies. Halliday (1978) reminded us that children's predisposition to learning is not based solely on their cognitive abilities and that we must consider the factor of the incongruence between the way that they construct meaning and how they think are valued in school. Also, it is important not to generalize learning styles to an entire ethnic group. Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) explained that individuals' behaviours are explained or expected based on their membership in groups, with the assumption that all members share the same experiences, skills, and interests. This is often the case with many Aboriginal students, who are placed in the same category regardless of their individual interests or abilities. The opinion of some teachers that Aboriginal students are unengaged, disinterested, or reluctant to participate in classrooms comes from the expectation of some educators who view learning or how learners should behave in a particular way that is consistent with the values and beliefs of the dominant culture. In Canadian classrooms, participation and contribution to discussions are valued and recognized as appropriate, if not ideal, student behaviour. Success in school hinges on thinking and participating in the ways that are valued. Although Ms. Reed diligently created a welcoming and responsive environment, some First Nations and Métis students—namely, Shayla, Darin, Erin, and Gage—chose silence and remained on the periphery. The unwillingness of First Nations and Métis children to participate in literacy activities and their propensity to sit silently are common observations of many teachers across Canada. Children choose to be silent in class for many reasons. They might lack

the confidence to share ideas publicly for fear of being wrong or being ridiculed for their inability to use Standard English. Some children might view the need to contribute as unnecessary or irrelevant because key members dominate the discussions. They might want to observe and not participate verbally, or they might not be interested in the learning activity or not consider it meaningful or relevant to their lives. Children might also be thinking about what they have just heard or observed and need time to reflect. The classroom's participation structures or the teacher's language use might be unfamiliar to them. Research has demonstrated that many children from minority groups do not participate orally in school because the participation and talk structures of their homes and communities differ from those that are used and valued in school (Au & Mason, 1981; Heath, 1983; Philips, 1983).

Research has also revealed that some students use their silence to control the classroom environment and avoid taking risks (Dumont, 1972; Jones & Gerig, 1994). In Dumont's (1972) research in Sioux and Cherokee classrooms in the United States, he found that students controlled the amount of talk and participation in the classroom. The students in the classrooms that Dumont observed established power by controlling how much they spoke. The teacher, no matter how hard he tried, could not encourage the students to actively engage. As Gregory Cajete (1994) explained, "The knowledge, values, skills and interests that Indian students possess are largely ignored in favor of strategies aimed at enticing them to conform to mainstream education" (p. 189). Shayla, like the students in Dumont's study, responded to the teacher's individually directed questions with silence. Although the teacher in Dumont's study had authority in the classroom, his power was limited if the students chose not to play by his rules. Similarly in Canada, many Inuit, Métis and First Nations students choose nonparticipation. In the larger Canadian society people who belong to an Indigenous group form the minority and can be marginalized. Students have little power in the classroom, except for their control of their level of participation. Therefore, First Nations, Inuit and Métis students' silence and lack of participation become a form of communication (Dumont, 1972). Students like Shayla are telling us with their silence about a disconnect between school literacy and Aboriginal literacy. Correspondingly, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students might choose nonparticipation to retain their own cultural ways of learning and knowing. As

Dumont concluded, “Education for most students is an either-or proposition: participate by teacher-school established norms or withdraw” (p. 368). Shayla did not contribute to class discussions and instead withdrew. She did not see places for her oral traditions to exist within or alongside school literacy.

Ms. Reed’s teaching practices supported some of the First Nations and Métis students, but not all. Because Shayla did not cause problems or disrupt the literacy activities, she remained on the periphery. When children move toward full participation, then peripherality is empowering; but because Shayla did not move towards full participation, peripherality became a disempowering position (Lave & Wenger, 1991). With the spotlight of attention on the key contributors, Shayla resided in the shadows. She might have considered her position on the fringes a safe place, a place where she would not have to take risks and expose herself to peer ridicule. It might also imply that her previous classroom experiences in earlier grades taught her that making herself invisible was a self-preservation tactic. Wells (2000) acknowledged that schools can impede rather than facilitate learning by “cultivat[ing] conforming, risk-avoiding identities in those who are successful in fitting the rules and expectations of the activity system while simultaneously cultivating alienated and either self-doubting or rebellious identities in those who are unsuccessful” (p. 59). Incidentally, Shayla demonstrated belonging by choosing when and how to participate. She did not take learning risks by participating in class discussions but joined group activities such as sitting in the story corner, running in the torch relay, participating in the mini-Olympic events, and creating literacy artifacts. Shayla’s risk taking occurred in the safety of a group.

Shayla welcomed the assistance of teacher or an adult with writing tasks, but without help she usually completed only the bare minimum of written work. As Figure 10 shows, Shayla wrote the three obligatory sentences that Ms. Reed identified as a requirement to go out for recess:

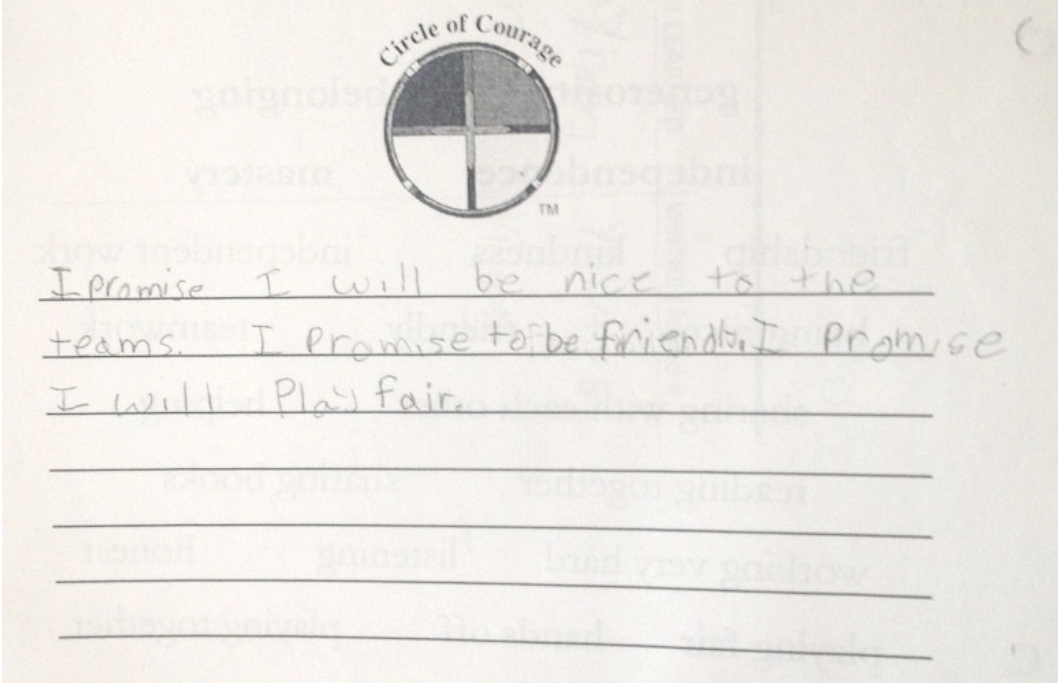


Figure 10. Shayla's Olympic pledge.

Shayla arrived at school late and missed most of the literacy activity on pledges. Although she was present for the instructions, she did not start working on her pledge. Instead, she sat sideways in the chair and turned away from the table where her handout rested. Seeing Shayla sitting in her chair, not working on her handout, Ms. Reed went over her to assist. She re-explained the activity and reiterated the examples from the class discussion. Shayla continued to sit while her peers wrote their own pledges and began to write when Ms. Reed announced to the class that they needed to write a minimum of three sentences to be able to go out for recess. Shayla's pledge demonstrates that she was listening even though she did not appear to be engaged in the activity or listening to Ms. Reed, and her written statements reveal that she understood the task. Shayla's legitimate peripheral participation enabled her to complete the minimum requirements for the literacy activity (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which she did minutes before the recess bell rang, which demonstrates that she was capable of completing the task even though when she was present during part of the activity, she appeared either unable or unwilling to do so. Shayla did what was required of her as part of her role as a student in *doing* school.

Role of Agency in Participation

The focal children strategically chose how and whether they would participate in the literacy practices. The teacher's influence determined how the choices of the students unfolded; for example, Ms. Reed established the minimum writing required before the students could go out for recess. Power is a social construction, and, as in most classrooms, teachers and students agree on the teacher's power by carrying the history of education and mutual engagement. The teacher has power only insofar as the members of the community of practice collectively negotiate how it will evolve. Moje and Lewis (2007) acknowledged that "learning is shaped by and mired in power relations" (p. 17). The students either participated in the teacher-sanctioned activity or remained on the periphery. This resulted in Shayla's position on the fringes during many of the activities. Wenger (1998) argued that members of a community of practice create a practice in response to what they consider their enterprise. Shayla's choice of limited participation was a response to how she viewed her subjectivity within the community of practice.

As I stated earlier, because I was not able to interview Shayla, I took advantage of the opportunity to sit next to her during literacy activities to ask her about her view of reading and other literacy practices. I had asked her earlier how she viewed herself as a reader, but she was more interested in telling me a personal narrative than in discussing literacy. During another literacy activity when I sat next to Shayla, I again attempted to discuss her literacy practices and asked her what she liked about school and what she liked to read. Shayla shrugged her shoulders in response and looked down at her desk. She chose not to answer the questions, did not know how to answer the questions, or did not want to take a risk answering questions about school and reading. Heit (1987) reported that in some Indigenous communities it is inappropriate for children to speak out in the presence of adults because it is viewed as bragging or thinking that one knows more than the others. She also pointed out that certain types of questioning remove individuals' freedom of choice to answer when they want and in a manner that suits them. These Indigenous cultural practices could have influenced how Shayla, a Cree child, viewed the questions. Dumont's (1972) research in Sioux and Cherokee classrooms revealed that children knowingly choose not to talk and referred to this behaviour as a "mask of silence" (p. 346). Their silence can be interpreted as a form of resistance to the

classroom norms. Shayla's body language demonstrated her resistance to classroom norms. She would sit sideways in her chair and not face the teacher. This gesture communicated that she was in control of her participation and that, even though she had to be there, she did not have to conform (Dumont, 1972). Autonomy and agency are important attributes that support the value of independence. Many Indigenous communities teach their children the importance of independence by giving them opportunities to exercise autonomy (Brendto et al., 1998; Philips, 1983). Philips found in her research on Warm Springs Reservation that Native American students did not respond when called upon to do so. She determined that the students did not respond because the teacher decided who spoke and when. This common teacher practice disregarded the community's value for autonomy. Therefore, the students determined when they were ready to participate. Shayla did not respond when Ms. Reed called upon her but would talk incessantly whenever I sat beside her. She spoke on her terms about what she decided that she would talk about. Shayla demonstrated agency through her choice to participate or not participate and her physical positioning. Moje and Lewis (2007) described agency as "the strategic making and remaking of selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools and resources, and histories, as embedded within relations of power" (p. 18). The literacy learning in the classroom both promoted and constrained the agency of the focal children (Moje & Lewis, 2007).

The focal children's agency in the classroom was an extension of their out-of-school literacy lives. For Karl it was a means of having control and ownership, which he did not have at home. In the interviews he described the turbulent relationship with his older sister, whose position as the eldest determined who played with the gaming consoles or selected what the family watched on television. This lack of agency also extended to his father, who played games while Karl was a spectator rather than a participant. Karl's sibling and father, as older members of the family unit, held authority and influence over Karl because he was younger than his sister and because of the parent-child dichotomy. I recall my relationship with my older sister in which I had to constantly reassert my independence from her control by rebuffing her commands and stating emphatically, "You are not my boss!" The reason for Karl's acquiescence to his sister's directives might also be that in many Indigenous families the relationship

dynamics dictate that older children are left in charge of the younger children, even when the parents are present. In my circumstances the older child in a position of influence and authority was often an older cousin rather than my sister. However, Karl's older sister could have been his 'boss.' In many Indigenous communities traditional childrearing practices involve the extended family, and not only do the parents take responsibility for the care and protection of their children, but they also share it with grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and older siblings.

Karl also lacked agency in the ownership of material objects. His family's frequent moves left him with few possessions because they often left many items behind at previous residences. As well, the family pawned the gaming console and perhaps other items of value to sustain their needs. He appeared not to have control over these aspects of his life, so, imaginably, the classroom dynamics facilitated his claiming agency in his literacy learning. The lack of control and agency at home possibly resulted in Karl's need and desire to attain control and agency at school.

Margaret used her agency to take control of her learning and bring her cultural identity into the classroom. She was always focused and diligent in her work. She completed literacy activities and was the only student who created a brochure of the city with images and captions as part of the Olympic bid. In a discussion with Ms. Reed about Margaret as a literacy learner, she told me that Margaret had created a dictionary in a small, coiled notebook, written new words in it that she had learned, and organized them alphabetically. She would access the words in her dictionary during writing activities to help her to spell words correctly. Margaret understood the value of reading and that it helped her to learn new things, and in one of our interviews she told me that she liked school. Her love of school fuelled her desire to do well. Through her dictionary, she took agency as a literacy learner to support her literacy development.

Margaret also took control over the use of iPads. Like Karl and Connor, when the students were organized into groups to record their Olympic venues, Margaret made sure that she was the first to control the iPad. Even when another First Nation student challenged her by trying to take the iPad from her, she said, "whose older?" and used her age to gain control over it first, and her peer could not dispute her reasoning. She was older and that merited first use. The other student's yielding to her logic is reasonable

because in many Indigenous communities, the older child is responsible for the younger children and often 'bosses' them.

Connor's exhibited agency in doing the things that readers do and demonstrating the values of the Circle of Courage. He chose to contribute and worked diligently to complete the literacy tasks in a timely manner. He often finished before many of his peers, and Ms. Reed would then request that he assist others. Connor influenced his classmates in that when he assisted them, he would either tell them what to do or, more often, do it for them. This was especially evident in the computer lab, where his peers would often call upon Connor for assistance. His power to influence was socially constructed through his relationships with his peers (Moje & Lewis, 2007). In assisting his peers, Connor maintained the role of subject and his peers as objects. Wenger (1998) reminded us that subjectivity does not require that we act as separate entities from objects; rather, it originates in engagement. Agency comes from a subjective identity that is socially situated (Wenger, 1998). This created a shift in Connor's identity from an apprentice to an old-timer in literacy learning. His agency allowed him to move from peripheral to central participation. As Moje and Lewis (2007) explained, "Learning shapes subject formation, which shapes identity enactments that allow for different types of agency" (p. 20). Connor's literacy learning gave him an identity as a good reader and a good student, which provided him with the necessary knowledge and skills for agency. Thus, Connor strategically chose his identity by taking on a subjective and active role (Moje & Lewis, 2007). He was also one of the male students who used humour to gain attention and status among his peers. Connor's metalinguistic skills equipped him with the ability to play with language and gain the attention of his classmates. His playful use of words was entertaining and made his peers laugh, and Connor recognized the behaviours that were valuable and then performed accordingly.

Children learn through social participation. Similarly, participation helps students to build on previous learning. Ms. Reed's classroom was arranged in a manner that supported talk and collaborative learning. As well, Ms. Reed crafted literacy activities that gave the students opportunities to talk to each other. For example, during the literacy studio when the class explored a tourism brochure, the focal children were engaged in a class discussion and looking at the brochure. Shayla sat sideways in her chair, and even

though she had the brochure open to the same page as the rest of the class did, she was not looking at it. Margaret directed Karl's attention to another part of the brochure, and they pointed to pictures and whispered to one another. Even though Shayla sat between them, she did not engage in their conversation, but continued to stare at something else. Her silent engagement was difficult to watch. Shayla was well positioned to engage with Karl and Margaret, but she chose not to participate and would not start an activity unless an adult assisted her. The others engaged in literacy activities willingly, and their level of participation improved their ability to be proficient in various literacy activities. The students who attended regularly were able to continually build on their previous participation in literacy activities, whereas Shayla's continual absences meant sporadic involvement that was difficult to build upon. Shayla's late arrivals and absences also meant that she missed Ms. Reed's think-alouds, modelling, class talk, and collective knowledge building. Shayla faced a disadvantage because she did not understand that her peers were bringing their out-of-school literacies into the classroom to support their school literacy learning.

Multiliteracies in Representing Meaning and Constructing Identities

The focal students used multiliteracies to bring their lived experiences, background knowledge, and funds of knowledge into school literacy. Multiliteracies involve the multiple ways that meaning can be constructed and represented. They enabled the students to co-construct meaning by permitting diversity in ways of knowing and representing what they came to know. The focal students found ways to make connections to their lived experiences and represent their identities through the use of multiliteracies.

Margaret drew from her own experiences and background knowledge to construct meaning. Her KWL graphic organizer (Figure 11) illustrates her background knowledge about the Winter Olympics. During the Book Club, Ms. Reed read *Geronimo Stilton: Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery* by Elisabetti Dami (2008). The background was useful because the story was set in Greece, the birthplace of the Ancient Olympics, and contained information on how the Olympics started and early sporting events. The colourful format and adventure genre of the *Geronimo Stilton* texts appealed to the

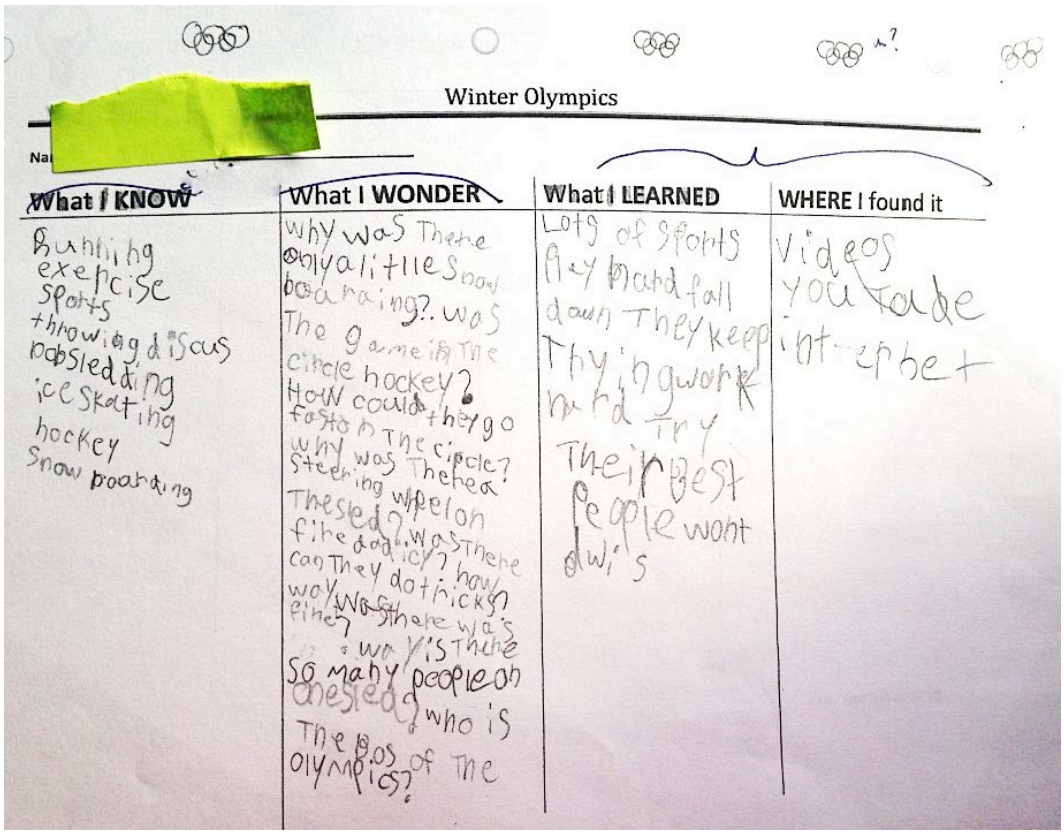


Figure 11. Margaret's KWL graphic organizer for the Winter Olympics unit.

students. Ms. Reed also used two nonfiction texts, *O is for Olympics* by Ned Elliot (2012) and The *Winter Olympics* by Nick Hunter (2013), to build the students' background knowledge. Margaret's graphic organizer reveals that she had some background knowledge about various winter and summer sports and that she recalled from the *Geronimo Stilton* book that running, throwing a discus, and sports are part of the Olympics. The graphic organizer highlights the importance of providing information to build background knowledge to improve future comprehension.

After the first viewing of *The Best of the Olympics* video on YouTube, Margaret wrote down questions based on gaps in her existing knowledge that she wanted to fill or questions from the curiosity that arose from watching the video. Margaret said in the interview, "*When I grow up, I want to be a Vet or do . . . snowboarding*." At the time of the interview I assumed that she became interested in snowboarding because of the Winter Olympics, but the KWL chart makes it evident that she was already knowledgeable about snowboarding and was interested in this topic, because her first

question was "*Why was there only a little snowboarding?*" Margaret demonstrated that she built on her existing knowledge when she wondered, "*Was the game in the circle hockey?*" She recognized the surface as ice, but the blue and red concentric circles created a disparity.

Margaret's second graphic organizer (Figure 12) also demonstrates her ability to construct meaning by viewing a video and making connections to her own experience. She was able to name several of the sports in the video. Her graphic organizer demonstrates that she had built knowledge about the winter Olympics. She wrote *skeleton* and *alpine skiing*, terms that she had learned in previous learning activities.

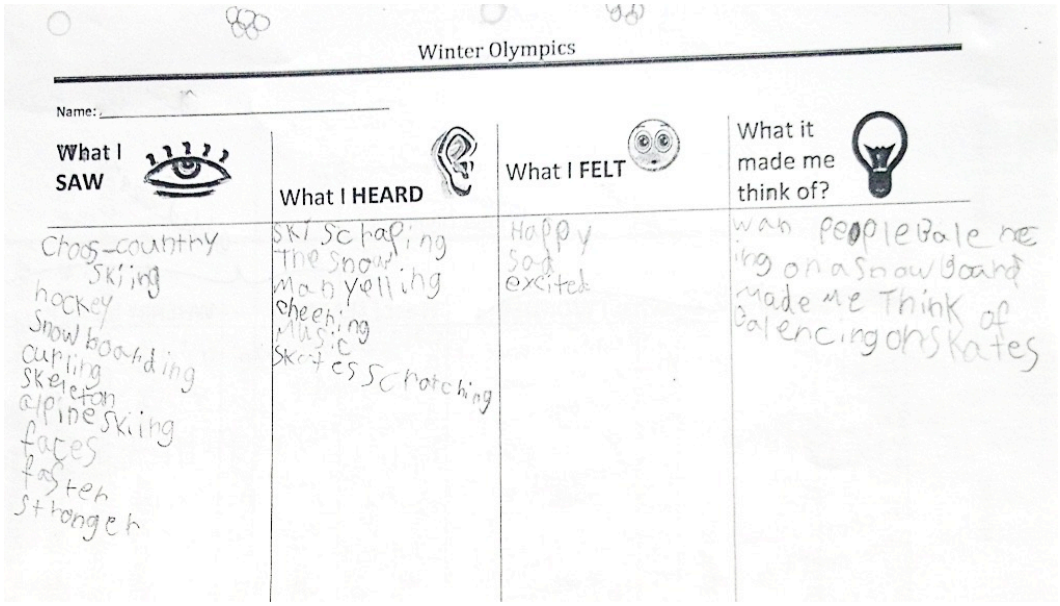


Figure 12. Margaret's Visual Response graphic organizer.

Margaret represented her meaning-making by using the resources available to her; for example, the video and her interests and experiences. Kalantzis and Cope (2012) explained that design is an expression of the meaning-maker's voice, which draws on the available resources in their contexts and cultures. Margaret used this graphic organizer to communicate with her teachers about her learning, but even if a teacher never sees it, the graphic organizer helped her to think about things in a new way and transformed her learning (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012).

Margaret's graphic organizer in Figure 12 reveals that visual texts of images are equally important as print texts in conveying information, because she recorded both of the images that she saw and the words *faster stronger*, which the video displayed intermittently. The teaching of reading in schools emphasizes the efferent stance (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). Margaret's graphic organizer demonstrates her ability to transact with the text and provide an efferent response; it also exemplifies her ability to make connections to her own experience by relating the experience of balancing on skates to seeing people balancing on a snowboard. This personal connection established Margaret's ability to transact with the text and provide an aesthetic response. The visual cues in the text helped her to move toward an aesthetic stance. Also citing Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading, Elizabeth Noll's (2000) found in her research with Lakota children that they also transacted with texts in their environment by connecting lived experiences and cultural knowledge to construct meaning.

When students watch videos or movies, their transactions with text are situated in the aesthetic stance because they approach the text with the purpose of watching or viewing for pleasure and enjoyment. However, they do not reside solely in the aesthetic stance, but move along the continuum between transacting for enjoyment and building knowledge (Rosenblatt, 1978/1994). This was evident when Karl drew on his background knowledge from watching television, movies, and video games to make connections during reading and class discussions. During our preinterview activity, Karl informed me that every day after school he watched movies. He told me that "*a long time ago the British were not allowed to come to Canada*." Upon further exploration, I found that he had mixed the information that he had received in his culture class with an *X-Men* movie. However, it was significant that he was able to make a connection between the treatment of minorities in Canada and that of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Even though he used the wrong terms for the different groups, he still understood the larger issue. Moll and Greenberg (1990) stressed that much of children's learning comes from their participation in an activity in which they are interested and that their own curiosity begs further questions and exploration. The focal students used their interests as a springboard to exploration and digital play on Glogster.

The students engaged in digital play by checking out the various tools on Glogster, testing the use of the different buttons, and experimenting with assorted configurations of graphics, images, texts, and animation. The students who sat next to each other would check to see what the others were doing and would often copy the same image. If students thought particular images or graphics were good, they would call over their friends to look at them, and their friends would inquire where they had found the images or graphics. Ms. Reed showed them how to upload the images or graphics to their glogs, and they continued to add other images. On the second day of working on Glogster, some of the students figured out how to upload a video from YouTube onto their digital posters. They then shared their knowledge and, like Connor, covered their images, text, and graphics with Olympic videos (Figure 13). The children learned a great deal from each other and were excited about the new possibilities that digital media afforded them.

Figure 13. Connor's glog on the Olympic value *excellence*.

The glogs that the students created were also examples of multimodal literacy. Using Glogster, Margaret created a tourism brochure (Figure 14) about their city as part of the Olympic bid. Margaret's glog demonstrated her understanding of the need for

images and text to communicate meaning. The students analyzed the images and texts on the tourism brochures and discussed the value of the use of captions. Karl explained, "*I looked at the picture and needed to check for understanding, so read the caption.*" Margaret was the only one of the focal participants who used captions to contextualize her images on the tourism-brochure glog for the Olympic bid. As her brochure illustrates, Margaret chose images that would showcase the city and attract people to visit. She also understood that the brochure needed to be visually appealing and provide information about the city.

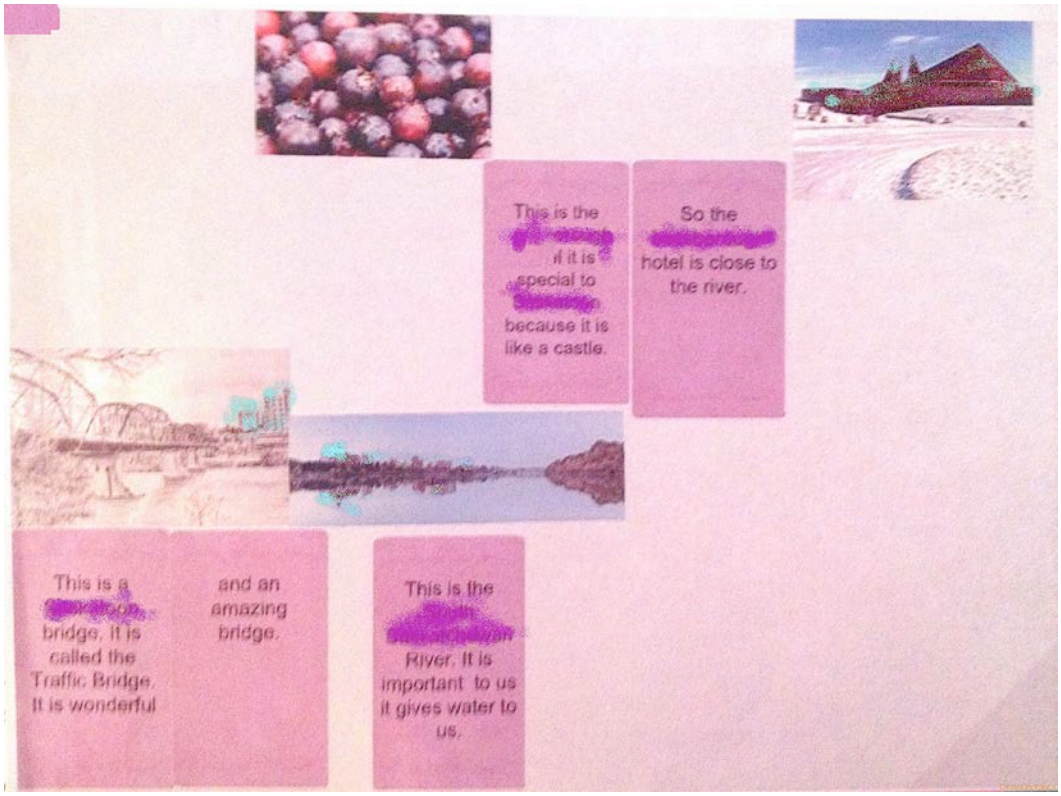


Figure 14. Margaret's tourism brochure.

Margaret's captions also included the purpose and a description of the image. For example, under the image of a river, Margaret gave the name and explained, "*It is important to us it gives water to us.*" Under the sketch of the bridge she wrote in the text boxes, "*This is a ___ bridge. It is called the Traffic Bridge. It is wonderful . . . and an amazing bridge.*" To the left of and below the picture of a hotel, Margaret included two text boxes and wrote, "*This is the ___ it is special to ____ because it is like a castle. . . .*

So the ____ hotel is close to the river." She included images of things that she thought people who came to the city to visit might want to see. Margaret clearly understood the purpose of the brochure, compared to many of the other students who got mired in adding images and graphics based on their personal interests.

Search engines such as Google are virtual playgrounds for students. Shayla used Google to search for images of bridges for her Olympic bid poster because their city had a bridge. Although she missed a great deal of school in the mornings, the Grade 3s scheduled time in the computer lab in the afternoons, so she was present to create digital posters on Glogster. In the process of creating her digital poster, Shayla selected pictures that appealed to her such as a rainbow bridge and San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, two images that she selected and uploaded into her glog. I wondered whether she used these images because she was unclear about the activity that was intended to represent her city or because she had limited knowledge of or experience with the city, so she pursued an area of interest to represent on her glog. Similarly, Karl, Connor, and Sean sat beside each other in the computer lab and used Google to search for pictures of dogs, even though this was not the topic; they were clearly guided by their interests. Connor used several pictures of police dogs on his glog. When I prompted Connor, Karl, and Sean to think about how their poster could highlight the city as a good site for the Winter Olympics, Karl pointed out that "*we have police dogs in [the city], and they are important.*" The recent numerous reports of the heroism of local and national police dogs resonated with Karl. Their interest in dogs could have come from out-of-school lived experiences or a previous school-literacy activity. Perhaps searching for images of dogs and inviting the others to see the results would have prompted the three students to start their own searches for similar images. The Internet and search engines such as Google are a huge scavenging ground. The students searched for ideas before they composed their glogs and built on their knowledge about their interests to co-construct meaning and make school literacy meaningful. Their digital reading took them on a creative digital adventure shaped by their experiences, feelings, and interests. Multiliteracies helped the students to construct meaning by transferring what they came to know in their out-of-school lives into school literacy.

Connor's glog or digital poster (Figure 15) included a picture of a police dog beside the picture of a hotel room. Connor used his knowledge from the tourism video that visitors to the city would need hotel rooms. Furthermore, he explained to me that the background picture of a piece of pie and the picture of a cake were important because people like to eat them and would come to the city because they like to eat them. This demonstrates that Connor understood that the purpose of the poster was to entice the Olympic bid committee to choose his city and that he was thinking about his audience. If they saw pictures of food that they liked, they would come.

Figure 15. Connor's tourism brochure.

Connor also included a swimming pool, because, in his view, Olympic "*athletes need a place to relax*." This demonstrates that Connor understood that the poster must also appeal to Olympic athletes. In the text box at the bottom right, he made a plea to the Olympic bid committee: "*Can we have the winter olympics we have nice skating rinks*." This shows that Connor understood the purpose of the digital poster was to persuade.

Karl's glog (Figure 16) does not show the many choices and images that he uploaded onto his glog. Unfortunately, when I finally was able to print a copy of his glog, he had removed many of the images that we discussed while he was in the process of creating the digital poster. For example, he deleted all of the pictures of police dogs. Karl included a graphic of a smiley face, a picture of a bridge over a river, a picture of a road crew paving a highway, and a picture of notebook paper.

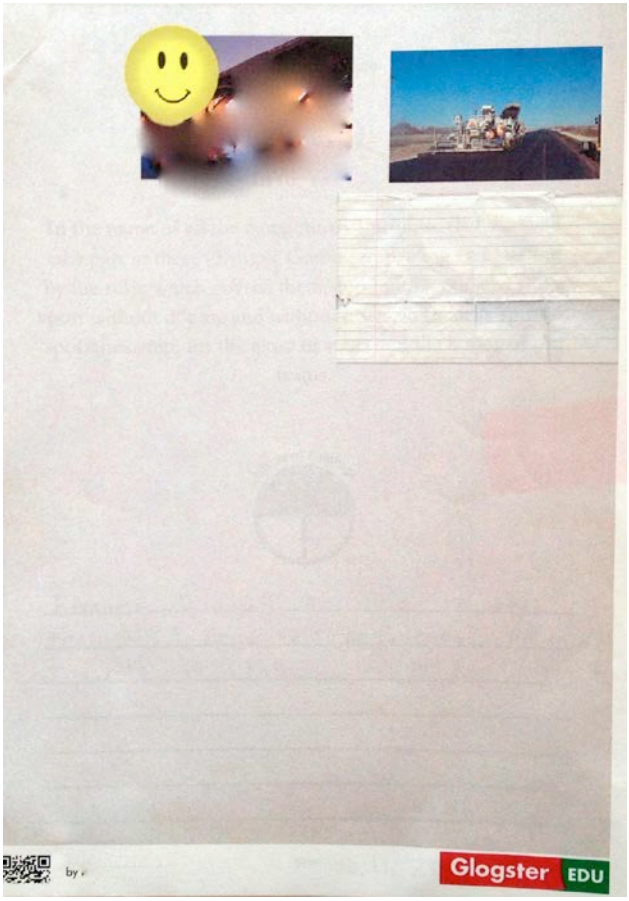


Figure 16. Karl's tourism brochure.

The opportunity for Karl to discuss and reflect about his glog gave him a chance to ponder his decisions. Perhaps our discussion propelled him to rethink his choices and thus remove many of the images that he thought the teacher would not deem appropriate to the task. Whatever the reason for his choices on his glog, Karl found ways to create a poster that represented him with a smiley face and pictures that interested him. These glogs demonstrate that identity and experience influenced the children's choices and

represented their knowledge. The students used available designs and transformed them to represent their meaning-making. Although they worked on their glogs individually, it was a shared activity. The children talked with their neighbours as they played with the digital texts, and they collaborated by showing each other how to do certain things and sharing what they knew.

The images and symbols in the glogs, graphical representations of their interests, also represented the students' identities. Margaret and Shayla's glogs visually represented their understanding of an Olympic value. Like Karl, they chose the Olympic value of peace, whereas Connor chose the value of excellence. Shayla's and Margaret's glogs contained similar graphics of peace symbols, hearts, and the words *peace* and *peaceful*. They sat beside each other, which might have influenced their choices when each saw the images that the other uploaded onto her glog. I did not observe who had uploaded the symbols on her glog first, so I was unable to determine who influenced whom or whether it was a mutual sharing of images and print text based on conversation. I also did not see them talking to each other while they were working on their glogs. Margaret's glog (Figure 17) included the recognizable images of the peace symbol and doves, which demonstrates that she understood that the purpose of the digital poster or glog was to create a visual representation of her chosen Olympic value. Margaret also included images that represented her identity by placing a dog and cat in the bottom corners. During the preinterview activity and the reading practices interview, she talked about her love of animals. She also chose to upload a video onto her glog of figure skaters, which demonstrates that she made a connection between a Winter Olympics event and a winter sport in which she had personally participated. The other interesting feature of Margaret's glog is its symmetry. The pink guitars flank the peace symbols and the doves that are situated beside the word *peace* inside the purple text box. Under the figure skating video is a winged heart that is lined up with the winged heart on the right side of the page, and both graphics end at the same point on the page. A sunburst is at the bottom centre, and the graphics of two household pets balance the bottom corners.

First Nations groups' beadwork are characterized by flowers, leaves, or geometric figures symmetrically positioned on moose, elk, or deer hide, whereas Métis beadwork is characterized by asymmetrical floral beadwork; that is, a line down the middle does not

create symmetrical sides. Even though some Métis beadwork might appear to be symmetrical, closer inspection will reveal that the artisan purposely created a small imperfection with a different-coloured bead. Shayla also used recognizable images that represent peace: a peace symbol and a graphic of the V-sign hand gesture (Figure 18). Her heart graphics are symbols of love, which can be attributed to peace, such as in the

Figure 17. Margaret's Olympic value glog.

common adage "Where there is love, there is peace." In addition, Shayla inserted several graphics and images of flowers. Although her glog (Figure 18) lacks the symmetry of Margaret's glog (Figure 17), she equally distributed images and graphics on each side of the text boxes. The addition of the star cluster off centre at the bottom is reminiscent of the Métis beadwork patterns in that what might appear to be an imperfection in the pattern is actually the signature of the artisan.

It is difficult to determine whether their cultural knowledge of beading practices influenced Shayla's and Margaret's decisions to configure their glogs. However, I believe that cultural knowledge permeates many aspects of our lives in unconscious ways. Aboriginal literacy embodies culture, language, and ways of knowing and being (Paulsen, 2003). The glogs, as artifacts, embody Shayla's and Margaret's ways of

knowing. As multimodal representations, they tell stories about their creators; and as artifacts, they evoke an emotional response as well as provide information (Racette, 2004). The glogs also become another way to validate Shayla's and Margaret's knowledge and lived experiences.

Figure 18. Shayla's Olympic value glog.

The students integrated linguistic elements, or print; visual elements, or images and graphics; and audio elements with the sound that accompanied the videos that they uploaded. In composing with traditional texts—for example, in writing their Olympic pledge—the students' lack of knowledge of words and grammar limited them. The words and sentences had basic constructions, but the digital texts afforded them more ways of representing their multiple ways of knowing. When they composed with digital text, as they did in creating their Olympic value digital poster or the tourism brochure, the students had images, sound, colour, and print at their fingertips to express themselves. The digital texts gave them multiple ways to use language, as well as access to several language-based semiotic tools to mediate actions. The digital texts were complex with layers and offered situated meanings rather than just literal meanings (Gee, 2004). These

digital texts also brought into the classroom the children's out-of-school lives. The students created meaning by using their funds of knowledge, which came from their out-of-school lives and experiences.

Using Funds of Knowledge to Affirm Identity

The community of practice was a social context in which the students could learn about language and co-construct knowledge. They accessed funds of knowledge from their family, cultures, and lived experiences as part of their multiliteracies. Funds of knowledge are valuable resources that students use to make meaning and in the design process to represent meaning. Moll et al. (1992) described funds of knowledge as "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 133). Moll et al. talked about funds of knowledge in terms of resources that we access within our families. Funds of knowledge can include all types of cultural knowledge that helps us to make sense of our world and negotiate literacies. The four focal children resided in an urban context where they had access to many types of knowledge from their social participation and lived experiences with family, community, and popular culture. In their research Moll et al. found that, if teachers look to students' families and lived experiences, they can make learning more relevant by tapping into the students' cultural and cognitive resources (Lopez, 2006). Similarly, teachers can also tap into children's lived experiences with popular culture as a cultural and cognitive resource.

Popular Culture as a Fund of Knowledge

Most school literacy practices rely on children's experiences with children's literature. The literacy practices valued in school are not often present in the homes of children of low socioeconomic status or from minority cultures (Heath, 1983; Marsh & Millard, 2000; Taylor & Dorsey Gaines, 1988).

> A curriculum permeable to children's textual resources, particularly media resources, seems especially important in classrooms serving children of economically limited means and children of color. Children who can be so described are less likely than middle-class White children to have cultural and communicative resources recognized and built on in school. (Dyson, 2003, p. 356)

A classroom in which children use popular culture as a fund of knowledge validates their experiences and honours their identity. Popular culture and media are important elements of childhood identity. It provides children with knowledge and indirect lived experiences that they can leverage into meaningful learning opportunities. Leaving popular culture out of the classroom comes at the cost of denying children access to some very salient resources.

The students accessed funds of knowledge from popular culture to construct meaning and make school literacy practices meaningful. As I mentioned earlier, children's popular culture includes music, sport, computers and related merchandise, books, magazines, television, and film, but also incorporates websites, toys, games, comics, stickers, cards, clothing, hair accessories, jewellery, sports accessories, oral rhymes, jokes, word play, food and drink (Marsh & Millard, 2000). The students' literacy development relied on how they connected their experiences with popular texts to school literacy practices. Dyson (2003) identified "children's experiences with popular media as integral to the formation of contemporary childhoods" (p. 330), thus creating alternate "pathways through which children enter into school literacy practices" (p. 330). The students could draw on their experiences with television, movies, video games, and music to help them to construct meaning when they transacted with texts in the classroom. Children are influenced by popular culture and can draw on these experiences to construct meaning (Noll, 2000). Connections between texts in school and popular texts from out-of-school literacy practices make school literacy practices meaningful and authentic. For example, Karl used the literacy practices of watching the movie *X-men: First Class*, viewing tabloid news on celebrities such as popular music star Justin Bieber, and reading books at school as resources to co-construct meaning and make connections when he used multiple literacies. Karl recontextualized popular culture to support his meaning-making (Dyson, 2003). For example, during class discussions on drug use in the Olympics, Karl made a connection between drugs and Justin Bieber. Karl and Connor chimed back and forth "*JB going to jail and getting out of jail*," which demonstrates their understanding that drug use has negative consequences. The children drew on popular texts when they made connections between viewing and reading. These connections brought something meaningful from their lives, something that they all

shared and could identify with as a school literacy practice. The children's membership and belonging "was founded on a shared cultural landscape in which media materials are woven into the fabric of their lives as young children growing up in a densely packed urban area" (p. 344). Additionally, in Karl and Connor's communication they designed their identities as people who know about popular culture by using what they had either seen or heard through the media. Dyson explained that "an audiovisual story experienced at home might become an occasion for verbal affiliation or even competition with peers, as children demonstrated expertise about a valued story" (p. 332). The students accessed popular texts to support their literacy learning as well as demonstrate to their peers that they were 'in the know' about things that people valued. For example, when Karl used popular texts to make connections, he not only shared what he knew about those texts, but also communicated that he was someone who watched movies and video games. For many children, being able to share that they have watched the latest movie or popular television show or played a new video game raises their status among their peers. As a classroom teacher, I would often hear students bragging to one another about how many times they had watched a particular movie or that they had just purchased a new game for their gaming console. When students are able to discuss the plot and characters of popular television shows or movies and contribute to discussions on celebrities and sports icons, it raises their status among their peers because they have access to information that is considered valuable. Popular culture and texts have social capital (Marsh, 2012).

The media[8] were resources for the students to use when they co-constructed and negotiated meaning and created relationships by connecting to each other through similar experiences. For example, Ms. Reed told me that in the fall of that year Connor had created a character named *Bemo* whom he not only featured in many of his creative writing stories, but also referred to in conversation. Ms. Reed did not know where Connor had hear the word Bemo, but I speculate that he was influenced by what he had heard when he watched television. The Bank of Montreal advertises its banking services in television commercials and uses the acronym *BMO*, which is pronounced *Bee-mo*. It is highly plausible that Connor heard the word and recontextualized it. Connor's use of

[8] *Media* in this context refers to forms of mass communication, such as television, radio, and the Internet.

Bemo brought something from his unofficial world into the official world of school (Dyson, 2013). Ms. Reed recalled that whenever Connor could find a way to work his character Bemo into a class discussion, he would, and his classmates began to use the name Bemo as well. This is an example of shared repertoire in that the name Bemo belonged to the practice of the community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Bemo was a spontaneous re-creation that the students transformed and then negotiated its particular use. Dyson (2003) remarked that children can transform any material "across different symbolic modes, different social expectations, and, always, different moment-to-moment interactional contingencies, as language users negotiate meanings with and for others" (p. 333).

In another example of Connor's appropriating language to meet his own purposes when I observed the Grade 3 class, he began to use the name *Obama* as a noun, verb, and adjective, thus demonstrating his metalinguistic abilities. I asked Ms. Reed whether Connor knew who Obama is, or perhaps he had just heard the name and found it appealing. She informed me that a week earlier they had discussed decision making, and she used the example of Canada's prime minister's decision making. Connor quipped that President Obama made decisions in the US. He appropriated the names *Bemo* and *Obama* from popular culture or media and found a way to make them his own (Dyson, 2013, 2015) by playing with language. Playing with language is fun and gives children opportunities to learn how language works (Zipke, 2008). Connor had fun trying to find different ways and places to use these words until he found an acceptable fit. Metalinguistic awareness, or the ability to reflect on and manipulate language, is essential to reading (Zipke, 2008). Other students began to use Obama as well as a noun or adjective, which demonstrated their knowledge of grammar and the different parts of speech. For example, when the students lined up to go to the computer lab and I walked toward the back of the line, Connor said, "*Your 'bama, Obama*," and several other students joined in: "*Whose 'bama?*" and "*You Obama*," or "*You 'bama, Obama*." Using certain words, laughing at the same thing, and "being included in what matters is a requirement for being engaged in a community's practice, just as engagement is what defines belonging" (Wenger, 1998, p. 74). For this community of practice to remain

cohesive, the students needed to value not only using talk to describe what a good reader does, but also playing and having fun with words.

Children's involvement and interests motivate much of their learning (Moll et al. 1992). In the focal participant's glogs, their identity and interests were present. The glogs were filled with symbolic representations of the students' identities and were examples of what Dyson (2003) described as a child bringing his or her unofficial world into the official world of school. Similar to the children in Dyson's (2003) study, these students created glogs that "were guided by their experiences with varied kinds of cultural texts, including media texts, as they entered into the new demands of school literacy" (p. 333). Not only were the students were called upon to write as a means of communicating their thinking, but they also needed to utilize digital tools to represent what they came to know. Moreover, these glogs were populated with images that were meaningful or interesting to them. Karl created a glog to represent the Olympic value of peace (Figure 19). On the glog he used the images and symbols of a basketball, an axe, a jewelled cross, a skateboard, a disco ball, crowns, an unhappy face, dollar signs located inside drops of oil, and a black background. At first I thought that he had not met the requirements of the task, but after talking to Karl about his glog, I discovered that these images and symbols resonated with him personally: They were from his lived experience with popular culture.

Figure 19. Karl's glog on the Olympic value *peace*.

Karl described his glog to me and explained his image choices and how he had found the images. Pointing at the dollar sign, Karl said, "*Money sign is for peace*," which linked the images to the task of creating a poster that reflects an Olympic value. He continued, "*I put a happy face; it should be on here somewhere.*" He also informed me that another student had shown him how to change the background of his glog. During our conversation Karl wanted to know whose glogs I had made of copies of and to see what each person had done. When he saw that Connor had included many videos, in an attempt to avoid being outdone, he announced that he had also tried to put a video on his glog:

> *I put a video on my [glog], but I deleted it because it didn't work. It was one of those— I writed Olympics, and every time I played it, it like just didn't play. It just—I writed peace, and there was one where he was making it out of one dollar, but it didn't want to play on me.*

Karl's glog displayed a basketball and a skateboard, and I inquired whether he liked basketball and skateboards. He began to tell me about a basketball video that he had watched in which the players did not share the basketball; he then switched to a story about a basketball game that he had watched at school. Rather than watching the basketball game, he and a small group of friends started to play their own mini game of basketball on the stage:

> *There is like different ones. There's music, and it says that, and you hit that, and then there is all these like music bands, and it looks like it is actually playing. I looked up basketball on YouTube, and there's a basketball video, and they are like fighting over a ball, and like they weren't sharing the ball. And same as—I was watching a basketball game; it was after school. Our school didn't win; it was the other school.*

In many discussions Karl referred to his out-of-school life and popular culture. I redirected him to his glog and asked him to explain what he had done. He informed me that the unhappy face depicted how he felt about his sister, except that his eyes did not have crosses (Xs). He said he put the crowns on because of a king and queen. The cross graphic reminded him of a movie that he had seen, and he began to describe the movie to me. In our interview Karl told me that he watched movies every day after school. He drew on knowledge from the movies and videos to support his other literacy practices,

such as making connections. Popular culture and texts give children an abundance of ideas from which to draw when they construct knowledge and represent their knowledge (Dyson, 2003; Marsh & Millard, 2000, Noll, 2000). Karl pulled together his experiences and things that he saw around him as resources to transform his meaning-making and co-construct his identity.

What appeared to be random images were actually visual representations that had meaning to Karl. He made connections to each of the images, graphics, and textual features. His glog conveyed a message that visually represented how he saw his life and experiences. Even though it did not clearly reflect an Olympic value, it did reflect things that Karl valued in his life and how he saw himself. He understood the task and tried to connect the money symbol to the Olympic value that was supposed to be the focus of his digital poster. Karl shared information during our discussion about his glog that supported many of my interpretations. He liked to be at the forefront and did not want to be outdone. When I showed him Connor's glog, Karl pointed out that he tried to include multimodal texts through videos on his glog. Karl needed to be ahead or on par with his peers. It was evident that he did not want to be seen as a less proficient computer user than Connor was. Additionally, he enjoyed talking about what he had watched and referring to videos and movies. Karl experienced popular culture and reified it through his own representations and meaning-making (Dyson, 2003). He also told me that another student had showed him how to change the background of his glog:

> *It is like on the computer, and it says background, and you just hit it. Adam showed me, and there is like so much envelopes, and you just click on one of those, and there is like so much backgrounds on it.*

What is especially interesting about this is that, in the computer lab, if students did not know how to do something, then other, more knowledge students would assist them. The more knowledgeable students did not explain how to do something, but would model it to the less proficient students by doing it for them. The more proficient or knowledgeable students would leave their computers, walk to the computers of students who were having difficulty, and take control of their mouse or keyboard. The learning and knowing existed in relation to the students and the activity (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The students learned through legitimate peripheral participation, and their identity moved

from apprentice to master when they were able to perform what the other students had shown them (Lave & Wenger, 1998). Observation often comes before being engaged in action (Wenger, 1998). Because participation is dynamic, identities evolve. Karl was, in this instance, in the role of apprentice, but took on the role of master several times in the computer lab, because he could know show others how to change the backgrounds on their glogs. Karl's desire for active participation influenced his literacy practices. Additionally, if he heard something that piqued his interest, he was keen to more and would often turn to books to learn more. Karl's interests and experiences motivated his learning (Moll et al., 1992). He utilized his lived experiences to assist him during literacy activities.

Artifactual Literacy as a Fund of Knowledge

Pahl and Rowsell (2010) used the word *habitus* "to describe lived experience, the acquired dispositions that shape everyday practice" (p. 7). Referring to the work of Bourdieau (1990), Pahl and Rowsell looked at the everyday practices of students that shape their identity and determine how they either fit or do not fit into school literacy. Artifactual literacies support the link between students' everyday practices and school literacy. The artifacts in this study embody a cultural practice. Pahl and Rowsell emphasized that "to conceptualize artifactual literacy requires an understanding of literacy as a situated social practice together with literacy as *materially* situated" (p. 13). Material objects are cultural representations that hold stories. Margaret used the bracelet that she wore as a tangible referent to her cultural identity.

Margaret was proud of being Dene and constructed meaning through connections to life in the northern community where her grandmother lived. They visited each other, and her grandmother gave anecdotal evidence of why she should be proud to be Dene. Weber-Pillwax (2001) stressed the importance of family ties and a strong connection to community to support Aboriginal children's success in school. When Margaret shared her knowledge about the Dene, she was also communicating that she was someone who was proud to be Dene. She showed me the bracelet made of beads and informed me that "*Dene people are very good at beading*." How people present themselves by what they choose to wear communicates to others how they want to be seen (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). An artifact such as Margaret's bracelet embodied her identity and lived

experience as a Dene. Cultural groups carry defining features through a shared understanding of what makes them belong to or what makes them different from other groups. I believe that Margaret's grandmother wanted her to be proud of her heritage in spite of the negative thoughts and feelings about the Dene in this area. This western province has a history of negative relationships between the Cree and Dene. Historically, competition over resources resulted in animosity between them as neighbouring First Nations in the northern part of the province. I have heard several Cree people say that the Dene have a selfish nature, they feel that the Dene cannot be trusted, and they think that the Dene are mean. In a school and community dominated by Cree culture, it was important that Margaret remember why it was good to be Dene. Several times she shared her knowledge of the Dene while she worked on literacy activities. For example, I sat beside Margaret when the students wrote their own Olympic Athletes pledge. As she wrote on her handout, she said, "*Dene like to eat moose meat, bannock, and lazy bannock*." I asked her what lazy bannock was, and she replied, "*It has a hole in it.*" Bannock with a hole is usually the fried variety, which carries a different meaning than bannock without a hole in terms of preparation and taste. How the bannock is made represents meaning and connects those who share that meaning. Knowing the difference between the types of bannock is cultural knowledge, and being able to share this knowledge with others creates a relationship. Being able to identify bannock not only demonstrates cultural knowledge, but also involves literacies, because we attribute meaning to it. Literacies are more than reading print texts that are valued in school; Aboriginal people find literacies across the environment (Hare, 2005).

Karl's tangible cultural items resided in television shows, movies, and video games, and they became artifacts that he used to make connections. He used these textual experiences to link school literacy to his everyday life (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Pahl and Rowsell stated that "merging artifacts with literacy offers a method of teaching and learning that opens up more space and understanding for students. Artifactual literacy acknowledges that everyone has a story to tell, and they bring that story into their learning" (p. 3). When I visit my grandmother, I like to ask her about things in her home, because a story is always attached to each object that brings life to it (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Photographs are especially valuable, not only for the image that is frozen in time,

but also for the stories that we recall when we look at them. Photographs become a mnemonic device that helps the narrator to recount the events that preceded or followed the picture of the image:

> When artifacts create new opportunities for storytelling, it is important to allow space for students to tell their stories and become heard. Sometimes, witnessing a story can become a moment of transformation for a student, creating a shift in the student's way of seeing the world. (p. 50)

The story then also becomes an artifact for students, giving them a resource to draw on to construct meaning. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) explained that "in telling stories about objects, the object becomes realized as material and sensual" (p. 11). Shayla's stories as artifacts of her lived experiences helped to bring her culture into the classroom. In the following excerpt from my field notes, I transcribed a segment of a discourse with Shayla:

> *The class is working on their letters and brochures as part of the Olympic bid and Shayla asked me to come over and help her with her writing. She had arrived late today and missed Ms. Reed modelling through a think-aloud and explaining the instructions for the literacy activity. Ms. Reed went over to Shayla's home base and explained the literacy activity and what Shayla needed to do. Shayla continued to sit at her home base and did not engage in talk with Ms. Reed. She just stared toward the handout of paper lying on the table in front of her. She continued with this behaviour after Ms. Reed left to help another student. Ms. Reed called out several prompts to Shayla asking her to start writing. Shayla eventually acquiesced and then asked me to come over and help her. I pulled up a chair to her table and asked her 'what do you want to write?' Instead of talking about the literacy activity Shayla responded, 'Do you know what? My mom braided my hair. She told me that she always had elastic and that what made her hair long. It is down to here' [gestures with hand toward her thigh].*

Shayla's hair became a storied artifact that carried her identity. She had shoulder-length black hair and considered the use of an elastic hair tie a means of having longer hair, as her mother did. The way that we choose to dress or wear our hair is part of our identity that demonstrates to others that we want to be seen as particular persons. Perhaps having her mom braid her hair and using an elastic hair tie was part of Shayla's identity. This small artifact was a connection to family. If her hair was long like her mother's and she wore it in the same fashion, others would see her as belonging to her mother or as part of something.

The stories that Karl, Margaret, and Shayla shared were cultural artifacts that symbolized their relationships (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). Karl's connections to texts and stories of family, Margaret's teachings from her grandmother, and Shayla's stories illustrate the influences of culture and everyday life on their meaning-making. Pahl and Rowsell commented that "some stories themselves *are* artifacts, told and retold over and over. . . . Literacy is inscribed, written on the body, or made public in tactile and sensory ways for people to hear (Back, 2007)" (p. 11). The stories, as artifacts, make culture tangible.

The focal children talked during class discussions as well as sharing stories with me when I sat beside them. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) explained that these small stories are part of a larger narrative from the children's lives and interactions with others. They maintained that "these stories can be observed in classrooms, as children swap small details of each other's lives, tell each other's stories, and recontextualize the experiences they have shared as they perform schooled tasks" (p. 40). The vignettes that they shared with me gave me a glimpse into their out-of-school lives and how they came to make sense of their experiences and identity.

Indigenous Culture as a Fund of Knowledge

Culture was an important part of the focal children's out-school-lives because they all had close connections to extended family. In interviews and informal conversations they all shared personal narratives about family gatherings and time that they spent visiting grandparents, playing with cousins, and being at home with siblings. Dyson and Genishi (1994) acknowledged stories as "an important tool for proclaiming ourselves as cultural beings" (p. 4). The students brought their culture into school spaces through their stories and personal connections, collective knowledge, and participation in school cultural events and activities. The focal children understood themselves according to cultural identities framed by what they knew and what they did rather than an emphasis on what they were not.

Children learn cultural knowledge, traditions, and language by interacting socially with family. Funds of knowledge are the accumulated cultural knowledge that is essential to functioning and well-being (Moll et al., 1992). The focal students accessed their cultural knowledge to construct meaning. They referred to family and familial

experiences to make connections, support their inferences, and make predictions. Karl and Margaret both participated in the school jigging group. Dance in many cultures is an important part of gatherings and cultural events. Fiddle music and jigging are central to Métis culture. Métis dancing originated from First Nations footwork and Scottish and French jigs and reels, which make it distinct. Historically and currently, fiddle music has brought people together to have fun and socialize. Square dancing is also a part of Métis culture that requires that four couples follow the directions of a caller. Jigging can involve any number of people. Feet move in unison to the very lively beat of Métis fiddle music. Many Métis people participate in jigging at family or community gatherings, celebrations, and festivals or in jigging contests. Because of the influence of the fur trade and the movement of French and Scottish fur traders into the north, some First Nations communities also participate in jigging and square dancing. For example, the Swampy Cree and Dene also have a tradition of jigging and square dancing. Dance was an embodiment of Karl's and Margaret's cultural connections. Their participation in this cultural activity validated Margaret's identity as Dene and Karl's identity as Métis. The focal children's involvement in cultural activities strengthen and reinforced their cultural identity and made them proud of who they are, amidst a larger society that too easily marginalizes and oppresses First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Noll (2000) found that cultural artifacts like dance and music become sign systems for Indigenous children as they construct personal meaning and cultural understanding. The stories and cultural activities located the focal children within their cultures. The use of cultural tools such as language helped them to embody, interpret, and negotiate their culture (Bruner, 1986).

All of the students in the school participated in the weekly cultural class that a Métis teacher taught. They heard stories from Elders, learned about Cree and Métis cultures and histories, and participated in cultural arts. The students' experiences with their families supported the knowledge that they gained in this class, and they used this collective knowledge and experience in classroom discussions to make connections, use contextual knowledge to build conceptual knowledge, and share their identities with their classmates. The culture class created a space for the students to renew their cultural sensibility and gave them new ways to look at the world within an educational system dominated by Western knowledge (Cajete, 2000). Indigenous knowledge is centred in

knowing oneself and where one stands in relation to the rest of the world (Cajete, 2000; Castellano, 2008; Wilson, 2008). In the culture class the First Nations and Métis students could express themselves within a communal cultural context. Indigenous knowledge comes from a communal experience (Cajete, 2000). First Nations and Métis students need to hear the stories and history and observe what is going on around them to truly come to know themselves and understand how everything is related. The culture, language, and ways of knowing of First Nations and Métis students must be recognized in school for them to be successful in school.

Summary

In this chapter I discussed the themes of talk, agency, and culture in relation to the construction of identities. Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of community of practice framed my exploration of the students' membership in a community of practice and how their participation helped them to negotiate meaning and their identities. The focal participants' use of talk helped them to bring their cultural selves into school literacy. The use of multiliteracies in reading, viewing and creating texts also generated opportunities for the students to draw upon their interests, experiences, and identities. As subjects of action, the students co-constructed their identities, which they reproduced within particular contexts and particular relationships. Popular culture, artifactual literacy, and culture served as funds of knowledge upon which the students could draw to construct meaning and reconstruct their identities as literacy learners.

CHAPTER 6:

WALKING THE GOOD WAY: CONCLUSION

In an Indigenous context, 'walking the good way' requires respecting the environment, self, and others and understanding that everything is connected. Walking or being in the world in a respectful way requires an understanding that everyone and everything is related, so we must take care in using language and performing actions. Although these might seem to be simple tasks, each element is complex and multifaceted. Respecting the environment requires knowing all things interconnect and that they need to live in harmony and balance. Respecting self involves taking care of mind, body, and soul; and respecting others requires building relationships, understanding the power of language, and honouring each person's ways of being, doing, and knowing (Cajete, 1994). In this study the students used language, culture, and agency to form relationships, to represent their ways of knowing, and to co-construct meaning and identities. Their agency gave them the means to walk the good way and represent their identities as First Nations or Métis while they transformed their identities as literacy learners through the use of multiliteracies.

In this final chapter I address how we can continue to walk the good way by respecting and valuing what First Nations, Métis and Inuit children bring to school literacy. I begin by sharing my insights into the school literacy lives of the participants and discussing the important role of oral language, multiliteracies, and funds of knowledge in co-constructing identities and negotiating meaning. To honour and validate the lived experiences and knowledge that students bring to the classroom, it is vitality important to create spaces for students to use oral language, they must have opportunities to employ multiliteracies, and they can draw from their funds of knowledge. Canada's educational system has a long history of failing Aboriginal people.

In this chapter I also discuss the significance of this study and how my insights broaden knowledge in the field of literacy, inform teacher practice, and improve the education system. The legacy of residential schools is evident in the many inequalities that Aboriginal people endure with regard to education, child welfare, economics, health, and racism (TRC, 2016). The TRC informed Canadians that "overcoming this legacy

will require an Aboriginal education system that meets the needs of Aboriginal students and respects Aboriginal parents, families and cultures" (p. 134). I hope that the findings from this research study will support the creation of such an educational system or lead to further research to enhance education.

I began this research wondering why some First Nations and Métis children were proficient readers. With so much research on deficits and literacy gaps compared to other children, how did some First Nations, Métis or Inuit children manage to overcome these prevailing concerns? What helped these children to succeed in reading when others were struggling or failing?

I hoped that by studying the school literacy practices of a group of First Nations and Métis children whom their teacher identified as proficient or successful readers, I might glean some insight into what worked for them and that perhaps this knowledge could be used to support all readers. This research study revealed that the focal children were situated in a community of practice in which they used multiliteracies while drawing on their funds of knowledge to support their literacy learning.

Oral Language in Facilitating Participation

Moje and Lewis (2007) argued that learning "involves and requires participation in something" and that people bring their "histories of participation" (p. 16) to new acts of participation. This reaffirms the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) on how learners move from legitimate peripheral participation to full participation as they learn. The Grade 3 class came together as a community of practice in the process of learning. The students were connected by their demonstration of the qualities depicted in the Circle of Courage. In their pursuit of the four values of belonging, independence, mastery, and generosity from the Circle of Courage, the students became accountable to one another as part of their mutual engagement in the enterprise of constructing meaning. Moje and Lewis also contended that "learning is always situated within discourse communities or is about gaining access to communities" (p. 17). The students in this Grade 3 community of practice were moving forward in their learning to become full members of a community of readers.

Oral language is a prerequisite for reading and "is crucial to participating in instructional interactions that lead to effective learning of vocabulary and

comprehension" (Lawrence & Snow, 2011, p. 320). Through talk, students scaffold each other's vocabulary learning by building on the ideas of others through the practices of adding, elaborating, or revoicing. They participated in literacy practices that gave them skills and accumulate knowledge about the practice of reading. Additionally, Ms. Reed encouraged talk by allowing the students to control how the discussion developed while acknowledging the students who exhibited the strategies of what good readers do. She connected talk to reading by discussing the purpose of their reading, activating students' background knowledge, posing open-ended questions, and encouraging the students to respond to one another (Lawrence & Snow, 2011). As legitimate peripheral participants in the practice of reading, the students either observed these strategies or practiced them. For example, the literacy practice of shared reading gave all readers, regardless of reading level or ability, access to the text, a shared experience, and new vocabulary upon which they could draw upon to transact with other texts. Many of the children in the class developed as readers by sharing experiences, making connections, and telling stories. They made connections whether they were telling their stories from their own experiences, stories that their family had told them, or stories from television or movies. Everything is related through stories by making connections to texts, making inferences by using textual information and their own stories, asking questions, and thinking critically while trying to fit the stories they hear or read into their current and evolving story. The use of language helps children to make connections to new knowledge. Therefore, children's talk is an essential part of language arts and is necessary for academic success in all content areas (Heath, 1983). Ms. Reed created time and space for the students to talk and a classroom environment in which student voice was valued and students were empowered by sharing their experiences. She provided space for students' agency, which determined the degree of their participation in class discussions.

Oral language or talk was a fundamental means of participating and communicating for the children in the Grade 3 classroom at Belleheights School. The students talked about their experiences, shared their thoughts, asked questions fuelled by curiosity or interest, and informed others of what they were doing. This is consistent with Halliday's (1969) theoretical framework of the functions of language for each individual to satisfy their physical, emotional, and social needs. He suggested, "What is

common to every use of language is that it is meaningful, contextualized, and in the broadest sense social" (p. 41). In this study the children learned about themselves, others, and the world by talking to others. Similarly, Gee (2001) purported that the function of language is to "scaffold the performance of action in the world" and to "scaffold human affiliation in culture and social groups and institutions through creating and enticing others to take certain perspectives on experience" (p. 715). These students used language to let others know about themselves, where they belonged, and what was important to them (Gee, 2001). Ms. Reed honoured the students' ways with words by creating an environment in which their talk and stories were valued (Heath, 1983).

Connor, Kyle, and Margaret were active in class discussions. Ms. Reed used her position as the classroom teacher to determine who had access to which tools or resources. She facilitated the conversations in a manner that helped her students to draw on their lived experiences, which determined their access. Through her influence as a teacher, Ms. Reed provided spaces for agency among all of her students. Even though Shayla did not participate in the same ways that the other three focal children did, Shayla had space for her agency. Ms. Reed informed me that the children whom she identified as focal participants all enjoyed talking about themselves. Perhaps she had the same opportunity that I had to hear Shayla's personal narratives and witness her making connections to her lived experience. In Shayla's quiet way she might have demonstrated to Ms. Reed how she constructed meaning when she read. Ms. Reed took time for every student to read to her and talk about their reading. In the individual reading conversations and the larger classroom conversations, the students were able to make connections and draw on their lived experiences to construct meaning. In the Grade 3 classroom at Belleheights School, many of the students embodied the stories and experiences from popular texts through their talk and made the school literacy practices meaningful by talking about the connections they saw to their lived experiences.

The Grade 3 class valued the use of talk as a literacy practice. Ms. Reed encouraged the students to participate in class discussions and talk about themselves as readers. Even though not all of the students participated as active contributors to the class discussions, they were able to learn though legitimate peripheral participation and accumulate knowledge about how language is used and how it works. Talk also

promotes the acknowledgement of multiple ways of knowing and thus facilitates multiliteracies.

Multiliteracies in Recognizing Ways of Knowing

The children in the Grade 3 classroom at Belleheights resided in a world that is rapidly becoming more digital. The students were members of a community of practice of readers in which participation, collaboration, collective knowledge, and shared production were valued and important practices. Reading is not confined to print-based texts bound in books; rather, it is multimodal and requires multiliteracies. Children enter classrooms with an abundance of knowledge and experiences with multiple textual forms. In the past decade the digital knowledge and skills that students bring to the classroom have increased. Teachers no longer need to teach students how to use a mouse or the vocabulary that accompanies computer technology and the Internet. In fact, YouTube videos show toddlers using iPads or trying to swipe magazines, wondering why they do not respond to their touch (UserExeriencesWorks, 2011). Even in classrooms the roles of expert and novice are sometimes switched when children and youth show their teachers how to navigate short cuts and around firewalls (a security feature to keep users from accessing certain sites), which I have experienced in my teaching practice.

The New London Group (1996, 2000) expanded the definition of literacy to address the continual shifting and evolving of literacy learning and teaching as a result of cultural diversity and the emergence of digital technology and globalization. The group coined the term multiliteracies to describe the multiple ways of knowing and the use of different literacy practices, depending on the context and the cultural and social aspects.

Multiliteracies are at the forefront because of the advances in technology; however, Indigenous people have belonged to multiliterate societies since time immemorial. First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are poised to use multiliteracies that they bridge to school literacy. They help students to bring their own experiences, backgrounds, and practices into the classroom and involve the multiple ways that meaning can be constructed and represented, thus honouring Indigenous epistemology. Indigenous epistemology is based on coming to know self through participation, collaboration, and connection to a place environmentally, socially, and spiritually (Cajete,

1994). Learning in Indigenous communities involves collaboration, the distribution of knowledge, and experiential participation, which are also the hallmarks of new literacies.

The students used new literacies by representing meaning through glogs (digital posters) and collaborating on the production of a word cloud. They represented their learning and how they saw themselves through the images, colours, and symbols they chose to include on their glogs. These choices demonstrated "that how knowledge is represented, as well as the mode and media chosen, is a crucial aspect of knowledge construction, making the representation integral to meaning and learning" (Jewitt, 2008, p. 241). The students were able to use multiple modes to represent what they knew and in the process of creation constructed more knowledge.

The four focal children in this study had computers at home and were adept at logging on to the school computers and navigating websites. They knew about social networking sites such as Facebook and how to access videos on YouTube. They also visited favourite websites to play games. Along with watching movies and television, playing video games on game consoles or the Internet, listening to music through MP3 players, or watching music videos, the children were immersed in multiple texts and using multiple literacies. The students also used traditional literacy practices in new ways through technology by writing in Word documents, reading print text on a screen, and drawing using Paint programs.

Although children might be immersed in technology with computers, game consoles, and mobile devices, they might not have opportunities to use technology in ways that are privileged in school. Children with a high number of absences or who remain on the periphery miss out when the teacher provides explicit instruction, models, or gives the students opportunities to socially construct and represent meaning with technology. This is a concern because technology continues to influence literacy practices, texts, and understanding. There is a significant demand for students to leave school with knowledge and understanding of the use of technologies as tools in a variety of digital environments, coupled with the perpetual need to become proficient readers and writers across multimodalities. If children do not have access to new literacy practices at home, then school becomes the only place where they will learn about them.

It is not just new technologies that promote multimodal learning; students can use many modes to represent and communicate meaning. The use of multimodal literacy through gestures and visuals gave the students tangible objects to use to help them to construct, negotiate, and communicate meaning. They used gestures to fill in the blanks when they could not think of a particular word and to add a visual mode to talk and enhance communication. The students read gestures and used gestures to assist them in constructing meaning through talk. The environmental print in the classroom became a visual resource from which the students could draw to co-construct meaning and talk about themselves as readers.

Multiliteracies make curriculum culturally responsive in that it acknowledges the value of many different literacies and literacy practices in which children engage and that they experience to construct and represent meaning.

Funds of Knowledge in Supporting Literacies

The students in this particular Grade 3 class drew on their funds of knowledge from their experiences with popular culture, artifactual literacies and their Indigenous cultures. Moll et al. (1992) described funds of knowledge as the cultural resources that parents and families offer their children at home. The children in this research study participated in family and cultural activities that informed them of who they are in the larger society. The importance of family is clear in their stories, in their connections to texts, and their view of themselves as First Nation or Métis children. Funds of knowledge include the out-of-school literacies that children learn by participating in their homes and communities. Their learning did not occur only in school, as evidenced by the many out-of-school experiences that they would bring into school literacy practices to help them to construct knowledge and make school literacy meaningful. Moll et al. purported that when teachers learn about their students' funds of knowledge, they can bring them into the classroom and make authentic links between the children's home literacy and school literacy.

Popular culture is a valuable resource that students can access and bring into school literacy practices to make learning relevant and meaningful. Children spend a considerable amount of time consuming popular culture through television, movies, and online spaces. The characters, celebrities, and personalities of popular media make it a

lived, albeit indirect, experience as children engage with popular texts. Children can access, draw upon, appropriate, and manipulate popular culture and its corresponding texts to construct meaning and represent what they know. Students recontextualize unofficial material as part of their multimodal composing and create hybrids (Dyson, 2003, p. 347). The glogs demonstrated how the students fused their funds of knowledge with school literacy. They used popular media and recontextualized them in interacting with peers socially or during classroom discussions. Connor transformed the meaning of *Bemo* and *Obama* to suit his purpose, and his classmates appropriated it for their own playful conversations. The range of experiences and funds of knowledge upon which children draw to construct meaning in literacy activities demonstrates that the view of their use of television or popular media as a mindless activity has no foundation (Dyson, 2003).

Ms. Reed's ability to create spaces for her students to bring in their out-of-school literacy experiences supported literacy learning that was more engaging and honoured diverse ways of knowing. She created zones of possibilities for her students (Moll & Greenberg, 1990) in which they could draw on funds of knowledge that they bridged to the curriculum. Family stories as artifacts, Indigenous cultural knowledge, and popular culture are funds of knowledge on which the children drew to make school literacy meaningful. The artifacts that the students brought into the classroom were stories that carried their identity and ways of seeing the world. Pahl and Rowsell (2010) asserted that "artifactual literacy acknowledges that everyone has a story to tell, and they bring that story into their learning" (p. 3). These artifacts made the students' experiences and knowledge a tangible object that they could evoke to construct meaning in their school literacy practices. The artifacts, or stories, connected the students' out-of-school lives to school literacy and affirmed their First Nations or Métis identity. For students to learn, their identities need to be recognized and acknowledged as worthwhile and valid (Moje & Lewis, 2007).

Significance of the Study

In Chapter 1, I acknowledged that this study is significant because of the widening literacy gap between Métis, Inuit, and First Nations, and all other Canadians as a result of the legacy of residential schools and negative school experiences. The federal

and provincial governments have been requested to make changes to the educational system to support Indigenous people and, consequently, benefit all Canadians (Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; TRC, 2016). For the last 20 years provincial governments have been rewriting curriculum to be more inclusive of Inuit, Métis, and First Nations cultures and history, but more needs to be done. The TRC's calls to action have propelled educational institutions to respond by indigenizing their programs and school environments. This study is significant in that it adds to literacy educators' and researchers' understanding of literacy learning for minority children and elucidates ways to reduce the existing literacy gap. Research is important because it extends the knowledge in a field and improves practice (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, I describe my insights from the study as they pertain to indigenizing curriculum to include Inuit, First Nations, and Métis ways of knowing; and I explain how this study contributes to academia, teacher practice, and an improved educational system that supports reconciliation.

Indigenizing Curriculum

Curriculum that is inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing provides spaces for students' agency. I believe that students will likely experience success in school literacy learning if their agentic actions are accepted and validated. Agency is the strategic and intentional action of constructing identity and relationships (Moje & Lewis, 2007). Students' agency in determining how they use language and behave in literacy learning shapes their identity and informs their engagement, which is necessary for learning. The students in this study socially constructed their identities through the use of talk. Through talk, students can exercise their agency while accessing their funds of knowledge. An indigenized curriculum helps students to negotiate their ways of being by joining in class discussions and making connections to popular and Indigenous cultures. Popular culture is a resource for many children that teachers can incorporate into the curriculum to make it culturally relevant. Students' sharing the same lived experiences with their peers has social capital; that is, their ability to talk about the same movies or TV shows as their peers or understand references to celebrities and athletes are valuable assets (Marsh, 2012). They validate and recognize each others' lived experiences, thus validating their own identity. The use of funds of knowledge became a way to honour

students' language and cultural knowledge, and the students in this study accessed them to construct meaning, which thus made various school literacy practices culturally relevant. Many of the students brought their own experiences, backgrounds, and out-of-school literacy practices into the classroom, thus bringing their ways of knowing into literacy learning.

Contributions to Academia

This research adds to the field by highlighting the importance of multiliteracies as a means to include diverse voices, texts, and cultures in school literacy. The use of multiliteracies creates a bridge between home and school literacy by helping minority children who might not have access to privileged forms of literacy to acquire school literacy. Multiliteracies bring multiple ways of knowing into the classroom when students share their stories and contribute to discussions. Multiliteracies open up spaces for children's voices. Providing spaces for student voice is important because "they draw on local histories and forms of knowledge" (Gonzalez, 2005, p. 38), and classroom discourse validates these histories and lived experiences. Children's culture and language are resources that they can use to support their literacy learning and thus more equitable access to school literacy (Dyson, 2003, 2013; Gee, 2004, 2008, 2014; Heath, 1983; Moll et al., 1992).

In this research study I made a connection between multiliteracies and Indigenous epistemology. Multiliteracies emphasize the influence of cultural and social contexts in shaping literacy practices and thus creates a context in which to honour and acknowledge the literacies of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children. Artifactual literacy acknowledges that objects carry stories because the artifacts embody culture, lives, and histories (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010). According to Paulsen (2003), Aboriginal literacy represents culture, language, and ways of knowing and being. We communicate the ways of knowing or epistemology through story or objects. The First Nations and Métis students' representations of meaning, whether they symbolized them in written stories, drawings, glogs, or oral narratives, are examples of Aboriginal literacies. Multiliteracies can create a context in which to value Aboriginal perspectives in literacy learning and to validate the knowledge and experiences that children and youth bring to school. These insights are an original contribution to the field of literacy, because, to date, I have not

found any research that links the hallmarks of new literacies, which are participation, collaboration, experimentation, and innovation, to similar features of Indigenous epistemology; specifically, participation, collaboration, and distributed knowledge. I believe that these similar qualities position Aboriginal children to use new literacy practices without having to abandon their Indigenous ways of knowing.

This research also applies Rosenblatt's (1978/1994) reader response theory to all texts, not just print. The children in this study gave evidence to support the efferent and aesthetic stances in response to digital texts. The practice of reading involves the construction of meaning during a transaction between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 1985). The integration of traditional print and digital print gave the children opportunities to transact with multimodal texts. This is very important considering how much access children have to technology and multimodal texts both in and out of school. Children must be aware of not only the information that is available to them, but also how modes are used and media[9] are created to evoke emotional responses, to persuade, and to influence. Because identity construction is ongoing and multilayered (Giroux, 1992), the ability to read a variety of texts (visual, linguistic, spatial) continues to inform the creation and transformation of multiple identities. Children's experiences, knowledge, and environment shape them. In transacting with texts, children bring their experiences and knowledge to the practice of reading. Transactions with digital texts afford more aesthetic responses considering the effects of colour and sound on the elicitation of emotions. Similarly, multimedia texts carry information across several modes, which requires that reader focus on several details to respond efferently and aesthetically. Using Rosenblatt's transactional theory with regard to digital texts illuminates how texts are produced to create different responses; for example, the affordances of digital texts to convey information. Apps on tablets afford the use of symbols, and drawing thus helps young children to create texts independently. The technology of video recording offers the affordance of recording memories, which, historically, was possible only with the technology of writing. We could not recall oral texts exactly as they were produced, but digital technology now offers a range of modes

[9] *Media* in this context refers to the channels of communication, such as videos, podcasts, blogs, e-mails, or text messaging.

to share memories. Affordances are the potential means available to creators to produce a text. The use of colours, the sizes and types of font, the design and layout of images and words, and the use of animation and sound influence how a text is read. All of these different modes carry meaning (Kress, 2001). Online reading practices require that readers negotiate between print text, images, and audio, which results in a multimodal representation of ideas and information. Digital texts are created within particular social and cultural contexts that inform the meanings that readers attach to the text. Similarly, children and youth are being socialized into the use and creation of digital texts. Readers' purposes in transacting with digital text affect their stance.

The research also offers a methodological contribution. I drew on Wells' (1999) dialogic inquiry and Gee's (2010) discourse analysis to explore the classroom discussions. My analysis tool gave me insight into the social construction of meaning and the use of cultural identities and funds of knowledge by determining the significance of the experiences that the students shared, how their identities shaped their talk and knowledge building, and how their language practices privileged certain sign systems. Gee's discourse analysis outlines several tools or questions that we can use to examine language to determine how we are using it. Gee's discourse analysis questions are based on the building tasks of language or on how we use language to create certain social activities and identities. Gee asked specific questions in analyzing language. For example, in analyzing the significance of language, he asked how language is used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways they might or might not be significant. In this study my analysis method involved Gee's idea of significance and wove it into Wells' spiral of knowing. Wells pointed out that knowledge building is a collaborative and social activity and involves identity formation as students participate in discourse. Therefore, bringing together pieces of Gee's discourse analysis and Wells' dialogic inquiry focused my examination of the discourse on the significance of the experiences that the participants shared, because these experiences represented their cultural identities. The analysis method elucidated the language practices that the students used to co-construct knowledge and how these language practices were part of the students' identity.

Considerations for Teacher Practice

Ms. Reed organized her classroom using culturally relevant or responsive pedagogical practices (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2001). Ladson-Billings (2001) reasoned that teachers who use culturally relevant pedagogy "… capitalize on learner's prior knowledge" (p. 99). Ms. Reed created spaces for her students to talk and share their experiences, and they learned how to listen to one another. Similar to Ladson-Billings (2001) culturally relevant teachers, Ms. Reed saw her students' culture as "the vehicle through which they can acquire the official knowledge and skills of the school curriculum" (p. 99-100). Culturally relevant pedagogy honours the knowledge and literacy practices that children bring into the classroom; while at the same time supports children in developing their multiple literacies alongside school literacy. Although the practices that I observed in the Grade 3 classroom were particular to this community of practice and should not be generalized across all classrooms, we can consider these practices opportunities to support other First Nations, Métis or Inuit children, if not all children, in their reading development. Wells (2009) stated that "no two children—and no two adults, for that matter—are identical. Each is unique, as a result of his or her particular combination of genetic inheritance and individual experience" (p. 139). However, it is still "necessary to look for common patterns" to help educators and policy makers "take appropriate action to alleviate disadvantageous circumstances" (p. 139). Even though this study involved a particular case, the themes that emerged illuminate the possibilities to create learning experiences that educators might not have considered.

The findings demonstrate that providing spaces for First Nations and Métis children to talk about their lived experiences and acknowledging their knowledge as valid and valuable created an atmosphere that helped most of the focal children to flourish. As Wells (2009) found, "The child's performance does not depend on ability alone, but on the complex interrelationships between the participants, the task, and the context in which it is embedded" (p. 140). The students had the agency to determine what their participation would involve. They enjoyed reading and the opportunity to make connections between their funds of knowledge and texts. Subsequently, culturally relevant or responsive pedagogy is more than just ensuring that students' culture is

evident in instructional techniques and resources but also requires teachers to create spaces for students' agency.

Educators need to move away from deficit theories of learning and stop seeing the literacy that First Nations, Métis and Inuit children bring to school as problematic. Instead of creating compensatory programs or looking for means of remediation to 'fix' First Nations, Métis and Inuit children, perhaps we need to honour the knowledge, skills, and experiences that these children bring to school. Unfortunately, some educators refuse to change their teaching practice to accommodate different learning styles and thus create an environment that requires that students adapt or be left behind. Currently, many First Nations, Métis and Inuit children have to change or adapt the literacy practices that they bring from their homes and communities. Some children who have achieved academically have done so at the expense of their cultural identity. Many First Nation, Métis or Inuit students do not assimilate into the dominant culture and remain on the fringes until they are pushed out of school. The lucky few have found ways to bridge their cultural ways of knowing to school literacy. Unfortunately, a high number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are pushed out of school, and, like Shayla, they reside on the margins until they see no place for them at all and do not return. Educators need to give Inuit, Métis and First Nations children the tools to navigate back and forth between their family and community literacy practices and school literacy. Additionally, educators need to consider how to support minority children in becoming full participants so that children such as Shayla who remain on the periphery can see themselves, their culture, and their ways with words as active in the classroom.

Reconciliation as the Path to an Improved Educational System

According to the TRC (2016), reconciliation involves "coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that overcomes conflict and establishes a respectful and healthy relationship among people, going forward" (p. 142). Education helps to realize reconciliation as a process and a goal. Education on past injustices and increased knowledge about Aboriginal peoples' experiences and perspectives can improve relationships. Rebalancing the curriculum is a means to reconciliation. Métis, First Nations, and Inuit perspectives and experiences have been largely omitted from the curriculum. If students cannot see themselves reflected in the curriculum, they will not

consider their experiences and knowledge worthwhile and valid. Students need to be able to bring their multiple literacies into the classroom to link authentically to school literacies without having to abandon their cultural identity.

The TRC (2016) made 94 Calls to Action in June 2015 "to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of reconciliation in Canada" (p. 1). Several calls to action are specific to education and appeal to federal and provincial governments to work with Aboriginal organizations to eliminate the existing gaps between First Nations, Métis, Inuit and all other Canadians through increased educational funding and the creation of culturally appropriate curricula to support the academic achievement of First Nations, Inuit and Métis students. Teachers need to create spaces where children can share their experiences, culture, and stories. It benefits not only the students whose voices are validated, but also the other children who learn about and from one another. As I have discussed, when children's cultural identity and language are evident in the classroom and considered valuable, their literacy learning benefits. The TRC also called on postsecondary institutions to "educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms" (p. 179). This research study's findings also highlight the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy, which accounts for the rich home literacy practices and languages of Inuit, Métis and First Nations children.

The TRC was established in 2007 as one of the components of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Residential school survivors filed lawsuits against the government and churches to prosecute those responsible for the injustices that they endured while they attended the federally funded schools. The Assembly of First Nations, Aboriginal organizations, churches, and the federal government made the agreement to support the healing of residential school survivors. Since 2009 the TRC has travelled across Canada to give residential school survivors, families, and communities an opportunity to share their experiences and the effects of residential school on their lives and communities. The TRC (2016) called on all Canadians to share the "responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships" (p. 161). This will require "sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal

rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society" (p. 161). The mandate of the TRC is to ensure that all Canadians hear the history and the impacts of residential schools on the lives of Aboriginal people. Learning about the legacy of residential schools and the contributions of Aboriginal people to Canada benefits everyone, not just Aboriginal students, in the creation of a better society. In the Grade 3 classroom, the use of the Circle of Courage model and attendance in the culture class helped the students to learn about the contributions and significance of Aboriginal cultures to their community.

Future Research

My ongoing analysis elicited several questions that are worthy of exploration. For example, what are the root causes low student attendance? Do different family childrearing practices influence students' attendance rates? Shayla's grandmother allowed her to decide whether she would attend school; therefore, do parents' or guardians' views on and feelings about school affect children's attendance or attitude toward school? During my visits to the Grade 3 classroom, rarely were all students in attendance. The absences of Analyn (a Filipino female who was visiting family in the Philippines for over a month) were extended, and Emma (a Cree female) broke her leg skating and was unable to attend school. Chase (a First Nation or Métis male) attended until the February break mid-month, but never returned. Ms. Reed informed me that Chase had arrived from the neighbouring elementary school of Belle River in October. According to this school, Chase had registered but never attended. In March, St. Boniface (another neighbouring elementary school) requested Chase's school records because he had just registered there. Tanya and Victoria (both identified as either First Nations or Métis) attended only a few times over the duration of the study. These are examples of students' mobility and low attendance, which are problems that many schools across the province with high First Nations, Métis or Inuit populations encounter. Students who move often frequently arrive without records, and their former schools usually have little information because of the high number of absences. Attendance is an issue that many inner city schools face. During the time of my visits, the students identified as struggling or well below grade level had the highest number of absences, with the exception of Evan, Paul, and Lori (the three students who received EA support).

Shayla, a focal child, was often absent or arrived late. Shayla's grandmother allowed her to decide to attend school or not. The dominant view in Western society is that children must attend school and that parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring that they attend. Therefore, according to the prevailing value of society, Shayla's attendance was poor. Perhaps Shayla's grandmother did not value attendance, and Shayla therefore missed a great deal of school, mainly in the mornings.

It was common to hear that grandparents did not insist that the grandchildren in their care go to school. Was this because the grandparents had had negative school experiences? Or was it more aligned with a traditional pedagogical practice to allow children to make their own decisions and learn from the experience? Was attendance part of how the students negotiated their participation? Did they view attending as submission to norms? These questions came to mind and require further study.

Another area that requires further exploration is the out-of-school literacy practices of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children. Their literacy practices at home and with family might provide information on the types of out-of-school literacy practices that can be brought into school literacy. What are Métis, First Nations, and Inuit students who are doing well in reading and school doing outside of school? Are they successful students who use their out-of-school or family literacy practices to support their school literacy practices? If so, how? Further exploration of the possible determinants of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children's success in school is needed.

Last, a further query might be the connection between participation and reading ability, because participation in the classroom was necessary for the students to become successful in the literacy activities. For example, if students with lower reading abilities increased their level of participation in classroom discussions, would their reading ability improve? Additionally, what factors determine a student's level of participation? Does a preexisting relationship with the classroom teacher or a certain level of comfort influence a student's degree of participation? Because many Métis, Inuit and First Nations students position themselves on the fringes and choose nonparticipation, further research into the influence of participation on literacy learning might result in additional supports to engage minority students.

Final Thoughts

I accomplished three things with my research: (a) I described the school literacy lives of four children who identified as Dene, Métis, or Cree; (b) I demonstrated how multiliteracies were involved in literacy learning that drew on the Cree, Dene, and Métis cultures, as well as on popular culture; and (c) I validated the role of talk in the classroom and the influence of participation on literacy learning.

This research reinforces the sociocultural learning theory. It makes evident that children learn through social participation in a cultural environment. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory identifies the significance of culturally determined and mediated tools in learning. Language is one of these tools. Children learn about their community's values, beliefs, and cultural practices through language, as well as how to use language through language (Halliday, 1978). Language carries a community's ways of being and doing and enables us to say, do, and be in the world (Gee, 2010).

The sociocultural practices of their families and communities influence children's literacy learning. Culture shapes language and, consequently, reading. Gee (2001) explained that "if embodied action and social activity are crucially connected to the situated meanings oral or written language convey," then reading must engage in connecting the texts to "real and imagined material and social world" (p. 716). Reading is a social practice that reflects the values of the culture in which it resides. When children's language and culture correspond with the language of reading as it is taught in schools, then they will more successfully be able to make connections and construct meaning.

REFERENCES

ABCya.com. (2016). [Home page.] Retrieved from http://www.abcya.com/

Adams, H. (1989). *Prison of grass: Canada from a native point of view*. Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House.

Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print.* Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Addison Stone, C. (2004). Contemporary approaches to the study of language and literacy development: A call for the integration of perspectives. In C. Addison Stone, E. R. Silliman, B. J. Ehren, & K. Apel (Eds.), *Handbook of language and literacy: Development and disorders* (pp. 3-24). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Alexander, P.A., & Fox, E. (2004). A historical perspective on reading research and practice. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed., pp. 33-68). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Allington, R. (2000). *What really matters for struggling readers: Designing research based programs*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Allington, R. (2002). What I've learned about effective reading instruction. *Phi Delta Kappan, 83*(1), 740-747.

Allington, R. (2012). *What really matters for struggling readers: Designing research based programs* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Alvermann, D. E., & Xu, S. H. (2003) Children's everyday literacies: Intersections of Popular culture and language arts instruction. *Language Arts, 81*(2), 145- 154.

Antone, E. (2003). Culturally framing Aboriginal literacy and learning. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 27*(1), 7-15.

Archibald, J. (2008). *Indigenous storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body and spirit*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: UBC Press.

Armstrong, H. (2013). Indigenizing the curriculum: The importance of story. *First Nations Perspectives, 5*(1), 37-64.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Razavieh, A., & Sorenson, C. (Eds.). (2006). *Introduction to research in education* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Au, K. H., & Mason, J. M. (1981). Social organizational factors in learning to read: The balance of rights hypothesis. *Reading Research Quarterly, 17*, 115-152.

Au, K. H. (1997). A sociocultural model of reading instruction: The Kamehameha Elementary Education Program. In S.A. Stahl & D.A. Hayes (Eds.), *Instructional models in reading* (pp. 181- 220). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ball, J. (2009). Supporting young Indigenous children's language development in Canada: A review of research on needs and promising practices. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 66* (1), 19-47.

Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local literacies: Reading and writing in one community*. London, UK: Routledge.

Battiste, M. (2000). Maintaining Aboriginal identity, language and culture in modern society. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 192-208). Vancouver, BC, Canada: UBC Press.

Bear Nicholas, A. (2008). The assault on Aboriginal oral traditions: Past and present. In R. Hulan & R. Eigenbrod (Eds.), *Aboriginal oral traditions: Theory, practice, ethics* (pp. 13-43). Halifax, NS, Canada: Fernwood.

Bearne, E., Clark, C., Johnson, A. Manford, P., Mottram, M. & Wolstencroft, H. (with Anderson, R., Gamble, N. & Overall, L.). (2007). *Reading on screen.* Leicester, UK: United Kingdom Literacy Association.

Bell, D., Anderson, K., Fortin, T., Ottmann, J., Rose, S., Simard, L., & Spencer, K. (2004). *Sharing our success: Ten case studies in Aboriginal schooling*. Kelowna, BC, Canada: Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education.

Black, P & Wiliam, D. (1998). *Inside the Black Box: Raising standards through classroom assessment*. London: Kings College.

Blair, H. (2000). Genderlects: Girl talk and boy talk in a middle-years classroom. *Language Arts, 77*(4), 315-323.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Boostrom, R. (1994). Learning to pay attention. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 7*(1), 51-64.

Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Boushey, G., & Moser, J. (2006). *The daily 5: Fostering literacy independence in the elementary grades*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 71-101.

Braunger, J., & Lewis, J. P. (2008). What we know about the learning and development of reading K-12: Thirteen core understandings about reading and learning to read. In S. B Kucer (Ed.), *What research really says about teaching and learning to read* (pp. 62-98). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Brendto, L.K., Brokenleg, M., and Van Bockern, S. (1998). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Britton, J. (1979). *Language and learning*. New York, NY: Penguin.

Bruner, J. (1978). The role of dialogue in language acquisition. In A. Sinclair, R., J. Jarvell, & M. Levelt (Eds.), *The child's concept of language*. New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Bruner, J. S. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountains: An ecology of Indigenous education*. Skyland, NC: Kivaki Press.

Cajete, G. (2000). Indigenous knowledge: The Pueblo metaphor of Indigenous education. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 181-191). Vancouver, BC, Canada: UBC Press.

Canadian Council on Learning. (2007). *Redefining how success is measured in First Nation, Inuit, and Métis learning*. Report on Learning in Canada, 2007. Retrieved from http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/Redefining_How_Success_Is_Measured_EN.pdf

Canadian Council on Learning. (2008). *Improving literacy levels among Aboriginal Canadians*. Retrieved from http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/LessonsInLearning/LinL20080904AboriginalLearning.html

Canadian Education Statistics Council. (2009). *Key factors to support literacy success in school-aged populations*. Retrieved from http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/201/key-factors-literacy-school-aged.pdf

Castellano, M. B. (2008). Updating Aboriginal traditions in knowledge. In In G.J.S. Dei, B.L. Hall, & D. G. Rosenberg (Eds.) *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world* (pp. 21-36). Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press.

Cazden, C. (2001). *Classroom discourse: the language of teaching and learning* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cazden, C. (2004). Value of conversations for language and reading development. *Literacy Teaching and Learning, 9*(1), 1-6. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov /fulltext/EJ966158.pdf

Coiro, J., Knobel, M., Lankshear, C., & Leu, D. J. (2008). *Handbook of research on new literacies*. New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (Eds.). (2000). *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures.* London, UK: Routledge.

Cordoba, T. (2005). Aboriginal *literacy and education: A wholistic perspective that embraces intergenerational knowledge*. Paper presented at the Centre for Canadian Studies conference, University of Edinburgh. Retrieved from http://www.cst.ed.ac.uk/2005conference/papers/Cordoba_paper.pdf

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Dami, E. (2008). *Geronimo Stilton: Geronimo and the gold medal*. Toronto, ON: Scholastic.

Daniels, H., Lauder, H, & Porter, J. (2009). Introduction. In H. Daniels, H. Lauder, & J. Porter (Eds.), *Educational theories, cultures and learning: A critical perspective* (pp. 1-6). London, UK: Routledge.

Dei, G.J. S., Hall, B.L., & Rosenberg, D.G. (2008). Introduction. In G.J.S. Dei, B.L. Hall, & D. G. Rosenberg (Eds.) *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world* (pp. 3-17). Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press.

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children*. New York, NY: New Press.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Introduction: Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 1-27). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). (Eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, A., Musker, J. & Clements, R. (Producers), & Musker, J. & Clements, R. (Directors). (1997). *Hercules* [Motion Picture]. USA: Walt Disney Pictures.

Diaz, R. M., Neal, C. J., & Amaya-Williams, M. (1990). The social origins of self-regulation. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology* (pp. 127-154). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Dudley-Marling, C., & Lucas, K. (2009). Pathologizing the language and culture of poor children. *Language Arts, 86*(5), 362-370.

Dumont, R. (1972). Learning English and how to be silent: Studies in Sioux and Cherokee classrooms. In C. Cazden, V. John, & D. Hymes (Eds.), Functions of language in the classroom (pp. 344-369). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dunn, M. (2001). Aboriginal literacy: Reading the tracks. *Reading Teacher, 54*(7), 678-687.

Dyson, A. (1997). *Writing superheroes: Contemporary childhood, popular culture, and classroom literacy.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dyson, A. (2003). *Brothers and sisters learn to write: Popular literacies in childhood and school cultures*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dyson, A. (2013). *ReWRITING the basics: Literacy learning in children's cultures*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dyson, A. (2015). The search for inclusion: Deficit discourse and the erasure of childhoods. *Language Arts, 92*(3), 199-207.

Dyson, A. H., & Genishi, C. (2005). *On the case: Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dyson, A.H., & Genishi, C. (1994). Introduction: The need for story. In A. H. Dyson & C. Genishi (Eds.). *The need for story: Cultural diversity in classroom and community* (pp. 1-7). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Ehri, L. C. (1996). Development of the ability to read words. In R. Barr, M. K. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Vol. II* (pp. 383-417). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Elliot, N. (2012). *O is for Olympics*. Guildford, UK: Hogs Back Books.

Ellis, J. (1998). Introduction: Teacher as interpretive inquirer. In J. Ellis (Ed.), *Teaching from understanding: Teacher as interpretive inquirer* (pp. 5-14). New York, NY: Garland Publishing.

Ellis, J. (2006). Researching children's experience hermeneutically and holistically. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 53*(3)*,* 111-126.

Ellis, J. (2010). Interpreting results. In A. Mills, G. Durepos, & E. Wiebe (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of case study research* (pp. 485-487). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. doi: http://dx.doi.org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.4135/9781412957397.n179

Erickson, F. (1996). Going for the zone: The social and cognitive ecology of teacher-student interaction in classroom conversation. In D. Hicks (Ed.), *Discourse, learning and schooling* (pp. 29-62). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ermine, W. (1995). Aboriginal epistemology. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 101-112). Vancouver, BC, Canada: UBC Press.

Friesen, J. W., and & Friesen, V. L. (2002). *Aboriginal education in Canada: A plea for integration*. Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises.

Gallimore, R., Boggs, J. W., & Jordan, C. (1974) *Culture, behavior and education: A study of Hawaiian-Americans*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gay, L. A., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. (2009). (Eds.). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Gee, J. P. (1985). The narrativization of experience in the oral style. *Journal of Education, 167*(1), 9-35.

Gee, J. P. (2001). Reading as situated language: A sociocognitive perspective. *Journal of Adolescents and Adult Literacy, 44*(8), 714-724.

Gee, J. P. (2004). *Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (2007). *What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gee, J. P. (2008). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourse*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (2010). *Introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method* (3rd ed.). Florence, KY: Routledge. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

Gee, J. P. (2014). *Literacy and education.* Taylor and Francis. Retrieved from <http:www.myilibrary.com.login.ezprozy.library.ualberta.ca?ID=665711>

Gee, J. P., & Hayes, E. R. (2011). *Language and learning in the digital age*. Retrieved from https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=6C63YQAnCLAC&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&authuser=0&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA57.w.1.4.7

Gee, J. P., Hull, G., & Lankshear, C. (1996). *The new work order: Behind the language of the new capitalism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Genishi, C., & Dyson, A. Haas. (2009). *Children, language, and literacy: Diverse learners in diverse times*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

George, N. P. (2003). The rainbow/holistic approach to Aboriginal literacy. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 27*(1), 29-40.

Giroux, H. (1992). *Border crossings: Cultural workers and the politics of education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Gonzalez, N. (2005). Beyond culture: The hybridity of funds of knowledge. In N. Gonzalez, L. C. Moll, & C. Amanti (Eds.), *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms* (pp. 29 -46). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Goodman, K. S. (1996). *On reading: A common-sense look at the nature of language and the science of reading*. Richmond Hill, ON, Canada: Scholastic Canada.

Goodman, Y. M. (2003). *Valuing language study: Inquiry into language for elementary and middle schools*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gutiérrez, K. D., & Rogoff, B. (2003). Cultural ways of learning: Individual traits or repertoires of practice. *Educational Researcher, 32*(5), 19-25.

Gutierrez, K. D., Baquedano-Lopez, P., Tejeda, C., & Rivera, A. (1999). Building a culture of collaboration through hybrid language practices. *Theory Into Practice, 38*, 87-93.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1969). Relevant models of language. *Educational Review, 22*, 26-37.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean: Explorations in the development of language*. New York, NY: Elsevier North-Holland.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. London, UK: Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1993). Towards a language-based theory of learning. *Linguistics and Education, 5*, 93-116.

Hampton, E. (1995). Towards a redefinition of Indian education. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nation education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 5-46). Vancouver, BC, Canada: UBC Press.

Hare, J. (2005). To "know papers": Aboriginal perspectives on literacy. In J. Anderson, M. Kendrick, T. Rogers, & S. Smythe (Eds.), *Portraits of literacy across families, communities, and schools: Intersections and tensions* (pp. 243-263). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hare, J. & Davidson, S. F. (2016). Learning from Indigenous knowledge in education. In D. Long & O.P. Dickason (Eds.) Visions of the Heart: Issues involving Aboriginal peoples in Canada (pp. 241-262). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Harste, J. C. (2010). Multimodality. In P. Albers & J. Sanders (Eds.) *Literacies, the arts & multimodality* (pp. 27-43). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Hays, P. A. (2004). Case study research. In K. B. DeMarrais & S. D. Lapan (Eds.), *Foundations for research: Methods of inquiry in education and social sciences* [E-book] (pp. 217- 234). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Way with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Heinemann (2014) *Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Benchmark Assessment System, 2nd Edition: Overview*. Retrieved from https://www.heinemann.com/fountasandpinnell/BAS2_overview.aspx

Heit, M. (1987). *Research summary: Communication styles of Indian peoples*. Retrieved from http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/lpsc_wksp_2007/resources/heit_report.pdf

Heit, M., & Blair, H. (1993) Language needs and characteristics of Saskatchewan Indian and Métis students: Implications for Educators. In S. Morris, M. Danesi, & K. McLeod (Eds.), *Aboriginal languages and education: The Canadian experience* (pp 103-128). Oakville, ON: Mosaic Press.

Hicks, D. (1996). Contextual inquiries: a discourse-oriented study of classroom learning. In D. Hicks (Ed.), *Discourse, learning and schooling* (pp. 104-141). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hoadley, C. (2012). What is a community of practice and how can we support it? In D. H. Jonassen & S. M. Land (Eds.), *Theoretical foundations of learning environments* (2nd ed., pp. 287-300). New York: Routledge. Retrieved from http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/006/677/CHAP12HOADLEY.pdf

hooks, b. (2009). belonging: a culture of place. New York, NY: Taylor and Francis.

Hull, G., & Schultz, K. (Eds.). (2002). *School's out! Bridging out-of-school literacies*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Hunter, N. (2013). *The winter Olympics.* Chicago, IL: Heinemann.

Hutchinson, S., & Wilson, H. (1994). Research and therapeutic interviews: A post-structural perspective. In J. M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp. 300-315). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

James, A. (2007). Giving voice to children's voices. *American Anthropologist, 109* (2), 261-272.

Jewitt, C. (2008). Multimodality and literacy in school classrooms. *Review of Research in Education, 32*(1), 241-267. doi:10.3102/0091732X07310586

Jewitt, C., & Kress, G. (Eds.). (2003). *Multimodal literacy*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Jones, C. (2003). Self-management and self-direction in the success of native literacy learnerns. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 27(1), 45-54.

Jones, M. G., & Gerig, T. M. (1994). Silent sixth-grade students: Characteristics, achievement, and teacher expectations. *The Elementary School Journal, 95*(2), 169-182.

John-Steiner, V., & Holbrook, M. (1996). Sociocultural approach to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. *Educational Psychologist 31*(3/4), 191-206.

Juel, C. (1988). Learning to read and write: A longitudinal study of 54 children from first to fourth grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 80*(4), 437-447.

Juel, C. (1996). Beginning reading. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Vol. II* (pp. 759-788). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kalantzis, M., & Cope, B. (2012). Literacies [Kindle version]. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://www.amazon.ca

Kitchen, J., & Raynor, M. (2013). Indigenizing teacher education: An action research project. *Canadian Journal of Action Research, 14*(3), 40-58

Knobel, M., & Lankshear, C. (2007). *A new literacies sampler*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Krashen, S. D. (2004). *The power of reading: Insights from the research* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Kress, G. (1997). *Before writing: Rethinking paths to literacy*. London, UK: Routledge.

Kress, G. (2001). *Multimodal teaching and learning* [electronic resource]: *Rhetorics of the science classroom* [Electronic resource]. London, UK: Continuum, 2001.

Kress, G. (2003). *Literacy in the new media age*. London, UK: Routledge.

Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication.* London, UK: Routledge.

Kress, G., & van Leeuwan, T. (2006). *Reading images* [electronic resource]*: The grammar of visual design* [Electronic resource]. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006.

Laderoute, B. (2005). *Nihiyaw awasak: Validation of Cree literacies: An ethnographic study of children at home, at school, and in the community* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teaching for African American students*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journeys of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2006). *New literacies: Everyday practices & classroom learning* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Open University Press.

LaRoque, E. (1975). *Defeathering the Indian*. Agincourt, ON: The Book Society of Canada.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lawrence, J. F., & Snow, C. E. (2011). Oral discourse and reading. In M. L. Kamil, P. D. Pearson, E. B. Moje, & P. P. Afflerbach (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Volume IV*. (pp. 320-337). New York, NY: Routledge.

Leander, K., & Boldt, G. (2012). Rereading "A pedagogy of multiliteracies": Bodies, texts, and emergernce. Journal of Literacy Research 45(1), 22-46. doi:10.1177/1086296x12468587

Leavy, P. (2009). Social research and the creative arts: An introduction. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice* (pp. 1-24). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Lewis, C., Enciso, P., & Moje, E. B. (2007). Introduction: Reframing sociocultural research on literacy. In C. Lewis, P. Enciso, & E. B. Moje (Eds.), *Reframing sociocultural research on literacy: Identity, agency, and power* (pp. 1-11). New York, NY: Routledge.

Little Bear, L. (2009). *Naturalizing Indigenous knowledge: Synthesis paper*. University of Saskatchewan, Aboriginal Education Research Centre, Saskatoon, SK and First Nations and Adult Higher Education Consortium, Calgary, AB. Retrieved from http://www.aerc.usask.ca

Littlejohn, A., Beetham, H., & McGill, L. (2012). Learning at the digital frontier: A review of digital literacies in theory and practice. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 28*, 547-556. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2729.2011.00474.x

Lopez, J. K. (2006). Funds of knowledge. *Learn NC*. Retrieved from http://www.learnnc .org/lp/pages/939

Low, B. E. (2005). "Sayin' it in a different way": Adolescent literacies through the lens of cultural studies. In B. V. Street (Ed.), *Literacies across educational contexts* (pp. 105-123). Philadelphia, PA: Caslon.

Macdougall, B. (2010). One of the family: Métis culture in nineteenth-century northwestern Saskatchewan. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

MacLean, M. (2004). *Métis teachers: Identity, culture and the classroom* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.

MacLean, M., & Wason-Ellam, L. (2006). *When Aboriginal and Métis teachers use storytelling as an instructional practice* (Aboriginal Education Research Network). Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Learning.

Marsh, J. (2012). Early childhood literacy and popular culture. In J. Larson, J., & J. Marsh, J. (Eds.). (2012). *The SAGE handbook of early childhood literacy* (2nd ed.,) (pp. 207-222). London, GB: SAGE Publications Ltd. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca

Marsh, J., & Millard, E. (2000). *Literacy and popular culture: Using children's culture in the classroom*. London, UK: Sage Publications.

McGee, L. M., & Richgels, D. J. (1996). *Literacy's beginnings: Supporting young readers and writers*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

McKeough, A., Bird, S., Tourigny, E., Romaine, A., Graham, S., Ottmann, J., & Jeary, J. (2008). Storytelling as a foundation to literacy development for Aboriginal children: Culturally and developmentally appropriate practices. *Canadian Psychology, 49*(2), 148-154.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education: Revised and expanded from case study research in education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.) [Kindle version] San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Retrieved from https://www.amazon.ca

Moje, E. B., & Lewis, C. (2007). Examining opportunities to learn literacy: The role of critical sociocultural literacy research. In C. Lewis, P. Enciso, & E. B. Moje (Eds.), *Reframing sociocultural research on literacy: Identity, agency, and power* (pp. 15-48). New York, NY: Routledge.

Moll, L. C., & Greenberg, J. B. (1990). Creating zones of possibilities: Combining social contexts. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology* (pp. 319-348). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, *31*(2), 132-141.

Nakashima, A. (Producer), & Goodchild, B. (Director). (2005). *Class of the Titans* [Television broadcast]. Canada: Studio B Productions & Nelvana.

National Council of Teachers of English. (2016). *Readwritethink.* Retrieved from http://www.readwritethink.org/

New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review, 66*(1), 60-92.

New London Group. (2000). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures* (pp. 9-37). London, UK: Routledge.

Niles, M., Byers, L., & Krueger, E. (2007). Best practice and evidence-based research in Indigenous early childhood intervention programs. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 30*(1), 108-125.

Noll. E. (2000). Literacy and American Indian students: Meaning making through multiple sign systems. In M. Gallego & S. Hollingsworth (Eds.), *What counts as literacy: Challenging the school standard* (pp.213-228). New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

OECD. (2011). *PISA 2009 results: Students on line: digital technologies and performance* (Vol. 11). Retrieved from http://dx/doi.org/10.1787 /9789264112995-en

Ogle, L. T., Sen, A., Pahlke, E., Jocelyn, L., Kastberg, D., Roey, S., Williams, T. (2003). *International comparisons in fourth-grade reading literacy: Findings from the progress in international Reading literacy study (PIRLS) of 2001* (No. NCES-2003-073). Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education.

Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2010). *Artifactual literacies: Every object tells a story*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2012). *Literacy and education* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Paley, V. G. (1997). *The girl with the brown crayon*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Paulsen, R. L. (2003). Native literacy: A living language. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 27*(1), 23-28.

Pete, S., Schneider, B., & O'Reilly, K. (2013). Decolonizing our practice: Indigenizing our teaching. *First Nations Perspectives, 5*(1), 99-115.

Philips, L. M., Norris, S. P., Osmond, W. C., & Maynard, A. M. (2002). Relative reading achievement: A longitudinal study of 187 children from first through six grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 94*(1), 3-13.

Philips, S. U. (1983). *The invisible culture: Communication in classroom and community on the Warm Springs Indian reservation*. New York, NY: Longman.

Pressley, M. (2001). *Learning to read: lessons from exemplary first grade classrooms*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Pressley, M., & Allington, R. L. (2015). *Reading instruction that work: The case for balanced teaching*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Purcell-Gates, V. (1996). Stories, coupons, and the TV Guide: Relationships between home literacy experiences and emergent literacy knowledge. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *31*, 406-428.

Racette, S.F. (2004). *Sewing Ourselves Together: Clothing, decorative arts and the expression of metis and half breed identity* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB, Canada.

Richards, J. (2008). *Closing the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal education gaps*. (C.D. Howe Institute Backgrounder, No. 116). Retrieved from http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf /Backgrounder_116.pdf

Richards, J., Hove, J., & Afolabi, K. (2008). *Understanding the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal gap in student performance* (C.D. Howe Institute Commentary, No. 276). Retrieved from C.D. Howe Institute website: https://www.cdhowe.org/sites/default/files/attachments/research_papers/mixed/commentary_276.pdf

Robertson, J. (2010). Opening doors, unlocking writers: A classroom exploration of picture books with sound. In P. Albers & J. Sanders (Eds.), *Literacies, the arts & multimodality* (pp. 67-89). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Rogoff, B. (1994). Developing understanding of the idea of community of learners. *Mind, Culture and Activity, 1*(4), 209-229.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1985). Viewpoints: Transaction versus interaction: A terminological rescue operation. *Research in the Teaching of English, 19*(1), 96-107.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1993). The transactional theory: Against dualism. *College English, 55*(4), 377-386.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1994). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of literary work*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1978)

Rosenblatt, L. M. (2004). A transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed., pp. 1363-1398). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Rowsell, J., & Burke, A. (2009). Reading by design: Two cases studies of digital reading practices. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 53*(2), 106-118. doi:10.1598/JAAL.53.2.2

Rowsell, J., Kress, G., Pahl, K., & Street, B. (2013). The social practice of multimodal reading: A new literacy studies: Multimodal perspective on reading. In D. E. Alvermann, N. J. Unrau, and & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (6th ed., pp. 1182 -1207). Newark, DE: International Reading Association (p. 1182 -1207).

Royal Commission of on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission of on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa, ON, Canada: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

Ruddell, R. B. (2006). *Teaching children to read and write: Becoming an effective literacy teacher* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Saskatchewan Education (2012). Community schools designation process. Retrieved from http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/FNM-Community-School-Designation

Schwandt, T. C. (2007). *The Sage dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sergiovanni, T. (1994). *Building community in school*. Toronto, ON, Canada: Jossey-Bass.

Singer, B. (Producer), & Vaughn, M. (Director). (2011). *X-men: First class* [Motion picture]. USA: 20th Century Fox.

Smith, F. (1988). *Joining the literacy club*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Smith, M. K. (2001). *'Community' in the encyclopedia of informal education*. Retrieved from http://www.infed.org/community/community.htm

Snow, C. E., Burns, S. M., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Stanovich, K. E. (1996). Word recognition: Changing perspectives. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Vol. II* (pp. 418-452). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Stanovich, K. E. (2004). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed., pp. 454-516). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Statistics Canada. (2005a). *Building on our competencies: Canadian results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey*, 2003. Catalogue no: 89-617- XIE. Retrieved from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-617-x/89-617-x2005001-eng.pdf

Statistics Canada. (2005b). *Projections of Aboriginal populations, Canada, provinces and territories: 2001-2017*. Catalogue no: 91-547-XIE. Retrieved from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-547-x/91-547-x2005001-eng.pdf

Sterzuk, A. (2008). "Whose English counts? Indigenous English in Saskatchewan schools." *McGill Journal of Education, 43*(1), 9-19. doi:10.7202/019570ar

Sterzuk, A. (2011). *The struggle for legitimacy: Indigenized Englishes in settler schools.* Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Stone, J. C. (2007). Popular websites in adolescents' out-of-school lives: Critical lessons on literacy. In M. Knobel & C. Lankshear (Eds.), *A new literacies sampler* (pp. 49-65). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Street, B. (1995). Social literacies: Critical approaches to literacy in development, ethnography and education. London: Routledge.

Taylor, D., & Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988). *Growing up literate: Learning from inner-city families*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Toulouse, P. (2011). *Achieving Aboriginal student success: A guide for K-8 classrooms*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2016). *A knock on the door: The essential history of residential schools.* Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press and National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Tunmer, W. E. (2008). Recent developments in reading intervention research: Introduction to the special issue. *Reading and Writing, 21*(4), 299-316. doi:10.1007s/11145-007-9108-4

UNESCO. (2014). *Reading in the mobile era: A study of reading in developing countries.* Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002274/227436e.pdf

United Nations. (n.d.). *Indigenous peoples, Indigenous voices fact sheet*. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf

UserExperiencesWorks. (2011, October 6). *A magazine is an iPad that does not work* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/aXV-yaFmQNk.

Vogt, L. A., Jordan, C., & Tharp, R. G. (1987). Explaining school failure, producing school success: Two cases. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 18*(4), 276-286.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Minds in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Walsh, M. (2010). Multimodal literacy: What does it mean for classroom practice? *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy, 33*(3), 211-239.

Watts-Taffe, S., & Gwinn, C. B. (2007). *Integrating literacy and technology: Effective practice for grades K-6*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Weber, S. J. (1986). The nature of interviewing. *Phenomenology + Pedagogy, 4*(2), 65-72.

Weber-Pillwax, C. (2001). Orality in northern Cree Indigenous worlds. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 25*(2), 149-165.

Wells, G. (1989). Language in the classroom: Literacy and collaborative talk. *Language and Education, 3*(4), 251-273.

Wells, G. (1996). Using the tool-kit of discourse in the activity of learning and teaching. *Mind, Culture, and Activity, 3*(2), 74-101. doi:10.1207/s15327884mca03022

Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogic inquiry: Towards a sociocultural practice and theory of education*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Wells, G. (2000). Dialogic inquiry in education. In C. D. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research*. (pp. 51-85) New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wells, G. (2009). *The meaningm : Learning to talk and talking to learn*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wertsch, J. V. (1990). The voice of rationality in a sociocultural approach to mind. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology* (pp. 111-126). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wertsch, J. V. (1995). The need for action in sociocultural research. In J. V. Wertsch, P. del Rio, & A. Alvarez (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 56-74). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, S. (2008). Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Winter, J. (2008). *Wangari's trees of peace.* Orlando, FL: Harcourt.

Yin, R. K. (1989). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yolen, J. (1987). *Owl moon*. Toronto, ON: Scholastic.

Yolen, J. (1998). *Welcome to the ice house*. Toronto, ON: Scholastic.

Zipke, M. (2008) Teaching metalinguistic awareness and reading comprehension with riddles. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(2), 128-137. doi:10.1589/RT.62.2.4

APPENDIX A:

INFORMATION LETTER, LETTER OF CONSENT/ASSENT

Information Letter/Letter of Assent

[Date]

Dear [Name of Participant],

I would like to invite you to participate in the study: Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliteracies. This study will look at how children use technology, like digital media to make sense of what they read and become better readers. Participation in this study includes talking about your reading and writing during Language Arts lessons. When I ask you questions about your reading and writing I will be recording what you say. I may also take pictures of you working, and may make copies of any work you have created.

I will keep the audio-recorded conversations, copies of your work, or any other images collected, and store them in a safe location to which only I have access. It is my job to protect your identity, so your name or image will not be used in my doctoral dissertation or any articles or publications that result from this study. For example, if I write about you, I will use a fake name (I will ask you to choose a name for yourself that I can use in my published work). Likewise, if I use any photograph of you, I will digitally alter the image so that no one but you will know that it is you.

I ask that you plan to participate in this study until I have gathered all the data I need. However, you may choose to withdraw at any time without any problem. If you choose to leave the study, all data connected to you will be destroyed.

This study will not put you in any risk. In agreement with the University Standards for the Protection of Human Participants, you have the right to:

- Not participate
- Withdraw from the study at any time without any difficulty
- Choose to leave without punishment and exclude any data from the study
- Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

I will remind you of these rights prior to each visit.

I have attached two consent forms for you to look at. If you choose to accept this invitation to participate, please read, sign and return one consent form to me, and keep the second one for your records.

There are also two consent forms for your parent or guardian and a letter explaining the project and asking for your parent's or guardian's consent. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Questions concerning the research study at this point, or at any point during the study, should you choose to participate, can be directed to me, or my supervisors Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca OR Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or wiltse@ualberta.ca

Sincerely,

Melanie MacLean
mamaclea@ualberta.ca

Student Participation Informed Assent

Title of Project: *Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliter*acies

Principal Investigator: Melanie MacLean at xxx-xxx-xxxx or mamaclea@ualberta.ca

Supervisors: Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca
Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or lynne.wiltse@ualberta.ca
University of Alberta, Elementary Education

To be completed by research participant:

Do you know that you have been asked to be in a research study?	Yes	No
Have you read and been given a copy of the information sheet?	Yes	No
Do you know the good and bad things about being in this research study?	Yes	No
Have you had the chance to ask questions and talk about the study?	Yes	No
Do you understand that you can say no to joining, or leave the study at any time while Melanie is there, without a problem, and all of the information you shared will be removed at your wish?	Yes	No
Has the topic of privacy been explained to you? Do you understand who will have access to your information?	Yes	No

This study was explained to me by: _____

I agree to take part in this study:

_____	_____	_____
Signature of Research Participant	Date	Witness

_____
Print Name

I believe that that person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____	_____
Signature of Investigator	Date

Information Letter and Letter of Consent to Parents/Guardians of Participants

[Date]

Dear [Parent or Guardian],

My name is Melanie MacLean, and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta. In part of receiving my doctoral degree I want to do a research study entitled: "Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliteracies." I will be observing and gathering information in your son/daughter's classroom. I would like to invite [name of child] to participate in the study.

The purpose of my study is to explore an elementary Language Arts classroom that uses digital technology, like the computer and Internet to support reading. My research takes a look at how many different ways technology, like the computer can support readers while recognizing that they bring knowledge from home. This proposed study will form the basis of my doctoral paper.

As part of the research, data will be collected over approximately four to eight weeks of visits to the classroom during English Language Arts (ELA) lessons. I will make notes while watching the teacher and students during their ELA class time, I will also take photographs of the classroom, the students and teacher while they are reading, writing and using computers during class time. I will make drawings of where the students and teacher are and how they move around the classroom. I will use a video camera over the shoulder of the children while they are using the computer to document how they go about using the computer. I will interview the children about their reading, how they use the computer and what kinds of things they do at home in reading, computers or other technology. The use of a digital audio recorder, to record interviews, digital camera to record in photographs the set-up of the room, literacy activities and participation of teacher and students, and video of students working on computers will also be used. As this is my doctoral research, I may use some of the photos of the children reading and writing. However, I will alter those using digital tools such as Photoshop so that their true identities are protected. The videotaping will be done over the student's shoulder to see what they do on the computer and the face of the student will not be shown. Under no circumstances will I ever use the children's real names or any personal information that can be used to trace back their true identities.

I ask that your child plan to participate in this study for the entire time (approximately four to eight weeks). However, they may leave the project at any time without any problems. If they choose to leave the project, all information connected to your child will be destroyed. If you and your child choose not to participate they will not be left out from any activities. Any information they give or anything they do in the classroom will not be used as part of the project.

This study does not pose any risk to your child. In agreement with the University Standards for the Protection of Human Participants, you child has the right to:

- Not participate
- Withdraw from the study at any time without judgement
- Opt out without penalty and exclude any data from the study
- Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

I will remind [name of child] of [his or her] rights prior to each visit. The children's altered image will not be used without consent. The children's identity will be concealed at all times. The children's name and any identifiable information will be changed in my doctoral paper as well as any other articles or presentations that I write using the information collected in this study. All artifacts, photographs, recordings, transcripts and field notes will be kept safe and secure by me on a password protected laptop for a minimum of 5 years after the study is completed. If you would like a copy of the final report this will be made available to you.

I have attached two consent forms for you to look at. If you choose to accept this invitation for your child to participate in this study, please read, sign and return one of the consent forms to me. You may keep the second consent form for your records.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning the research study at this point, or at any point during the study, my home number is xxx-xxx-xxxx. You can also contact my doctoral

supervisors at the university Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca OR Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or wiltse@ualberta.ca

If you have any questions about the rights of someone participating in research you can also call the University of Alberta Ethics Office at 780-492-2615 (collect calls accepted).

Sincerely,

Melanie MacLean
mamaclea@ualberta.ca

Parent or Guardian Informed Consent

Title of Project: *Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliter*acies

Principal Investigator: Melanie MacLean at xxx-xxx-xxxx or mamaclea@ualberta.ca

Supervisors: Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca
Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or lynne.wiltse@ualberta.ca
University of Alberta, Elementary Education

By signing this form, you indicate that you understand the research project and agree to allow your child to participate. In giving your consent, your child has the right to:

- Privacy, anonymity (their name changed) and confidentiality (anything they say will not be linked back to them)
- Withdraw from participation at any point during the study without explanation or penalty
- Safeguards to security of data (Melanie will keep all data on secure, password protected computer)
- Ownership and original copy of their class work (I will keep photocopies)
- Copy of the consent form for your reference
- Copy of the final report upon request

Please feel free to contact me if you have in questions concerning the research study at this point, or at any point during the study. You can also contact my doctoral supervisors at the university, Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca OR Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or wiltse@ualberta.ca

_____
Name of Research Participant

_____ _____
Printed Name of Parent or Guardian Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date: _____ Telephone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

I believe that that person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to allow their child to participate.

_____ _____
Signature of Investigator Date

Information Letter and Letter of Consent to Classroom Teacher

[Date]

Dear [classroom teacher],

My name is Melanie MacLean, and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Elementary Education at the University of Alberta. In partial fulfillment of my doctoral degree I am proposing to conduct a research study entitled: "Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliteracies." I would like to observe and gather data in your classroom.

The purpose of my study is to explore an elementary Language Arts classroom that integrates multiliteracies, like digital technology to support reading development. My proposed research takes a look at how multiliteracies can support readers while acknowledging their identity. This proposed study will form the basis of my doctoral dissertation.

As part of the research, data will be collected over approximately four to eight weeks of visits to the classroom during English Language Arts instruction. I will use observations, field notes, reflective journal, photographs, drawings, artifacts of student work, artifacts of your teacher lesson and unit plans, and transcribed informal interviews as data. The use of a digital audio recorder, to record informal interviews, digital camera to record in photographs the set-up of the room, literacy activities and participation of teacher and students in using multiliteracies will also be used. As this is my doctoral research, I may use some of the photos of you and the students reading and writing. For the purposes of using the images, however, I will alter them using digital tools such as Photoshop so that the true identities are protected. Under no circumstances will I ever use your real name, unless you indicate otherwise. I will also not use the children's real names or any personal information that can be used to trace back their true identities.

I ask that you anticipate participating in this study for the duration (approximately four to eight weeks of classroom observations). I may also need to return to ask follow-up questions when analyzing the data to clarify any information previously gathered. However, you may withdraw at any time from this study without consequence. If you choose to withdraw, all data connected to you will be destroyed.

This study does not pose any risk to you or your students. In agreement with the University Standards for the Protection of Human Participants, you have the right to:

- Not participate
- Withdraw from the study at any time without judgement
- Opt out without penalty and exclude any data from the study
- Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

I will remind you of your rights prior to each visit. The children's name and any identifiable information will be changed in my doctoral dissertation as well as any other articles or presentations that I write using the information collected in this study. I will also change your name and alter any images with you in them unless you specify otherwise. All artifacts, photographs, recordings, transcripts and field notes will be kept securely by me on a password protected laptop for a minimum of five years after the study is completed. If you would like a copy of the final report this will be made available to you.

I have attached two consent forms for your consideration. If you choose to accept this invitation to participate in this study, please read, sign and return one of the consent forms to me. You may keep the second consent form for your records.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning the research study at this point, or at any point during the study, my home number is xxx-xxx-xxxx. You can also contact my doctoral supervisors at the university Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca OR Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or wiltse@ualberta.ca

If you have any questions regarding one's rights as a research participant please call the University of Alberta Ethics Office at 780-492-2615 (collect calls accepted).

Sincerely,

Melanie MacLean
mamaclea@ualberta.ca

Classroom Teacher Informed Consent

Title of Project: *Aboriginal Children as Readers in Legitimate Peripheral Participation with Multiliter*acies

Principal Investigator: Melanie MacLean at xxx-xxx-xxxx or mamaclea@ualberta.ca

Supervisors: Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca
Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or lynne.wiltse@ualberta.ca
University of Alberta, Elementary Education

By signing this form, you indicate that you understand the research project and agree to participate. In giving your consent, you have the right to:

- Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality
- Withdraw from participation at any point during the study without explanation or penalty
- Safeguards to security of data
- Ownership of original lesson plans and units (Researcher will make a copy)
- Copy of the consent form for your reference
- Copy of the final report upon request

Please feel free to contact me if you have in questions concerning the research study at this point, or at any point during the study. You can also contact my doctoral supervisors at the university, Dr. Heather Blair at (780) 492-0921 or heather.blair@ualberta.ca OR Dr. Lynne Wiltse at (780) 492-2016 or wiltse@ualberta.ca

_____ _____
Name of Research Participant Date

_____ _____
Signature of Research Participant Telephone

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

I believe that that person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to allow their child to participate.

_____ _____
Signature of Investigator Date

APPENDIX B:

LITERACY INTEREST SURVEY, PRE-INTERVIEW

ACTIVITIES AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Literacy Interest Survey

1. Do you like to read?
2. How much time do you spend reading?
3. What are some of the books you have read lately?
4. Do you have a library card? How often do you use it?
5. Do you ever get books from the school library?
6. About how many books do you own?
7. What are some books you would like to own?
8. What are your favourite television programs?
9. How much time do you spend watching television?
10. What is your favourite magazine?
11. Do you have a hobby? If so, what is it?
12. What are the two best movies you have ever seen?
13. Who are your favourite entertainers and/or movie stars?
14. Do you have access to a computer at home?
15. What kinds of things do you do on your computer at home?
16. What websites do you like? What do you like about them? What do you not like about them?
17. What kinds of things do you do on the computer on school?
18. When you were little, did you enjoy having someone read aloud to you?
19. What does the word 'reading' mean to you?
20. Do you like to write?
21. What kinds of things have you written in the last couple of months?

___a. letter to a friend/family
___b. an email
___c. a request for something
___d. a personal journal or diary
___e. a text message
___f. a poem
___g. a short story
___h. a post on website
___i. lyrics for a song
___ j. instant message

Pre-Interview Activities

Group 1 Pre-Interview Activities – Getting to know you

Please use the coloured markers and pens and pages provided and complete one or more of the activities below, and bring it with you to our interview.

1. Show a schedule for your day, week or year and use colours to indicate how time is spent.
2. Draw a diagram and use colours to show where your support or support systems come from.
3. Draw a picture or make a diagram of a place that is important to you. Use key words to indicate the parts or what happens in each of the parts.
4. Draw two pictures showing what things were like for you before and after something important happened in your life.

Group 2 Pre-Interview Activities about school in general

And also *please complete one or more of the activities below, and bring it with you to our interview.*

5. Make a timeline showing important things that happened that changed what school has been like for you over years.
6. Make two drawings: one showing a good day being in school and one showing a not so good day being at school. You can use speech bubbles or thought bubbles.
7. Make two drawings: one showing something you like about life in school and another showing something you do not like.

And also *please complete one or more of the activities below, and bring it with you to our interview.*

Group 3 Pre-Interview Activities about Reading and ELA

8. Make a list of 20 words that come to mind when you think about reading. Then divide the list into 2 groups.
9. Make a drawing showing something you really enjoyed doing in ELA class.
10. Make two drawings showing something that is difficult and something that is easy to do in ELA.

Open-Ended Interview Questions

General Get to Know You Questions:

1. If you had to go to school only three days a week, what are some of the things you'd like to do with the extra time?
2. Have you ever done anything that other people were surprised you could do?
3. What is the most difficult thing you have ever had to do or, is there something you've done that was really hard to do but you really wanted to do it?
4. Have you ever done anything really different from what most people of your age have done?
5. Some people really believe in the power of wishing. Do you think you do? .... Has it ever worked?
6. Do you ever get other people to go along with your ideas or what you want to do? What about in activities with friends or routines at home?
7. Sometimes we like to daydream about things we'd like to do, or things we'd like to try, or things we'd like to become. Can you remember anything you've ever daydreamed about?
8. What's the best thing about being your age? What's the hardest thing about being your age?

9. What would you like to be really good at doing?
10. Some people believe that willpower can take them a long way. Do you think that you've ever used willpower?

Questions about experience in school generally:

11. What are some of the best parts of the school day?
12. Over the years, how has school changed the most for you in each grade?
13. If you could plan the school day or week for the class how would you make it different?
14. What are looking forward to the most when you think about being in other grades in the years ahead.

Questions about their experience of being in ELA or doing reading:

15. I'm going to ask you some different kind of questions now, questions about how you see things in ELA.:
16. If a student from another school was going to join your class, what would you tell him or her about how to do things in ELA class?
17. What do you think the teacher could do make the class more enjoyable for students?
18. What do you think the teacher could do make some of the difficult things in the class easier for students?
19. What would you say is the best part of ELA class?
20. In the last week or so, what did you like the best in ELA class? . . . And what did you like the least?
21. What are you looking forward to trying for the first time or doing more of in ELA?

APPENDIX C:

WINTER OLYMPIC UNIT PLAN AND RESOURCES

Winter Olympic Unit Overview

Schedule	Learning activity	Literacy strategy	Multiliteracy or multimodal literacy
Day One	Read Geronimo Stilton	Build background knowledge about history of Olympics	Listening, viewing illustrations in print text
Day Two	Introduce Winter Olympics	Before Viewing – activate prior knowledge During – construct knowledge	Viewing Video via YouTube
Day Three	Explore images, text, and sound in Video	Use textual and graphic cues to construct meaning. Evaluate use of graphics, text, images to communicate a message.	Viewing Video via YouTube
Day Four and Five	Olympic Values	Representing	Create web for a value Create a digital poster for value on Glogster
Day Six	Olympic Sports	Watch and write a sentence about an Olympic sport.	Watched videos of various sports via YouTube.
Day Seven	Olympic Sports	Speaking – read sentence about Olympic sport while using a visual aid (icon).	Use visual (Olympic sport icon) to share about sport.
Day Eight	Research Olympic Athlete	Using Athlete profiles found on Olympic Canada website complete graphic organizer.	Record important details from athlete profile on website.
Day Nine	Research Olympic Athlete	Continue with athlete profile and draw a picture of athlete performing their sport.	View pictures and videos of Olympic events; Drawing sketch of Olympic event.
Day Ten	Olympics Opening Ceremony	Watched opening ceremony live	Viewing live stream of Winter Olympics opening ceremony
Day Eleven	Olympic Athlete Pledge	Write Olympic Pledge based on Circle of Courage	View Olympic Opening Ceremonies to watch athletes and officials give Olympic pledge. Shared writing using laptop.
Day Twelve	Olympic Athlete Trading Card	Transpose information from graphic organizer to trading card template.	Writing and drawing pictures (portrait of athlete and picture of event).

Schedule	Learning activity	Literacy strategy	Multiliteracy or multimodal literacy
Day Thirteen	Olympic Events schedule	Read Olympic Event schedule; read examples of newsletters	Using Olympic event schedule on website to gain information; view different online newspaper sites to read articles about the Olympics
Day Fourteen	Mini-Olympics	Creation of team names and flags; opening ceremonies reciting athlete pledge and torch relay; Olympic event in the gym and outside	Drawing Team Flag, reading Athlete pledge projected on screen, participating as a team in physical activity
Day Fifteen	Closing Ceremonies and Class Olympic Newsletter	Watched video report on Sochi Olympics; as well as video created by Ms. Reed about class mini-Olympics; class medal ceremony; wrote class Olympic newsletter	Watched two videos; writing and contributing to newsletter using publishing software
Day Sixteen	Reading Creative Writing	Read aloud – listening to what authors do to start writing; Story elements: characters, setting, problem and solution	Listening to story in story corner. Shared writing and collaboration- using laptop and chart paper;
Day Seventeen	Reading for fluency and comprehension and Structure Design	Reading Athlete quotes and mottos and discuss to construct meaning, make connections, inferences; Discussion about what structures are needed for the Olympics and what each structure would need. Preliminary designs created.	Read online athletes' mottos or quotes; Design of buildings using sketches
Day Eighteen	Reading for fluency and comprehension and	Reading Athlete quotes and mottos and discuss to construct meaning, make connections, inferences; Story elements: characters, setting, problem and solution	Read online athletes' mottos or quotes; Writing creative stories using template
Day Nineteen	Reading and Creative Writing	Reading Athlete quotes and mottos and discuss to construct meaning, make connections, inferences; Story elements and using details in stories. Analyzing three different stories and work on own story.	Use of Scholastic Story Starter during computers

Schedule	Learning activity	Literacy strategy	Multiliteracy or multimodal literacy
Day Twenty	Reading and Creative writing	Read aloud of story – listening what do authors do; i.e., powerful words and getting your attention. Used class generated checklist to create their own story, then share story with a peer.	Listening to story in story corner. Writing story using template. Read story to a peer.
Day Twenty-one	Viewing and Representing	Discuss how viewing is like reading; watch a videos and view a brochure – compare; How to create brochure about the city that would convince the Olympic committee to have the Olympics hosted here.	Watched a tourism video about the city; looked at a tourism brochure about the city; using Glogster create brochure about the city (Ms. Reed modeled creating a Glogster using her hometown).
Day Twenty-two	Representing	Creating a good poster – ideas generated as a class became a checklist for the students.	Create a poster of the city using Glogster.
Day Twenty-three	Spelling Test and Representing	Spelling Test to assess consonant and vowel sounds; Class planning on creating a video for Olympic bid	Using iPads to create video about the Olympic venue they created.
Day Twenty-four	Viewing and Representing	Analyze tourism brochure as a class. Watch videos created by other cities as part of their Olympic bid	Using iPads to create video about Olympic venue they created.
Day Twenty-five	Representing and Writing	Create a brochure about the city or write a letter to Olympic committee; Students placed their structures (Olympic venue) to create a model of an Olympic village	Checklist created by class on laptop/projector; Discussion and negotiation about where certain building should go
Day Twenty-six	Writing and Representing	Creating brochure or letter. Finished copies delivered to principal (Olympic committee) as bid for Olympics.	Writing on template provided.
Day Twenty-seven	Mini-Olympics planning	Students were successful in bid, so now must plan a mini-Olympics for a younger grade.	Collaborate in groups to plan and lead events.
Day Twenty-eight	Mini-Olympics	Students set up events and invited another class to participate.	

KWL Graphic Organizer

Name: _____

What I **KNOW**	What I **WONDER**	What I **LEARNED**	**WHERE** I found it

Visual Response Organizer

Name: _____

What I **SAW** 	What I **HEARD** 	What I **FELT** 	What it made me **Think Of** 

Winter Olympic Sports Graphic Organizer

Name:_____ Date: _____

The Winter Olympics are a sporting event where many countries compete. The Winter Olympics are held every four years. The Olympics are a way for countries to practice peace, friendship, respect, and excellence. There are 15 sports at the Winter Olympics.

I have chosen the sport of _____

Important words in the sport:

Write a sentence about the sport:

_____ _____

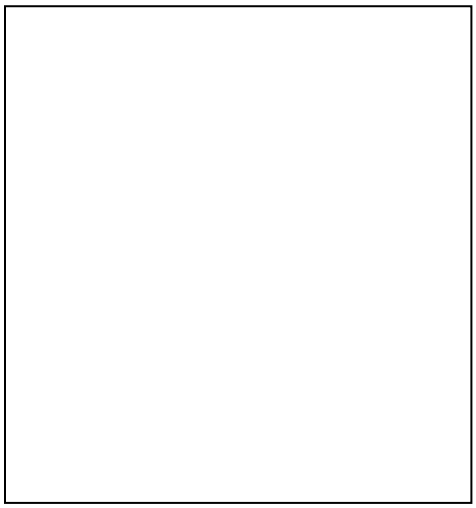
_____

Athlete Research Grid

Name:_____ Date: _____

My Athlete

Athlete's Name: _____
_____
Age: _____
Birthplace:_____
Hometown:_____
Sport:_____



Athlete Portrait

Question:	Answer:	Source:
When and how did the athlete start their sport?		
What other races has she or he been in?		
What awards have they already won?		
What is another interesting fact you learned about the athlete?		