Rewriting the Achievement Gap Through Engagement and Discourse Analysis

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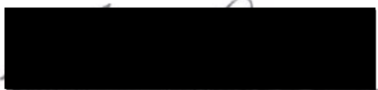

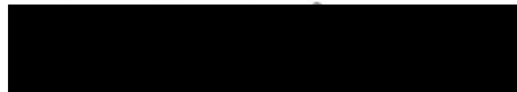

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This is for my mum, who has been there for every moment of my life,
even if it was just to watch me sit on the bench in soccer.

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Introducing a Rewriting of the Achievement Gap

I grew up in a single-parent household, where my mum had to work two to three jobs just so the four of us – her, me, and my two sisters – could survive. We couldn't afford extra frills; we barely had enough money for food. Yet, this economic poverty did not transfer to familial or relational poverty. My mum, somehow, still made it to our school concerts and our soccer games. And, even if we weren't able to sit down and eat as a family each night for dinner, my mum was there as we went to bed, to remind us of how much she loved us.

I remember being rather ashamed that I received a free lunch in school. It felt like a giant "L," the high-school equivalent of a scarlet letter ("loser"), was stamped across my forehead. This fear is rather trivial now, of course, but it was important in secondary school when class-mates and peers can be judgmental and cruel with only the slightest provocation. To add to this fear of being judged, I was viewed as a gigantic nerd. Top ten GPA? Check. National Honor Society? Check. Final research paper on the varying races and species in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*? Check, check. I was an oddity: a marginalized student, based on my socioeconomic status and family circumstances, with top-notch grades and a determination to excel. Looking back, I wonder how this happened. My peers came from middle-class homes with two parents, and, while I know their lives were not without difficulty, I had a bit more catching up to do and a few other obstacles to navigate.

Yet, my story is not important here. What matters are the millions of other students whose stories run parallel to mine. Compared to most of these students – these people – I had it easy. Not only am I a Caucasian girl, but I had a two things going for me: a supportive family and a good school. These cross-sections of my life – low socioeconomic status, gender, ethnici-ty, family background – and their intersectionality point to the limitations of categorical thinking,

as well as the complicated nature of our identities and our diversities. This discussion of diversity and how our backgrounds have the ability to serve as resources will be a running thread throughout this thesis. For now, however, I'd like to consider the question of what happens when the circumstances are too much for our students? When there *isn't* an upside? One of the reasons I became an educator is because I want to help *all* students learn, regardless of demographics and status in the margins of society. I see it as my purpose to be an active advocate for students and for learning. It's a heady task, to be certain, but failure is not an option. Nor should it be an option for our students.

When it comes down to it, this thesis is meant to impact students' learning and students' lives. I began this project researching the achievement gap – a constant refrain in the world of education and the media – because I wanted to know the statistics and the context of the achievement gap. What struck me was the lack of humanity in these statistics and the apparent writing off of entire groups of students. Out of this research evolved the desire to do something, to insert my own voice into the refrain, with the hope of creating a new medley.

So, here are the instruments of that medley: in order to better enable all students' learning and, in turn, battle the achievement gap in our own classrooms, I argue that a pedagogy of engagement infused with the tools of discourse analysis should be used. Within this argument, there are quite a few loaded terms: learning, the achievement gap, discourse, discourse analysis, and pedagogy of engagement. Each of these terms will be discussed here (in the introduction) and will be explored in more depth throughout the remainder of this study. What I'd like readers to keep in mind is the fundamental argument: pedagogy of engagement + discourse analysis = learning for all students.

Put simply, the achievement gap is based on statistical data primarily revolving around standardized tests in education. The "gap," so to speak, is the differential found between groups of students, particularly between the white, middle-class students and students of diverse ethnicities and/or low socioeconomic status. While such a differential exists between multiple groups of students, educators need to re-frame the deficit-model of education that the concept of the achievement gap furthers. The question of the achievement gap should be, instead, one of student *engagement*, as engaged students are engaged learners. While this premise of engaged learners and the benefits of such a pedagogy will be discussed in more depth, particularly in chapter one, this shift to a focus on engagement serves to place students and authentic learning back at the center of education. In doing so, the focus of education and our students' learning is creating relevant and meaningful connections to our world and our lives, in order to then critically examine and think about the learning material and issues/topics in our world.

By utilizing an active pedagogy paired with the tools of discourse analysis, educators can manifest learner engagement. Using such a pedagogy transforms students' diversities – and the world's – from detriment to strength. Moreover, learning is authentic and directly related to students' own lives, breaking down the barrier between school and the outside world.

Discourse analysis highlights the diversity of Discourses that contribute to society and its functions. By breaking down and analyzing these Discourses, through creative pedagogy, a process of critical engagement is enacted, which connects the learner to the learning material and, ultimately, to the world. Readers will notice the capitalization of "Discourses"; there is a distinction between big "D" Discourse and little "d" discourse, which will be discussed more thoroughly below. Thus, active pedagogy and discourse analysis go hand-in-hand in working to trans-

form students' learning experiences and the negative connotations created by the rhetoric of the achievement gap.

Big "D" and Little "d" - Discourse and discourse

In its simplest form, "discourse" is "stretches of language which 'hang together' so as to make sense to a community of people, such as a contribution to a conversation or a story" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 112). Gee's definition of discourse is rooted in the sociocultural perspective of the world, drawing on society's impact on language, as seen in the reference to "people" and "community." Other researchers rely on this perspective to explore and understand discourse, as well. Norman Fairclough argues that "'discourse' is used in a general sense for language (as well as, for instance, visual images) as an element of social life which is dialectically related to other elements" (215-6). According to Fairclough's definition, discourse is language (in a broad sense) that is tied to the functionings of the world. To give a more tangible definition, Sara Mills defines discourse as

> not a disembodied collection of statements, but groupings of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence. Institutions and social context therefore play an important determining role in the development, maintenance and circulation of discourses. (10)

All three researchers emphasize the social nature of discourse and discourses in their definitions. Implied within their work is the dual nature of discourse: discourse creates and influences meaning and beliefs, and meaning and beliefs are shaped by discourse. That is, the notion of discourse, within this perspective, demonstrates the dynamic relationship between lan-

guage/communication and society – their interconnectedness and how they influence and shape one another. Society shapes discourse and discourse shapes society, within this viewpoint.

As an influential theorist, Michel Foucault argued that knowledge is created *through* discourse, thus considerably transforming how we view the process of constructing and creating knowledge, as well as the significance of studying and analyzing discourse. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language* Foucault comments that "this will to truth, like the other systems of exclusion, relies on institutional support . . . it is probably even more profoundly accompanied by the manner in which knowledge is employed in a society, the way in which it is exploited, divided and, in some ways, attributed" (219). Here, the "will to truth" or, as he later refers to it, the "will to knowledge," is discourse. Writing in *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault argues that in discourse "power and knowledge are joined together": "discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (100-1). Within these points, Foucault suggests the use of discourse – and, inherently, knowledge – is a tool, as it is "employed." Worrying, too, are how discourse is "exploited, divided," in order "transmit," "reinforce," and even "undermine" power and knowledge. Underlying Foucault's theory of discourse is its polyvalent quality, "as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies" (100). Foucault rejects the binary and even linear notion of power, as a struggle between the dominant discourse and the repressed discourse (ibid). Rather, discourse, is inherently plural, as there are multiple types and forms of discourse. For example, Foucault discusses religious discourse and medical discourse in depth, but even within these two discourses there are offshoots and variants. Religious discourse could be broken down into specific religions, like Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, and then there are even separate forms of discourse within these religions, for example in considering smaller de-

nominations or sects. To consider the essentially infinite number of discourses abounding within society, you can better understand Foucault's argument regarding the polyvalent nature of discourse.

While Foucault serves as an anchor to our understanding of discourse in today's society, certainly in the research of Gee, Fairclough, and Mills, it's the work of Gee that is most used to support this thesis. To summarize, Foucault argued that discourses shape society, implying a shaping of ideas and of power, as well. Today, researchers, like those mentioned previously, have furthered Foucault's work by arguing that, just as much as discourse shapes society, society also shapes discourse. This duality is apparent in Gee's conception of Discourse (big "D") and discourse (little "d"), respectively. The former, Discourse, is routinely described by Gee as an "identity kit" or "dance." More fully,

> a Discourse is a socially accepted association among ways of using language and other symbolic expressions, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting, as well as using various tools, technologies, or props that can be used to identify oneself of a member of a socially meaningful group or "social network," to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful "role," or to signal that one is filling a social niche in a distinctively recognizable fashion. (Gee *Social Linguistics* 158)

Again, Gee's Discourse is related to how ideas and beliefs, for Foucault power and knowledge, are influenced and shaped by language, by discourse. Using a Discourse is a "dance" that signifies positioning within that Discourse and, thus, its values, its ideologies. For Gee, this Discourse dance is composed not only of language but of things like how a person dresses, tone while talking, word choice, and gestures. And to review, discourse (little "d") are the "stretches of language" that make sense within a community of people. To complicate matters, however,

the ability to "make sense" using discourse also means being able to successfully negotiate Discourse – the two are very much intertwined.

Important to this discussion of Discourse and discourse, as each theorist here notes, is its multiplicity, its diversity. In terms of education and learning, which is the focus of my argument, "diversity," within this framework, is then the presence of a variety of Discourses and discourses. Relying on such a definition of diversity allows for a broader and more open view of the world and society, more ably recognizing the diversity between people and *within* people, for each of us are situated within and use a number of Discourses and discourses. Altogether, this framing enables a more viable connection between diversity and pedagogy, with Discourses/discourses acting as the link between the two terms.

For Gee, the first Discourse we acquire and use is our primary Discourse, also known as our home Discourse (Gee *Social Linguistics* 154). Any Discourse we acquire or learn after the primary Discourse is known as a secondary Discourse. Although seemingly trivial terms, Gee's examination of primary and secondary Discourses is incredibly significant, especially in considering how primary and secondary Discourses interact. As Gee notes, "these interactions crucially affect what happens to people when they are attempting to acquire new Discourses," with potential effects including "resistance, opposition, domination, on the one hand, or of alliance and complicity, on the other, among Discourses" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 155). Essentially, our primary Discourse sets the stage for how well we acquire other Discourses. And in my research here, the key Discourse is that of the school and of education.

The Achievement Gap

Current rhetoric around education – big "D" Discourse – is plagued with words like "low-performing," "disparity," and, most notably, "gap." Of course, the core issue fueling this

rhetoric is research regarding the achievement gap. While any educator and anyone paying attention to education in America will note the achievement gap as a fierce reality, how we approach the achievement gap must be re-framed and re-worked. For, in the present model of education, the current Discourse, the achievement gap is its own Discourse to reckon with, shaping not only how we teach or what we teach but also how we *think* about education. Rather than characterize learners positively, learners, within the current model for the achievement gap, are noted for what they are not or what they lack or what they can't do. This negativity is pervasive, and it furthers a deficit-model of education that includes rampant standardized testing, rote memorization, and, moreover, Paulo Freire's now-familiar banking-concept of education. In essence, the rhetoric of the achievement gap furthers the achievement gap itself by advocating policies and curriculum that offer only superficial change.

To further this argument, I'd like to critically examine the achievement gap itself. According to The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the achievement gap is when "one group of students outperforms another group and the average scores for the two groups is statistically significant." The United States Department of Education defines the achievement gap as "the difference in academic performance between ethnic groups." The language in both definitions asserts collectivization of students from individuals into "groups," in which numbers represent actual people. What's more, learning and education themselves are minimized to mere notions of "performance." As mentioned previously, standardized tests are the performance indicator – the measure for identifying gaps between groups of students. Before moving into statistics regarding the achievement gap, it's important to note that the U. S. Department of Education demarcates the gap as solely between "ethnic groups." The NAEP, too, primarily reports on gaps between groups of varying ethnicities, such as those of Hispanic and

Black students. Recently, however, there has been a shift in focus to other gaps, such as those in socioeconomic status (SES); gender; access to technology; and even nutrition.

To focus in on statistics on the achievement gap, the Nation's Report Card, which measured students' writing ability in 2011 for grades 8 and 12, showed that students who identified as Asian, White, or two or more ethnicities scored, on average, at least twenty-six points higher than Black students (for both grades) (U.S. Department of Education. *The Nation's Report Card*). Other gaps exist in the data provided, for example between those students eligible for free or reduced lunches (thirty point scoring difference); between male and female students, with females scoring, on average, fourteen points higher than males in grade 12 and twenty points higher in grade 8; and there was a slight gap regarding location, with students from a city environment scoring at least three points less than those from rural and town schools and more than ten points less than those students from suburban schools (ibid). The largest gaps, according to the Nation's Report Card, however, revolve around student disability status and English language learners (ELL): those students who identified as having a disability (in both grades 8 and 12) scored, on average, forty points below those students who did not; ELL students in grade 8 scored forty-four points, on average, below their non-ELL peers, while in grade 12 this gap was fifty-six points (ibid).

Other significant studies regarding the achievement gap have come out of the NAEP. Hemphill and Vanneman researched the gap between Hispanic and White students in 2011, noting that "while Hispanic students' average scores have increased across the assessment years, White students had higher scores, on average, on all assessments." Also notable within this research is that the states with the largest gaps between Hispanic and White student populations often also had large gaps between these groups; this includes Pennsylvania, Minnesota,

Utah, and Connecticut (ibid). A similar study through the NAEP by Vanneman, Hamilton, and Anderson found that for grade 8 in reading, there were gaps in 41 of the 42 states (with data); the state with the largest gap for grade 4 and grade 8 (in reading) was Wisconsin.

Moreover, as recent as 2011 two studies found growing gaps between students coming from high- and low-income families in both standardized testing and in college entry and completion. According to Sean Reardon of Stanford University, the gap in standardized testing between high- and low-income students has increased by roughly 40% since the 1960s; Reardon notes that this gap is nearly twice as large as the current gap between Black and White students. Researchers also measured the achievement gap in terms of things like graduation rates and college entry and completion. This is the case in a study out of the University of Michigan, which found that there's an increasing gap between high- and low-income students in entering and completing college: while college completion has increased by 4% for those students classified as low-income (comparing those born in the 1960s to those born in the 1980s), it has increased by 18% for those students from high-income homes (Bailey). The rate of college entry between these two groups is similar: an increase of 10% for low-income students and 22% for high-income students between the two periods (Bailey).

All of these studies, these statistics, which I'd remind readers correspond to actual people, are suggestive of other factors that influenced the noted gaps, rather than pigeonholing achievement solely as an issue in education. Vanneman, Hamilton, and Anderson specifically point to correlations between student achievement and home factors, such as "the presence of two parents in the home, the hours children spend watching television, the hours parents spend reading to them, and the frequency of absence from school" (1). Reardon, too, lays out changing

economics and the development of different parenting styles throughout these generations as a factor potentially impacting the achievement gap.

Overall, this broadening of our understanding of the achievement gap, looking to other factors besides education, is a significant trend of the 21st Century. To insert my own argument into this trend, I would like to refer back to the question proffered earlier: what happens when a student's primary Discourse does not align with the school Discourse? For me, the answer obviously has some bearing on the achievement gap, as a student's primary Discourse conflicts with the school Discourse. Gee explains that

> the conflicts between the home-based Discourse of some minority children in the United States and the Discourses of the school are deep and apparent. Indeed, the values of many school-based Discourses treat some minority children as "other" and their social practices as "deviant" and "non-standard." (Gee *Social Linguistics* 4)

An important facet of this conflict is the curriculum itself, which is beleaguered with standardized testing. And, as has already been pointed out, tests are how the achievement gap is measured. To now tie these ideas together, the conflict between Discourses is what fuels the achievement gap. More importantly, the conflict perpetuates a negative view of diversity (read: Discourses), one in which variance from school Discourse equates to a deficit. This mode of thought is supported both in terms of school Discourse and in the statistics and data regarding the achievement gap.

While it seems more of these gaps surface every day, the primary point is that each categorical gap has a bearing on students' learning. To break this down a bit further, currently in the United States, "learning" means performing well on standardized tests, as this is how students

across the nation are assessed. Moreover, learning and "achievement" have become somewhat synonymous, so that achievement (noun) and to achieve (verb) are also tied to testing. The problematic nature of relying on such a measurement as standardized testing will be discussed further in chapter one, but for now it's important to underscore the relationships driven by this model of education, of this Discourse, especially in its shaping of what it means to learn and to achieve. Although the disparity of these gaps is largely documented through standardized tests, the significance remains. Where educators can insert influence is in *how* students learn and *what* students learn. Our understanding of these two verbs – to learn, to achieve – is what's driving the broadening of notions of the achievement gap and what draw people to research factors such as nutrition, technology, gender, and college enrollment, altogether pushing away from traditional notions of the achievement gap. What I'd like to stress is my placement of learning and achieving as transitive verbs, altogether emphasizing the active and evolving nature of how we understand each concept.

Arguing for a Pedagogy of Engagement

As an educator, I, too, feel and face the achievement gap as a challenge in the classroom. And while I would argue that the achievement gap is rooted in more than education and educational policy, for example in social issues like housing, nutrition, a living wage, and access to technology, educators have to be able to work against the Discourse of the gap in our own classrooms. That is, the current focus of the achievement gap is seen at the macro-level in education, with regard to shaping policies and a national curriculum, but we need to move to a micro-level focus on pedagogy. We need to zoom into our classrooms, knowing that the achievement gap exists but also knowing that there is the need for exigency. We cannot wait for policies

to enhance our classrooms and better enable learners. We need to do something now. And this should start within the classroom. And with those people who know learners best: educators.

Put simply: a pedagogy of engagement is comprised of three conditions: flow, dialogic processes, and reflection. While this pedagogy will be discussed in more depth in chapter one, discussing each of the three conditions, I argue that a pedagogy of engagement is the most beneficial for learning and for pushing against the current Discourses of school.

To first take the word "engagement," such a pedagogy reflects how both the classroom and the learning environments are structured, in that there are high levels of interaction – liveliness, if you will – and the pedagogy is dynamically social at its core. Such a pedagogy centers on creative and thoughtful strategies that engage students in learning through creativity and imagination. While there are those who dismiss this high-energy behavior as child's play, there is much research to the contrary. In fact, as a prominent educational theorist, Vygotsky encouraged play, as it "contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is itself a major source of development" (102). Vygotsky argues that play allows for the development of abstract thought, more ably allowing learners to enter into the zone of proximal development – the space in which learning and growth occur most effectively (86, 102).

The first condition in integrating a pedagogy of engagement, flow, is rooted in the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. Csikszentmihalyi argues that flow is "'the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter'" (qtd. in Smith and Wilhelm 28). In order to reach such a state, Csikszentmihalyi argues that nine principles must be enacted (all of which are outlined in Appendix A), three of which the teacher has the ability to facilitate and control: clear goals, immediate feedback, and a balance of skills and ability (8). The remaining conditions of flow are what the learner experiences: "concentration is deep; problems are forgot-

ten; control is possible; self-consciousness disappears; sense of time is altered; experience becomes autotelic" (Csikszentmihalyi 8). Yes, flow is essentially an argument for play and for *engagement*. Altogether, this type of pedagogy makes learning tangible. It makes learning relevant. And it makes learning more accessible for diverse student populations.

The second and third conditions of a pedagogy of engagement are dialogism and reflection, and, as already stated, each of these conditions (including flow) will be discussed in more detail in chapter one. Briefly, however, within this thesis, dialogism is centered around the work of Vygotsky, who argues that learning occurs in social situations. For Vygotsky, dialogism also involves the process of making internal thoughts external, in order to concretize our thoughts and experiences. Reflection, too, involves making learning meaningful and, thus, increasing the longevity of the material, as students connect learning to their own lives. Using reflection increases the relevancy of curriculum to students' lives, and it also helps to extend the learning material outside of the classroom and school walls.

In terms of my working to re-frame the Discourse of education and the achievement gap, I've established that *how* to achieve this re-framing is through a pedagogy of engagement. To further the argument, I'd now like to address the question of *what*: what issues should be explored within the classroom? The "what" is discourse analysis, a tool that allows for the "study of language at use in the world, not just to say things, but to do things" (Gee *How To* ix). Discourse analysis is an entry point for studying and exploring the Discourses of the world – both at the macro- and micro-level – and, thus, for exploring diversities. As Gee points out, "it is the job of the teacher to allow students to grow beyond both the cultural models of their home cultures and those of mainstream and school culture" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 110). The specific tools of Discourse analysis offer specific strategies for investigating the "dances" and "identity kits" of

various Discourses, and, as Foucault asserts, analyzing discourse inherently means studying the construction and perpetuation of knowledge and truth in society.

The ultimate goal in fusing a pedagogy of engagement with Discourse analysis is to better enable students to learn and to achieve. By offering up a pedagogy that allows students to play with and interact with Discourses, educators open up a critical examination *and* conversation with the world. Overall, this is my vision of a pedagogy of the 21st-Century, where diversity means strength and learning offers infinite potential.

Looking Ahead

To begin the exploration of this argument and its research, chapter one, "To Achieve or Not to Achieve?," is a discussion of the achievement gap, going into specific details about its impact and how a pedagogy of engagement is an antidote to the skill-and-drill pedagogy manifested out of policies like NCLB. My primary argument within chapter one relies on Vygotsky and Csikszentmihalyi, who both assert that learning occurs in social situations, such as that of a pedagogy of engagement. Chapter two, "Discourse and discourse," connects facets of the achievement gap, such as standardized testing, to discourses, using Gee as a primary theorist. Within this chapter I extend the argument started here in the introduction regarding the achievement gap, as it represents a gap between students' Discourses and the Discourses of education. From here, in chapter three, "Implementing a Pedagogy of Engagement Infused with Discourse Analysis," I connect pedagogy of engagement with the tools of discourse analysis; this is where the achievement gap, discourses, and a pedagogy of engagement will be tied together. Again, my claim is that, in order to focus on closing the achievement gap at the classroom and school level (the micro-level), educators need to traverse the gap between the d/Discourses of the institution and the students' d/Discourses. To do so requires imbuing classrooms with a

pedagogy of engagement that utilizes the tools of discourse analysis. On the whole, chapter three is where I lay out a solution to the achievement gap. It is followed by a unit plan, "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries in *To Kill a Mocking-bird*," which offers a glimpse into specific and practical strategies and tools for educators to use in their own classroom, further integrating these two threads of a pedagogy of engagement and discourse analysis. Lastly, I conclude by reflecting on this pedagogy, its usefulness, and how I envision its future.

Chapter One: To Achieve or Not to Achieve?

A tremendous focus in the world of education at the moment is the righting of the achievement gap; this focus undergirds much of educational policy, especially at the national level. One such move to decrease the achievement gap was the creation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This policy itself, established in 2001 by former President George W. Bush, was garnered out of concern over the achievement gap and pushed for standards-based education. The primary goal of this act was to equalize education and educational opportunities for all students, regardless of ethnicity, SES, demographics, and ability level. Specifically, NCLB called "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind" (United States. 107th Congress). What this policy has led to is heavy amounts of standardized testing, neverending teacher scrutiny, competition, and private-interest groups investing in education. All of these effects underline the government's thrust of school accountability and meeting AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) (United States. 107th Congress). NCLB also increased teacher and school accountability for students' learning and progress, which is where meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) comes in: schools must prove that they're meeting AYP (based on standardized test scores) in order to receive federal funding. Yet, despite the accountability requirements, such as testing and AYP, many of our students are still "left behind," especially in regard to both standardized testing and graduation rates. NCLB documents these gaps between groups of students, emphasizing issues in achievement, "but it has done nothing meaningful to change the conditions that cause these gaps" (Ravitch "National Opportunity to Learn Summit"). For this reason, Ravitch calls NCLB a "disaster," noting that "we know the gaps are there; actually, we knew about the gaps *long before* NCLB was passed. Yet Congress is still patting itself on the back for identifying a problem and doing nothing meaningful to solve it"

(ibid; emphasis own). Obviously these are heavy-hitting and harsh words, as Ravitch, along with other researchers, imply that NCLB was a massive failure. What NCLB did achieve, however, and what is part of its legacy to this day is the entrenching of "carrot-and-stick" policies in education; increasing numbers of non-teachers or those with no educational background dictating policy and curricula ("they aren't teachers but they think they know how to fix schools"); and a policy-over-people approach to learning (ibid). As an educator, what's worrying is that NCLB has twisted how our nation views education, school, and learning, especially considering that NCLB has laid the foundation for current and future educational legislation.

In 2010, President Obama signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which is, in effect, NCLB's twin (United States. *A Blueprint for Reform*). Again, the focus is on "outcomes" through the use of standardized testing, not to mention "incentives" for "innovation" in education through non-profits. Partnering with the ESEA is the Race to the Top initiative, which is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Essentially, Race to the Top is a

> competitive grant program [providing $4.35 billion to schools] designed to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; achieving significant improvement in student outcomes, including making substantial gains in student achievement, closing achievement gaps, improving high school graduation rates, and ensuring student preparation for success in college and careers; and implementing ambitious plans in four core education reform areas,"

including "adopting standards and assessment," "building data systems," a sustainable educator force, and "turning around our lowest-achieving schools" (United States. *Race to the*

Top). Schools are awarded points, based on their ability to fulfill the State's criteria; more points equals more money, providing a tangible reward for adhering to the government's initiatives and curricula. Adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which are national education standards meant to "serve as the foundation for an education system that demands excellent teaching, high-quality professional development, rigorous curricula, and dynamic assessments," is an example requirement in receiving Race to the Top funds (U. S. Department of Education). That is, individual states have to adopt the CCSS in order to receive federal funding; at the present time, 45 states have adopted the standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative).

Within these policies and the curricula they generate – trickle-down education, so to speak – academic achievement is regarded as a "technical issue," in that it's something to be easily fixed, as a "scientific undertaking" (Bartolome 231). Writing about her graduate students' tendency to seek "methods as solutions," Lilia Bartolome comments that the problem with this mechanistic perspective is that it ignores the "sociocultural realities" of each school and each classroom (232). Even though Bartolome is focusing on her own students, this view is not unique to them, as seen in our educational policies that seek to have a "one-size-fits-all" methodology (ibid). And this tendency is especially the case, as Bartolome asserts, for "students who do not respond to so-called 'regular' or 'normal' instruction" (231). These mechanistic attempts to improve America's education and, intrinsically, student learning, overlook the people and human nature of education. The policies merely play lip-service to improving education: politicians look like they're doing something, but their words and policies are empty promises that neglect the complexity of education and learning. Ultimately, NCLB legislation and President Obama's Race to the Top initiative place schools and educators at the root of the achievement gap. More worrying is the underlying philosophy of school performance over students' well-being. Based

on these issues, it's no wonder that critics take issue with these narrow visions of education and of the achievement gap and seek to re-frame how we view it.

Trickle-Down Education

What's more, these governmental policies have heavily influenced pedagogy and curriculum – *how* educators teach and *what* we teach, as policy comes to bear at the state and local levels. An increase in standardized testing has been one effect, as has already been mentioned. While these initiatives and their backers are claiming to benefit learning, they have had the opposite effect. Meier et al go further, arguing that "narrowly focusing in on test score gaps as the sole indicator of educational inequality is just one more way that standardized tests impose high-stakes consequences on the victims of educational failure rather than those responsible for it" (61). Numerous researchers have outlined and labeled the consequences of over-testing: to Kelly Gallagher it leads to the "overteaching" of books and eventual readicide; to Joseph Renzulli it leads to mechanized (or rote) learning; and to William Teale it leads to a "curriculum gap." And while Paulo Freire and Donaldo Macedo predate NCLB, each scholar's research regarding the banking-concept of education and "stupidification," respectively, is pertinent to the effects of an educational policy out of touch with the reality of learning and learners.

While the increased standardized testing may not seem terribly burdensome, it is. Consider what's being tested and by whom, for example. With standardized testing, school becomes simply a site for skill-acquisition, tick-off-the-box type of learning, with the teacher simply as a technician (Macedo 153; Parkinson 145). This is not *education* or *learning*, as Brown notes: it's simply school, a place where students come to be told what to think and what to know (6). Since the introduction of NCLB, education in America functions within a high-performance model. As stated previously, this model equates to standardized testing and a rigid curriculum. Further-

more, this high-performance structure is dominated by outcomes and measurable outputs that characterize American education by the philosophy of "not what the school can do for its students, but what the students can do for their school" (Stephen Ball qtd. in Fielding 399). Rather than let the school be governed by affect and strong relationships that foster growth, once again schools alienate students, as relationships are used for social capital, much like test scores (Fielding 400).

The curriculum dictates learning material, progression in school, and, oftentimes, how these things are taught. And while there have been many critics of this oppressive curriculum, Paulo Freire, in particular, has gained renown for his articulations on the "pedagogy of the oppressed" (and book of the same name). Underlying Freire's criticism of this pedagogy of the oppressed is the banking-concept of education: teachers fill students with information, and students store these deposits of knowledge (73). This mechanization of learning manifests ignorance by taking the thought and thinking—the process of inquiry—out of education, in effect devaluing learning and the skills needed to learn (Freire 72). Additionally, this type of pedagogy and curriculum strips learners of independent thought (Macedo 63, 86). By discouraging independent thought, students do not have the capability to question such a pedagogy or the knowledge bestowed upon them. Indeed, the increase of standardized testing supports this model, as learning has no shades of grey or complexity; it's a black-and-white approach to education with its emphasis on rote memorization (Bartlett 2). This "fragmentation," as Macedo calls it, "deadens the senses and discourages forging links"; it's simply "education for domestication" and leads to "stupidification" (17). Rather than being able to "link the reading of the word with the world" and creatively explore ideas and knowledge, students will only be able to regurgitate facts and the so-called knowledge they were filled with by the dominant ideology (Macedo 15; Bartlett

2). For Macedo, fragmentation also occurs when knowledge is taken away from the context, creating a disconnect that neglects the fuller picture (17). An inevitable consequence of such education is not only ineffective learning but also a negative view of learning that transcends the school walls well into adulthood.

Re-framing the Achievement Gap

Just three years after NCLB, Meier et al in *Many Children Left Behind: How the No Child Left Behind Act is Damaging Our Children and Our Schools* explained how educational reform and legislation should be based on equity, which is not the focus of NCLB, or children will otherwise continue to be left behind. For example, it's noted that the spending ratio on high-income and low-income students is approximately 3-4:1 (per student) (Meier 6). When considering this statistic, although rather dated in 2004, it's important to refer back to the growing gaps between groups in different SES, based on research by Reardon and Bailey, for example. These studies tie together educational funding, SES, and achievement, in general noting that the higher the SES, the higher the funding, the higher the achievement. It's no wonder, then, that there is a consistent push among educational reformers for equity.

Other advocates of this re-framing include Gloria Ladson-Billings and, more recently, Diane Ravitch. Ladson-Billings argues that, rather than an "achievement gap," there's an "education debt," rooted in a sociocultural perspective of learning. Ravitch, too, argues for a broader understanding of the achievement gap and a focus on equity. She also takes issue with the classification of "failing" in the NCLB legislation for those schools who do not meet AYP: "most failing schools continue to struggle, even after everyone has been fired and replaced" (Ravitch "Time to Kill 'No Child Left Behind'"6). The law's ineffectiveness is also shown in that "most states have endorsed low standards and inflated their scores to meet the laws nonsensical re-

quirements" (ibid). Overall, these researchers highlight the complexity of the achievement gap and, in particular, provide a contrast to educational policy, which has oversimplified the achievement gap, offering misguided solutions. Due to the fact that the achievement gap is founded on students – actual people – and their learning, these policies have significantly impacted people's livelihoods.

A Pedagogy of Engagement

What we've seen here is an exploration of how the Discourses of education – the macro-level systems, such as policies and standards – affect and "trickle down" to the micro-level, in shaping the functioning of our own schools and classrooms. Despite these forces, I do want to offer hope for educators and those passionate about student learning: we can push against these Discourses, in advocating a system and policies that place our students first. We should not allow our students or our schools to be limited by narrowmindedness, rather we will offer a pedagogy that intrigues and pushes students to exceed. That is, we can counter the current educational Discourses from the micro-level upwards, much like a grassroots movement, by implementing a pedagogy that makes our students and their learning the top priority. Their needs should be first and foremost, and we should not allow that focus to be obscured. What I advocate, then, is a pedagogy that places the power in students' hands (rather than legislators), letting their needs dictate how a classroom functions. Notice that I do not suggest ignoring standards or policies, as teachers must also be accountable for these; however, these facets of education should not be the focus for how and what to learn – our students should be. By placing students first, the rest comes into place, for, as educators engage students in learning, students excel and *exceed* standards. And this is why I argue for a pedagogy of engagement.

A pedagogy of engagement, rather than being influenced by the broadening of the achievement gap into our classrooms, stands against the skill-and-drill lecture types of pedagogy. Not only does a pedagogy of engagement offer an alternative to a banking-model of education, it is also seen as a solution to the deficit-model of education that the rhetoric of the achievement gap helps to perpetuate. At its most basic level, a pedagogy of engagement demonstrates a focus on three elements: flow, dialogic processes, and reflection. These components are not in sequential order, rather each element is present at some point in this pedagogy. And while each piece is certainly a characteristic of effective learning, together they amount to the trifecta for engaged learning and achievement. That is, building a classroom experience centered on these three pieces enables authentic, relevant, and *engaged* learning that propels student achievement and development. To more adequately understand how each piece of this pedagogy functions – on its own and, also, as part of the whole – they will be explained and discussed in further detail throughout this chapter. What these pieces actually look like in the classroom and how to implement them will be explored in chapter three.

Pedagogy of Engagement: Flow

In essence, one part of a pedagogy of engagement is Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow: "what you feel when you're doing things that are so enjoyable that you want to pursue them for their own sake" (7). Richard VanDeWeghe adds to this, noting that "flow is what people of all ages describe when they become totally immersed in something" (5). The underlying assertion of flow and this pedagogy is that learning is meant to be pleasurable or enjoyable. In fact, Csikszentmihalyi denounces the common assertion that "the roots of knowledge are bitter but its fruit sweet," which he noted is written on the school gate in his hometown (4). Rather, Csikszentmihalyi argues that "the roots of knowledge do not necessarily have to be bitter"; "the

reason that we carve those words on schools is that schools themselves make knowledge bitter, not because knowledge itself is such" (4). What Csikszentmihalyi points to here – and has been asserted throughout this thesis – is how schools, through both policies and curricula, instill notions of knowledge and learning, in this case making them "bitter." Using a pedagogy of engagement is one solution to forestalling this attitude toward knowledge, while proving that knowledge and learning are, indeed, "sweet." In turn, a pedagogy of engagement will more ably provide and "give the child the freedom and the motivation to go on learning for the rest of life," as learning is reframed as a pleasurable and worthwhile endeavor (Csikszentmihalyi 29).

An important side note to this conversation regarding engagement is that it is not meant to advocate a d/Discourse of entertainment for school and learning. Words such as "fun," "pleasurable," and "sweet" are used to draw attention to the contrast in learning environment this pedagogy creates, as compared to the skill-and-drill pedagogies in practice. These words are not meant to imply a pedagogy centered on entertainment and superficiality. Rather, a pedagogy of engagement reframes learning as a worthwhile and pleasurable endeavor, which is vital for encouraging students' lifelong learning. As already mentioned, a pedagogy of engagement serves to foster authentic, relevant, and *engaged* learning. And while this pedagogy is not restricted from having moments of fun and laughter in the classroom, the intent and purpose of the pedagogy is to, first and foremost, establish a teaching methodology that enables student learning and development. *Engaging* students means facilitating an invigorating curriculum that challenges students, while also demonstrating the value and connectedness of the learning material and the process of learning to our own lives.

Although Csikszentmihalyi's work on flow is rooted in a broad psychological perspective, it's easily applicable to education and learning, especially considering that he draws these

connections himself. On the whole, though, Csikszentmihalyi viewed and promoted flow to allow people to *engage* in life, for example in their hobbies and in their relationships. Flow, for Csikszentmihalyi, is synonymous with "optimal experience," meaning a person is getting the most out of life as possible, and this, of course, relates back to the thread of enjoyment and pleasure. Another important point is that flow is universal: "regardless of social class, education, culture, gender; this phenomenon, this inner state, seems to be universally present," thus pointing to flow's ability to transcend demographics and cultures, as well as areas of people's lives (15).

More specifically, flow has nine conditions: "goals are clear; feedback is immediate; skills match challenges; concentration is deep; problems are forgotten; control is possible; self-consciousness disappears; sense of time is altered; experience becomes autotelic" (8). These nine conditions, which are outlined in Appendix A, open up a multitude of possibilities for creating flow in the classroom – there is no singular solution for how to do so. Rather, it comes down to educators to know their students, in order to effectively integrate these conditions. While the nine conditions are seemingly self-explanatory, I'd like to discuss each in turn, particularly focusing on how they add to the flow experience and learning. Specifically, there are two categories within the conditions of flow: (1) those conditions that relate to how a teacher facilitates learning; and (2) conditions that relate to the learner's experience while in flow, all of which relate to levels of concentration and the intrinsic value of learning.

The first category within flow, how a teacher facilitates learning, encompasses Csikzentmihalyi's beginning three flow conditions: goals are clear, feedback is immediate, and skills match challenges (8). The first – goals are clear – is outlined by Csikszentmihalyi to mean that students know what they're meant to be doing at "every moment" (8). Goals for activities, les-

sons, and units are clear and explicitly understood, so that both the students and the teacher have distinct measures to reach toward. More likely than not, these goals will be differentiated based on students' needs and abilities, allowing for individualization and personalization.

Following the first condition of flow is that feedback is immediate: not only should students have clear goals, they should also know how well they're achieving these goals (Csikszentmihalyi 8). Moreover, feedback should be comprised of an evaluative statement and comments on how to reach the goals set. Just as in the first condition of flow – goals are clear – feedback needs to be explicit, and this transparency is a trend throughout flow. By aiming for explicit goals and explicit feedback, it makes learning and *how* to learn more tangible to students.

The third condition of flow is that skills match challenges, which ties in closely to the previous two conditions, in that goals and feedback should correspond to students' abilities. Csikszentmihalyi states that "the opportunities for action in the environment are in balance with the person's ability to act" (8). Similarly, Vygotsky's research also argues that the most effective learning occurs when a person is appropriately challenged. The term for when skills meet challenges, for Vygotsky, is the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD): "*the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers*" (86; author's emphasis). Vygotsky notes that the ZPD "characterizes mental development prospectively," altogether demonstrating learners' potential for growth; whereas "the actual development level characterizes mental development retrospectively" (86-7). Thus, in order for learners to progress, the ZPD must be enacted – this is where

learning should be occurring. Otherwise, learners are not being challenged and no true learning occurs.

Together, the first three conditions of flow provide an outline for educators in using flow to facilitate a pedagogy of engagement. I would argue, too, that these conditions preempt the remaining conditions: the teacher must provide clear goals, immediate feedback, and appropriate challenges, in order for students to experience the other conditions and, therefore, flow self. Considering their significance in developing a pedagogy of engagement, how to successfully implement these conditions will be discussed in chapter three.

The remaining conditions of flow are interrelated, as they all center around the learner's experience, specifically their levels of concentration and investment in learning. (Again, all of these conditions are outlined in Appendix A.) These six conditions are that concentration is deep; problems are forgotten; control is possible; self-consciousness disappears; the sense of time is altered; and the experience becomes autotelic (Csikszentmihalyi 8).

The first of these conditions – "concentration is deep" – means that the learner is focused on the activity in that moment (8). Of course, this high level of concentration implies that other problems are forgotten, which is condition five. Other "stimuli," as Csikszentmihalyi calls them, like friends, personal problems, homework, sports, and hobbies are not the primary focus; these "stimuli" are pushed to the background as whatever task is at hand is the priority and focus. Csikszentmihalyi notes that conditions four and five are direct results of facilitating the first three conditions of flow, as already suggested, as deep concentration and forgetting problems are "simple result[s] of the concentration that is required when challenges and skills are in balance, goals are clear, and feedback is there. Then you begin to get immersed in what you are doing and forget the usual problems" (13). This is also linked to condition six of flow, in that control is

possible, and "success is in one's hands" (ibid). Similarly, maintaining this depth of concentration better enables condition seven of flow: self-consciousness disappears. Again, this condition has to do with a deep focus on the task at hand, so that self – worries, fears, and so on – are forgotten for the moment. Csikszentmihalyi argues that

> this self-consciousness in the classroom is one of the reasons why [students] don't process the information [. . .] because there is this barrier of the attention being spent trying to look smart or look cool or look whatever. That [self-consciousness] takes away the attention that, ostensibly, should be used to process information. (13)

Csikszentmihalyi points out, however, that, after the flow experience, self-consciousness increases, as "people experience their own self as being stronger and more vital than it was before" (13). The trajectory of self-consciousness during flow, as drawn by Csikszentmihalyi, then, is much like a spiral, as self-consciousness continually disappears but inevitably returns and is deepened. In terms of education, increased self-consciousness largely relates to *conscious* learning, which relates directly to the first three conditions of flow and how well they're implemented. Conscious learners can explicitly understand and articulate the skills they're using and how well they've achieved their goals, primarily as a result of the feedback provided. That is, explicit goals and continual feedback provide a basis from which students are more aware of themselves and their learning. What's more, this self-consciousness enables learners to develop autonomy, as they're able to be self-reflective in determining their goals and feedback, increasing their sense of freedom and even their motivation for learning (Csikszentmihalyi 21, 23, 29).

The final two conditions of flow relate to the value found in the experience by the learner. Condition eight is that the sense of time is altered, and condition nine is that the experience

becomes autotelic. The former, as Csikszentmihalyi argues, means that time usually goes faster; the learner has such a high level of concentration and is so engaged that time slips by without even noticing (8). The latter flow condition – and the last – highlights that within the flow experience there's an inherent sense of worth: the learner feels there's value in the experience itself. As such, the emphasis is on the process learners are engaged in and not the product.

Overall, Csikszentmihalyi's conditions of flow offer insight into how to facilitate a pedagogy of engagement. Other researchers have also used Csikszentmihalyi's work in arguing for a pedagogy that engages and enriches students' lives. For example, similar to what has already been suggested, VanDeWeghe reasons that educators can only strongly influence three of the nine conditions of flow: having clear goals, giving feedback, and creating a balance of challenge and ability (9-11). The other two conditions of flow that VanDeWeghe focuses on – concentration and enjoyment – refer to the fourth and ninth conditions of flow described by Csikszentmihalyi (concentration and the experience becomes autotelic). And, like categorized in this chapter, VanDeWeghe emphasizes that these two conditions "come from within oneself," so educators have less influence and control (10). Smith and Wilhelm also use flow in their research and is specifically documented in *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*, which investigates literacy in the lives of forty-nine young men. The premise of their study is based on research demonstrating a gap between girls' and boys' achievement and engagement in literacy, particularly in the English/English Language Arts classroom. What they find is the primacy of flow, as it "will make students more inclined to engage in learning" (Smith and Wilhelm 53). Like VanDeWeghe, the two researchers parse down Csikszentmihalyi's research on flow, documenting four primary conditions: (1) "a sense of control and competence"; (2) "a challenge that requires an appropriate level of skill"; (3) "clear goals and feedback"; and (4) "a

focus on the immediate experience" (Smith and Wilhelm 28, 30). These four conditions correspond to the first four of flow that Csikszentmihalyi outlines. The fourth condition from Smith and Wilhelm, regarding the "immediate experience," also implicitly integrates Csikszentmihalyi's other conditions, in that problems are forgotten, success is possible, self-consciousness disappears, sense of time is altered, and experience becomes autotelic. The term "experience" is rather broad, so it easily incorporates a range of flow conditions; however, the use of the adjective "immediate" places emphasis on the task at-hand and being in the present moment, as Csikszentmihalyi also argued. What's particularly interesting in Smith and Wilhelm's research is that they found that flow was already an integral part of the lives of these young men *outside* of school and formal education (30). That is, while the experience of flow did not transfer over into learning in school (for this group of students), especially when it came to skills in literacy, these young men still experienced flow in their everyday lives, such as in their hobbies (ibid). As already stated, what Smith and Wilhelm ultimately argue is that educators must transfer these conditions of flow – *how* flow works – to our classrooms and our curricula, as well as broaden our notions of literacy to include our students' interests.

Together, all of these researchers particularly emphasize the role of educators in facilitating the first three conditions of flow: clear goals, immediate feedback, and a balance of skills and challenges. The implication is that, in thoroughly planning and preparing to meet and even exceed these three primary conditions, the remainder more easily fall into place and are felt by learners. So, while educators only have full control of these first three conditions of flow, as already argued, focusing on integrating these three conditions gives way to the remaining flow conditions and, thus, flow itself, as part of a pedagogy of engagement.

Pedagogy of Engagement: Dialogic Processes

The second piece of a pedagogy of engagement is dialogic processes, which inherently place an emphasis on using the social – *dialogue* – in learning. A large part of this relates to the research of Vygotsky, who argues that learning occurs best in social situations. Specifically, "human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (Vygotsky 88). What Vygotsky's research suggest, as stated in the previous quotation, are three key points: (1) the role of modeling in learning; (2) the impact of learners' communities or those people in their lives, including family and friends; and (3) the fact that the social is how people learn and grow. Smith and Wilhelm also emphasize the importance of the social in learning, as "ideas presented can be taught to each other, shared, argued over, and critiqued" (199). Here, Smith and Wilhelm are specifically referring to inquiry projects, which will be discussed later in this chapter, but what they suggest extends past a single type of assignment grounded in social activity to activities framed by dialogism, overall. Moreover, the two researchers describe how

> the boys' home literacy [their primary Discourse], which was so eagerly embraced, was always social, contextualized, and enmeshed deeply with significant relationships. We need to use group structures and projects and to emphasize sharing and group problem solving throughout our teaching. [As] literacies [and D/discourses] grow out of relationships -- whether these are teacher to student, student to student, parent to child, or mentor to mentee. (Smith and Wilhelm 199)

What Smith and Wilhelm argue here goes back to the first two key points in Vygotsky's research regarding the social nature of learning, in the importance of modeling and how the people around us impact and influence our learning. Even more than that, Smith and Wilhelm open up discus-

sion of how the people around us, our communities, shape our d/Discourses, which will be discussed in chapter two.

When it comes to this part – dialogic processes – of a pedagogy of engagement, the emphasis is really on collaboration and community, which means facilitating methods such as group work and discussion. The main premise in integrating the social into our classrooms is because "learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement" (Vygotsky 90). Based on this argument, then, development – cognitive, mental, emotional, better known as "internal" development or "internalization" – follows learning (ibid, 56-7). (As a side note, Vygotsky is quick to ascertain that development does not follow learning like "a shadow," "in equal measure or in parallel," rather these processes are complex and vary depending on each learner (91).) What we see here, in terms of the relation of learning to development, occurs in two basic parts. The first part is that internal thoughts, through socialization, are externalized. Such a process requires that learners are able to take often abstract thoughts and articulate them; in doing so, learners concretize their own learning and their own experiences, making them more meaningful and conscious. And the second part of this process is actually the third piece of a pedagogy of engagement: reflection or, as Vygotsky calls it, "internalization." To put it more succinctly, "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first *between* people . . . and then *inside* the child" (Vygotsky 57; author's emphasis). Thus, we must have the social – "*between* people" – in order to learn and develop "*inside*." Of course, it's important to note that Vygotsky's work is not exclusive to children; its validity spans all age

groups. Key to a pedagogy of engagement, however, are the implications that Vygotsky's research point to, namely, the social as an integral part of learning and, therefore, an integral part of pedagogy.

Pedagogy of Engagement: Reflection

Finally, the last piece of a pedagogy of engagement is reflection, which involves looking backward, on past experiences, to consider the significance. For learners the act of reflection involves taking time to consider or meditate – to think! – on the learning material. Much like a reflective surface, the aim of reflection is to study an object, a person (or people), or intangible items like events, themes, and issues, in a way that highlights its characteristics. In the case of reflection as a teaching strategy, what's highlighted is generally the importance of the ject. And, more often than not, reflection involves a consideration of the learning material's relevance and how the learning relates to the learner.

To briefly delve into cognitive theory and brain-based learning, Eric Jensen notes that "increasing the quantity of relevant associations is a consistently strong way of increasing recall," as "it builds memories" (12). That is, synaptic connections are formed and strengthened through "*novel* and coherent experiences" (Jensen 5; italics own). As VanDeWeghe furthers, "neurons connect when the brain finds something meaningful or desires to make something meaningful. [. . .] If learners are not making meaning or not searching to make meaning, they are not, by definition, truly learning" (14). The bottom line here is that reflection forges and strengthens connections in the brain, between new information and information already stored there. And making these connections – these "associations" – is how we learn and how we further enforce or strengthen what we learn. The act of reflecting comes into this process in that it directly involves learners making connections, which strengthens the synapses in the brain and

subsequently increases the ability to recall and *use* information. An important facet of this process is suggested by VanDeWeghe, who stresses making learning "meaningful," and Jensen similarly uses the word "novel," in considering learning experiences. What both researchers imply is that learning must be made relevant to students, as this relevancy is what makes it "novel" and "meaningful" to them. Basically, we learn and we remember what's important to us. Thus, by using reflection as a tool, by actively asking students to consider and connect the information, issues, and ideas to their lives and the world itself, it makes these things meaningful, enabling students to learn.

Another important argument to consider, regarding reflection, relates back to Csikszentmihalyi's seventh condition of flow: self-consciousness disappears (during flow) to then reappear stronger (after flow). As already argued, this process centers on conscious learning, in knowing what, how, and why learning is taking place. Reflection amplifies this consciousness, as it is explicitly drawn out: not only are learners more aware of themselves and their learning habits, abilities – self-conscious – they're more aware of themselves as individuals, they're more aware of others, and they're more aware of the world itself and how they fit into it.

Importance of a Pedagogy of Engagement

Ultimately, a pedagogy of engagement is a pedagogy designed to accommodate and enrich the education and lives of all learners. Educational reformer John Dewey argued that "the great waste of school is the child's inability to use what he knows in school; and to apply what he learns in school in his real life" (Qtd in Wilhelm 16). Making learning relevant is part of a pedagogy of engagement, as students fuse together their life experiences with learning in the classroom (Neelands 2). Doing so helps to break down the barrier between school and the "real-world," inevitably manifesting more investment in learning, as students begin to more readily

connect the two settings and see how and why education is important. Not to mention, students more readily view themselves as learners, since they all have something to contribute in a pedagogy of engagement (ibid). Moreover, Fredericks et al note that "engagement is associated with positive academic outcomes, including achievement and persistence in school; and it is higher in classrooms with supportive teachers and peers, challenging and authentic tasks, opportunities for choice, and sufficient structure" (Fredericks 87). By offering relevancy, authenticity, autonomy, forging connections, and an opportunity to *engage* with others, with themselves, and with their communities, this leads to students who value lifelong learning, taking their skills with them and integrating them in the real world. As noted, it is through engagement that students can more ably take on challenging tasks, such as those involving critical-thinking skills, like analysis and reflection and the work of discourse analysis, which will be discussed in the next chapter. In engaging students, educators enable students to connect to the learning material and issues and to then deepen and challenge students through more complex tasks, propelling student thinking, learning, and achievement.

Chapter Two: Discourse and discourse

As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, there is a distinct difference between big "D" Discourse and little "d" discourse, according to the research of James Paul Gee, whose framework is used throughout this thesis. This chapter will first review these two terms, along with the implications, and then move to further consider Discourses and discourses, particularly in terms of education and learning.

Put simply, Discourses (big "D") "are *ways of recognizing and getting recognized* as certain sorts of *whos* doing certain sorts of *whats*," while discourses (little "d") are the "stretches of language" that make sense within a community of people (Gee *Social Linguistics* 153, 112; author's emphasis). Both Discourses and discourses influence and shape one another, as the two are intertwined: discourses are embedded within Discourses just as Discourses affect discourses. Gee further explains that

> Discourses are ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing, that are accepted as instantiations of particular identities . . . by specific groups, whether one is being a lawyer of a certain sort, a biker of a certain sort, a business person of a certain sort, . . . and so on and so forth through a very long list. Discourses are ways of being "people like us." They are "ways of being in the world." They are "forms of life." They are socially situated identities. They are, thus, always and everywhere social products of social histories." (Gee *Social Linguistics* 3)

Thus, any utterance, any form of communication – a "stretch of language" – is a form of discourse, while at the same time signifying at least one Discourse; the two are interwoven. Understanding the tangled nature of Discourses and discourses is significant, especially in conjunction

with their social nature. Gee states that Discourses are "social products of social histories," with the latter ("social histories") emphasizing the multiple contexts and backgrounds that form Discourses. Note, too, that Gee uses the plural form of "history" to underscore the multiple histories that come together to produce each Discourse. What this notion of histories signifies is the complexity of Discourses and, by extension, the complexity of the people using these Discourses and discourses. As noted in the introduction, this complexity asserts the multiplicity of Discourses and discourses and, furthermore, a framework for defining diversity. That is, diversity is the presence of a variety of discourses and Discourses. Rooting diversity within a sociolinguistics model allows for a broader understanding of what it means to be diverse, as it attends to and brings together other perspectives of diversity, such as ethnicity, gender, and SES, without giving preference to any, as all represent varying "forms of life." The implication of this definition, in establishing a broad understanding of diversity, is that it recognizes Discourses and diversities as "ways of being in the world." The active nature of "being" demonstrates the aliveness of diversity, its multiplicity, while the prepositional phrase "in the world" signifies the presence of these Discourses and diversities in our society. Moreover, Gee suggests the centrality of our Discourses – and, thus, diversities, in the framework argued here – to who we are, our identities: they are our "ways of being" and "forms of life." Together, these notions point to both the significance of Discourses and diversities to individuals and our society itself. What this perspective leads me to, in terms of education and learning, is the potential for educators to frame diversity and difference within a positive framework, as the variety of Discourses/discourses and the people and institutions who use them *contribute* to and influence society and its functionings – they contribute to individuals' and society's "ways of being." Of course, a significant aspect of this framework is highlighting the spectrum of discourses, in how they can contribute to society

in both positive and negative ways, as well as varying shades in between. For example, just as there are d/Discourses of courage and love, there are d/Discourses of racism, hatred, and inequality. Despite these points, using such a framework that considers how d/Discourses contribute to – meaning to cause or bring about – and influence society allows educators to frame diversity as a contribution. These "forms of life," whether positive or negative, are the ingredients of our society, and they need to be studied and explored, since they're the root of our interactions, values, beliefs, and knowledges, in particular. These d/Discourses and these diversities are the roots of our society. Within this framework, there's also the potential, then, for educators to highlight the diversities of our selves and our own contributions to society. For students, this framework centered around diversity establishes the complexity of our lives and our communities, as well as our – in particular our students' – relevance and roles and importance. In this way, educators have the opportunity to point to how the diversity within and around us should be celebrated (rather than being viewed as a detriment).

Discourses as Diversity: a Framework for the Classroom

Discourses as diversity is a celebratory framework that counters deficit views of language and students' diverse backgrounds. Language is, of course, only one aspect of a Discourse, but it's also the primary instrument (or tool) in using a Discourse. Generally, the other pieces of a Discourse – such as behavior, intonation, context, subtext, beliefs, and power – are secondary to language; they give meaning and life to the words and expressions people use. A common example is when people ask "how are you?" Quite often, people use this question as a statement, as they pass each other in hallways, for instance. A person will say "how are you?," but quickly dash by, not even pausing for a reply. The lack of intonation and rising tone to suggest a question, as well as the harried pace, imply potential Discourses of career, apathy, and time, to name

a couple. To complicate matters, a person needs to know the context, for example the relationship between the people and how well they get along. In studying this example further, there's an unwritten subtext of, perhaps, tardiness or having a busy schedule. And, to extend this analysis, power structure and dynamics can also play a role in this exchange – perhaps the person relaying a quick "how are you?" has more power than the other person and isn't quite interested in his/her life. This consideration of power also brings in beliefs and attitudes that the person's language – his/her discourse – illustrates. For example, the person may not value interpersonal relationships, may view the other person with disdain, or may simply be more concerned and attentive toward other facets of life. All of this is to say that while language (discourses) are important, what's not said reveals a lot about the undergirding Discourses of a person's life. In terms of learning and education, it is then just as important to study the use and effects of discourses and Discourses.

To move to education, in American schools, English is generally the language of instruction, and, standard English is the primary d/Discourse enforced. I say that standard English is a Discourse because of the mainstream values that its use asserts. Asa G. Hilliard III writing in Lisa Delpit's *The Skin That We Speak* notes that

> common American English is a language of convenience. As a common language, it is efficient for the nation. Yet, the approach to teaching English in schools seeks to establish standards for aesthetics and to establish a national cultural heritage based on it. Instead of thinking of "standard" as common or ordinary, "standard English" is thought of as the standard of quality. The effect of this thinking is to subordinate any alternative and to label that alternative as inferior. (Hilliard III 94)

As Michael Stubbs notes in the same text, this inferiority – known as the "primitive language myth" – is often perceived in "the language of low income groups in rural or urban industrial areas [and that they're] somehow structurally 'impoverished' or 'simpler' than standard English" (Stubbs 71). What this view effects is alienation on the part of those students who do not adhere to the qualities of standard English. As Mills notes, Discourses are tied to identity: they "structure both our sense of reality and our notion of our own identity" (13). Moreover, Stubbs argues that language and Discourse are also tied to community and home (70). To then implicitly label students' Discourses as defective – inferior – by enforcing standard English, is to then alienate students on a number of levels, including their Discourses, their communities, their homes, and their own identities. For Gee, this means students "[disidentifying] with [. . .] teachers and schools that they perceive as hostile, alien, or oppressive to their home-based identities" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 36). Victoria Purcell-Gates goes further to say "if you are forbidden to use your language to learn to read and write, if you are forced to speak differently when reading and writing, then you are in effect being closed off, or at least seriously impeded from accessing the world of print" (134). For Purcell-Gates, this prioritizing of standard English means cutting off students from their past experiences and the "cultural practice" tied to language and literacy (128). In essence, this practice also means damaging students' learning opportunities and, moreover, stoking students' feelings of inadequacy (Delpit 41). Rather, we need to accept and embrace students' languages and, more broadly, their Discourses, as it will help better their education, since integrating students' Discourses enables them to connect to the learning material (Purcell-Gates 137; Delpit 45).

Yet it is not only these students, whose Discourses are being ignored, who face heady repercussions. Mainstream students – those students whose primary Discourse is (or similar to)

that of the Discourse of school – are deprived of experiencing and exploring other Discourses, which means they're lacking the benefit of learning about such things as other cultures, languages, and identities. Put simply, "by fostering prejudice such as language biases, we stifle all students' cognitive development," as it's "intellectually limiting" (Wynne 209, 213). Specifically, these students are missing out on the opportunity to "make connections": "in a fragmented modern society, mak[ing] connections to each other and to a larger world is a respectable outcome that many scholars believe can be advanced through the study of diverse dialects and languages" (Wynne 217). One way to make such connections is through "cross-cultural respect and understanding" and collaboration, which Wynne asserts as being imperative as the world is – and further becomes – a "global village" (209). In *not* providing the opportunity for students to understand and value others' Discourses – their cultures – educators are allowing the perceived superiority of standard English and mainstream Discourses to continue (Wynne 209). More powerfully,

> as long as mainstream students think that another's language is inferior to theirs, they will probably not bother to understand it, and therefore, there will be much about the other that they will always fail to understand. Not only will this further widen the cultural divide, but it will prevent the group in power from accessing the knowledge base--and, subsequently, potential solutions to a myriad of world problems--of those deemed "other" by virtue of language form. (Wynne 209-10)

Obviously, the issue of discussing and studying Discourses in the classroom, where this discussion began, has ballooned into much larger issues, revolving around values, relationships, and culture. It's not an understatement to say that Wynne, with whom I agree, views the importance of breaking down stereotypes and working toward collaboration and "cross-cultural respect and

understanding" as a major feat that has repercussions outside the realm of school. Together, what these researchers ably articulate is the ripple effects of education from the micro- to the macro-level, influencing our society's values, its politics, and its functionings. And what they point out is the influence educators do, indeed, have in asking our students to think about and learn the world and its diversities through its Discourses.

Language and Achievement

As discussed above, the benefits of using and studying d/Discourses, include affirming students' rights to their own cultures and experiences (such as language), increasing the relevance of learning material (i.e., curriculum) to students' lives and, therefore, increasing development and learning itself and making cross-cultural connections. Yet, despite the value in exploring the world through d/Discourses, researchers are quick to assert that language alone is *not* the harbinger to student achievement (or lack thereof). To summarize this argument briefly, it is overly simple to pin students' successes or failures on language ability, as other factors combine together to influence learning and achievement, such as family background, SES, ethnicity, previous teachers and types of schools, and learning styles.

The fact that language is not the sole contributor to student achievement is well-documented within the sociocultural perspective of language. But this fact does not prevent educational politics, the public, and the even the media from touting language – or, more aptly, the lack of proficiency in language or possession of language for those children who do not possess it – as a scapegoat when considering student achievement. After all, it's easier to blame one facet of learning than delve into the complex issues of our students' lives, which can act, conversely, as stumbling blocks or building blocks in learning and achievement. This scapegoat-type

mentality is, undoubtedly, related to the achievement gap and, in particular, the current emphasis on literacy in education.

Of course, society's ills have long been blamed on a lack of literacy, also known as illiteracy. In the US, particularly in the 1960s, illiteracy was "singled out as a root cause of poverty" (Szwed 421). It has also been used to explain away unemployment (Brodkey 165). Whether regarding achievement, SES, or employment, the argument remains the same: a lack of literacy – or illiteracy – leads to downfall, while, on the other hand, "literacy leads inevitably to a long list of 'good' things" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 41). The latter is what's known as the "literacy myth," in that literacy alone has the power to transform lives. Within a sociocultural perspective, however, literacy as the single instigator to change – good, bad, or otherwise – is a "myth" because "literacy in and of itself, abstracted from historical conditions and social practices, has no effects, or, at least, no predictable effects" (ibid). From a sociocultural perspective, then, no single factor is at the root of learning and achievement; rather, it's a conglomeration of "conditions" and "practices," of which literacy is only one. What this perspective aims to do is break down the literacy myth, on which society is fixated, in order to draw attention to broader societal issues, with the purpose of assuaging them.

Typically, literacy is viewed in the singular, as an acquired skill that you either have or don't have (Szwed 422). More specifically, this definition of literacy, known as the autonomous model, is tied to the skills of being able to read and write: either you can read and write, or you can't; either you're literate or you're illiterate (Street 431; Szwed 423). This view of literacy also includes a literate "continuum," in which people move from being illiterate to literate (from not being able to read and/or write to being able to do so), beginning first with oral language skills (Szwed 423). When applied to education, the autonomous model of literacy is used to ra-

tionalize narrow curricula and policies, which are based on the traditional skills of reading and writing standard English. What we see happen through such a rigid view of literacy – its skills of reading and writing – is literacy being tied solely to school, which has led to school and education then being used as a scapegoat when the literate continuum fails. In this argument, students do not learn, do not achieve, because they do not become "literate," and the fault lies with schools and educators. As critics like Street point out, the autonomous model ignores the social context of people's lives (Street 431). And it serves to deflect attention from the "wider issues about society and social change" that the "rates and issues of literacy are symptoms of" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 30). That is, this view of literacy disregards the plurality found within society and people themselves. It ignores the fact that people have a multiplicity of experiences and, to bring it back to the larger point of this chapter, d/Discourses.

On the other hand, another view of literacy, as argued by sociocultural researchers, recognizes the complexity of literacy. According to Gee, literacy is the "mastery of a secondary Discourse" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 173). As discussed in the introduction, our Primary Discourse is our "home" Discourse – the very first Discourse we learn in life. Any Discourse after our Primary Discourse is "secondary," which means we all have a number of secondary Discourses. By extension, using Gee's definition of literacy, we all have a number of

cies. Gee goes on to say "that whatever literacy has to do with reading, reading must be spelled out, at the very least, as multiple abilities to 'read' texts of certain types in certain ways or to certain levels. There are obviously many abilities here, each of them a type of literacy, one of a set of literacies" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 40). The implication, emphasized by quotation marks around "read," is that this verb must be thought of more broadly, as we do not only read books and essays. We read films, we read cartoons, we read advertisements, we read sports, we read

videogames, and we even read people. These examples are a few of the "certain" texts people may read. The point here is that "illiterate" is a misnomer, as every single person, including our students, has a secondary Discourse. What Gee argues, based on his conception of literacy/literacies, is that, rather than an "illiteracy problem," we have a "school" problem (Gee *Social Linguistics* 31).

Without sounding too circuitous, the "school" problem is our school system's inadequacy in enabling our diverse population of students to learn and achieve, which is a significant argument throughout this thesis. Within the focus on literacies, the "school" problem for Gee means that "as tasks become more complex and 'school-like,' less and less of the population can do them, with failure being most prominent among those less influenced by, and most poorly served by, the schools" (ibid). Other scholars, such as Delpit, paint the problem much more broadly, for example in our educational system's failure to respond appropriately to students' literacies – their Discourses – and, therefore, not allowing them (both students and their Discourses) to flourish. Purcell-Gates further explains this by noting how "learners from impoverished and low-status groups fail to develop as fully and productively literate as compared to learners from sociocultural groups that hold sociopolitical power and favor" (124). And so, again and again, there is inconsistency and, yes, I believe unfair, treatment of groups of students, who, due to their non-mainstream status and diversities, are at a disadvantage because our society and our educational system fail to acknowledge harsh realities and the complexity of how and what it means to learn.

To now return to the original point of this section: what *does* language have to do with achievement and with learning? We've already established that it's overly simplified "to say that a child's language *directly* determines his success or failure at school" (Stubbs 78). However, as Stubbs goes on to say, "a child's language may be a *disadvantage* in his educational pro-

gress: not because his language is itself 'deficient,' but because it is different" (79; author's emphasis). Stubbs summarizes the key points throughout this section, noting that

> it is important to ask just how the disadvantage arises. Is it "in" children's language? Or does it arise rather from people's attitudes to language differences? If you believe that children's language can be "deficient," then you may be tempted to try and improve their language in some way. [. . .] [I]f you believe that linguistic disadvantage arises largely from people's intolerance and prejudice towards language differences, then you will probably try to change attitudes to guage. (79)

What Stubbs outlines are two frameworks for viewing diversity and Discourses within education: the first is that the disadvantage is "'in' children's language" represents a deficit model, whereby an educator's aim would be to "correct" the language; the second, on the other hand, which is derived from "people's attitudes to language differences," suggests that an educator's aim is to explore and, ultimately, "try to change attitudes to language." The latter is at the heart of discourse analysis, through which we can explore Discourses, like our own.

Breaking Down Discourses

According to Gee, there are five main points to be considered regarding Discourses: (1) "Discourses are inherently 'ideological'; (2) "Discourses are resistant to internal criticism and self-scrutiny"; (3) "Discourse-defined positions from which to speak and behave are not . . . just defined internal to a Discourse, but also as standpoints taken up by the Discourse in its relation to other, ultimately opposing, Discourses"; (4) "any Discourse concerns itself with certain objects and puts forward certain concepts, viewpoints, and values at the expense of others"; and (5) "Discourses are intimately related to the distribution of social power and hierarchical structure in

society, which is why they are always and everywhere ideological" (Gee *Social Linguistics* 158-9). While these points suggest ramifications for society, on the whole, the focus here is on education and learning.

What Gee, along with other researchers, argues is that Discourses (and, thus, discourse, since they're tied together) are *always* ideological, which is one of his key points regarding Discourse. By analyzing discourse, we can understand Discourse, which, for learners, opens up dynamic potential in exploring how and why people use language and communication. An important consideration and example in today's society are the d/Discourses around "terrorism." In a recent piece in *The Guardian* ("Why is Boston 'Terrorism' . . .?") Glenn Greenwald questioned the use of the label "terrorism" when referencing the use of bombs at the Boston Marathon, while other violent attacks, such as the shootings in Columbine, Sandy Hook, Aurora, and Tucson, are not considered "terrorism." The underlying Discourses around the discourses of "terrorism" that Greenwald highlights is how the label (discourse) of "terrorism" asserts our beliefs and attitudes regarding the word and the types of people who commit terrorism. Greenwald argues that, "as usual, what terrorism *really* means in American discourse – its operational meaning – is: violence by Muslims against Americans and their allies." Thus, the big "D" Discourse of "terrorism" portrays mainstream American attitudes and fears of Muslims, in this case that Muslims are terrorists while white Americans who commit similar acts of violence are "perpetrators" or "criminals." The change in discourse relays changes in Discourse, for example in how each person is punished, reactions and evaluations by the media and American public, and even actions taken by the government. For example, as Greenwald points out, "[the word 'terrorism'] single-handedly ends debates, ratchets up fear levels, and justifies almost anything the government wants to do in its name." To be certain, Greenwald's arguments around the d/Discourses of ter-

rorism demonstrate the connectedness of discourses and Discourses, as well as the potential and significance for such analyses in our schools. By analyzing the use of discourses in our world, students can more ably analyze the Discourses – for example, the attitudes and beliefs – that abound in society. Altogether, such a study reveals the centrality of language and communication in our world and lives, as well as the living nature of d/Discourses, as they create and shape meaning.

Discourse Analysis

According to Gee, discourse analysis is "the study of language-in-use [. . .] it is the study of language at use in the world, not just to say things, but to do things" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* ix). Thus, by studying discourses with an eye toward Discourse, as has already been argued, learners can more ably explore the world.

There are many approaches to discourse analysis, but we will continue with the work of Gee, who outlines twenty-seven tools for discourse analysis (see Appendix B). The underlying purpose of these tools is to explore how and why language is being used, and each of the tools allows its users to accomplish facets of this purpose. For example, by considering the structure, the organization, and the word choices, we can surmise the purpose of the communication, what this reveals about the speaker(s), and how all of this reflects Discourse(s).

Using the Tools of Discourse Analysis

Before discussing the tools of discourse analysis, it's important to emphasize the complexity and, yes, at times, the sheer tedious nature of discourse analysis. It's not an easy task whatsoever, and there are often more questions than answers, which can be both daunting and irritating. As an educator, keeping these side effects, so to speak, of using discourse analysis in mind is vital. For example, I am not advocating that every activity involving discourse analysis

be a clause-by-clause, word-by-word close analysis and reading of texts, since this would be aggravating (for both the students and the teacher!) and completely destroy the fun and intrigue in exploring language and learning. What I do advocate is a pedagogy that is *infused* – not overrun – with discourse analysis. Like any strategy, it's the educator's decision for when and how to integrate discourse analysis. However, I would point out that the more discourse analysis is integrated, the more likely these skills will become automatic for students, so that they'll reach for them -- and use them -- on their own accord. In regard to how to integrate discourse analysis, I would suggest working with key passages (or short texts), which can then be used in illustrating larger issues, ideas, and Discourses, for example.

More specifically, in regard to using discourse analysis, Gee divides these tools for discourse analysis into four main categories: (1) language and context; (2) saying, doing, and designing; (3) building things in the world; and (4) theoretical tools. In order to simplify and differentiate these tools for the secondary classroom, these categories are going to be the four main tools that will be used and integrated for discourse analysis. That is, I've collapsed the tools (within these categories), so that students will consider these four main, broad categories in their studies. Appendix C demonstrates these four tools for students' use, and the table itself can also be printed as a poster for classroom display. For the purposes of clarity, I will refer to each as a "tool" throughout the remainder of this thesis (i.e., the language and context tool). (Readers are, again, reminded that Gee's original list of tools for discourse analysis is included in Appendix B.) The only revision from Gee's titles is that the fourth category – theoretical tools – will be renamed to the connecting things to the world tool, as the word "theory" has a bit of a stigma associated with it (with associations of complexity and as being considered boring, for example). Having twenty-seven tools for any task is rather unwieldy, regardless of age and experi-

ence. In my own teaching experience, I've found that any rules or practices in the secondary classroom need to be five or fewer in order to be effective and efficient. Thus, having four tools, each of which encapsulates the specific questions that Gee urges us to consider in using discourse analysis, is much more manageable and accessible. As a note on language, "speaker," throughout this work, refers to the individual, group, or institution who is communicating, while "audience," refers to the intended or imagined recipient of the communication.

The first tool – the language and context tool – is used to consider the context of the communication. For Gee, this tool involves three main considerations: identifying and exploring the choice of subject, understanding and filling in the context, and intonation. Quite broadly, the language and context tool is about deciphering what's said (or what information is given), such as the subject, and what's not said but can be implied. In using this first tool in the classroom, progressing through the considerations as noted will allow students to move from the concrete to the abstract. This would mean first identifying the subject, why the subject is chosen, how it's used, and why another subject was not selected. The next step is to fill in the context, which can be done, as Gee suggests, noting deictics, such as pronouns, and also by considering what needs to be filled in, such as the relationship between the speaker and the audience. A significant philosophy of discourse analysis, as demonstrated by this first tool, is that what's *not* said or communicated is often just as important as what *is* said, or similarly, noting whose views and attitudes are *not* presented. For example, the d/Discourses of education are almost wholly void of student voices and perspectives, and educators are often left out of these dialogues, too. What this example and the inherent idea point to are how language (d/Discourses) are used for specific purposes and activities, such as gaining power and privilege, as the next three tools help us to understand.

The second tool of discourse analysis is the saying, doing, and designing tool. The focus of this tool rests on the last word, "designing." This tool emphasizes the decisions made by the speaker, in how the communication is structured or "designed," which means considering word choices, type(s) of language used, organization, and how ideas are connected. For Gee, getting to the "design" of the communication allows us to understand the "saying" and "doing" portions of this tool. The former refers to the speaker's meaning, and the latter refers to the speaker's purpose in communicating.

In using the saying, doing, and designing tool, there are a number of "designing" features that Gee outlines. These include types of words and types of language; the order and organization; and how both clauses and "idea units" (or stanzas) are integrated, structured, and connected (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 74). Due to the precision of such an analysis, it's imperative that educators guide students in using this tool, using their own discretion in what aspects of this tool are used and/or emphasized. The focus in using the saying, doing, and designing tool should be on the first two: saying and doing; educators should choose design features that offer an entry-point in considering these two points. Again, we don't want to overwhelm students with too much information and too many tasks. What I would recommend is starting small – with word choices, for example – and then moving toward more complex analyses, like order and organization.

The third tool is the building things in the world tool, which, in referring back to Gee's original categories, is the bulkiest of the four. Just as in the previous tool – the saying, doing, and designing tool – the title of the building things in the world tool is indicative of its purpose: considering how the speaker is using communication to build things. The title of this tool also signifies a shift in focus, to how language connects to and builds things "in the

world." Whereas the previous two tools directly considered the speaker and the audience, this third tool aims to place the speaker's communication in a broader frame, as we analyze how it interacts and functions in the world. In regard to what is being built through language, Gee notes a number of items, including significance, activities, identities, relationships, politics, connections, sign systems, and knowledges. Obviously these are much more abstract concepts and, therefore, more complicated to explore; however, I don't doubt students' capabilities in attending to how language constructs meaning. What becomes apparent, in using the building things in the world tool, is the fact that language is alive: as it moves from speaker to audience, its effects extend well past what's said and what's done ("saying" and "doing," respectively). And this is the purpose in utilizing this tool: demonstrating the vitality of language. An example of using this tool can be found in Glenn Greenwald's argument about the use of the word "terrorism": the use of this type of language (discourse), specifically, builds attitudes and beliefs toward Muslims. By selectively connecting Muslim people and faces with terrorism, the American media and institutions are *building*, through discourse, big "D" Discourses of racism, hatred, and fear. In unraveling the use of discourses to build Discourses, we can more ably return to such questions as to the purpose, the significance, and, our fourth tool, connections to and within the world.

The fourth and final tool in discourse analysis is the connecting things to the world tool. As mentioned, this was originally labeled "theoretical tools," as Gee's fourth category in completing discourse analysis. Due to the difficulty of this tool, as framed by Gee, I've taken the undergirding principle of his focus – in being able to make connections to the world – and used this focus in adapting the tool for use in the secondary classroom. The primary focus is making connections between the text (the communication) and the world. Unlike the third tool (building

things in the world), which centers on how the speaker and the communication shape ("build") the world, the fourth tool analyzes the conversation between the text and the world – how they're connected. By extension, this also means considering the speaker's connections with the world. Establishing these connections draws out the relevancy of texts, so that students can better relate and connect to the text(s) themselves. As already argued in chapter one, relevancy is an integral piece of engaged learning and of a pedagogy of engagement.

In using the connecting things to the world tool, there are three main points, which will guide students in understanding these connections between text and world and speaker and world. These points include big "D" Discourse, figured worlds, and connections to other texts (intertextuality). The first of these points requires us to identify the Discourses that are enacted in the text, by extension also considering what "actions, interactions, values, beliefs, and objects, tools, technologies, and environments are associated with this sort of language within a particular Discourse?" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 201). The second point asks students to identify and discuss "figured worlds": a picture of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal. What is taken to be typical or normal . . . varies by context and by people's social and cultural group" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 170). Essentially, this requires a great deal of thinking regarding how the text (and the speaker) reflect ways of life and living, including values, ways of interacting, and people. To achieve this high level of analysis and reflection means stepping into the text (and/or the speaker), in order to understand how the world is perceived, how the world is figured. And, the last point in the connecting things to the world tool (connections to other texts) means identifying and forming how and why language is used to "quote, refer to, or allude to other 'texts' . . . or other styles of language (social languages)" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 201). While these points have been rearranged from Gee's origi-

nal version, following such a progression (from Discourse to figured worlds to intertextuality) allows for a broadening understanding of the text and its connections between and with the world, as well as the speaker. In practice, this movement outward would then be followed by reflection and connections to the self, as discussion of the diversity of connections will allow students to relate to and engage with the text.

Discourses Matter

Again, the purpose of discourse analysis is to study "language-in-use." What's accomplished through such a study, as outlined by Gee, is an explicit and critical understanding of language and how it's used. When followed by exigency and practice in the classroom, as in the pedagogy advocated in this thesis, using discourse analysis guides students in exploring their own language and d/Discourse practice, as well. Another fundamental aspect of discourse analysis is that it also explores relationships, namely that between the speaker(s) and the intended audience. Much of the work done in discourse analysis implicitly revolves around uncovering and analyzing these relationships. Specifically, what Gee's framework for discourse analysis offers is the opportunity to critically examine the world *through* the word and words. Also implicit in this model is drawing connections to our own lives. Whereas other models of discourse analysis take a scientific bend, studying subjects and drawing conclusions without necessarily reflecting on our own lives, Gee's use of discourse analysis urges us to take a more humanistic approach.

Readers may wonder why discourse analysis matters, especially to middle- and high-school students. It matters because *doing* discourse analysis allows people to dig into and get to the nitty-gritty of language and people and the world. What this exploration and analysis manifests is growth, development, and, ultimately, a better understanding of our selves and our

world: its cultures, its people, its histories – its Discourses and its diversity. So, yes, discourse analysis matters. As Gee notes,

> What meanings we give to words are based on knowledge we acquire and choices we make, as well as values and beliefs—and, yes, even interests—we have. Words are consequential. They matter. Words and the world are married. (Gee *Social Linguistics* 25)

How this "mattering" will come into play in the classroom will be discussed in chapter three and will be more clearly articulated in the unit plan.

Chapter Three: Implementing a Pedagogy of Engagement Infused with Discourse Analysis

As already discussed in chapter one, a pedagogy of engagement includes three main characteristics: flow, dialogic processes, and reflection. The first characteristic is a reference to Csikszentmihalyi's research, which focuses on how people engage in *and* with hobbies and interests, ultimately finding pleasure. Flow itself is comprised of two main categories: (1) how a teacher facilitates learning and (2) the learner's experience while in flow. By tying this to education and learning, the hope is that students will experience the same feelings – pleasure, enjoyment, fun – in their learning. The second and third characteristics refer to creating a classroom centered on collaboration and discussion and using reflection as an integral part of the learning experience, respectively. Overall, the purpose of using and integrating such a pedagogy is to propel student learning and achievement by bringing pleasure and relevancy, which help facilitate *engagement*, back into learning. As argued elsewhere in this thesis, learning should be reconceptualized as a fun endeavor. However, the current Discourses around education, fueling educational policy and curricula, have effected an educational system centered on testing, statistics, artificial learning, and curricula that override students' well-being and best interests. In essence, this type of system works in opposition to instilling fun and enjoyment in learning, thus doing a disservice to our students. And while I recognize the heft of policy – on teachers, on administrators, on students – and both the reality and necessity of meeting the government's requirements, what I offer is a pedagogy that *exceeds* these standards. What I mean by this is that standards do not tell educators *how* we teach (Common Core Standards Initiative; Beach 7). Nor do standards dictate *why* we teach. The "how" and the "why" questions serve as the foundation of our pedagogies; they're the lifeblood of our careers and our drive to impact students' lives. By focusing on these two fundamentals – how we teach and why we teach – we are able to

exceed standards and policy by not allowing ourselves or our students to be limited. And so, by focusing on students' needs and their learning first and policies second, as a pedagogy of engagement does, we can more ably enable our students to learn and achieve, moving well past any standards. Even more important, is that a pedagogy of engagement encourages lifelong learning; so when standards are no longer present – after graduation, for example – learning will still be a vital aspect of our students' lives.

What a Pedagogy of Engagement Looks Like & Practices to Support

Before detailing what a pedagogy of engagement entails and looks like, specifically, let me first give you a couple of visual snapshots that illustrate this pedagogy. In snapshot #1, the teacher is not the center of attention, but is off to the side, monitoring and/or guiding students, who are working animatedly in small groups. The students understand the task, its purpose, and their own goals – they have a conscious and explicit understanding of the learning material and their own learning. The use of dialogism in this snapshot is used to further engage and support learning, as students work collaboratively in groups. In snapshot #2, the students are in a myriad of groups: some work by themselves, some work in pairs, while some work in small groups, as the class is involved in a writing workshop. The teacher sits at her desk with a student, discussing the student's writing and her goals and progress in this assignment. Like in the first snapshot, students have an explicit understanding of their own goals and the goals of the assignment here, in snapshot #2. The structure of the classroom, in having a variety of groups, likewise establishes a focus on individual needs and abilities. These components help to foster autonomy, relevancy, and motivation in learning and progressing as a learner. In snapshot #3, the entire class is involved in a whole-class piece of drama, known as forum theater: one group of students acts out a passage of text, while the other group directs and tells the actors how to proceed and

perform. In this snapshot the teacher allows the students to lead the activity, with the selection of a director (or co-directors), only stepping in for guidance and direction when needed. The use of a balance of skills and abilities – via choice of role and level of participation – and use of immediate feedback from both peers and the teacher encourages flow and engagement, as does dialogism. Reflection, too, plays an important role in this snapshot, as students evaluate the performances of the forum theater, making connections between the performance and the text and the text and the world, including our own lives. Overall, in entering this classroom, a person can *feel* the energy – like a buzzing – that may be accompanied by noisy chatter or, conversely, the quietness of total concentration. You'd also see that students are working hard, as they are bent over their desks, leaning inward toward their work or their group members, and connecting to the learning material. Lastly, the most striking visuals include focused and interested body language and facial expressions.

To now break down this description, a pedagogy of engagement, first of all, follows a learner-centered model for teaching, which "aims to capitalize on the expertise that students bring with them to class, and to teach them what we know as more experienced readers and writers" (Smith and Wilhelm 192-3). That is, teachers and students construct knowledge and learning together; however, it is clear that students are the ones in charge of their education, as they both contribute to and are responsible for their own and others' learning. Every facet of this pedagogy is centered on the learner and learning. Within a learner-centered model also comes autonomy and competence, which, as you'll remember is a condition that learners experience while being in flow (Csikszentmihalyi 8; Fredericks 81). As Csikszentmihalyi further points out, autonomy also leads to motivation, as students become engaged in learning and continue to seek more learning opportunities (23, 29). In developing autonomy, students are also able to ascertain

goals and feedback on their own learning, enabling them to self-direct and become even more autonomous in their learning (ibid). A final note on a learner-centered model for teaching comes from Peter McInerney, who studied educators using engagement in their classrooms and found that "they [educators] affirmed student agency by viewing them as constructors of their own knowledge and language, rather than being passive recipients of some externally imposed curriculum" (McInerney 30). Again, McInerney notes the active role that students have in their learning and looks to how a pedagogy centered on engagement has the ability to exceed standards.

Within this learner-centered model, the roles that educators have are equally important. As mentioned, a learner-centered classroom places students' needs and goals in learning and engaging with the learning material first and foremost. However, within this model, educators have the responsibility of assessing and ascertaining what these needs and goals are, in order to create curricula that meet these needs and in order to guide students as learners. In this model, then, educators' roles include planner, facilitator, guide, and expert, to name a few. Deciding what role(s) to take on is based on learners' needs, thus emphasizing the need for flexible teaching approaches. This dynamic model of both teaching and learning demonstrates the concerted team effort required for effective and authentic learning. Much of the work of educators here is behind-the-scenes, laying a foundation from which students can further establish themselves as engaged learners.

Another important facet of a pedagogy of engagement is diversity and versatility in strategies and, with these, flexibility, in order to meet students' needs and abilities. What I mean by "diverse" strategies relates to an educator's use of activities and assignments that appeal to students' interests, abilities, and learning styles. Of course, a diverse array of teaching strategies also lessens the likelihood of students *disengaging* by sheer boredom due to repetition. Integrat-

ing a diverse array of strategies is also important because engagement itself is “malleable” and is “a function of both the individual and the context” (Fredericks 82-3). Fredericks et al, who reviewed research on engagement, found that “engagement” and the traits that help manifest engagement vary from one classroom and school to the next, therefore emphasizing the need for educators to know their students. As Smith and Wilhelm point out, “we have to know both our students and our subject” (187). Being an educator means that we teach students and we teach in our subject area, as Smith and Wilhelm suggest, not one or the other. While this duality in our role as educators allows us to incorporate diverse strategies, it also allows educators to understand how to best engage students and foster learning (by knowing our students *and* our subject *and* pedagogy). Ultimately, these facets of understanding and knowing, as educators work to better student learning, underscore the significance of teacher support and advocacy in engagement (Smith and Wilhelm 187; Fredericks 75-6; McInerney 30).

Before moving to more specific practices in a pedagogy of engagement, a final focus of this pedagogy is inquiry. Specifically, “inquiry” emphasizes the process and authenticity of learning, by creating questions centered on topics that interest and matter to students (Smith and Wilhelm 188-190). Smith and Wilhelm suggest using inquiry projects, in which students select the topic and work to answer questions that they genuinely would like to learn the answer to. The process of inquiry adds to the relevancy and “relatedness” of learning, increasing engagement and motivation, as has already been argued (Fredericks 81; Smith and Wilhelm 188).

Finally, more specific strategies to implement in establishing a pedagogy of engagement include frontloading activities, elements of choice, and feedback as dialogue (Smith and Wilhelm 197-8; VanDeWeghe 93-96, 117-8). The first of these, “frontloading,” simply means heavily foregrounding units for students, so that they are able to engage in the issues and texts stud-

ied. Frontloading also builds intrigue and curiosity, which naturally leads to inquiry. The second strategy mentioned has already been implied throughout, in that students need to have elements of choice in their education, for example, in ascertaining goals to achieve, texts to study, and projects to complete. Having choices increases autonomy and independence in learning and increases motivation in *wanting* to learn and engage. Thirdly, framing feedback – both verbal and written – as a dialogue, a conversation, portrays the idea that learning is a continuous process – the teacher doesn't have the final say – in which we work with one another to build knowledges. Using this strategy ascertains the fact that the teacher does not have the final say and isn't the bearer of all learning, rather it generates authentic thoughtfulness toward goals and objectives in learning. Additionally, creating a dialogue in feedback lessens the anxiousness some students experience in receiving comments and evaluations, as well.

Overall, I would be amiss if I didn't emphasize our Discourses as educators as extremely significant in shaping our students' and community's thoughts and perceptions of learning. First of all, our d/Discourses must emphasize the potential for all learners to achieve and engage in the learning material, which means that we must not create d/Discourses of exclusion in our curricula or pedagogies, in particular. Our discourses in talking to students should similarly suggest Discourses of ability and achievement, emphasizing the belief that all students are learners. Secondly, as VanDeWeghe suggests, we need to also focus on "engaged modeling," as we demonstrate being engaged in both our minds and our hearts (49). This point implies that our work habits should model engagement and our discourses, especially, must demonstrate the enjoyment found in learning. Rather than portraying activities like reading and writing, for example, as "work" or being tedious, our aim should be to highlight the benefits and, yes, the potential for fun, in such activities. And so, modeling engagement and having the same expectation for our

students establishes the fundamental principle of a pedagogy of engagement: all students can learn and achieve.

Using Creative Strategies for Engagement

As already discussed, our understanding of engagement is "malleable," in order to appeal to a diverse population of students. What this implies, moreover, is the flexibility in how to integrate a pedagogy of engagement. Despite this "malleability," there are certain practices and strategies that serve as instrumental in establishing this pedagogy, all of which were previously explained. The aim of this section is to argue for an emphasis in using creative strategies in fostering a pedagogy of engagement. The term "creative" refers to activities that utilize and encourage imagination. Another term for creative strategies is active strategies; however, I felt that this term is limiting, referring primarily to bodily movement, whereas creative strategies center around "movement," so to speak, of the mind. Strategies include such things as drama, art, games, and sports, all of which Csikszentmihalyi notes as being particularly effective practices in enacting flow (12). While the linking of creative strategies to flow is not purposeful, it does highlight our propensity to experience flow when participating in these types of ties. Bringing these active strategies into the classroom, then, is done with the purpose of more effectively enacting flow for students, in order to more effectively engage and learn.

Furthermore, creative strategies allow students to be imaginative in learning, providing memorable learning experiences. In particular, the use of drama and art are useful to delve into the imaginary, which, as Vygotsky suggests, "can be regarded as a means of developing abstract thought" (Vygotsky 103). When culminated with reflection, as a pedagogy of engagement uses, abstract thought is connected and made relevant to students' lives, strengthening the staying power of the learning material. Essentially, students must make their own knowledge – which is

internal – external in using creative strategies. The process of imagining makes learning much more tangible, for both students and teachers, as they're able to visibly construct information and ideas. As Vygotsky's research indicates and as outlined in chapter one, this process of internalization to externalization then moves to internalization, repeating and reinforcing connections, and, thus, learning.

Using creative strategies in education and learning is a burgeoning field, and there are limitless possibilities for the classroom, as long as educators also remember to have an imagination and be creative in their pedagogy. Example activities include hotseating, writing in role, tableaux, competitions and games, montages, human continuums, and graffiti. Inevitably, creative strategies offer unique learning experiences for students, and, yes, they often involve elements of enjoyment, too.

Pedagogy of Engagement and Discourse Analysis

The majority of this chapter has revolved around integrating a pedagogy of engagement, but the second piece to my thesis centers on the tools of discourse analysis. I've argued that a pedagogy of engagement infused with these tools of discourse analysis better enables students to learn. My lack of attention to discourse analysis in this chapter is not to diminish its importance; however, as an educator, I view the development and actual application of a pedagogy, such as a pedagogy of engagement, more complex and, therefore, something that needs more space to examine. Again, I want to emphasize that a pedagogy of engagement, in my argument, offers an approach in *how* to teach, and discourse analysis offers a set of tools in exploring the content – the *what* – of teaching. Specifically, and as already mentioned, the "what" involves analyzing language and words – discourses – in order to study and connect to the world around us.

Essentially, how to link the two involves first establishing the framework of a pedagogy of engagement and, second, using discourse analysis. Being complicated in nature, it's particularly important that students are engaged in the learning material and activity(ies) before shifting to discourse analysis, as engagement acts to propel and enhance student learning. Engagement – fun, pleasure – acts as a launching point, in this way, to then transition into the difficult terrain of discourse analysis. While this movement may seem like trickery, it pushes students to engage in high-order skills that they most likely would be resistant toward, such as analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.

In regard to how to use discourse analysis, there are four tools, which were discussed in chapter two: (1) language and context; (2) saying, doing, and designing; (3) building things in the world; and (4) connecting things to the world. Using these tools involves asking a lot of questions, on the whole, with the aim of considering how the text is created and crafted by the speaker and for what purposes.

Each tool of discourse analysis should be used, like any tool, only when it's needed and applicable. Specifically, the tools should be layered throughout curricula, so that the skills are reinforced and strengthened for students. These four tools, which move from micro-level analysis to macro-level in moving from the first to the last tool, and discourse analysis itself, also need to be catered based on ability and age, in order to have appropriate outcomes. Again, an important part of instilling a pedagogy of engagement (in creating flow, specifically) is having a balance of skill and ability level; pushing too much one way or the other risks damaging engagement and learning. To adapt discourse analysis to the middle-school level, for example, I would recommend using tools three and four, as this age group will be able to comprehend how language builds and connects to things, whereas the more minute analyses required in the first

two tools may be beyond their grasp. Despite this, using slight elements of the first two tools within these grades would be beneficial, in both gauging student ability and enforcing critical-thinking skills. For example, beginning with analyzing a word in a text or the effect of a gesture would not be out of reach. For high-school students, I would use a similar approach, in beginning slowly and then building in more complex analyses more often. Having a visual representation of these tools, such as a poster similar to the one in Appendix C, would also be beneficial for reminding students of questions to consider while studying texts and what to look for when analyzing material. Of course, such a poster also means that students need to have explicit knowledge of the tools themselves, knowing their names and how and when to use them. Again, however, tools should only be integrated into curricula in such a way as to foster engaged thinking and learning.

In terms of strategies in using discourse analysis, there are a few practices to remember. First of all, Gee recommends using Discourse maps, which, as it sounds, creates a visual representation or guide in analyzing Discourses (Gee *Social Linguistics* 215). Second of all, and most important, is the strategy and practice of simply asking questions. Emphasizing the need to always ask how and why, in particular, is a key skill for students to have through school and beyond. Overall, Gee notes that

> Good classroom instruction [. . .] can and should lead to meta-knowledge, to seeing how the Discourses you have already got (not just the languages) relate to those you are attempting to acquire, and how the ones you are trying to acquire relate to self and society. But to do this, the classroom must juxtapose different Discourses for comparison and contrast. Diversity, then, is not an 'add-on,' but a

> cognitive necessity if we wish to develop meta-awareness and overt reflective insight on the part of learners. (Gee *Social Linguistics* 169-170)

What Gee suggests, here, is what has been argued all along: Discourses highlight diversity. What's more, he argues that by studying these Discourses, such as through a Discourse map or discourse analysis, it leads to "meta-knowledge," which is knowledge (understanding, knowing) about your knowledge, essentially. For Gee, the effect of meta-knowledge is liberation:

> Meta-knowledge is liberation and power, because it leads to the ability to manipulate, to analyze, to resist while advancing. [. . .] Thus, the liberal classroom that avoids overt talk of form and superficialities, of how things work, as well as of their socio-cultural-political basis, is no help. Such talk can be powerful so long as one never thinks that in talking about grammar, form, or superficialities one is getting people to actually acquire Discourses. (Gee "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics" 532)

While these passages are bulky, Gee makes important points, particularly on two fronts: first of all, by *not* integrating critical thinking and meta-knowledge, such as through using discourse analysis, we are disadvantaging our students and hindering their potential achievement; second of all, diversity is a "necessity." Together, the two combine to emphasize important threads of this research, as these questions and discourse analysis itself push students to think about themselves, their communities, and the world, as well as how they all connect and shape one another through language and D/discourses. Doing so enables students to learn, of course, but it also enables them to *engage* in much broader conversations than those happening in the classroom, all of which is integrated and further explained in the unit plan (chapter four).

What becomes clear, in using a pedagogy of engagement infused with the tools of discourse analysis, is that students are engaged in two ways: as learners, in the classroom, and as learners of the world. By establishing a pedagogy that empowers students, they become more independent and thoughtful in their learning, enabling them to achieve great heights.

Chapter Four: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

The primary reason *To Kill a Mockingbird* (*TKAM*) was chosen as the centerpiece of this unit is because of its relevancy and the importance of the issues that Harper Lee fronts. These issues or Discourses – of racism, hatred, poverty, and childhood, for example – are invaluable topics to explore, especially for young adults. Of course, this novel is also a recommended text within the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which adds to the regard with which superintendents and principals may view this unit.

The focus of the unit itself is on our intersectionality – how we're composed of multiple selves, multiple identities, which come together to form one whole. What I'm seeking to complicate are black-and-white versions of the world, particularly stereotypes and generalizations, as these form boundaries that constrain ourselves and others. That is, narrowmindedness limits our thinking and our learning, as well as our interactions with others and the world.

More specifically, this unit is designed for a Grade 10 English-Language Arts classroom, most likely toward the end of the school year. The primary goals are outlined on the unit cover page (seen above), but they include (1) making connections between the novel and today's society, in the 21st Century; (2) analyzing and evaluating language; (3) using drama techniques; (4) exploring the relevance and importance of the novel's issues to students' own lives; and (5) reflecting and analyzing on our own language use (d/Discourses). Based on these goals, there's an obvious focus on connecting the setting of *TKAM* – 1930s Alabama – to today's students, who may feel quite disconnected from the context and issues raised by Lee. For example, it may be difficult for students to imagine the relevancy of a severely conservative and segregated setting, which is the background (and foundation, really) for Scout – as our narrator – and her childhood. In this case, for Grade 10 students, they will perceive a gap in time, geography, issues,

and age, if they are not directly asked to reflect and make connections between the text and their own lives. Throughout the unit these connections and the bend toward relevancy are achieved through actual reflections that pose questions to students, as well as the selection of texts and framing of lessons that highlight these links. For example, each lesson has a reflection that usually includes some aspect of personal connection to the text and the learning objectives, and the supplemental materials, such as poetry and nonfiction texts, point to the connectedness between *TKAM* and our lives today. Within these unit goals is also the focus on language analysis, including that of our own. The CCSS (which are noted) also center on and are derived from these goals. And, lastly, the key questions and considerations, which are also outlined in the unit overview, are linked to the unit goals and the standards. These questions are used to encourage and facilitate students' own inquiry throughout the unit, as they're centered on the primary issues and concerns of this unit, such as how language (d/Discourses) creates and shapes meaning.

In regard to other decisions made in creating this unit, I'd also like to address the supplemental texts selected and the integration of key vocabulary. First of all, when selecting supplemental texts, my aim was to offer a diverse range, from nonfiction to photographs to art to poetry, so that students can explore the issues and key questions through a variety of forms. Obviously, this range of texts appeals to a breadth of learning styles, but it also emphasizes the multiplicity of responses, in how people respond and interact with the issues in our society (that we're focusing on in this unit). I'd further note that the CCSS emphasize the integration and students' interaction with nonfiction texts, in particular. As for the key vocabulary, this list of ten words are the "key" terms of our unit, and they will be continually reinforced and used throughout the lesson. In my experience, having a set list of words (usually between 10-15) for a single unit, which are readily available and consistently used by both the teacher and the students, is an

effective method for learning vocabulary. Rather than superficially memorizing a set list of words every week or so, having a set of key vocabulary for a single unit (for a month or two) enables students to take ownership of the vocabulary and authentically integrate them into their discourses for an extended period of time. The words themselves relate to the issues and questions of our unit, so students will have many opportunities to use them in class. More importantly, however, I would argue that the majority of these words transcend the classroom setting and are important for developing students' vocabulary and knowledge of the world. Activities that will help in reinforcing these words include vocabulary charades and written and verbal responses that integrate these terms.

Overall, when designing the unit, like most educators, I worked backwards: I took my unit goals, designed formal assessments and projects, and then worked from the end of the unit to the beginning. This process was used to ensure that students have ample time to complete and achieve the unit goals and the assessments paired with these goals. In moving from the end of the unit to the beginning, for this unit, I specifically set aside the last three weeks to work on our final projects, both of which are outlined in the unit plan. After having a basic structure for the unit, I moved to designing lesson plans. Both for the lessons and the general structure of the unit, my aim was to create an engaging learning environment, as argued within a pedagogy of engagement, before moving to more difficult work, such as discourse analysis. For example, this layout of first establishing engagement and then critical-thinking skills can be seen in first completing a final project (visual representation) that allows students to connect and articulate their ideas through a form that they feel comfortable with. After completing this final project, in which students have thought out and formed their own ideas, we move to the final essay, which asks students to, essentially, write about the issues and questions explored in their final pro-

ject. This progression, from being engaged (being hooked) to higher-order and more complex task, is also the general structure for each lesson. That is, the warm-ups, in particular, along with the beginnings of each lesson, are designed to hook students and develop a connection, an engagement, which somehow relates to the learning objectives and key ideas for the lesson. Yet, it's important to note that by first seeking to establish engagement, it does not imply that engagement is not present throughout more complex and difficult activities, such as discourse analysis. Nor does it suggest that the activities used to garner engagement are simple or easy. Rather, lessons are scaffolded to increase in difficulty and enable students to enter their ZPD, in balancing skill and ability, as argued in the introduction and in chapter one. This scaffolding, within a pedagogy of engagement and discourse analysis, means layering these two facets – engagement and discourse analysis – and simultaneously increasing the difficulty of activities and the learning material. Thus, while engagement is initially used to manifest focus, relevancy, and interest, certain activities centered on engagement also involve critical thinking and higher-order skills. For those reading this unit, I've highlighted the unit calendar to identify (1) activities involving discourse analysis (in pink); (2) creative strategies aimed to create engagement (in yellow); (3) the inclusion of a handout, which are in Appendix D (in blue); and (4) the inclusion of a full lesson plan (in green).

To now zoom into the lessons and the research used in creating this unit plan, I'd like to discuss the lesson for Day 16, which is based on Atticus's explanation of "folks." This lesson is divided into five main sections: (1) a warm-up involving images from Hurricane Katrina; (2) performing a trial to consider who's responsible for the death of Tom Robinson; (3) discussion of d/Discourses of racism in *TKAM* and today; (4) writing a newspaper article based on a Discourse performed in small groups; and (5) an evaluative reflection. The actual practice in facili-

tating this lesson can be found in the lesson plan itself; what I'd like to focus on is the research and theory behind the lesson plan. First of all, engagement is instilled through the use of Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow, all of which are described in chapter one. Specifically, the scaffolding in progressing from analyzing images to a short passage to physical performances to larger passages of texts allows for students to critically engage with our objectives, which center on the d/Discourses of racism and how discourses both suggest and build Discourses, in this case attitudes toward and about other people. The scaffolding moves from students identifying d/Discourses to analyzing to then using and evaluating these d/Discourses. The use of visual and creative strategies, as students analyze the Hurricane Katrina images and their own performance, generates concrete and memorable representations of the effects of d/Discourses, from which students can then – in following flow and engagement – more ably analyze and think about these effects through the use of the tools of discourse analysis. This lesson also demonstrates a balance of skill and ability, which are necessary conditions of flow, as students can choose their own level of participation in the performance activity, and through the scaffolded progression of the lesson itself. In regard to dialogism and reflection, both of these aspects are also prevalent. The former is used throughout the lesson, as students work in pairs to discuss the photographs, as they work together to perform and stage a trial, and in collaboratively writing a newspaper article. And, finally, the latter (reflection) is woven throughout the lesson, as students discuss and connect the use and effects of discourses to the text and to their own lives.

In the end, these threads discussed throughout my research – flow, dialogism, reflection, which generate engagement, and discourse analysis – are consistently integrated into the lessons provided. Together, their primary effect is creating an environment centered around a critical

engagement and conversation with the world, in order to better understand the world itself and our own roles within it.

Unit Overview

Unit Title
The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries in *To Kill a Mockingbird* – A 25-day Unit for Tenth-Grade English

Unit Goals

- Students will make comparisons and connections between Harper Lee's 1930s and the 21st-Century in order to consider the relevancy of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and what we can still learn from it – why it's important to read – especially in regard to the impact of language.
- Students will analyze and evaluate language (passages, texts) in order to consider the values and beliefs of the speakers *and* how this language shapes/influences others' beliefs. This will also help to enhance critical-thinking skills and an understanding of how/why writers use language (and structure).
- Students will use drama techniques, performing in-role activities such as discussions, a forum theater, hotseat activity, etc., in order to better connect to the novel and understand point-of-view.
- In order to make connections between texts and consider the relevancy/importance of issues, students will create a visual representation (final project) and then also write a comparative essay, focusing on supporting their arguments with references to the text.
- Students will reflect on their own language use, in order to explore how their beliefs have been shaped by language and how they influence others with their language.

Centerpieces
NOVEL: Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
POETRY: "BlackGirl"; "Half-Caste," John Agard; "I Look at the World," Langston Hughes; "Search for my Tongue," Sujata Bhatt; "Kid," Simon Armitage; "Homage to My Hips," Lucille Clifton
IMAGES/PHOTOS, ART: Hurricane Katrina (loot/find) photos from AP; *TKAM* book covers/representations, photos/symbols that represent, quotations
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: "Our 21st-Century Segregation: We're Still Divided by Race" (in *The Guardian*); "NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly 'Wanted to Instill Fear' in Black and Latino Men" (from *The Guardian*)

Questions

- How does how we think of others and how we treat others linked, if at all?
- Why do people think and/or treat others differently? Poorly? Better?
- Where and how do we learn how to treat others? Where do stereotypes come from?
- What does how we treat others and think about others say about ourselves?
- How do stereotypes create boundaries (for all involved)?

- How can/do people break these boundaries?
- How does language shape how we treat (and think) of others?

Key Standards (NYS Common Core)

- RL 2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL 7: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.
- RL 11: Interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, aesthetically and ethically by making connections to: other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events and situations.
    - Self-select text to respond and develop innovative perspectives.
    - Establish and use criteria to classify, select, and evaluate texts to make informed about the quality of the pieces.
- W 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- W 9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL 1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues,* building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Vocabulary

1. Narrator
2. Point-of-view
3. Protagonist
4. Antagonist
5. Setting
6. Characterization
7. Prejudice
8. Discrimination
9. Segregation
10. Stereotype

Unit Calendar

Notes:

- Students will do the bulk of reading at home, with us then discussing/exploring the passages in class afterward.
- Days highlighted in green signify full lesson plans, which are included.
- Items highlighted in blue indicate that a handout is used (and included – see Appendix D).
- Items highlighted in yellow indicate creative strategies.
- Items highlighted in pink indicate discourse analysis.

Month #1

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Week A	• Warm-up: charades (act out/perform random objects; then move to abstract/conceptual topics; last round – every group assigned word "stereotype" to perform) • Discuss: what is a stereotype? What do our performances reveal about stereotypes? • Journal prompt: think about and describe a time that you were stereotyped or that you stereotyped someone else. How did you feel? • Agree/disagree statements on stereotypes (effects, origins, why used, etc.) – line up/arrange • Inquiry project (in pairs or small groups): research 3-4 examples of stereotypes, as portrayed in the media from DIFFERENT sources and forms (e.g., song, ad, tv, film, news, etc.). • Whole-class discussion of inquiry • Define "stereotype" based on research and discussion • Reflection: return to agree/disagree statements – any changes? Links to inquiries? How does language impact/is involved?	• Warm-up: image analysis, predictions • Frontload activity: Clue using photos/images • Introduce unit and its goals/objectives • Research: find facts on given topic; speed-date • Begin reading ch. 1 (pages 3-9) • Reflection (on post-it): write question and attempt at answer based on research and discussion	• Warm-up: childhood monsters w/ props • Finish reading chapter 1 (pages 9-16) • Character portraits • Reflection: connection to characters (move to spot in room to show what character relate to) • HW: read chapters 2-4

	Day 4	Day 5

Week B	• Warm-up: use yarn to form and explain connections between characters (Boo, Dill, Scout, Jem, Atticus, Calpurnia, the Cunninghams, the Ewells)
	• Write down character map (in notes)
	• Review (Think, Pair, Share): other fears, monsters from chapters 2-4 on index card
	• Unit vocabulary: divvy up each word to a group; research, draw it, link it to reading, teach it to the class
	• Key word: characterization
	• Scout as narrator – review chapters, select 1-2 quotes that demonstrate her personality, attitude. Is she reliable? Should we believe her?
	  ○ Discourse analysis: language (discourse) that Scout uses (via Lee) to build character, attitudes
	• Reflection: cast Scout – think of a person (in life or actress/actor) who acts as you imagine her
	• HW: read chapter 5
		• Warm-up: abstract machine (students build a machine using only body parts/noises, connecting together)
		• Setting of *TKAM*: use Legos/building blocks (or virtual/technological building program) to create "summer boundaries," as described by Scout (pages 6-7)
		  ○ Label setting
		  ○ Draw map in notes
		  ○ Identify one quotation that describes entire setting for *TKAM* (1930s Maycomb); use Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link method to explore importance of setting and things we should keep in mind as we read.
		  ○ If time allows, discuss or write about own childhood setting; connections to *TKAM*?
		• Connect to facts from Day 2
		• Individual student conferences re goals, objectives (as complete activities on setting)
		• Reflection: how is our warm-up (a machine) like the settings of *TKAM*?
		• HW: read chapters 6-8

<table>
<tr>
<td>Week A</td>
<td>Day 6
• Warm-up: show and tell (child-hood object)
• Connect to objects found in TKAM
• Write story of object (from object's POV)
• Reflection: golden line
• HW: read ch. 9</td>
<td>Day 7
• Warm-up: vocabulary charades
• Write one sentence related to reading so far that uses vocab. word
• Open topic/content: allow students to choose what we discuss, explore in TKAM based on their interests; aim to link to stereotypes and integrate vocabulary words (encourage to use them in responses). For example:
  o Conflicts in TKAM
  o Return to questions from Day 2
  o Perform/dramatize scenes (staging paper?)
• Reflection: Evaluate novel using a line graph to demonstrate interest (on Y-axis; time on X-axis); explain in 1-2 sentences
• HW: read ch. 10</td>
<td>Day 8
• Warm-up (journal prompt): reaction/reflection on Tim Johnson
• Hotseat characters re thoughts on Atticus killing Tim Johnson (two students per character: one conscience and one actual character)
• Reflection: pyramid (3 things you've learned at bottom of pyramid; 2 questions you need answered; 1 thing you already knew but was emphasized)
• TPS for reflection
• HW: read ch. 11-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week B</td>
<td>Day 9

NO PLANS (built in flexibility)
HW: read ch 14</td>
<td colspan="2">Day 10
• Warm-up: draw and caption an image that illustrates courage
  o How does this relate to Atticus's view of bravery?
• Key word: point-of-view
• Read ch. 15
• Forum theater of jail scene (ch. 15) (focus on gestures, body language); teacher takes back seat – lead director takes over
  o Options: freeze frame, silent scene
  o Discuss: identify at least THREE points-of-view; how would these people/groups view bravery – who's brave, according to them? Link to previous discussion. Implications of this? (MVP of POV?)
• Reflection: comment on, evaluate TKAM so far and goals, objectives
• HW: read ch. 16-18</td>
</tr>
</table>

Month #2

<table>
<tr>
<td rowspan="1">Week A</td>
<td>Day 11
• Warm-up: draw map of courtroom (based on ch 16 description)
• Return and give feedback on reflections from Day 10 (both as a class and individual/written)
• Key word: segregation
• Discuss, analyze: how/why is the structure/layout of the courtroom important? How do physical boundaries created relate to mental/psychological boundaries in community?
  ○ Link to “boundaries” from Day 5. What are “boundaries”?
• Connect to own “boundaries”: begin with drawing setting, like the lunch room; move to abstract
• Reflection: Select one event and/or character from TKAM that links to your own “boundaries” in life. Explain the connection in 4-5 sentences.
• HW: read ch. 19-21</td>
<td>Day 12
• Warm-up: role play re trial
• Introduce trial assignment
• Work in groups to develop and complete trial assignment
• Reflection: ticket-out-the-door (explain one revision in passage)
• HW: trial assignment</td>
<td>Day 13
• Warm-up: bippity-bippity-bop
• Practice and then perform dramatized scenes
• Reflection (verbal discussion; use TPS via small groups):
  ○ What do our performances reveal about how language builds identities and relationships?
  ○ What relationships and identities are being built in TKAM? What about others not in the trial?
• HW: read ch. 22-24</td>
</tr>
</table>

Week B	Day 14	Day 15

Week B	Day 14
	• Warm-up: agree or disagree continuum: Do you agree or disagree with Atticus's statement about "Folks"?
	  ○ Discuss Atticus's statement and students' thoughts on it
	• "BlackGirl" – read, discuss, connect
	  ○ Give students words, phrases from poem; make predictions about poem (theme, issues)
	  ○ Intertextuality to Seuss – why?
	  ○ What stereotypes does the author comment on, critique? What's her purpose in writing?
	  ○ Relate back to boundaries, stereotypes in *TKAM* – write parallel poem to "BlackGirl" poem based on character experiences (from their POV)
	  ○ Choral montage (in groups) of character's experience
	• Reflection: Analyze, comment on one line from any of the poems; explain impact, significance; how it demonstrates a stereotype
	• HW: write poem based on idea, structure of "BlackGirl" – may be about yourself or another person (think back to Day 1 and stereotypes we discussed)
		Day 15
		• Warm-up: share homework (depending on enthusiasm, whole-class sharing or small-group)
		• Key words: prejudice, discrimination
		• Jigsaw poems: split students into groups; each group will read and explore a poem (see cover page of unit). Then these groups will split and form new groups with a rep. from each poem. Discuss and share poems.
		• Use words/phrases from these poems to create a Wordle on either the word "prejudice," "discrimination," "stereotype," or "boundary" (or create a found poem)
		  ○ Discuss, reflect on this activity – how do poems build or connect to these issues?
		• Reflection: connections to "BlackGirl"? To your own poem?
		• HW: read ch. 25-26

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="1">Week A</td><td>Day 16
• Warm-up: loot vs. find images from Hurricane Katrina
  ○ Connect discussion of "folks" (from Day 14) w/ reading for HW
• Trial of Tom's death
  ○ Compare racial Discourses (treatment of Tom with treatment of Jews)
  ○ What views are represented re Tom's death? What views are not represented? How do these views build Discourses of racism?
  ○ Connections to today?
• Write (in a group) own newspaper article of Tom's death using given Discourse (in role)
• Reflection: peer feedback (in groups) – one question, one positive, one thing to improve
• HW: read ch. 27-29</td><td>Day 17
• Warm-up: rank characters
• Finish newspaper articles
• Read ch. 30-31
• Tableaux of last pages (scenes from Boo's perspective)
  ○ Compare Boo's discourses (film vs. novel) – how do each set up Discourses?
• Intro final project
• Reflection: go back to rankings (from warm-up) – does anything change? Comment on 1-2 of your rankings.</td><td>Day 18
• Warm-up: dominoes
• Brainstorm, model for final project
• Consider connections to goals for unit; discuss as a class these goals and progress
• Build and make proposals
• Reflection: one question, one exclamation point</td></tr>
<tr><td>Week B</td><td>Day 19*
• Work on final projects
• Create rubric for final project
• HW: work on final project</td><td colspan="2">Day 20*
• Work on final projects
• HW: finish final project</td></tr>
</table>

Month #3

<table>
<tr><td>Week A</td><td colspan="2">Day 21
• Present final projects</td><td colspan="2">Day 22
• Warm-up: concentration
• Introduce final essay
• Build grading criteria; discuss and list/note elements to make essay a "success"</td><td colspan="2">Day 23*
• Workshop essays
○ Aim to integrate vocabulary words from this unit . . .</td></tr>
<tr><td>Week B</td><td colspan="3">Day 24*
• Reflect, discuss: our own language (how others' language has influenced our beliefs and how our language has influence others)
• Workshop final essays</td><td colspan="3">Day 25
• Reflect on final essays and unit, including goals
• HW: essays due next lesson (to allow for final revisions considering our discussion)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Week A</td><td colspan="2">/</td><td colspan="2">/</td><td colspan="2">/</td></tr>
<tr><td>Week B</td><td colspan="3">/</td><td colspan="3">/</td></tr>
</table>

* Notes that these days/lessons will be very flexible, depending on students' needs. The intent is to conference and provide goals, feedback, using the progress sheet. Students may work in whatever condition is best for their learning, e.g., on computers, in groups, etc. Reflections will primarily be peer feedback and/or evaluative measures.

Potential activities to consider:

- Newspaper articles: "Our 21st-Century Segregation: We're Still Divided by Race" (in *The Guardian*); "NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly 'Wanted to Instill Fear' in Black and Latino Men" (from *The Guardian*)
    - Organization/structure (saying, doing, designing tool)
- What If? Reenactment
- Staging paper
- Elements of gothic (i.e., *The Grey Ghost*)
- Watch Gregory Peck film – compare
- Structure: importance of Part One, Part Two split?
- Continuum to consider order/organization of "stanzas" (Gee's idea units) – rearrange to demonstrate importance, purpose
- Reflections
    - top ten list
    - Post-it: R, ?, !

Lesson Plans

Lesson ? – Introduction to D/discourses

<table>
<tr><td>Date: /</td><td>Period: 80-minute period</td><td>Room No: Kristen Niemi</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Class: English 10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Focus: d/Discourse, “I am” poems
Context of Lesson within Unit:
This lesson would take place in the second or third week of school year; the overall unit would take anywhere from 2-4 80-minute lessons. At this point, students will have written their “I am” poems, after having workshopped them in class.
Prerequisites: introduction to classroom, classmates, learning environment</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Learning Objectives:
1. Students will perform and discuss their Discourses (from their “I am” poems), in order to explore their attitudes and beliefs and their connectedness to the world. The visual performances will also support engagement in creating/designing their d/Discourse maps.
NYS Common Core Learning Standards (www.nysed.gov):
• L 3: Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style.
Key words: build, identity, role, discourse, Discourse</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Homework set: /</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>Time:</td><td>Lesson Plan</td></tr>
<tr><td>15-20 min.

12-15 min.</td><td>Warm-up: Share “I am” poems in groups
• Overview: students will share their “I am” poems in small groups, discussing “golden lines” from each poem and how that line succeeds in demonstrating a role (an “I am”).
  o Directions: Hello ladies and gents. Today we’re going to use your wonderfully crafted “I am” poems for a new activity. Our focus is on how our language and our roles demonstrate our identities.
  o To begin, you’re going to share your “I am” poems in small groups. As a group, I want you to work together to do two things: (1) identify a “golden line” from each poem and (2) consider how that line succeeds in building a role, an identity. Any questions? [Use TPS] You have 15 minutes to complete this warm-up. [May take more than 15; budget for 20 minutes, to give students ample time to consider and discuss their poems and the language.]
  o Students work in groups. After, whole-class discussion. Discussion prompts:
    ▪ What types of things can language “build”? What does language – discourses – build in your “I am” poems? Types of roles? How is this done?
    ▪ What do readers learn about the narrator of the poem?
Perform Example Discourse
• Overview: the teacher or a student volunteer will “perform” one of his/her roles from the “I am” poem. The focus will be on demonstrating the “dance” of that role: expressions, gestures, clothes, etc. The performance will be rather</td></tr>
</table>

short (30 seconds), and it will be repeated a number of times, with discussion (in pairs) in between each performance.

- *Directions: With these thoughts in mind, we're now going to do a bit of drama and performance, using our "I am" poems.* [Ask for volunteer to perform]
- *Directions (continued): As the rest of us watch the performance of this role, I want us to consider how the expressions, the gestures, the language, and so on demonstrate that person's identity. Moreover, I want us to be specific about what pieces of the identity the "dance"/performance highlights.*
- Perform and model acting out of role
- Discuss (in between performances):
    - What role is he/she performing? What gestures, facial expressions, language, clothing, etc., did the person use in portraying this role?
    - What do the characteristics of the performance reveal about this person and the role he/she is acting out?
    - How can we change the performance to make the role even more convincing? Or less so, perhaps?

15-20 min.

Introduce tools of discourse analysis

- Overview: introduce students to the four tools of discourse analysis (see Appendix B). And then go back to modeled performance (previous activity).
    - *Directions: I want to introduce you now to two new terms: discourse and Discourse. Who can spot the difference? There's a reason one of these words is capitalized and the other is not: each has a different meaning. Small "d" discourse are stretches of language and how we make/create meaning.* [Model and discuss examples from previous activity] *While big "D" Discourse – and we need to call them "small 'd'" and "big 'D'" to keep them straight – are the roles and identities that we all play in life; they're our "dances" in life. In the previous performance, what was the main big D Discourse performed? How are the two terms connected?* [Use TPS]
        - *What are some examples of big "D" Discourses? What about small "d"?*
    - *Directions (continued): Our key focus throughout this school year is going to be in exploring these two terms. Why do you think that is? Why are these important? How we'll do this is through a set of four main tools.* [Introduce and review four tools (Appendix C).] *Using this chart and the questions provided, I'd like to return to our modeled performance and see if we can think about and explore any other points about how the small "d" discourse links to the big "D" Discourse.*
    - Review/return to performance

15-17 min.

Small-group performances of roles

- Students will use the tools of discourse analysis to analyze a performance from amongst their small group peers.
    - *Directions: In your small groups, you'll now have a volunteer (from your group) perform one of his/her roles – his/her Discourses – from the "I am" poem. Like we just did as a class, use the discourse analysis tools to discuss and answer how the person's discourse reveals his/her Discourse, es-*

7-8 min.

pecially the attitudes and beliefs.

- Act out Discourse; rotate through students, as time allows

Reflection (group): connection between discourse and Discourse

- Overview: groups will switch their newspaper articles with one another, read them, and then on an index card write (as a group) one question, one positive comment about the writing, and one thing to improve
  - Collect "I am" poems from students
  - *Directions: Your reflection today will be done in your groups. Each group will discuss two things: (1) how do small 'd' discourse and big 'D' Discourse connect? And (2) how do d/Discourses impact our lives? What do they reveal? After discussing, write your responses on an index card (answer each question on a different side).*
  - Discuss responses; turn in
  - *Directions/comments: Please turn your reflections in to me as you leave today. All of your group member's names should be at the top. Excellent work, overall! You're doing very difficult work, so pat yourself a high-five!*

Materials/resources:

- Index cards (for reflection)

Assessment for learning (AfL):

- Formal assessment:
  - "I am" poems
- Informal assessment:
  - Thumbs up/thumbs down for directions
  - Think-pair-share; give-one and get-one; discussions – gather students' own opinions and stances on key issues; gauge engagement with ideas and where/how to push students' thinking
  - Reflection demonstrates students' connections to characters and the novel, as well as any points that need to be reviewed, etc.

Plans for next lesson: Next lesson we'll use our "I am" poems to create discourse maps.

Lesson for Day 2 – Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries

<table>
<tr><td>Date: /</td><td>Period: 80-minute period</td><td>Room No: Kristen Niemi</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Class: English 10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Focus: “Clue”-like game using photos, images, and quotations; introduce unit; research and find facts based on given topic; begin reading chapter 1 in TKAM (pages 3-9 up to line “it was then that Dill gave us the idea of making Boo Radley come out”)
Context of Lesson within Unit:
This is the second lesson in our unit on To Kill a Mockingbird. The unit itself, including TKAM, have yet to be introduced. Rather, we’re frontloading the text, in order to build engagement and intrigue. In today’s lesson students will use images, photos, and quotations from TKAM to draw conclusions about the text.
Prerequisites: /</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Learning Objectives:
2. Students will analyze images that relate to TKAM, in order to build knowledge of the text and its issues and form questions.
3. Students will identify facts based on a given topic, in order to begin understanding the context and setting of the novel.
NYS Common Core Learning Standards (www.nysed.gov):
• RI 1: Develop factual, interpretive, and evaluative questions for further exploration of the topic.
Key words: fact, setting, context</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Homework set: /</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Time:</th><th>Lesson Plan</th></tr>
<tr><td>5-6 min.

20 min.</td><td>Warm-up: Image analysis, predictions
• Overview: each student will receive an image of some sort that’s related to TKAM. Based on this image, the task is to analyze the image – what it may be about, what’s happening, etc. – noting 3-5 points and then create two predictions about the text.
o Directions: Good morning, ladies and gents! For your warm-up today each of you will receive an image of some sort that relates to our next text. Your job, with that image, is to individually study it and consider what’s happening, why it may be important. Then, do two things: (1) note 3-5 points about the image and (2) create two predictions about the text based on the image. Check with the person beside you to quickly see that he/she understood these directions.
o You have approximately FIVE minutes to complete the warm-up.
Clue Using Images
• Overview: each student will, based on the shape drawn on the back of his/her image, form a new group, share the image and thoughts on it, and then discuss the images as a whole, creating TWO questions about the text. After, groups will complete give-one get-one (share one image, receive one image) to further build engagement and knowledge around text.
o Note: images are divided into three categories: (1) book covers of TKAM; (2) scenes of TKAM from the film and plays; (3) quotations that have been artistically drawn/portrayed. These images are NOT included, because it would take too long to scan them or load them into a</td></tr>
</table>

Word document. They will be included in the final, printed version of my thesis.
- The groups formed will have a representative image from each of the three image categories.

- *You are now going to form small-groups and discuss your images: the points you've noted and the predictions. And then you'll, together, create TWO questions that you have about the text, based on these images. Make sense? Now, look on the back of your image and you'll see a shape. Your group members will all have the same shape as you. Go ahead and form these groups now. You have approximately 7-8 minutes to discuss the images.*
- Discuss images, create questions
- Give-one, get-one activity
  - *Each group will now join with another. You will share ONE image, the points you've discussed. Then the other group will share. Afterward, you'll return to your group and see if you're any closer to answering your question.*
  - Repeat give-one, get-one a few times, so students build background information and inferences regarding *TKAM*

3-4 min.

- List questions on board; how were questions formed (based on what inferences)?

Brief introduction to new novel

- *Now that the intrigue is full-on, let's discuss our next unit. The title of the unit is "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries." And our main text is called* To Kill a Mockingbird*. I'm purposely not telling you anything else besides this because our focus today is on you discovering and finding out about the text yourselves. What we do today centers on the setting and context of* TKAM*.*

15-20 min.

- Review "context" and "setting"
- Discuss goals and objectives; have handout with these on them

Researching *To Kill a Mockingbird*

- Overview: in groups, students will research and find five facts regarding a certain topic (1930s, the South, segregation, the Civil War, the Scottsboro Case, Harper Lee). They'll then speed-date to share/discuss and learn other facts (from other groups).
- *Directions: In groups, you'll now be assigned a topic regarding* TKAM*. In your groups, research the topic, identifying FIVE facts that you deem important. Any questions?* [Have student explain directions and purpose of activity] *Each group member must have note the five facts.*
- Students research, identify five facts
- *Directions: The next step is speed-dating. You'll recall how this works: you'll move from peer-to-peer, sharing and discussing your information and then switch, so you listen and learn from your peer.*
- Speed-date (in two circles or lines, if possible; students may get repeat facts, but will help reiterate points and get different perspectives)
- Get back into original groups; discuss and identify one important point from activity

20-25 min.

- Whole-class discussion: share important point from each group; highlight/provide feedback on points raised in listening to students' discussions and speed-dating

<table>
<tr>
<td>7-8 min.</td>
<td>Read TKAM – pages 3-9

Overview: read the pages noted (teacher or volunteer); as read, consider questions created in the beginning of the lesson
Read TKAM

Reflection: post-it

Overview: students complete the following: on a post-it write question from beginning of class and attempt to answer, based on discussion, research, and reading

Directions: Before you leave today, ladies and gents, you will, individually, write a brief response to our activities today. On the front of a post-it write a question that you formed at the beginning of class. On the back, write a response/answer, based on our discussion, the research, and our reading.
Collect post-its
Directions: Now, you may pack up your things, but before you leave, I'd like you to line up along this line, noting your interest/enjoyment of the novel and unit so far.
Evaluation/continuum
Directions (continued): Bravo to everyone today! I enjoyed the class and appreciate your hard work. Thank you! Have a good day.

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<tr>
<td colspan="2">Materials/resources:

Images
Laptops/computers
Goals and objectives handout (from cover page of unit)
Copies of To Kill a Mockingbird

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<tr>
<td colspan="2">Assessment for learning (AfL):

Formal assessment:

Reflection – Students will be assessed using +, +/-, - scale. + represents significant effort and thought; +/- is average effort and thought; - represents little/no effort. Provide brief written comments, too.

Informal assessment:

Thumbs up/thumbs down for directions
Think-pair-share; give-one and get-one; discussions – gather students' own opinions and stances on key issues; gauge engagement with ideas and where/how to push students' thinking

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<tr>
<td colspan="2">Plans for next lesson: We'll move further into TKAM, in connecting to the fears/beliefs of the characters and their experiences.</td>
</tr>
</table>

Lesson for Day 3 – Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries

Date: /	**Period:** 80-minute period	**Room No:** Kristen Niemi
Class: English 10		
Focus: our own childhood monsters, superstitions; finish reading chapter 1 in *TKAM*; character tableaux based on descriptions **Context of Lesson within Unit:** This is our third lesson in our unit on *TKAM*. We've spent two lessons building intrigue/engagement, and today we'll dig more into the text and move fully into reading the text, finishing chapter one. **Prerequisites:** students will have read pages 3-9 in *TKAM* and done research regarding the context and setting		
Learning Objectives: 4. Students will **reflect and comment** on their own childhood experiences, in order to connect to the characters' experiences and be mindful of their perspectives/viewpoints. 5. Students will **create and perform** character portraits based on passages from the novel, in order to step into the characters' shoes and to visually see representations of the characters. This activity will also enable students to work with/dig into the text and details given. **NYS Common Core Learning Standards (www.nysed.gov):** • RL 4: Analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. **Key words: character, author, monster**		
Homework set: read chapters 2-4 in *TKAM*		

Time:	**Lesson Plan**
10 min.	**Warm-up: Journal prompt – childhood monsters** • Overview: students will work in small groups to create a tableau that represents a childhood monster (real or imagined) after each discussing their own childhood monster (they'll choose one from the group). o *Directions: Good morning, ladies and gents! Let's get straight to work. To begin, I'm going to give you TEN minutes to write a response to this topic: describe a childhood monster that was either real or imagined. Be specific, giving details about what this monster looked like, acted like, etc., and why/how this monster scared/frightened you (how it was monster-like). Any questions?* [Use thumbs up/down to check for understanding] o Students write for ten minutes
15-20 min.	**Childhood monsters tableaux** o Students will now be split into small groups and share their childhood monsters. From the monsters described, each group will choose ONE to create a tableau to represent this monster. o *I am going to split you into groups of 3-4 people. Each group will do four things in the following order: (1) each student will share his/her journal responses – your childhood monster, describing (not reading) the monster; (2) select ONE monster to represent in a tableau and highlight the key words used to describe this monster; (3) practice and create that tableau, paying attention to how the monster was described; (4) perform the tableau for the class.* [Have student repeat directions for clarity, emphasis]

	○ *Also, every group member must be involved. Again, your task is to portray the monster – what its like, its effects – based on the description of him/her, so pay attention to word choice. You may use anything in this box of props, if that will help your group and its enactment.* ○ *You have approximately TEN minutes to complete the first three steps, and then we'll perform these, so get to work.* ○ Discuss and share monster tableaux; cycle through groups ▪ *We're now going to share our monster tableaux. Each group, when told, will form this, holding it for five seconds. After, other groups will try to guess the monster and its effects, as portrayed.* ▪ Whole-class discussion after every group has performed, regarding vividness of monsters, their effects, how they made them feel, as a child (or still), etc. ▪ Potential prompts for discussion: • Why do we have these fears? Where do they come from? • What is a monster? • Effects of monsters? • How do "monsters" change as we grow up? • Potential links to chapter one reading (pages 3-9)
30 min.	**Continue reading chapter one in *TKAM* (pages 9-16)** • Overview: finish reading chapter 1; students will pay attention to childhood monsters and links to our beginning activity. Student choice for reading: take student volunteer(s) to read and/or teacher reads aloud OR read aloud in small groups. After finishing, we'll discuss the reading. • *Now, we're going to move on, but I want you to keep in mind this activity, especially the effects of these monsters on you, as a child.* • *We'll now finish reading chapter one*. [Take vote on how to read: small groups or whole class] *While reading, please pay attention to the monsters that these children have in their lives, as well as any links between what we read and our opening activities.* • Finish reading chapter one in *TKAM* • Discuss links, perceptions of novel in small groups; each group reports back with one significant point
15-17 min.	**Character portraits** • Overview: in groups, students will be assigned a character described in chapter one, from which they must create a character portrait of him, her, or it. We'll share these portraits and then discuss what we can infer about these people/objects. ○ Characters: Scout, Jem, Dill, Boo, the Radley house, the South, Atticus, Calpurnia • *Directions: in groups, you'll be assigned a character that you will create a character portrait of.* [Discuss what "portrait" means] *In your groups and with your character, review chapter one and make a list of 5-6 words, phrases that describe that person or object. Based on these word choices, create your character portrait to reflect your understanding of the character. Any questions?* [Have student explain directions and purpose of activity] *You have approximately 8 minutes to prepare before we perform these portraits.* • Practice and then perform character portraits; cycle through groups ○ *We're now going to share our portraits. Each group, when told, will form*

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this, holding it for five seconds. After, you'll explain why you chose to design your portrait the way you did.

- Option: have other groups guess/explain why (use A-B-C questioning), if time allows
- Option: photograph each portrait for later use and potential use in newspaper, bulletin board, etc. to highlight student work (if allowed, willing)

o Whole-class discussion; potential prompts for discussion (throughout and after performances, depending on time):

- What do we learn about our characters?
- Types of language used? Effect of word choices?
- What's the MVP for today's lesson and in understanding descriptions, details about a person?

</td></tr>
<tr><td>3-4 min.</td><td>

Reflection: connection to character

- Overview: students move to designated space in room to demonstrate connection to a specific character (one of the people or objects from the character portraits)
  - o Remind students of homework for next lesson
  - o *Directions: Your reflection today is an active one. I want you to, first of all, take a brief 30 seconds to consider what character from our portraits you most relate or connect to.* [Pause for 30 seconds] *Now, when I give the word, you'll move to the section of the room to where the name of your character is posted. Any questions? Okay, go ahead and move.*
  - o Allow students to move, noting (mentally) where students move
  - o *Directions: The next step is to discuss your connection/relation in your groups.*
  - o Listen in on groups; if time, get feedback from groups
  - o *Directions (continued): Excellent work today! I want you to continue to be thinking about how word choices are important – how they impact how we view others, in particular. High-fives on the way out the door, folks!*

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Materials/resources:

- Box of props for tableaux
- Camera (for character portraits)
- Labeled sections of the room (section for each character/object) for reflection
- Homework on board
- Copies of *To Kill a Mockingbird*

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Assessment for learning (AfL):

- Formal assessment: /
- Informal assessment:
  - o Discussion demonstrates students' knowledge, interest, engagement in activity and learning; build ideas off of one another
  - o Thumbs up/thumbs down for directions
  - o Journal entry and tableaux demonstrate engagement in idea and student participation (mindset, attitude for class and learning)
  - o Character portraits – physically demonstrates students' understanding of the characters and what the descriptions imply about the character
  - o Reflection demonstrates students' connections to characters and the novel, as well as any points that need to be reviewed, etc.

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Plans for next lesson: We'll move to forming connections between characters and considering Scout as a narrator.

Lesson for Day 10 – Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries

<table>
<tr><td>Date: /</td><td>Period: 80-minute period</td><td>Room No: Kristen Niemi</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Class: English 10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Focus: read chapter 15; jail scene (forum theater, considering body gestures, facial expressions, body language)
Context of Lesson within Unit:
This lesson is a mid-way point in our unit, so we'll end the lesson by reflecting on and evaluating the goals and objectives of the unit.
Prerequisites: /</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Learning Objectives:
6. Students will discuss and analyze the use of point-of-view in order to reflect on its significance (both in the text and outside, in the "real" world).
7. Students will engage and perform a close reading activity (forum theater) in order to visualize a scene from our novel and to analyze the effect of crafting/staging a scene (gestures, body language, etc.).
NYS Common Core Learning Standards (www.nysed.gov):
• SL 1d: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.
Key words: point-of-view, mob mentality, bravery</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Homework set: read chapters 16-18</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Time:</th><th>Lesson Plan</th></tr>
<tr><td>12-15 min.</td><td>Warm-up: images of "courage" – compare/contrast to Atticus and own ideas
• Overview: students will each have 7-8 minutes to draw and caption an image that illustrates bravery.
  o Directions: Good morning! Our focus and main goal today is being able to discuss the impact of point-of-view, which you'll recall is one of our unit's vocabulary words. With the person beside you, briefly remind each other of what POV is and why it may be important for us to be thinking about. [Discuss in pairs, then discuss/review as whole class.]
  o Directions (continued): For our warm-up today, you'll work individually to draw and caption an image that illustrates courage. Any questions? [Use thumbs up/down to check for understanding] You have approximately 7-8 minutes, and there are markers and crayons up front for you to use.
  o Use linking-sharing method (first meet with one person and share warm-up; then these two meet with two others and share; then these four, etc., moving to whole-class).
    ▪ Interrupt/interject and have students discuss how drawings of bravery relate (or don't) to Atticus's view of bravery
    ▪ Potential prompts for discussion:
      • How did you illustrate bravery?
      • What connections did you find between your drawings?
      • How can we link this to our key word, point-of-view?
      • Links to TKAM? Atticus? (Review what Atticus says about bravery)</td></tr>
</table>

 20-25 min.	**Read chapter 15** • Overview: students will read chapter 15. To do so, gauge student attitudes/engagement in order to decide *how* to read this, i.e., teacher, volunteers, small groups, individual. Whatever way is used, students will focus on point-of-view and bravery. This may be done by listing the varying POVs. • Read chapter 15

35-40 min.
	Forum theater
	• Overview: students will work as a class to dramatize the jail scene in *TKAM* (from pages 167-170). There will be two groups of students: (1) actors/actresses in role as characters and (2) directors who decide how to stage the scene.
	    o Characters to cast: Atticus, Scout, Jem, Dill, "a burly man," Mr. Cunningham, Tom Robinson, Old Sarum gang
	• *Directions: The next activity will focus on the jail scene from our reading. What we're going to do is called "forum theater." Does anyone recall what this means/what we'll do?* [Take volunteers] *For our forum theater, we're going to be divided into two groups: (1) actors/actresses, who will be in role and (2) directors. May I please have volunteers for our first group, please?* [Cast characters]
	• *Like you may have now gathered, we'll re-read pages 167-170, and our actors/actresses will perform the scene. The rest of us, the directors, will discuss and direct how the scene is acted. Make sense? Any questions?* [Use thumbs up/down to check for understanding]
	• *Now, we also need a narrator, who will read the lines between the dialogue. Who can remind us of our narrator in* TKAM*? And who would like to take on this role? We also need a lead director – volunteers?*
	• *Before we launch into performing the scene, let's first discuss what's happening and get a sense of the mood, the characters, and so on.*
	    o Discuss as a class or in small-groups. Potential prompts:
	        ▪ What's happening in the scene? What should be our focus as we perform it?
	        ▪ Key action or dialogue?
	        ▪ Mood? Conflicts?
	    o Have classroom set-up in horseshoe or circle; actors/actresses to the front
	• *Now, here are the basic guidelines for this activity: (1) the lead director is the one in charge; (2) if we want to pause the action, raise the YELLOW card to get the lead director's attention, and he/she will pause the action, and the directors will discuss and tell the actors/actresses how to perform it; (3) as a director, I, too, may use the yellow card to call attention to items. Any questions or concerns before we begin? I'm going to give each of the two groups approximately TWO minutes to converse and sort yourselves before we begin*.
	• Perform forum theater
	    o Options: freeze frame, silent version
	• After, discuss as a class what the activity revealed/highlighted regarding courage and POV. Potential prompts:
	    o How does this activity link to our initial discussion of courage? Who's brave in this scene? What actions, gestures, language can be considered courageous, based on the POV?
	    o Let's identify at least three POVs; how do these people/groups view

<table>
<tr><td>7-8 min.</td><td>
bravery – who's brave according to them?
◦ What's the significance of having Scout as a narrator in this scene?
◦ What are the implications, regarding POV? What should we remember as we continue reading TKAM?
Reflection: Comment on and evaluate TKAM so far, as well as goals and objectives
• Overview: students will write an evaluation of TKAM – their opinion and thoughts regarding the novel so far – and also evaluate their progress in our goals and objectives and questions made in the beginning of the unit.
◦ Remind students of homework for next lesson (reach chapters 16-18)
◦ Directions: Your reflection today will be done individually, and it's comprised of two parts: (1) your evaluation of TKAM, meaning your opinion and thoughts of the novel so far and (2) an evaluation of your progress in our goals and objectives. I'd also like you to consider those questions you wrote at the beginning of the unit. [Have directions on board] Are there any questions? [Take questions] I'd like you to be honest, ladies and gents, please. I'll read these over the weekend and get them back to you first thing on Monday.
◦ Students complete reflection
</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">
Materials/resources:
• Markers, crayons, etc. for warm-up
• Yellow cards for forum theater
• Copies of To Kill a Mockingbird
• Homework on board
</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">
Assessment for learning (AfL):
• Formal assessment: /
• Informal assessment:
◦ Images of bravery and discussion – gauge students' understanding of concept and depth of reading (for homework)
◦ Thumbs up/thumbs down for directions
◦ Think-pair-share; give-one and get-one; discussions – gather students' own opinions and stances on key issues; gauge engagement with ideas and where/how to push students' thinking
◦ Reflection demonstrates students' evaluation of the novel and of their own progress
</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Plans for next lesson: Next lesson we'll focus on the structure of the courtroom and its "boundaries."</td></tr>
</table>

Lesson for Day 12 – Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries

<table>
<tr><td>Date: /</td><td>Period: 80-minute period</td><td>Room No: Kristen Niemi</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Class: English 10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Focus: the trial scene, word choice
Context of Lesson within Unit:
For this lesson students will prepare and practice their dramatized trial scenes (two per group) (each group selected a character who testifies in the trial, and groups will dramatize a passage based on that character's experience).
Prerequisites: familiarity with trial scene</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Learning Objectives:
8. Students will analyze and revise a passage selected in TKAM (trial scene), in order to demonstrate the effect of word choices and how these highlight (and build) relationships and identities.
9. Students will practice and perform a scene from TKAM, in order to engage with the text and its issues, particularly the effect of language.
NYS Common Core Learning Standards (www.nysed.gov):
• W5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, REVISING, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
• W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
    o W2d: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
• RL 11: Create and present a text or artwork in response to a literary work.
Key words: dramatization; building relationships, identities; revise</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Homework set: trial assignment (prepare, gather any necessary props, materials, etc.)</td></tr>
</table>

Time:	**Lesson Plan**

10-12 min.	**Warm-up: in-role writing (journal entry)**
	• Overview: students will have 10 minutes to write an in-role journal entry post-trial, verdict has been reached (choose from any character presented in the novel thus far)
	    o *Directions: Good morning! Our focus and main goal today is being able to revise and analyze word choices, in order to understand the effects. That's what I'll be giving you feedback on and looking for you to be able to understand.*
	    o *Directions (continued): We're going to start off today with an in-role journal entry. Who can remind us what that means? What we'll need to remember?* [Take volunteers to discuss assignment] *Your assignment, then, is to write an in-role journal entry from the perspective of ANY character in* TKAM, *writing as the character after the trial. Quickly, let's shout out the characters we've encountered so far.* [List characters] *Does everyone have a character they can write as? Okay – get to writing.*
	    o Think, pair, share journal entries. Potential prompts for discussion:
	        ▪ Poll whose perspective/viewpoint students wrote from
	        ▪ How did you feel? Does the trial feel any different, placing your-

	self in one of these character's shoes? What stood out to you?
60 min.	**Trial assignment** • Overview: students will work in groups to dramatize a selected passage from the trial. They'll perform this scene twice: once as written by Lee and another time after revising the passage to somehow alter the relationships and/or the identities presented in the trial. • *Directions: We're going to continue being in-role for the next assignment, which will continue into next lesson. Your assignment is to dramatize a passage from the trial. But there are a few stipulations. The first is that you'll select a character who's on trial and from that select a passage to dramatize. Okay so far?* [Use thumbs up/down to check for understanding] • *Directions (continued): Here's the next hitch: you will perform the scene TWICE. The first time will be as it is written by Harper Lee and interpreted by you and your group. The second time will be a dramatization of a revised version of that passage that somehow alters the relationships and/or identities presented in the trial. Before taking any questions, I'll now split you into groups. In your groups, I want you to read the assignment handout and discuss the directions and guidelines given to make sure y'all know what to do.* • Split into groups; take questions from groups • Groups select character and begin practicing • Circulate, provide feedback and guidance • Option: pause in middle to get feedback regarding progress, insights to revising word choices

7-8 min.	**Reflection (group): ticket-out-the-door (on index card)**
	• Overview: on an index card, each group will note one revision that they've made, explaining the impact of that change and why they chose it.
	  o Remind students of homework for next lesson (work on trial assignment)
	  o *Directions: Your ticket-out-the-door today is a group reflection. Each group, on an index card, will note ONE revision that you've made from the selected passage. And then I want you to explain why you've made that change and its impact regarding relationships or identities. Do this in 3-4 sentences.*
	  o *Directions: Then, somewhere on your index card, draw a face to represent how well you and your group are achieving the goal of understanding the impact of word choice. Once you're finished with all of these things, you may leave. You did very well, once again. I'm eager to see your performances next lesson! Have a good day.*

Materials/resources:

- Trial scene handout (assignment)
- Copies of *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Homework on board

Assessment for learning (AfL):

- Formal assessment:
  - Trial scene – will be assessed on noted goal/objective (analyzing, revising word choices) and representation of trial scene (effort and engagement, primarily)
- Informal assessment:
  - Thumbs up/thumbs down for directions
  - Think-pair-share; give-one and get-one; discussions – gather students' own opinions

and stances on key issues; gauge engagement with ideas and where/how to push students' thinking o Reflection demonstrates students' connections to characters and the novel, as well as any points that need to be reviewed, etc.
Plans for next lesson: Next lesson we'll practice performing the passages and then move into performing them for the class.

Lesson for Day 16 – Breaking Stereotypes, Breaking Boundaries

<table>
<tr><td>Date: /</td><td>Period: 80-minute period</td><td>Room No: Kristen Niemi</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Class: English 10</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Focus: discussion of “folks” (connecting Day 14 w/ HW); comparing racial Discourses
Context of Lesson within Unit:
This lesson is a mid-way point in our unit, so we’ll end the lesson by reflecting on and evaluating the goals and objectives of the unit.
Prerequisites: reading for homework and understanding of “folks”</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Learning Objectives:
10. Students will discuss and analyze how language builds relationships and identities, in order to compare two different Discourses regarding race and religion (within the same community).
11. Students will write a newspaper article that represents a given Discourse, in order to explore how language is used to influence and how it also shapes other people’s beliefs.
NYS Common Core Learning Standards (www.nysed.gov):
• W 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
    o W2d: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
Key words: build, identity</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Homework set: read chapters 27-29</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>Time:</td><td>Lesson Plan</td></tr>
<tr><td>12-15 min.</td><td>Warm-up: “loot” versus “find” – images of Hurricane Katrina
• Overview: students will work in pairs to discuss two images from Hurricane Katrina (from the AP) without the captions. After considering the similarities and differences, students will be given the captions for the photos, without being told which caption belongs to which photo. Students must discuss and decide how the captions and photos match and why. The focus will be on using the “building things” tool, as students discuss and consider how the discourses of the captions create/shape Discourses of racism and discrimination.
    o Directions: Howdy folks! I hope you had a nice weekend. Our focus and main goal today is being able to discuss how language builds and demonstrates relationships and identities. What do you think I mean by “build”? I mean, how can language “build” anything? Give that a think for a second. [Use TPS] Discussion prompts:
        ▪ What types of things can language “build”?
        ▪ What does it mean when we use “build” when referring to language?
    o Directions (continued): With these thoughts in mind, we’re going to move to our warm-up. With a partner, you’ll have approximately 5-7 minutes to discuss the two photographs I’m about to pass out. These are from Hurricane Katrina, and were taken by the AP. In particular, I want you to be able to identify and discuss no less than three similarities and three differences between the two photographs. [Remind/review Hurricane Katrina; then work in pairs to discuss photos]</td></tr>
</table>

	o *Now, I'm going to pass out two captions, each of which belongs to one of the photographs. Your job, in pairs, still, is to discuss and match the caption to the photograph. In doing so do two things: (1) have a rationale/explanation for your pairings; and (2) consider how each discourse (the language used) builds ideas and attitudes. Any questions?* [Use thumbs up/down to check for understanding] *Okay, you have approximately 5-7 minutes to complete this activity.* o Discuss photographs as a class; write comments about "folks" on the board (have student volunteer do this). Potential prompts for discussion: ▪ What are the discourses building in the captions and images? Is one more powerful than the other (i.e., the image more powerful in building? Or the caption?)? ▪ Review and connections to Atticus's view of "folks"? What did we think of it? ▪ Connections to the reading for homework? Specifics? ▪ MVP from reading??? ▪ Own thoughts about reading? How did you feel about how Tom's death was discussed?
25-30 min.	**Trial of Tom Robinson's death** • Overview: students will stage a trial over Tom Robinson's death, questioning representative people/groups • *Directions: Now that you've had the chance to think about and process these connections, we're going to stage a trail over Tom Robinson's death, aiming to uncover people's attitudes toward Tom and how these may have contributed to his death. To do so, we need to first brainstorm a list of characters that we should investigate.* o Potential characters: Mr. Underwood, Bob Ewell, the officers who shot him, the jury who convicted him, Atticus, Calpurnia, Tom's wife, Jem, etc. • *Directions: In this activity we'll have three roles: (1) character on trial; (2) jury members; (3) and stenographers. Each of you will be one of these three, so take a few second to think about what you'd like to do.* [May have to explain roles, like stenographer] • Split students into roles; may have other roles, like journalists, photographers, judge, etc. • *Directions: In your groups you'll now have approximately five minutes to prepare for your role. Group 1, I'd suggest you discuss with the other members your own role and how to portray him/her; Group 2, jury members remind yourselves of the circumstances of Tom's death and begin writing questions to ask; Group 3, prepare yourself to take notes on the trial.* o Have key chapters on board (chapters 17-21 = trial; chapter 24 = news of Tom's death; chapter 25 = details and description of Tom's death) • Perform trial; each group will reach a "verdict" concerning guilt • Whole-class discussion (in a circle) regarding attitudes, viewpoints of "folks" that may have contributed to Tom's death. Potential prompts: o What views (what "folks," what Discourses) are represented in the reporting and gossip of Tom's death? What views (what "folks," what Discourses) are not represented? ▪ Take notes on the board, as will be useful for next activity . . .

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>
What word choices, gestures, intonation, revealed (built) beliefs? Relationships?
What are the effects of these POVs and their language???
Review pages 268-273 in TKAM, how does the discussion of Hitler and Jews connect/compare to our trial and our discussion here???
Connections to today??? (Doesn't have to be a crime.)
</td></tr>
<tr><td>20-25 min.</td><td>
Newspaper article

Overview: students will work in groups to write a newspaper article from the POV of one of our "folks"/Discourses who was on trial
Option: write a newspaper article on a current issue/event from the POV of a specific Discourse/"folks"
Directions: We're going to continue being in-role for the next assignment, which will be a group activity. In groups, you're now going to write a newspaper article from the POV of one of our Discourse from the people on trial in our last activity. Your newspaper article – its language – should clearly demonstrate the attempt to build/shape ideas and beliefs, as the people do in TKAM. Okay so far? [Use thumbs up/down to check for understanding]
Directions: Before we begin, what are some ways that language "builds" things?
For example, through word choice, through emphasis of topic/subject, through relationships
Directions (continued): What I'd suggest you do is use our notes from the trial (on the board) to brainstorm how you'd like to write the newspaper article. Be specific about what person or group you're going to use for a POV, place yourselves in that person/group's shoes/skin, and think about how he/she/they would write this article. What words would they use? What topics/subjects would they emphasize? What wouldn't they say? I'll be around to help you and give you feedback.
Guidelines: 1-2 pages handwritten, clear title w/ byline, date, title of newspaper (publication), and you may include an image
If you'd like to, you may peruse newspaper articles online to get ideas about formatting and titles
Split into groups, students write newspaper articles
Circulate, provide feedback and guidance

Extension: discuss and consider own d/Discourses of racism and attitudes toward others
</td></tr>
<tr><td>****
7-8 min.</td><td>
Reflection (group): peer feedback (one question, one positive, one thing to improve)

Overview: groups will switch their newspaper articles with one another, read them, and then on an index card write (as a group) one question, one positive comment about the writing, and one thing to improve
Remind students of homework for next lesson (read chapters 27-29)
Directions: Your reflection today will be done in your groups. Each group will swap their newspaper article with another group, and you'll read the other group's newspaper article aloud (as a group). After, on an index card, each group will write one question, one positive comment about the writing, and one thing to improve/consider for that group's writing.
Complete this first step of the reflection
Directions: Then, after you receive your own group's article back, read the comments, and, underneath, explain your next steps and what you'd like to

</td></tr>
</table>

	focus on as we continue these articles next lesson. o Complete remaining bit of reflection o *Directions/comments: Please turn your articles and the reflections in to me as you leave today. All of your group member's names should be at the top. Excellent work, overall, today! You're doing very difficult work, so pat yourselves on the back! Have a good day!*

Materials/resources:

- Index cards
- Copies of *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Homework on board

Assessment for learning (AfL):

- Formal assessment:
  - Newspaper article – Students will be assessed using +, +/-, - scale. + represents significant effort and thought; +/- is average effort and thought; - represents little/no effort. Provide brief written comments, too.
- Informal assessment:
  - Journal prompt – gauge students' understanding of concept and depth of reading (for homework) and the connections they're making
  - Thumbs up/thumbs down for directions
  - Think-pair-share; give-one and get-one; discussions – gather students' own opinions and stances on key issues; gauge engagement with ideas and where/how to push students' thinking
  - Trial will demonstrate and assess students grasp of the POVs and Discourses involved in *TKAM*
  - Reflection demonstrates students' connections to characters and the novel, as well as any points that need to be reviewed, etc.

Plans for next lesson: Next lesson we'll focus on the structure of the courtroom and its "boundaries."

Concluding Thoughts

I began this research with a narrative of my own life, dipping into the history of my education and both how and why I've come to the point of studying student achievement. And while this past has certainly influenced my research and my teaching, it's the thought of my future – my future students, that is – that propels me forward. The thought of these students is what drives me to learn, so that I can offer them the learning environments and educations that they deserve, so that they can achieve, and so that their education gives them the tools to overcome limitations and boundaries.

How I envision this future, in terms of my pedagogy and teaching philosophy, is in using a pedagogy of engagement that is supplemented by the tools of discourse analysis. To briefly review the two primary threads of this pedagogy, a pedagogy of engagement is centered around the belief that learning should be reconceptualized as a pleasurable endeavor, while discourse analysis is based on Gee's conception of studying "language-in-use." Together, the aim in using such a pedagogy is, as VanDeWeghe argues, to engage the hearts *and* the minds of our students.

As already mentioned, the route into this research was through the achievement gap. From here I sought to study the role educators can play in rewriting the achievement gap, with the inevitable intent of decreasing the gaps between groups of students and by empowering and enabling those students on the margins, in particular. Thus, the focus is on praxis and exigency – *doing* something in our classrooms. And it is with this lens that I researched and designed my thesis.

A significant limitation to this study is that it has yet to be put into practice, as a variety of circumstances prevented this pedagogy from being implemented into a secondary classroom. Despite this limitation, being grounded in research sets a firm foundation and launching

pad for utilizing this pedagogy and its practices. However, research does not always equate to good pedagogy when put into practice. So there may need to be revisions to improve elements of this pedagogy. Of course, as has already been emphasized, the need to be flexible is a crucial part of being an educator, and the same can be said here. That is, when integrating a pedagogy of engagement and discourse analysis, any educator, including myself, must be flexible in adapting and differentiating lessons and activities to meets students' needs. And while this disclaimer may portray hesitancy, it's meant to merely inform readers of a limitation to the research. I firmly believe that this pedagogy will both engage students in a critical examination of their lives and the world and enable them to learn more effectively. In taking on this research as an important endeavor for my career, I will return to write about the results of using this pedagogy.

Being a relatively new form of research, there is much room for studying the potential of a pedagogy of engagement. In particular, its "malleability" should be considered more thoroughly, in aiming to examine how "engagement" changes and evolves for varying people. Unfortunately for those who like hard-and-fast rules, a pedagogy of engagement has only a rough outline, which can be seen as both a strength and a weakness: a weakness in its lack of clarity or specificity, and a strength because pedagogies should be adapted and differentiated based on students' needs, which vary widely from classroom to classroom.

Looking Back – Reviewing

First of all, in chapter one, "To Achieve or Not to Achieve?," I trace the development of educational policies and legislation, such as NCLB and the reauthorization of the ESEA, along with measures like the Race to the Top, as examples of an educational Discourse that pushes for standards and coverage of material over students' learning and well-being. Moreover, what these policies effect are curricula detached from reality and relevance and, what's more, peda-

gogies that manifest superficial learning and "stupidification." And, as if it cannot get any worse, the current educational Discourse is one that privileges mainstream students, altogether neglecting a significant population of students. While some may consider this summation of the state of education in America as melodramatic, I would counter that providing our students – our children – with a quality education and quality learning experiences isn't something to take lightly. While I recognize the necessity of implementing evaluative measures that assess students' learning and development, the current system of heavy-handed standardized testing and one-size-fits-all curricula do not work. In fact, they do more damage than good. I also recognize that federal policy has the inherent objective of establishing benchmarks for measuring student learning, as a nation, as well as teacher and administrative accountability, all in the name of benefiting our students. But the effects of federal policy are quite far from their actual aim.

So what do we, as educators, do about this doom and gloom outlook that I've laid out? As those who know our students best and have their interests in mind, we push back, forming a counter-Discourse to the current state of education. We cannot control national and even state policy, but we can shape what happens in our classrooms. We can exceed these standards and enable our students to aim higher and achieve better by centering our classroom pedagogies and teaching material around their needs. And we can enable and equip students, through introducing and using discourse analysis in the classroom, to examine the world in similar ways and insert their own voices to these d/Discourses.

One way to exceed these policies and standards, as argued in chapter one, is by using a pedagogy of engagement, along with the tools of discourse analysis. The former revolves around having three primary criteria: flow, dialogic processes, and reflection. The concept of flow is based on the research of Csikszentmihalyi, who argues that experiencing flow is the most effi-

cient way for people to become engaged in an activity, where time doesn't matter, concentration is deep, and, ultimately, where fun and pleasure are felt. Combining flow with dialogic processes – social elements – and the act of reflection in the classroom creates a dynamic learning environment that compels and engages students in learning.

From here, I move to chapter two and a discussion of d/Discourses, based on the model of James Paul Gee's work. Gee argues that "big D" Discourses are our identity kits, as ways of speaking, acting, dressing, believing, and so on, whereas "little-d" discourses are stretches of language and, yes, they're a significant part of people's varying Discourses. What we're able to perceive by using Gee's framework is that many of our students' primary (their first) Discourse is not embraced (or even acknowledged) by schools, which is one factor that has the power to negatively impact their learning. Yet, by using discourse analysis, we are able to explore the d/Discourses and the diversities of the world, as the presence of Discourses (plural) highlights this diversity. By considering diversities and our students' (and the world's) Discourses, we, as educators, can more ably create critical and affective learning environments that engage students.

Finally, chapter three is a discussion of strategies and practices to use in implementing a pedagogy of engagement infused with the tools of discourse analysis. These practices and strategies are based on the research of, primarily, Jeff Wilhelm, Michael Smith, and Richard VanDeWeghe, who use a foundation of engagement in their classrooms. And the tools of discourse analysis – how to integrate them – continues to follow the practices of Gee. Following from chapter two, what become apparent are the cognitive and affective benefits of integrating discourse analysis, as we gain meta-knowledge of our Discourses and the world's Discourses and, thus, diversities.

The unit developed around this pedagogy has, at its centerpiece, Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and is a culmination of the research throughout this project. In designing this unit, the primary issue or focus kept in mind was breaking stereotypes and boundaries, as *TKAM* offers students an interesting portrayal of a community full of d/Discourses that judge and use language to shape (and build beliefs). Regarding pedagogy, the aim was to first instill a pedagogy of engagement, so that students would be compelled and intrigued, and this was done through practices such as frontloading and creative strategies. Of course, dialogic processes and reflection are integral to the unit, as well, with each lesson involving these elements. The more difficult aspect to implement was discourse analysis.

Other practices that were used in developing this unit were elements of choice, as students were able to choose roles that they could play, how to read the text itself, and both the final project and final essay allowed students to select their focus. Also, the unit begins by outlining the goals and objectives, as well as noting questions to consider throughout the unit; these aspects were used in order to enact flow and a sense of inquiry.

Implications: Knowledge is Power

A significant underpinning to this research on the achievement gap is the issue of power, for it is those who hold power, like politicians, who dictate what and how to learn – to *know* – in education, and having knowledge – *knowing* – itself is empowering. And it is this second facet of power, of empowerment, that this research and pedagogy seeks to influence. In particular, the use of discourse analysis in this pedagogy and an emphasis on critical-thinking skills are a means to critically examine the word and world so that we can attempt to *know* it and understand it. The old adage is that "knowledge is power," and I don't disagree. For it is through knowledge and the active pursuit of knowing that we can have what Freire terms "critical con-

sciousness," or "conscientizacao": "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (35, 73). That is, students must develop a form of praxis: "reflection and *action* upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire 51; italics own). Giroux offers a similar pedagogy, which centers on a curriculum of social justice, concentrating on the least-advantaged populations, in order to "invert hegemony" (127). Specifically, Giroux emphasizes a critical pedagogy, considering his emphasis on popular culture and its effects; this would better position students to be able to actively think and place themselves within this world and its hegemonic forces (233). Both Freire and Giroux note that while language can be used as a tool of oppression, using a critical pedagogy, such as that advocated in this research, can make language – and knowledge – empowering and a tool of liberation. More specifically, using the tools of discourse analysis not only allows for a critical exploration of discourses and Discourse in the classroom, but having, using, and knowing these skills transcends the classroom and school walls to the "real" world. Using such pedagogy means "equipping students with skills that enable them to reflect and critically engage their experiences; to equip them to challenge social conditions that shape and influence their experiences" (Chege 235). This is something similar to Rosa Eberly's "citizen critic," which emphasizes every person's ability to play the dual role of citizen and critic, in order to better society and ourselves (1). Gee notes that

> we can also talk about a literacy being *liberating* ('powerful') if it can be used as a 'meta-language'(a set of meta-words, meta-values, meta-beliefs) for the critique of other literacies and the way they constitutes us a persons and situate us in society. Liberating literacies can reconstitute and resituate us. (Gee "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics" 529)

For Gee, "classroom instruction . . . can lead to meta-knowledge, to seeing how the Discourses you have already got relate to those you are attempting to acquire, and how the ones you are trying to acquire relate to self and society (Gee "Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics" 532). Together, all of these researchers emphasize, despite their use of different terminology, an awareness or understanding – a conscious and explicit knowing – of our multiple selves, others, and the world. And, as Giroux and Freire argue, it is through this knowledge and critical understanding that praxis, that action, that change occurs.

Looking at Education Today

To look at the d/Discourses of education in America today, there is much to be desired and much work to do. As already discussed throughout this thesis, there's rampant standardized testing, rote learning, and, on the whole, unhappy and unsatisfied students, educators, and community members. Connected to these factors is the achievement gap, which is used by politicians and educators alike as a reason to increase the amount of testing and accountability, which then further increases these gaps. Unfortunately, the pervasive negativity felt toward education, as seen in the d/Discourses around it, only serve to create a climate that limits learning and progressive reforms.

Within the d/Discourses of education today, the lack of multiculturalism and fringe voices creates a significant lack of relevancy for those students not considered of the mainstream, which is the majority of the population (Brown 7). What's more, as discussed in chapter two, mainstream students lose the opportunity to better understand the diversity and richness of the world. Despite the importance of diversity, Macedo notes that "the US was founded on a cultural hegemony that privileged and assigned control to the White patriarchy and relegated other racial, cultural, and gender groups to a culture of silence" (44). In turn, this hegemony equates to

alienation in education, alienating students from their own cultures and others' cultures (Gordon 42). Teaching canonical literature, as the curriculum prescribes, can have an alienating effect on students: "on the one hand, it ignores the life experience, history, culture, and language practices of students. On the other, it overemphasizes the mastery and understanding of classical literature and the use of great books as the only vehicle that enables one to search for the 'Good and True'" (Macedo 63). Thus, the defense of "tradition" in education leads to the exclusion of large populations of students.

Another focus within education is that of "equality" between varying groups of ple. As Macedo points out, though, "guaranteeing equal access to unequal educational structures and unequal treatment in school would never lead to equality of education" (3). The issue of equality in education is further complicated in considering the potential of equity, which mandates that people receive whatever is appropriate and sufficient to their needs (Gordon xiv). Despite this, the distribution of goods and resources in education, such as technology and nutrition, show neither equality nor equity. In 2011 *The New York Times* published two articles on what has become known as "The Digital Divide" and another on the impact of the food industry in public education. This "new" digital divide that Crawford outlines in "The New Digital Divide" is the growing disparity in America between those who have access to high-speed internet and those who do not. The lack of regulation and competition and the high price of high-speed internet are preventing millions of Americans from gaining this tool (Crawford 8). What's more, these Americans are also losing access to "untold doors of information and opportunity," as "our jobs, entertainment, politics and even health care move online," in turn leaving those without technology further behind (Crawford). Furthermore, the case of nutrition in schools is also of importance, especially that of access to nutritional meals. The links between nutrition and aca-

demic achievement and general well-being have been often studied. And while it's not difficult to imagine the benefits of nutrition in a healthy lifestyle, schools still do not seem to have gotten the memo regarding this correlation. The National School Lunch Program helps to serve lunch to thirty-two million students in America, of which twenty-one million receive free or reduced-price lunch (Komisar). What's worrying is the privatization of this program, as schools within the NSLP outsource resources and funding to food-service management companies such as Aramark, Sodexo, and Chartwells, who work with food manufacturers such as Tyson and Pilgrim's (Komisar). Komisar notes:

> schools get the food free; some cook it on site, but more and more pay processors to turn these healthy ingredients into fried chicken nuggets, fruit pastries, pizza and the like. Some $445 million worth of commodities are sent for processing each year, a nearly 50% increase since 2006.

This "cozy alliance" is seen as beneficial for school authorities who do not wish to pay for skilled labor or have the hassle of cooking actual meals (Komisar). Yet, the companies' profits and the schools' folly is not the primary concern here. What is terribly worrying is the nutritional effects, as this poor diet shortens life-expectancy and increases the likelihood of developing diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer (Komisar). For our students, this type of nutrition negatively affects both intellectual and physical health, detrimenting their learning and, more importantly, their overall well-being.

The picture of inequality in education doesn't look any brighter when considering income and wealth either. Just this past week the Pew Research Center published a study that found that "during the first two years of the nation's economic recovery, the mean net worth of households in the upper 7% of the wealth distribution rose by an estimated 28%, while the mean net worth of

households in the lower 93% dropped by 4%" (Fry and Taylor 1). Another study from the Pew Research Center on income distribution (with data from 2009) between ethnicities found that "the median wealth of white households is 20 times that of black households and 18 times that of Hispanic households" (Kochbar, Fry, and Taylor 1).

Obviously these studies and research about the d/Discourses of education today demonstrate that factors, such as the uneven distribution of wealth, unequal access to nutrition and technology, and the hegemony of the white, middle class, are not going to go away anytime soon. They're not going to vanish straight away and become less of an issue in our society. And while I began this thesis with a discussion of the achievement gap, in regard to standardized testing and achievement, the above factors play just as much of a role in education, learning, and students' overall well-being. Together, what all of this research on the state of education in America today points to is the importance of doing something, of engaging students in learning, and giving them opportunities that they may not have elsewhere. It's about giving students the tools and confidence to both stand up and against these factors and to insert their own voices in these d/Discourses, too. That is, educators must be their students' advocates in being change-makers and pushing against these d/Discourses, but we must also teach and enable students to be their own advocates. As argued throughout this thesis, it is through creating imaginative and innovative curricula and learning that we can guide students in overcoming these obstacles and engaging in a world that is going to leave them behind otherwise. Thus, to address Macedo's concern regarding canonical literature, it is critical to *connect* these texts to students' lives. While Macedo's point about the canon silencing other voices is valid, the primary issue revolving around canonical literature is when educators do not highlight and raise other elements and viewpoints – other d/Discourses – within and about these texts. Rather than present the canon as

what is "'Good and True,'" rather than disregard the contributions of these d/Discourses to society's ways of being, and rather than submit them to silence, use these texts – from both within the canon and from outside – to explore and analyze and converse with diverse d/Discourses (Macedo 63). Such a methodology can be seen in the use of the unit designed around the issues and themes of *TKAM*, such as the d/Discourses of poverty, racism, and adolescence. Again, by considering these diversities within canonical literature, it does not silence voices, instead it enables students to make tangible connections between their own lives, the text, and the world – those voices that may have been silenced otherwise.

Looking Forward

We know the effects of the achievement gap, because we see it in our classrooms every day. With growing income disparity in the US and decreased funding for schools, these effects and the "gap" itself are only going to worsen, especially if we pander to politicians' superficial and misdirected reforms and policies. As educators, we need to take our classrooms back. We know what's best for our students, and we should have the confidence in ourselves – and affirmation from others – that we can and will use our knowledge, as professionals, to better our students' lives, learning, and future.

In terms of the current state of education and its Discourses, which has been an important aspect of this project, I believe that, while this pedagogy serves to place our students' needs first and foremost in our classrooms, we should not refrain from voicing these counter-d/Discourses at the state and national levels.

And, so it is that by a using a pedagogy of engagement infused with discourse analysis and engaging students in the d/Discourses of their own lives and our world, students will be given the opportunities to learn and achieve that they deserve, as well as the tools to engage with the

world. Educators can engage students in analysis of the d/Discourses of adolescence in *The Catcher in the Rye*, d/Discourses of relationships and dating in *Pride and Prejudice*, d/Discourses of the media, and/or d/Discourses of ability in *Of Mice and Men*. There are literally limitless options for educators within this pedagogy, simply because the foundation of this research centers on students being given the tools for entering conversations with and about the world. Using such a pedagogy allows students to understand, explore, and enter the world's d/Discourse dances in a dynamic and engaged manner that further enables students to also share and build their own "dances." Ultimately, such critical and engaging analyses are what rewrite d/Discourses and what propel student learning and achievement.

Appendix A – Components of Flow

Based on the work of Csikszentmihalyi

Categories (by Niemi)	Csikszentmihalyi's conditions	Description
Teacher: those conditions the teacher can facilitate and most influence	Goals are clear	Students know what they're meant to be doing and why they're doing it.
	Feedback is immediate	Students must also know how well they're doing/completing the goals.
	Skills match challenges	Students' abilities match/meet the level needed to successfully complete an activity.
Learners: those conditions that relate to the learners' experiencing flow	Concentration is deep	Students are focused on the activity in that moment.
	Problems are forgotten	Other thoughts and worries are not the focus – they're pushed to the background.
	Control is possible	Success and achieving the goals is viable for students.
	Self-consciousness disappears	Deep focus on the task at hand, so that self – worries, fears, and so on – are forgotten for the moment. After flow, self-consciousness increases.
	Sense of time disappears	Time moves faster; students have such a high level of concentration and are so engaged that time slips by without even noticing.
	Experience becomes autotelic	There's an inherent sense of worth: the students feel there's value in the experience itself.

APPENDIX B – Tools for Discourse Analysis

Each tool is numbered and based on Gee's description/use (Gee How To Do Discourse Analysis 195-201*).*

Unit (Category)	Number and Name of Tool	Description
Language and Context	Tool #1: The Deixis Tool	Deictics are words that must be filled in by using context, such as pronouns, which "make assumptions about what listeners already know or can figure out" (195).
	Tool #2: The Fill In Tool	"Based on what was said and the context in which it was said, what needs to be filled in here to achieve clarity? What is not being said overtly, but is still assumed to be known or inferable? What knowledge, assumptions, and inferences do listeners have to bring to bear in order for this communication to be clear and understandable and received in the way the speaker intended it?" (195)
	Tool #3: The Making Strange Tool	Act as an "outsider" to make the communication "strange," thinking about what an outsider would think, feel, and find "strange" about what's being said?
	Tool #4: The Subject Tool	Identify the subject; consider why the subject was selected, what the speaker has to say about the subject, how the information is organized around the subject, and if the speaker could have chosen a different subject.
	Tool #5: The Intonation Tool	How does intonation affect/contribute to meaning? What's emphasized versus what's not? Read written texts aloud to surmise intonation.
	Tool #6: The Frame Problem Tool	Review context again and widen the "frame" surrounding communication, considering other factors that may affect the language.

Saying, Doing, and Designing	Tool #7: The Doing and Not Just Saying Tool	Consider the purpose of the communication – what is the speaker's aim ("what he or she is trying to do")? May have multiple purposes (doings) (196).
	Tool #8: The Vocabulary Tool	Consider the types of words and language used and why.
	Tool #9: The Why This Way and Not That Way Tool	Consider how and why the speaker organized (built, designed) language in the way given and not another way.
	Tool #10: The Integration Tool	Consider how and why clauses are integrated/used in the language.
	Tool #11: The Topics and Themes Tool	Identity the topic and the theme for each clause; consider effects/implications of such decisions. (The "topic" is the subject; the "theme of a clause is the point of departure of the message, a framework for the interpretation of

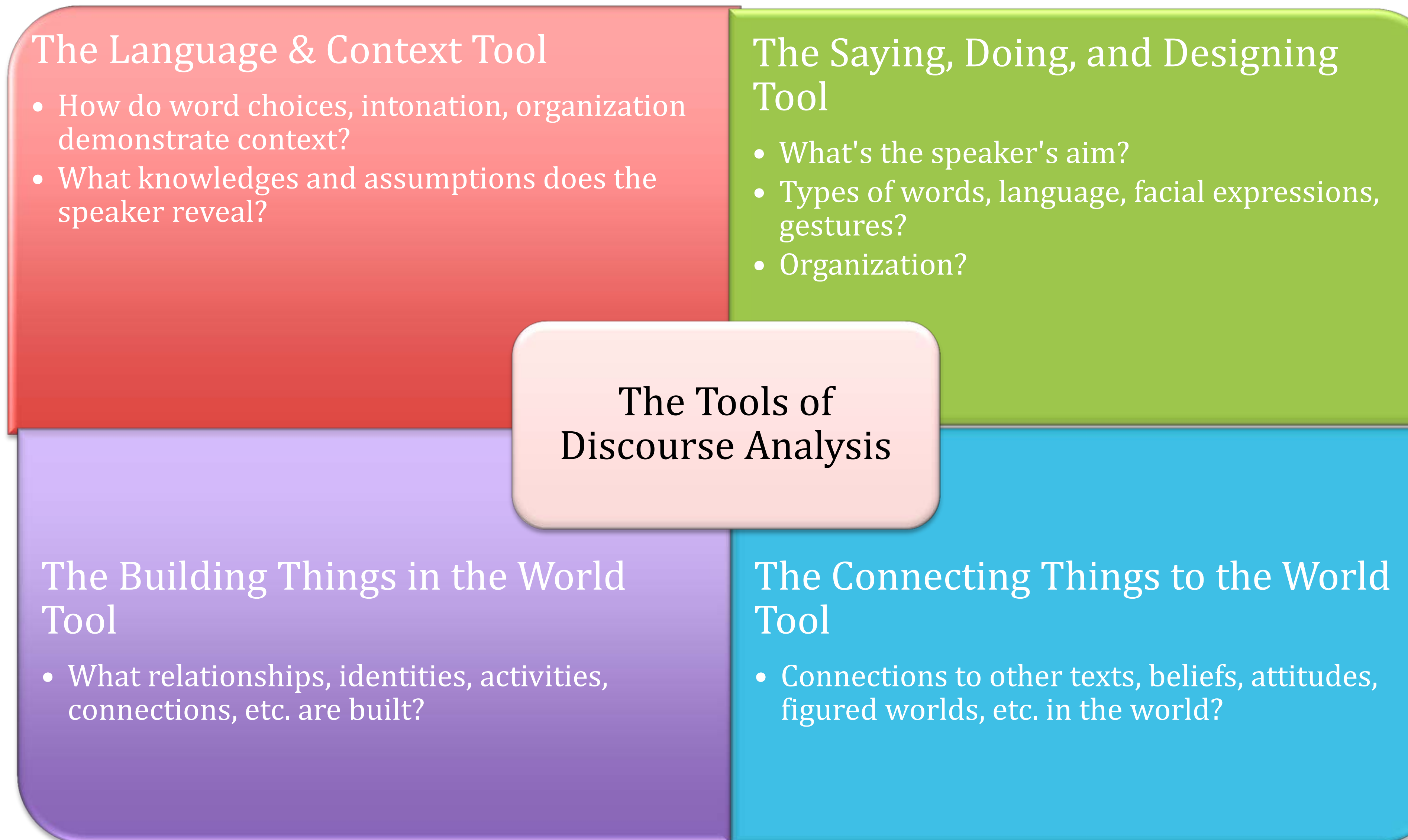
		the clause," which "orients the listener to what is about to be communicated. In English, the theme of a clause is whatever comes before the subject" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 65).)
	Tool #12: The Stanza Tool	Identify the stanzas; consider how/why they're organized and structured. (Stanzas are "idea units" that center on "one important event, happening, or state of affairs at one time and place, or it focuses on a specific character, theme, image, topic, or perspective" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 74).)

Building Things in the World	Tool #13: The Context is Reflexive Tool	Consider how/why the context is shaped, crafted based on the speaker's language.
	Tool #14: The Significance Building Tool	Consider how/why words, structures, devices are used to build (or lessen) significance.
	Tool #15: The Activities Building Tool	Consider what activity/activities the speaker is building, as well as what institutions, social groups, cultures, etc., support this/these activity/activities. ("When I call something an action, I am focusing on doing and what is being done. When I call something an activity I am focusing on how an action or sequences of actions carry out a socially recognizable and institutionally or culturally normed endeavor" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 96-7).)
	Tool #16: The Identities Building Tool	Consider what identity/identities are enacted and built and how/why this is done. Also consider what other identity/identities the speaker recognizes (explicitly or implicitly).
	Tool #17: The Relationships Building Tool	Consider what relationship(s) (e.g., social groups, cultures, institutions, etc.) are built and how/why this is done.
	Tool #18: The Politics Building Tool	Based on language used, identity what counts as social goods and viewpoint(s) regarding social goods. (Politics is "any situation where the distribution of social goods is at stake. By 'social goods' I mean anything a social group or society takes as a good worth having" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 118).)
	Tool #19: The Connections Building Tool	Identify connections made through language and then consider how/why these are made, as well as how/why things are made relevant or irrelevant.
	Tool #20: The Cohesion Tool	Identify cohesive devices and how/why they're used to connect (or *not* connect) information. ("Cohesive devices" are devices used to "connect sentences across whole oral or written texts" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 128).)
	Tool #21: The Sign	"For any communication, ask how the words and gram-

	Systems and Knowledge Building Tool	mar being used privilege or de-privilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations, etc.) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief" (200).
	Tool #22: The Topic Flow or Topic Chaining Tool	"Ask why the topics are of all main clauses and how these topics are linked to each other to create (or not) a chain that creates an overall topic or coherent sense of being about something for a stretch of speech or writing" (200).

Theoretical Tools	Tool #23: The Situated Meaning Tool	Consider the situated meanings (meaning in specific contexts) of words and phrases
	Tool #24: The Social Languages Tool	Identify social language(s) used and consider how words, phrases, structures are used to enact this/these language(s).
	Tool #25: The Intertextuality Tool	Identify and consider how and why language is used to "quote, refer to, or allude to other 'texts' . . . or other styles of language (social languages)" (201).
	Tool #26: The Figured Worlds Tool	"Ask what typical stories or figured worlds the words and phrases of the communication are assuming and inviting listeners to assume. What participants, activities, ways of interacting, forms of language, people, objects, environments, and institutions, as well as values, are in these figured worlds?" (201). ("A figured world is a picture of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal. What is taken to be typical or normal . . . varies by context and by people's social and cultural group" (Gee *How to do Discourse Analysis* 170).)
	Tool #27: The Big "D" Discourse Tool	Identify and consider the Discourse(s) the speaker is enacting, as well as what "actions, interactions, values, beliefs, and objects, tools, technologies, and environments are associated with this sort of language within a particular Discourse?" (201).

Appendix C – Discourse Analysis Chart



Appendix D—Handouts for unit plan

The Trial Scene – Breaking Down Language

Task: Dramatize a passage from the trial scene in *To Kill a Mockingbird* based on a given character.

Guidelines:

- You will be placed in groups and select a specific character from *To Kill a Mockingbird*, who testifies in the trial. Select one specific passage from this person's testimony to dramatize, which should be approximately 2-3 minutes in length.
- Your group should dramatize the passage in TWO different ways:
    1) as Harper Lee has written it and as your group interprets it; and
    2) a *revised* version that somehow alters the relationships and/or the identities presented in the trial.
- Every group member must be involved in the dramatization.

Procedure:

1) Select a character (may not have a group for each character . . .)
    a. Heck Tate (cross-examined by Mr. Gilmer)
    b. Heck Tate (cross-examined by Atticus)
    c. Bob Ewell (cross-examined by Mr. Gilmer)
    d. Bob Ewell (cross-examined by Atticus)
    e. Mayella Ewell (cross-examined by Mr. Gilmer)
    f. Mayella Ewell (cross-examined by Atticus)
    g. Tom Robinson (cross-examined by Mr. Gilmer)
    h. Tom Robinson (cross-examined by Atticus)
2) Review the trial scene, locating and re-reading the section in which your selected character is testifying
3) Select a passage from this larger section (from where your character is on trial) to dramatize
4) Assign roles for the passage (for example, think of the other characters in the courtroom, who would be interesting to cast and add to your dramatization)
5) Re-read the passage, in role
6) Discuss/consider *how* to perform the scene, including intonation, emphasis, placement, gestures. Pay attention to word choice.
7) Practice performing it
8) Review the passage, considering how to revise it, given the above requirements. For example, what words can be added or deleted? Different stresses/intonation?
9) Practice performing the revised scene
10) Discuss any additional alterations

<u>Ranking suggestions (to prompt student discussion)</u>:

- Most to least likeable
- Victim to villain
- Most changed
- Most affected by the trial
- Garners most sympathy from readers

Tom Robinson
Mayella Ewell
Bob Ewell
Atticus Finch
Boo Radley
Scout (Jean Louise) Finch
Jem (Jeremy Atticus) Finch
Dill (Charles Baker Harris)

Connecting Language from the Past to the Present

Final project – *To Kill a Mockingbird*

DUE DATE:

Task: Create a visual representation that demonstrates the impact of language on society in the 21st Century. Consider how it shapes how we think, our beliefs/values, and how we treat others. Use Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* as a starting point for thinking about how language affects us. And "visual representation" can be thought of very broadly, including a skit/play, a movie, a song, artwork, a video/computer game, etc.

Format: There are TWO main criteria regarding this final project: (1) a visual representation that reflects the impact of language on people/society in the 21st Century and (2) sharing (discussing, explaining) your project with the class.

Timeline and procedure:

- Brainstorm and build ideas, including types of visual representations and, also, on the impact of language; review notes from class and the novel, too.
- Discuss and propose ideas to Miss Niemi; get approval
    - . It's suggested that you have 2-3 ideas to consider/propose
- Organize, build/create visual representation; peer feedback
- Share your project with the class

Guidelines:

- You must FIRST propose ideas for creating a visual representation and get approval BEFORE launching into completing the final project. It's suggested that you have 2-3 ideas to propose when you conference with Miss Niemi.
- The conference and proposal will take the form of a negotiation, in that your visual representation must demonstrate *significant* effort and thought. There is not an across-the-board requirement for length and minutes, as each final evaluation is meant to cater to each individual student's interests and abilities.
- Your reflection should make specific references to *To Kill a Mockingbird*, in order to demonstrate your thinking/reflection on the novel and how it links to today's society.

Grading criteria:

<u>Dominoes – *To Kill a Mockingbird*</u>

Cut out the dominoes below (each domino will have TWO words/concepts). Then, pair dominoes together by placing them end to end, explaining the connection between the words/concepts. Aim to provide specific evidence and references to the text.

Jean Louise Finch	**Hardship, adversity**
Jem	**Childhood, growing up**
Dill	**The roles of women, men**
Atticus	**Language (its use, its effects)**
Calpurnia	**Bravery, courage**
Tom Robinson	**Education, learning**
Tim Johnson	**Facts vs. opinions**
Family, heritage	**Prejudice**
Maycomb	**Symbolism (symbolize)**
Mrs. Dubose	**Status (class, ethnicity, etc.)**

Bob Ewell	**Point-of-view, perspective**
Mayella Ewell	**People, relationships**
Boo Radley	**Belief/value systems**
The Radley House	**Death**
Mockingbird	**Rumors, legends**
“Folks”	**Innocence**
The trial	**Understanding**
1930s	**Free choice**
Mr. Dolphus Raymond	**Free choice**
The South	**Free choice**

Connecting Language from the Past to the Present

Final essay – *To Kill a Mockingbird*

DUE DATE:

Task: Throughout *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee consistently portrays the impact of language in shaping beliefs, especially how we treat and view other people. Select one passage from *TKAM* that considers this, and select one current text that also demonstrates the impact of language. Explore how each text (chosen passage) shows the power of language, including how it is used, its effects, and the purpose(s) of the authors. Be specific in your exploration, using evidence to support.

Requirements:

- 3-4 pages handwritten (back and front equals one page!); 2 pages, double-spaced typed

Timeline and procedure:

- Brainstorm and build ideas, including topics/ideas to discuss in essay, current texts, etc.; review notes from class and the novel, too.
- Discuss and propose ideas to classmates (small-group work)
    - . It's suggested that you have 2-3 ideas to consider/propose
- Organize, draft essay
- Peer feedback x2; class discussion of essays, ideas
- Revise draft
- Reflect on essay and unit; celebrate your hard work ☺

Grading criteria:

Appendix E – *To Kill a Mockingbird* Reading Schedule

***** Students will do the bulk of reading at home, with us then discussing/exploring the passages in class afterward.

	Day/lesson	Chapter	Page numbers (# pages)	Details, description of chapter (s)
Part One	3	1	3-16 (14)	Intro/exposition, Dill arrives, Boo introduced (try to get him to come out)
	HW (for day 4)	2	17-24 (8)	Scout starts school, Miss Caroline Fisher, description of Cunninghams
		3	25-35 (11)	Walter over for lunch, Burris Ewell upsets Miss Caroline, Ewells intro-duced, "climb into his skin" dialogue (33)
		4	36-45 (10)	Gifts in oak tree, Dill comes back to Maycomb, more on Boo
	HW (for 5)	5	46-55 (10)	Miss Maudie introduced, discuss Boo with Maudie, note to Boo
	HW (for 6)	6	55-64 (10)	Spy on Boo, Jem loses pants
		7	64-70 (7)	More gifts in the knot-hole, write Boo a letter, hole is filled with cement
		8	70-82 (13)	Cold winter, it snows, Miss Maudie's house on fire
	HW (for 7)	9	82-98 (17)	Scout fights Cecil Jacobs (b/c accused Atticus of "defend[ing] niggers" (82)), Atticus discusses defending Tom, Christmas, Uncle Jack, Scout fights Francis
	HW (for 8)	10	98-109 (12)	Discussion of Atticus's age, Atticus shoots rabid dog (Tim Johnson)
	HW (for 9)	11	110-124 (15)	Mrs. Dubose introduced; Jem destroys her camellias; Jem must read to Mrs. Dubose, who overcomes morphine addiction and dies

Part Two	HW (for 9)	12	127-139 (13)	Jem and Scout go to church with Calpurnia, Aunt Alexandra arrives
		13	140-148 (9)	Finch family heritage
	HW (for 10)	14	148-159 (12)	Dill returns
	10	15	159-171 (13)	Old Sarum gang tries to lynch Tom; Jem, Dill, and Scout follow Atticus to the jail
	HW (for 11)	16	171-182 (12)	Mr. Dolphus Raymond, trial begins
		17	183-197 (15)	Trial: Heck Tate testifies, followed by Bob Ewell
		18	197-209 (13)	Trial: Mayella Ewell testifies
	HW (for 12)	19	209-220 (12)	Trial: Tom Robinson testifies, Dill cries at cross-examination (by Mr. Gilmer)

		20	220-227 (8)	Talk to Dolphus Raymond, Atticus summarizes defense
		21	227-233 (7)	Children are found in court (Calpurnia comes to get them), jury returns verdict of guilty, spectators in balcony stand for Atticus
	HW (for 15)	22	234-239 (6)	Jem cries, Atticus receives gifts from community, Bob Ewell spits in Atticus's face and vows revenge
		23	239-251 (13)	Atticus not worried by Bob's threat; Atticus discusses trial with Jem ("As you grow older you'll see white men cheat black men every day of your life" (243)); discussion of different types of "folks"
		24	251-262 (12)	Missionary Society meets for tea, news comes of Tom's death
	HW (for 16)	25	262-266 (5)	Description of Tom's death in community, newspaper
		26	266-273 (8)	School starts again, discussion of Hitler, Jews (treatment)
	HW (for 17)	27	273-280 (8)	Odd happenings in Maycomb, Scout as ham in school play
		28	280-294 (15)	Pageant; Bob attacks Jem and Scout, who are rescued; Bob is killed
		29	294-298 (5)	Scout describes the attack, meets Boo
	17	30	298-305 (8)	Atticus thinks Jem killed Bob; Heck Tate "proves" that Bob fell on his own knife (knows that it was actually Boo, though)
		31	305-309 (5)	Scout and Boo see/visit Jem, Scout walks Boo home, re-cap of plot through Boo's eyes

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