

# Students' Reflections on Targeted Learning Outcomes

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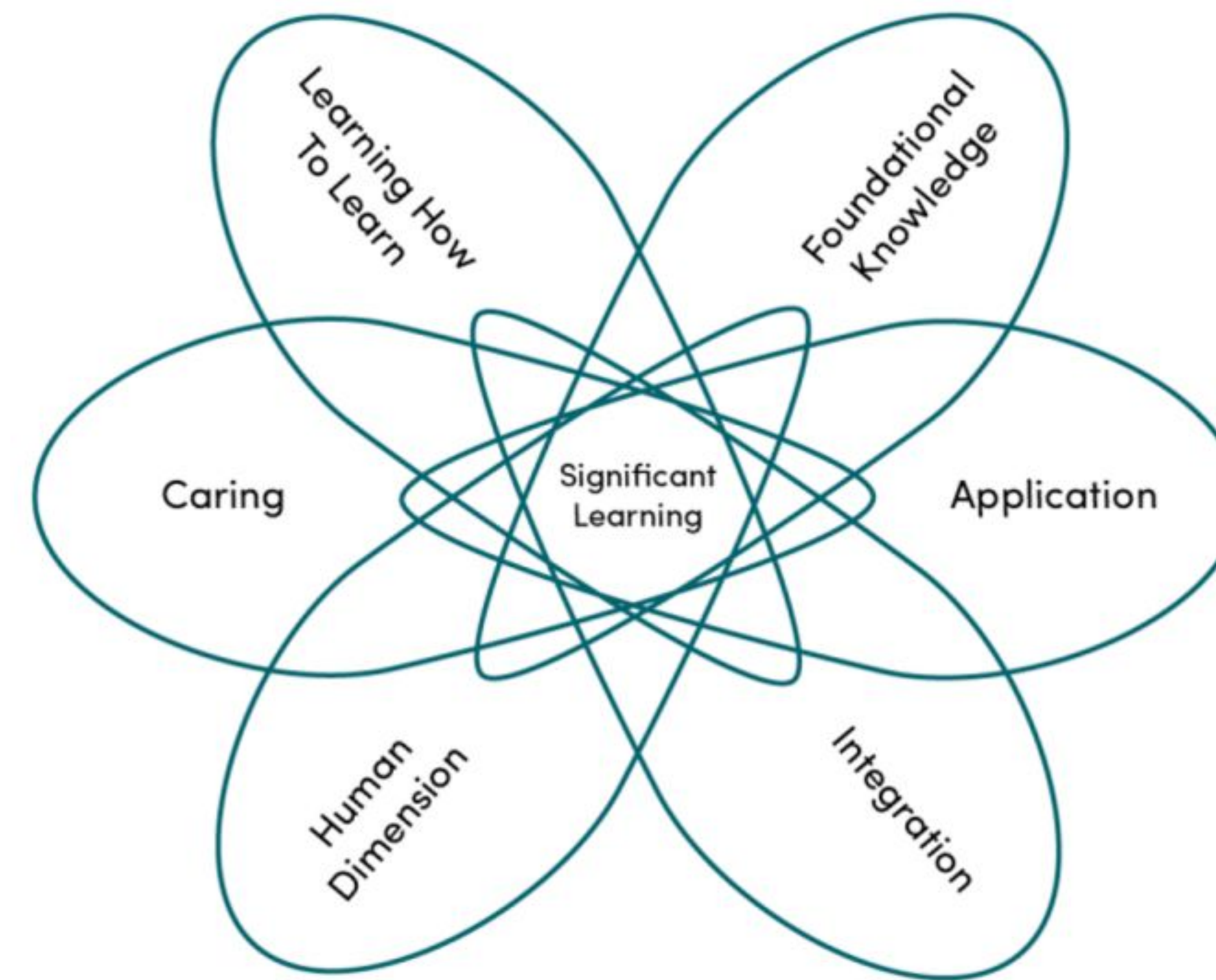


## STUDY AIMS

- The purpose of this project was to compare student reflections on learning to scores on a student engagement questionnaire developed by Handelsman et al (2005).
- Students reflected on how specific course topics and learning objectives helped them achieve a “human dimension and caring” goal. This specific objective is a component of Fink’s (2003) model for creating significant learning.
- A subset of students enrolled in an Abnormal Psychology class completed reflections, which were coded by themes related to: Self Reference, Emotions, Social Justice, and Stigma.

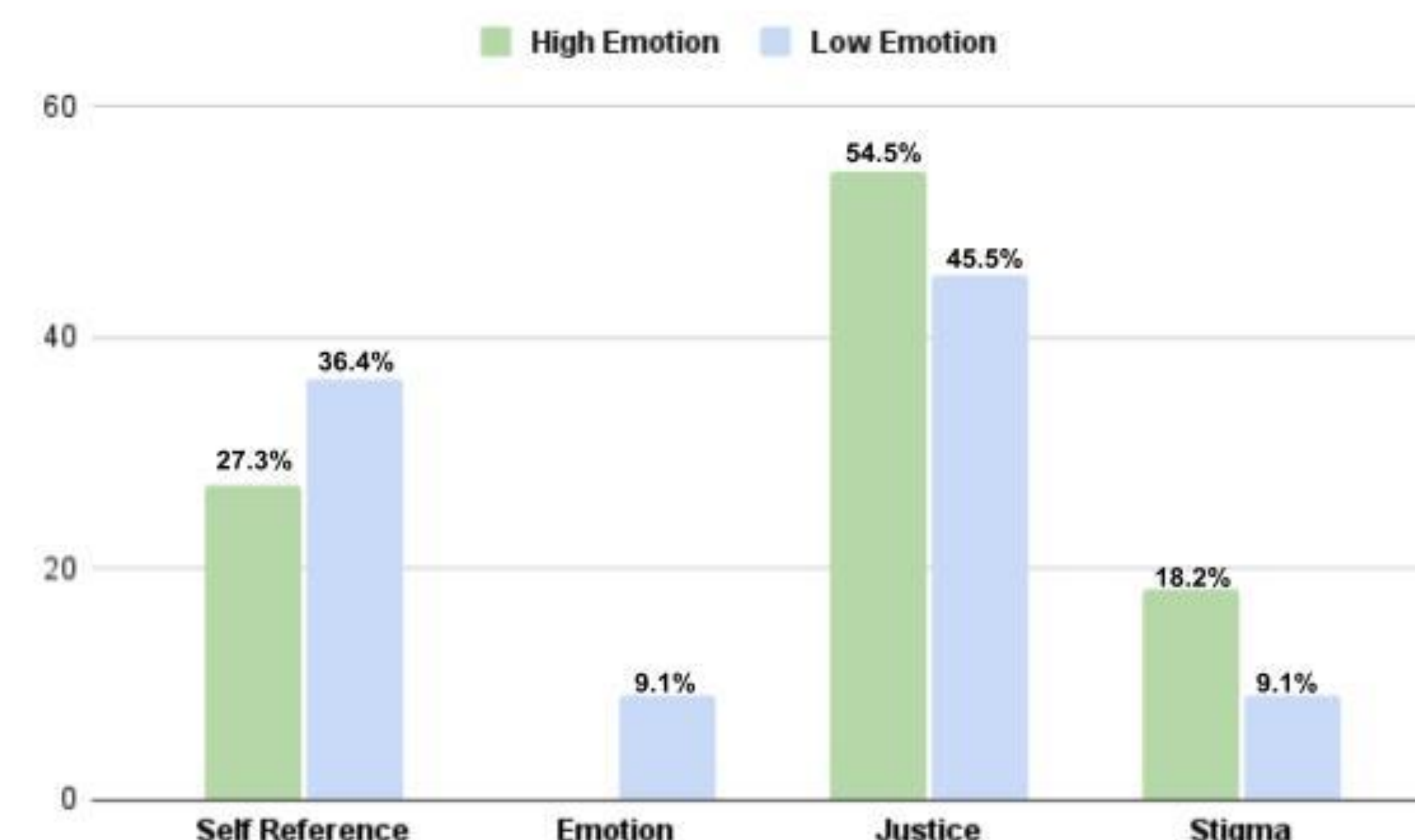
## ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT REFLECTIONS

- **Definitions of Dominant Themes**
  - Self Referencing: Student mentions their own mental wellness or that of a loved one.
  - Emotions: Student had an emotional reaction to the prompt, including empathy, anger, and sadness more specifically.
  - Justice: Includes subcategories of social justice, discrimination, accessibility, quality care, and personal realization.
  - Stigma: Refers to labeling and media portrayal of mental illness.
- **Learning Engagement**
  - The Student Engagement Questionnaire (Handelsman et al., 2005) measures engagement through practice, emotions, participation, and performance.



## RESULTS

- Data collected from student reflection responses showed a higher percentage of the “Justice” theme as opposed to other categories.
- In particular, the students’ *Engagement through Emotions* subscale was of interest because it measures how material and class objectives applies to their life. Frequency of dominant themes were compared between two groups based on their scores on this subscale.



## CONCLUSIONS AND NOTES

- The data set (N= 33) represents a pilot data set. Comparing the subset of students provided a starting point for future analyses.
- It was expected that students who belonged to the “high emotions” group would have a greater number of responses with the dominant theme of emotions. Instead, the high emotions group did not have a single reflection with the dominant theme of emotions.
- Furthermore, the definitions of “emotion” categories differs between the reflections and engagement.
- Emotions in the coding of the reflections is defined as an emotional reaction, i.e., anger, sadness. Meanwhile, the questionnaire measures emotional engagement, not responses. For example, whether or not the student thinks about class material outside of class, or how it applies in to their life.
- Regardless of the emotion group, the most common dominant theme related to social justice. This is likely due to the fact that this theme had major relevance in the course.
- Future work can continue to compare student perceptions of learning to their level of engagement.

### SELECT REFERENCES:

- Fink, L. D. (2003). Creating significant learning experiences: An Integrated approach to designing college courses. John Wiley & Sons.
- Handelsman et al (2005). A measure of college student course engagement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 98(3), 184-191.