JoLLE@UGA®
JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

Collage Praxis: What Collage Can Teach Us about Teaching and Knowledge Generation

Jessica Whitelaw

Abstract: In this article, I examine collage in pre-service teacher education as an arts-based theory and practice to interrogate knowledge in the classroom; how it gets generated, by whom, and to what end. I consider how historical legacies of collage that revolutionized modern art by shifting focus away from technique and mastery toward concept, process, and critique of the status quo, can shed light on literacy practices in K-12 and teacher education. Through practitioner inquiry and feminist arts-based frameworks, I examine collage-making and sharing in response to a shared picturebook in a children's literature course. I argue that collage staked claim to an accessible framework and participation structure that disrupted typical linear ways of engaging with story and offered a malleable, material-discursive model for inquiry, process, and concept. To make the argument, I explore how collage re-framed knowledge generation in relational terms that relied upon uncertainty, multiplicity, and an interplay of individual and collective engagement, reclaiming literature as an aesthetic activity and positioning teachers as aesthetic and emergent subjects. I consider implications for how pre-service teachers learn to think about knowledge in the process of becoming a teacher.

Keywords: arts-based pedagogy, children's literature, collage, inquiry, teacher education

Jessica Whitelaw is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. There she teaches courses in literacy learning, literature for children and youth, inquiry-based research, and teacher learning. Her research focuses on arts-based literacies and critical inquiry. In 2019 she published a research monograph entitled *Arts-Based Literacy Teaching and Learning: Cultivating a Critical Aesthetic Practice,* a book that explores an arts-based framework for centering the arts in the social and intellectual activity of everyday school life with a commitment to inquiry, joy, and justice.

Introduction[1]

Within the force of the current and far-reaching neoliberal paradigm (Brass, 2014; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Hursh, 2007; Mayer et al., 2008; Ogawa et al., 2003; Taubman, 2009; Wyse et al., 2012), pre-service teachers need opportunities to think about "how uniformity of knowledge is not as natural or desirable as the architects of the contemporary, positivistically oriented institutional context might suggest" (Jones & Woglom, 2016, p. 10). For those who teach, a disruption of this seemingly natural order requires mutations of mentality (Guattarri, 1995, p. 20). Teachers and their students need opportunities to construct new ways of knowing and being that rely upon uncertainty, multiplicity, and relational learning, when so much of the discourse of education relies upon certainty, sameness, individualism with knowledge that has been set a priori by the teacher.

The arts can be generative sites of inquiry for literacy teachers to explore pedagogies that are less contingent upon pre-determined meaning, drawing upon aesthetic and imaginative dimensions of learning that resist the notion that there is one way of getting it right. Through sensibilities that resist singular ways of knowing, the arts can push back against means-end logic and individualism and open up relational spaces to examine and interrogate sense-making and constrictive normativity in the classroom. As Bourriaud (1998) argues, the arts create social interstices, spaces that allow for interaction and ways of being outside the norm. Since the arts are fundamentally relational and meant to be shared, these interstices offer sites of dialogue and possibilities for the negotiation of individual and collective meaning in the social context of the classroom. In these ways, the arts offer access to new ways of knowing but also "accommodate the possibility of participating in more than one discourse or manner of being" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 65). In other words, the arts can invite questions about not only *what* we know but *how* we come to know it; they can provide experiential opportunities for teacher educators, teachers, and their students to critically consider what knowledge is, how it gets generated, and who controls it in the learning process (Bourdieu, 1987).

The art form I examine in this paper is cut paper collage, an art form where different cut paper shapes and forms are assembled together to create a new whole. I explore this with pre-service teachers as an art form and as a mutant pedagogy (Jones & Woglom, 2016), that is, a pedagogy that encourages mutations in thinking (Guattari, 1999), ways of thinking about phenomena that diverge from the status quo. Collage is potentially helpful in this regard because it is inherently resistant to fixed or pre-determined meanings and, in this way, has potential for decentering certainty and the teacher as the primary knower in the classroom. This effort can be understood in light of what Grushka and Young (2014) refer to as "artful pedagogy," a term that signals uses of the arts that attempt to distance the pre-service teacher/learner from dominant scientific paradigms and instrumental approaches to teaching. It can also be understood as an experiential effort to expand possibilities for what pre-service teachers envision as knowledge generation and practice with their own students in K-12 classrooms. I asked:

- What happens when pre-service teachers are invited to make sense of story meaning of a picturebook through the making and sharing of cut paper collage in a children's literature classroom?
- How can collage inform how teachers and their students think about knowledge

[1] All pronouns for individuals in this article correspond to the pronouns they use to refer to themselves.

generation and what are the implications for literacy teaching and learning?

These questions invite audiences to consider what collage offers as a literacy practice, teaching methodology, and framework for knowledge generation in light of the current context. While the focus of this paper is on collage-making and sharing in a university children's literature course for pre-service teachers, I consider implications for both teacher education and K-12 education more broadly.

Conceptual Framework

Efforts to explore the relationship between collage and multiple ways of knowing through the arts are informed by feminist traditions across a range of fields of study have critiqued positivism and objective truth as the most valid approach to knowledge generation. Feminist epistemologies foreground the unraveling of singular ways of knowing, highlight the ways in which knowledge is always to some degree interactive and never constructed in isolation, and call for a more dynamic interplay between the individual and collective (Alcoff & Potter, 1993). In literacy contexts, some worry that the elicitation of multiple perspectives through an arts-based form such as collage is counter-productive to learning – that it will lead to pure relativism and an "anything goes" approach, or that this will discourage students from expanding beyond their own interpretive frameworks and habitual ways of seeing. Standpoint epistemology challenges this assumption, proposing that objectivity and subjectivity need not be entirely at odds and that multiplicity can actually sharpen, deepen, and lead to more accurate and ostensibly "objective" understandings of our shared world (Harding, 1991). These underpinnings are particularly relevant to uses of collage in literacy contexts, where the rationalist underpinnings of critical literacy (Janks, 2009) have tended to exclude multiple ways of knowing and where the negotiation of multiplicity is central to the form and process.

"To position the teacher as an emergent aesthetic subject . . . has an ethical dimension, pushing back against mental models of certainty that prevent the teacher from being an ongoing learner and developing a questioning and critical stance."

Efforts to explore collage in teacher education can also be understood by considering the teacher as an emergent aesthetic subject (Foucault, 1988; Guattari, 1995; Greene, 1995), that is, as a teacher/learner and incomplete project in an ongoing process of becoming. Collage is helpful in this effort because it offers an aesthetic experience that relies heavily upon uncertainty and process in both making and viewing. For teachers as emergent aesthetic subjects, this reliance pushes back against the ways that uncertainty is often construed as inherently unproductive for teachers as evidenced by deep cultural expectations that have long privileged certainty and expertise as the defining characteristics of good teaching (Britzman, 2003). To position the teacher as an emergent aesthetic subject thus has an ethical dimension, pushing back against mental models of certainty that prevent the teacher from being an ongoing learner and developing a questioning and critical stance. Underscoring the ethical imperative of uncertainty in the project of learning to teach, Britzman (2007) argues: "if the teacher chooses to become a critical subject, uncertainty is essential… it resides within the acts of a self-commitment to becoming" (p.3).

Lastly, collage offers a way of exploring how teacher learning is shaped by relational contexts as well as the

materials we encounter (Barad, 2007; Jones & Woglom, 2016). These materials both open up and shut down possibilities for what teacher/learners know and who they become. Scholarship and teaching is thus called upon to expand these materials as a way of expanding ways of knowing in both K-12 and teacher education. The unique material-discursive features of cut paper collage offer possibilities for the teacher as an emergent aesthetic subject to explore malleability of their own thinking, multiplicity of meaning, and new insights about how knowledge gets generated outside of typical linear discourses.

Related Literature

The historical legacy of collage sheds light on its potential as an apt methodology for unsettling assumptions about knowledge generation in teaching, teacher education, and research.

The Historical Legacy of Collage

The word collage, taken from the French word collé, refers to the technique of pasting paper cut-outs onto a surface. But this seemingly simple definition and technique belies its significance as what has one of the most consequential artistic innovations of the 20th century (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2019; Schjeldahl, 2010). Artists of the Cubist and Dada movements such as Pablo Picasso, Jean and Hans Arp revolutionized modern art by using the collage form to shift the focus of art toward concept and process and to challenge the notion of a single reality. In the 1930s, Mexican muralists Diego Riveria, José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros encouraged a new generation of artists in the U.S. to explore a social role of art through experimentation with form and new techniques to do so, influencing the work of Romare Beardon, whose work upended distinctions between fine art and popular arts, and used collage as a form of social critique, resistance, and self-determination (Whitney Museum of American Art, 2020). As a departure from previous movements that focused on art object, skill, aesthetically pleasing images, and measured control, this new wave of artists used materiality, shape, color, texture, and assemblage to bring attention to form and content, to invite dialogue, and to raise questions about society, encourage inquiry, and question the role of art itself.

This move toward new forms and subjects of art opened up new ways of knowing and sense-making that challenged realistic portrayals as insufficient to reflect the complexity of lived worlds and called upon readers to be active participants in challenging the status quo and critically grappling with meaning. Farebrother (2009) argues that the emergence of collage is significant because it invited a new kind of dialogue with works of art due in part to how the maker and viewer must take on active interpretive roles in constructing and discerning relationships and meaning. She argues that this new kind of dialogue signified a dramatic shift affecting the way we read, initiating a process of de-familiarization and re-assessment of the material from different angles. She argues,

> collages are characterized by material heterogeneity and incongruous juxtaposition that breaks the continuity of discourse, they alter the way we read… viewers are forced to piece together meaning actively; they must tease out relationships between parts… fragments… and wholes. These meanings remain in dynamic play. (p.8)

Collage in Arts-Based Teaching and Research

Collage has been used in a range of contexts across K-12 and university teaching to open up pathways to knowledge generation that rely upon a dynamic, non-binary logic of doing and thinking. In elementary classrooms collage has been used to support idea generation and evolution of ideas in the teaching of

narrative writing. Olshansky (1994) argued that working with materials engaged students in new ways that, through the process of making, allowed them to "see things" that shaped their narratives. She argued that collage awakened the imagination and offered new options for discovering and creating stories. Collage has also been used in pre-service teacher education. McDermott (2002) explored how collage provided an aesthetic experience through which pre-service teachers could construct and critique their cultural identities. She argued that the emergent, relational, and transformative possibilities of collage helped pre-service teachers "layer" future possibilities, opening up new understandings of identity. Lewis (2011) studied how collage journals could be used to explore process and product and be woven together into a multi-vocal reader's theater.

Arts-based research has provided a useful framework for more expansive understandings of the arts in both teaching and research, arguing that the arts are not just a formal area of study but have a central role to play in epistemic and intellectual activity (Barone & Eisner, 2011; Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Irwin, 2013). Arts-based educational research has expanded "epistemological diversity, [by making] a variety of forms of representation available to enrich what we can come to question or to know by virtue of the ways in which the subject matter is addressed" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 47). Across teaching and research, arts-based approaches to knowledge generation have shed light on the ways that aesthetic dimensions of learning (i.e., embodied representations and sensory experience, Greene, 1995) bring multiple pathways to knowledge generation and ways of extending "beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable" (Barone & Eisner, 2011, p.1). Arts-based research has brought attention to a range of modes of inquiry that uphold an arts impulse to see anew (Greene, 1995) and at best, offer "an event or encounter with multiplicities that dislodges fixed ways of perceiving" (Irwin et al., 2006, p. 85).

Some arts-based research has focused specifically on collage as both a mode of representation and a mode of inquiry (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010; Holbrook & Pourchier, 2014). This work has examined how research methodologies can draw upon the historical affordances of collage to counter hegemonic and linear thinking (Butler-Kisber, 2008). Butler-Kisber (2017) uses the term collage inquiry to argue that collage can be used not just to represent but to generate knowledge, and that the process of creating collage from fragments brings about embodied and nuanced understanding of a phenomenon being studied, often eliciting new insights and connections after the fact. Collage inquiry has been explored as a methodology with doctoral students making sense of data for their dissertations (Butler-Kisber, 2017) and alongside concept mapping as a visual tool in experiential research that aids in deepening researchers' understandings and communicating those understandings to an audience (Butler-Kisber, 2010).

Scholarship on collage as a mode of arts-based teaching and research shares some goals with literacy scholarship that has explored myriad forms of art as powerful interrupters of conventional ways of seeing, giving rise to critical democratic visions of schooling (Simon et al., 2014). Among these forms have been graphica (Jones & Woglom, 2016); digital media (Alrutz, 2013; Jocson, 2018; Rhoades, 2012; Simon et al., 2018); drama (Belliveau, 2006; Bhukhanwala et al., 2016; Conrad, 2002; Edmiston, 1998; Fisher et al., 2009; Medina & Campano, 2006); poetry (Leggo et al., 2011); and visual art (Broderick, 2015; Simon et al., 2014). Through various art forms, this body of work highlights a range of ways that the arts can expand how knowledge gets generated in literacy classrooms. As Barone and Eisner (2011) argue, "the concept of literacy needs expansion from a process concerned

essentially with the making of meaning in language to a process in which meaning is made through the interpretation of forms in whatever media they happen to appear" (p. 62).

Methodology

I examine collage in the tradition of practitioner inquiry, taking up intentional and systematic study of my teaching practice and theorizing from the educational contexts that I shape daily through an ongoing dialectic between theory and practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, 2009). As such, the work represents my own effort to invent, interpret, and theorize the work of teaching, learning, and knowledge generation (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) by "pos[ing] the right problems and seek[ing] solutions in context" (Lytle, 2008, p. 379).

Practitioner Inquiry in Teacher Education

The site of study was a required master's level course in children's literature in a K-8 pre-service teacher education program. Practitioner inquiry, in this case, offered a qualitative methodology through which to examine knowledge and practice as it relates to a common activity in literature classrooms: sense-making of story. At the time of this study, I had been teaching the course for five years. Although the syllabus was initially organized around various genres in children's literature, over the years, I found that deeper and more critical engagement involved a shift and re-design toward inquiry-based pedagogy. This meant not just asking questions but taking the practice of teaching literature as a site of examination and critique into what we do in classrooms, how we do it, and to what end. One of the key issues we explored was how children's literature can be a site of critical and collaborative inquiry for educators and students in K-12 classrooms. In the context of teacher education, this required the creation of a space where the teacher educator (myself) and pre-service teachers could occupy inquiry as stance and interrogate the relationship between knowledge and practice in our work (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). We asked questions such as, who is generating knowledge? how is knowledge being generated? What kinds of knowledge are being generated? and in the interest of whom and what? These questions allowed us to think about the kinds of pedagogical practices that would effectively invite all students to grapple with, inquire into, and generate knowledge in classrooms, not go searching for it.

Participants included 19 pre-service teachers at a large urban northeastern university. The students were enrolled in a one-year intensive K-8 teacher preparation and certification program and came with a range of undergraduate disciplinary backgrounds. For the majority of students, children's literature as an academic field of study was new (only two students had taken a children's literature course in their undergraduate program). Likewise, none of the students had arts or arts education backgrounds. Five students in the class identified as students of color (two students identified as Black, one as mixed race, two as Asian, and 14 as White). Since students were predominantly White teachers working in an urban education context serving predominantly students of color, it was especially important for teachers to interrogate ideas about what counts as knowledge and who controls it in the classroom. All names provided are pseudonyms and students granted permission to publish their artwork.

The course was offered during the first summer of the 14-month teacher preparation program. Students met twice weekly and were assigned children's literature paired with course readings from scholarly journals. We created collages over two course sessions that focused on sense-making of picturebooks with course readings that included the following: picturebooks as art forms and cultural artifacts (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2000; Sipe, 2012;); navigating complex and

challenging picturebooks (Evans, 2015); expanding ways of knowing in the literacy classroom (Leland & Harste, 1994); and cultivating socially just mindsets through picturebooks (Zapata et al., 2017). Over the two course sessions, pre-service teachers had opportunities to explore, critique, and potentially expand notions about the kinds of knowledge that can be generated and how that knowledge can be generated through engagement with picturebooks as unique visual/verbal art forms and cultural artifacts.

Materials and Methods

Students created their collages in response to Wild and Spudvilas' (2006) *Woolvs in the Sitee, a* dystopian picturebook for older readers that I read aloud during the first of the two sessions. The book is centrally defined by indeterminacy and ambiguity (Goldstone, 2004), features that are present in both the visual and verbal material. Rendered expressionistically in dark red, brown, and black illustrations with words scrawled phonetically upon the pages, the book conveys a sense of fear embodied by the central character, but the source of that fear--what constitutes the "woolvs in the sitee"—is never explicitly named or resolved. The ambiguity of the book made it unconducive to prescriptive methods since certainty was not possible and the book raises more questions than answers. In this way, collage provided an arts-based mode of sense-making that Fleckenstein (2003) might call "slippery learning" through "slippery text" (p. 112), where the form became a material way of navigating an indeterminant text and made space for teachers to experience and explore the role of uncertainty and ambiguity in knowledge generation and inquiry.

I introduced collage through an exercise called Symbolic Representation Interview, or SRI (Enciso, 1990), a research methodology that asks readers to symbolically represent meaning through cut paper shapes arranged on a page and to provide a written or spoken rationale for their symbolic choices. The SRI had two components: 1) the construction of a visual rendering of a scene or idea of their choice from the story through paper cut-outs using only simple shapes; and 2) an interview (in this case, a written rationale) that provided a justification for each of their visual choices. The SRI was well suited to pair with picturebooks because it meant that readers had to observe and attend to the role of both visual and verbal modes in perception.

To support creating the collages, we studied elements of visual design and perception in Molly Bang's (1991) *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. Since the teachers came from a range of disciplinary backgrounds and most had limited or no study in the arts and/or design, this resource helped us to develop a shared language for working with visual meaning. To develop this language, Bang guides readers through the construction of a visual representation of a scene from a familiar fairy tale using only shape, color, and placement on the page. By reducing materials to the simplest of forms, she deconstructs how each of her design choices is made to influence perception in a particular way – diagonal lines to convey tension, for instance, and vertical lines to convey energy (see appendix). Although this logic is just one perspective on pictures and perception and these codes are always culturally mediated, in the context of this class, the framework was helpful to call attention to the creative process where the artist must grapple with conditions of uncertainty to construct visual meaning that is not pre-determined but "in-the-making" (Ellsworth, 2005).

I then asked students to experiment with these principles of design and perception in cut paper collages on a concept that they viewed as central to *Woolvs in the Sitee*. As a working document, I adapted Bang's ten principles of visual design into a set of images as a working reference (see appendix). Students were asked to use only color and basic

geometric shapes, a criteria that kept the emphasis on symbolic representation and layers of meaning and kept the activity accessible to everyone regardless of technical artistic skill. Students worked alone or in pairs and I encouraged working together to provide an additional opportunity for dialogue. After creating their collages, students wrote a rationale explaining their design choices using the language of the Bang framework. During the second class session, students presented their collages and their written rationales to the whole group. After everyone had shared, we held a critique where viewers made observations on each collage and asked questions about design and meaning. To culminate the activity, I facilitated a whole group discussion that included two parts: 1) comments and reflections on the meanings that students generated; and 2) comments and reflections on the process of collage making and sharing.

Data included the collages, written rationales, and the recorded verbal descriptions of each of the artworks as well as dialogue from the whole class session. I approached the analysis through an interpretive, hermeneutic paradigm (Heidegger, 1962) motivated by questions of how collage was taken up as an arts-based mode of sense-making and what this process offered teacher learning in this context. I drew upon what has been learned about social context and knowledge construction in recent years in social science and literacy studies to explore the role of the arts from sociocultural perspectives on learning and inquiry (Gadsden, 2008).

I analyzed the collages, rationales, and transcript of classroom talk through open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to determine overarching themes and then through subsequent layers of recursive analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) in light of the framework and literature to narrow the findings. The initial themes included: uncertainty, tension, concept/big ideas, negotiation of meaning, multiple meanings, and surprise. Through multiple rounds of analysis and through the lens of material-discursive ways of knowing as outlined in the conceptual framework, I

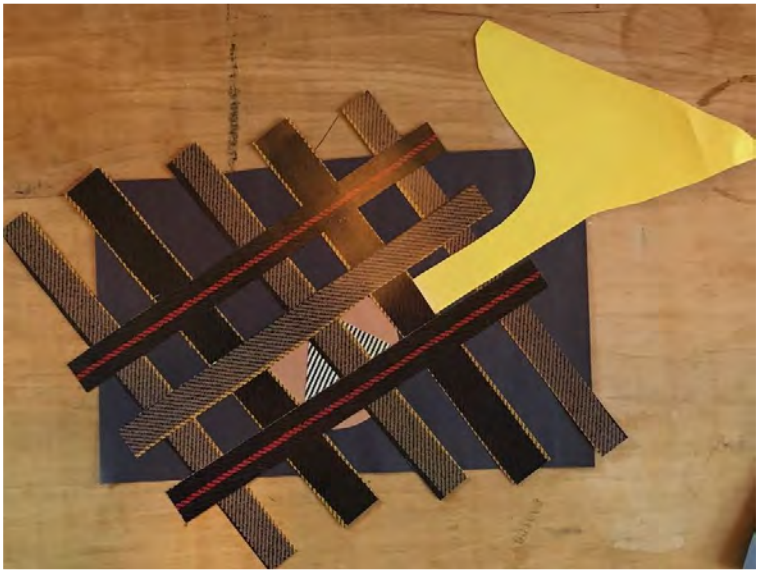
Figure 1

Yue's collage

I wanted to highlight the negative space; the small triangle to the left represents the boy, whereas the mountain on the left is constructed from pieces that are torn to show the tenuous nature of the structure. Compared to the right side the contrast between the two worlds is jarring. The rectangles are meant to act as barriers with a hidden past of the obstacles that he will encounter, even after he reaches the peak. The bright snow is meant to contrast and provide a brief moment of hope (somewhere in the world) before he returns back to that anxious state of mind and has to return back to the basement.

Figure 2

Joseph's collage



The brown circle with the black and white triangle represent the boy, he is real and struggling mentally but wants to be strong and hopes things will get better – his transformation. The black background shows the landscape and how he views the world. The diagonal lines represent how he is trapped – he is being smothered within the house and his own mind, come off the page to show that there is not escape. The yellow is the hope at the end – he is escaping the world of fear, inviting others to join him – endless possibilities. Rage against the machine feeling at the end of the book.

synthesized the themes into three findings or claims, as I will show and discuss in the next section. Through all stages of analysis, I treated the visual and verbal information in the artwork, the rationales, and the dialogue during the creating and sharing as one body of data.

In the following sections I share and discuss three findings: 1) Collage centered a grappling with tension and uncertainty in story meaning, keeping these tensions in dynamic play; 2) Collage offered a material model for inquiry, process, and concept; and 3) Collage centered the negotiation of multiplicity of meanings through a dynamic interplay between the individual and the collective. Each finding offers insight into collage as a literacy practice, teaching methodology, and framework for knowledge generation, and has implications for the process of becoming a teacher. I discuss each of the findings via two collage exemplars and then close with implications of this work for teacher education.

Findings and Discussion

Collage centered a grappling with tension and uncertainty in story meaning, keeping these tensions in dynamic play.

Because collage relies upon material juxtaposition without requiring a resolution of tensions, it provided a space for these tensions to be held, grappled with, creatively examined, represented, and critiqued. In Figures 1 and 2, students use opposing depictions of space (positive and negative); opposing shapes (sharp and soft); contrasting textures (flat and patterned); different parts of the page (top to bottom); and layering (diagonal lines over shapes) to convey felt tensions in the book. The collage form provided a space where tensions in the book such as light and dark, freedom and confinement, hope and despair could be named and represented visually through juxtaposition and layering without necessarily being resolved.

In Figures 1 and 2, we can also see how divergent use of visual materials allowed each student to represent

tensions around freedom and confinement, hope and despair, and light and dark to different effect. Yue's piece (Figure 1) sets up a visual contrast between two worlds and a journey upward between them filled with barriers depicted by vertical rectangles along the way. She makes use of texture and color to show a challenging but alive mountain scene as a metaphor and contrast to the dark and cavernous apartment and apocalyptic landscape rendered in the book. Joseph (Figure 2), working against the constraints of the paper, uses a series of thick diagonal lines to reflect a sense of the boy's entrapment, an entrapment that extends off the edges of the page to convey that "there is no escape." While Yue makes her collage on a small piece of paper to convey constraint, Joseph's lines extend off the page to convey release and freedom. Yue, despite using white as snow to represent something bright and hopeful, suggests that the boy would likely return to the basement and his anxious state of mind. Alternatively, Joseph seems to suggest that change is possible with a resounding horn-like shape that emanates from the center in yellow, breaking through the lines and extending upward and outward. Although both students take up the idea of hope in the face of despair, collage allowed for variation in the subtleties of how this tension is explored and understood. In this way, the renderings aptly captured the complexity of the story, shifting the focus away from resolution of tension, and making space for these tensions to be explored.

Collage offered a material model for concept, inquiry, and process.

The materiality of cut paper required that students engage in a process of working with shape, texture, color, position, and juxtaposition to grapple with and convey meaning; simple paper shapes and forms had to represent things and concepts. This emphasis on paper forms and shapes as symbolic meaning offered a material way to work at the level of ideas, abstraction, and metaphor. In creating their representations from visual material, students had to do a lot of inquiring; they had to consider how decisions about shape convey aspects of character, how the materiality of the paper affects meaning, how decisions about color convey emotion, and how positioning can convey relationships among ideas.

Figure 3

Lucy and Abby's collage

"Early one morning when I'm squinting out the window, I sees a bloo sky with soft white clouds" "My heart leaps! Things are back to normal!" When we first read this page we interpreted it as a small glimmer of hope during a dark time. We chose an all black background to represent the oppressive environment which the main character is experiencing. We wanted to depict the image of someone tentatively pulling back a curtain with one finger to expose what is happening outside. We decided to use a rounded shape for the finger to give it a sense of humanity as well as a bright red and green pattern to ensure life. The dark patterns and pointed and straight angles of the curtains convey a harsh inside environment in contrast with the brightness of the outside which we chose to show through brighter blue and white. We intentionally cut the hole in just a sliver, slightly rounded to represent that far-off glimmer of hope.

Figure 4

Alec's collage

The large pink form in the center represents the brain. The shapes outside represent various stages of "real" wolves. The most real wolf is actually in the brain. As you get further from the brain, the wolves get less and less real. They are "attacking his brain" as well as shown by the direction of the triangles. This represents a mental illness that the narrator is experiencing. Also, I chose purple because it makes me feel uneasy. It is speckled with silver glitter- which is the color of mental illness.

They had to navigate parts and wholes—what were the various shapes going to add up to and say? The process drew attention to epistemology and the ways that meaning-makers always work within the constraints of their materials to construct and convey meaning. It was a way to experience that art-making is not just a way to *represen*t ideas but to *form* them.

When students worked with a partner, like Lucy and Abby (Figure 3) , the process involved making joint decisions and negotiating meaning in order to create an image. When students worked alone, like Alec (Figure 4), they tested out options and "revised" their visual depictions as they went. As students physically moved their shapes on the page, arranging them and re-arranging them in dialogue with themselves and each other, their process of inquiry and negotiation of form and concept was made visible. The collages below can be read as a process of grappling with meaning at the level of concept, idea, and metaphor. The first collage is about hope and possibility in a dark, oppressive environment; the second collage is about mental illness and the fragility of the brain.

Lucy and Abby's collage uses colored shapes as curtains amidst a large black background that represents an oppressive environment. Through a small opening in the curtains, a sharp white line amidst a patch of blue is used to represent clouds and a sky rendered as a glimpse of normalcy, teasingly rendered as something occupying a distant past or future, currently out of reach for the central character. Lucy and Abby used a green and red patterned form to represent a living finger, tentatively pulling back the curtain to see the distant sky. In Alec's depiction, we see sharp black shapes, closing in a soft pink shape that he used to symbolize the brain. These shapes, slightly disfigured and representing variations on the wolf, get more abstract with distance. Inside, the shapes coalesce to form a wolf's head, figuratively occupying the boy's brain. Alec made use of purple and silver glitter paper he found, to represent mental illness and to surround his image. Across both pieces, fear is a shared concept, but the idea is rendered quite differently to different effect; in one case fear is represented as external (an oppressive environment) and in the other as internal (mental illness). Taken together, the pieces show how the materiality of collage served as a mode of inquiry; students worked with the materials available to them (patterned paper for the curtain, sparkles for mental illness) to uniquely wrestle with and represent concepts in their collages. At the same time, the concepts were taken up in subtle and different

directions, provoking consideration of the multiple locations of fear and the ways that fear manifests.

Collage centered the negotiation of multiplicity of meanings through a dynamic interplay between the individual and the collective.

An important aspect of the process was the sharing and critiquing of one another's collages. This social process allowed for the surfacing of multiple understandings of the story, what Richardson (1997) might call "prismatic understandings," where multiplicity allows for different angles on a subject to become visible, much like the colors in a prism. The public critiquing allowed for "polyphonic perspectives" (Hasebe-Ludt et al., 2009) to surface, in other words, for multiple voices to weigh in on each collage and be heard in the classroom. The sharing and critiquing of the collages thus allowed for a dynamic interplay between the individual and the collective (Alcoff & Potter, 1993) in the classroom. As we can see above, even when the collages were about fear, students explored and came to understand different sources, locations, and textures of that fear as they were made visible through symbolic forms. When interpreting literature, it can be difficult for students and teachers to decenter their own perceptions of story and to see each perception as subtly unique, especially in contexts where the focus is on standardization and singular meaning. In sharing their collages, students sometimes worried that their piece would not have anything "different" to contribute. Dimitri told us before sharing his piece (Figure 5), "I don't think mine has anything more to offer what has already been said." Shortly after, he expressed surprise by the way his collage initiated a conversation about comfort and human relationships as the only hopeful aspect of the book. The sharing and viewing of the collages seemed to challenge this common impulse by highlighting the variations, subtle or profound, across each students' work where each deepened students' shared understandings. I share two examples below; one from Dimitri and one from Jonah and Esme (Figure 6) that explore different

Figure 5

Dimitri's collage

I tried to depict both the overall feeling of the story and the scene in which the main character huddles with their neighbor, The two characters are huddled together in the bottom left corner and they are represented as small pink circles. They are safe, soft colors and safe and placed in the corner as juxtaposition to the overwhelming feeling of the wolves outside. The wolves are jagged, angular shapes pointed diagonally at he people. Their shapes and colors are menacing and the diagonal orientation conveys movements – they are closing in on the people. The blue background is both a comment on the bleak mood of the story and a reference to the sky outside. The black shape is a wolf but also the wolves who've taken over the city. But the blue (hopelessness) is his reality, even though the wolves feel like reality.

Figure 6

Jonah and Esme's collage

The small black triangle in the lower right hand corner represents the main character. The triangle shows his insecurity and the black with the patterned colors and shapes shows his complex inner thoughts. The main character is trapped in the corner by sinister red/orange and other dark influences including his own fearful thoughts. The diagonal shapes create a feeling of tension and anxiety. The wolves are depicted by the animalistic red and dark shapes which separate the main character from the bloo skies, which represents his hope. The perspective is from a lower point of view looking up as the main character seems to be in a basement looking up and out of the window.

dimensions of safety, security, hope, and hopelessness in the book.

On the surface, both depictions represent hope in the face of fear, however the sharing and dialogue in the group discussion highlighted differences. For instance, students noted that Dimitri was the only person to depict the boy's contact with the neighbor upstairs, a detail that many agreed was central to the possibility of hope and humanity in the story through human connection. Jonah and Esme's collage also had elements of hope. Playing with perspective, they highlighted how the boy felt small by rendering him as looking upward and outward to a perceived threat; at the same time, however, they suggest that the upward gaze shows the boy had not given up hope and was looking toward a way out of his entrapment, whatever that entrapment actually was. Students noted how Dimitri chose to cast blue as sad, whereas some of the others in the class depicted blue as a sign of hopefulness and opening up, as in the blue sky in a previous collage. This led to a conversation where students debated how blue can mean sad but it can also convey peace and happiness in association with blue skies, which led to a discussion about the mutability of color associations that are sometimes view as fixed and how context affects meaning. Students also discussed how Dimitri's verbal description highlighted feeling, which punctuated both the visceral reaction that many students had to the book and the idea that feelings affect perception; in other words, what we think is often linked to how we feel.

Students noticed how multiple perspectives across the collages allowed for the deepening of story meaning and made this observation with some level of surprise. As Esme said upon reflection on the process, "It was one thing to make sense in the pairs, but when we all came together, it helped me to understand the book more – it made it much more meaningful – I hadn't expected that." Collage, when explored together, was a material way to see the evolution of individual and collective meaning and the transformation of one another's understandings via a process where ideas could develop and collide. Its open-endedness could reinforce a sense of plurality, of multiplicity, of possibility of several disparate takes on or reactions to the same artifact (Jones & Woglom, 2016, p. 10). In this way, the

differences across the collages were not just a way of surfacing and celebrating multiplicity but a way of experiencing the feminist notion that multiple understandings are not just a distraction but can actually deepen what we know.

Implications

Taken together, the examples show how collage broke the typical linear continuities of discourse, altering the way students made meaning. Students were called upon to be active participants and negotiators of story meaning through a non-linear process of individual and collective sense-making. Grappling with tension and uncertainty; using materials to engage with process, concept and inquiry; and developing individual and collective understandings allowed students to piece together meaning in ways that are arguably more reflective of both how we actually construct meaning in everyday life and how we make sense of complexity in our lived worlds. When the collages were displayed around the room, students could, at glance, literally see the layers and range and variation of meaning-making in the room. This invited a "crystallization" (Richardson, 1997) of sorts, where meaning and analysis could be seen and experienced as multiply constituted, not singular and determined ahead of time by the teacher. For pre-service teachers studying children's literature, it was a way to experience first-hand how readers engage with meaning in different ways even when reading the same text (Santori, 2008). Collage and collage thinking offered an experience where to arrive at a singular definition or comprehension of the text was not the end goal, nor was that even possible.

"Collage and collage thinking offered an experience where to arrive at a singular definition or comprehension of the text was not the end goal, nor was that even possible."

Although the range and variation in the collages highlighted differences in sense-making, it also made visible important collective understandings across them. Students could visibly see how all the collages characterized fear in some way but how the angles on fear, the locations of fear, the responses to fear, and the implications of fear were rendered divergently, adding layers of understanding. In a pre-service classroom, seeing the similarities and the differences across the collages were important ways of disrupting the all-or-nothing binary that often accompanies the teaching of story in classrooms, i.e. that it is either about a singular meaning (positivism) or that anything goes (relativism). Collage was a way of experiencing how understandings can be at once subjective, rooted in story, and intimately linked across a community of sense-makers, a simultaneity that is important for teachers and their students to understand.

For pre-service teachers who often enter the profession expecting to become "experts," working with materials at the level of shape, abstraction, and visual metaphor was a way to interact with text from a standpoint of "not knowing" and to negotiate uncertainty and ambiguity as generative learning spaces, not something to be avoided. Most of the elementary school pre-service teachers were not English majors and so working with abstraction via these collages provided a space in their teacher preparation to experience how meaning is emergent, socially contingent, and always in flux (Sumara, 1996; Street, 2003). Developing comfort with uncertainty and with the fluidity of sense-making is important for teachers in order to embrace the complexity of sense-making, but it also plays a role in the ethical obligation of teachers to honor what students bring as intellectual resources. Developing comfort in uncertainty is an important

capacity for all teachers to develop to avoid deficitizing students via transmission-based approaches to learning that focus overwhelmingly on skills that can be measured and meanings that are pre-determined by adults. A healthy orientation to "not knowing" is necessary to cultivate inquiry and to negotiate meaning in ways that are situated, emergent, and relational.

Collage was a way for pre-service teachers to experience the arts as epistemology and a way of generating knowledge, not just representing it. Zoe said of the process: "It helped me to see that there are a range of ways to *analyze* (emphasis added) a text in a new modality." Zoe's comment makes the argument that collage could be a meaningful form of *analysis,* a way of knowing and making sense that leads to new understandings that were not known at the outset. Whereas art always has the possibility for knowledge generation, it is often employed pedagogically as individual expression that *demonstrates* meaning. For teachers to embrace collage as a mode of analysis is thus part of an effort to expand the invitations for the ways that students come to know and make sense in classrooms. During times when the logic of standardized teaching, testing, and an emphasis on certainty places troubling restrictions on what counts as knowledge and ways of generating that knowledge in classrooms, attention to what students know and how they know it takes on critical importance. As Barone and Eisner (2011) argue, it is particularly during a period in which precision, quantification, prescription, and formulaic practices dominate that the arts should shed light upon more vast epistemologies and stake claim to alternate forms of logic. In literacy classrooms, the arts can push back against dominant logic by centering the inherent fluidity and mutability of sense-making, a fluidity that is essential to offset the reach of certainty found in standardized approaches and teaching materials (Bomer & Maloch, 2012; Comber, 2011; Serafini, 2011) They can offer invitations to inquire into and grapple with story meaning rather than "to prescribe settled…meaning" (Abbs, 2003, p. 14). These invitations can subvert dominant power structures in the classroom concerning who has authority over knowledge and the learning process and give way to more vast and inclusive epistemologies.

"During times when the logic of standardized teaching, testing, and an emphasis on certainty places troubling restrictions on what counts as knowledge and ways of generating that knowledge in classrooms, attention to what students know and how they know it takes on critical importance."

Lastly, collage making and sharing fostered and relied upon a culture of participation where everyone's ideas could be grappled with, surfaced, shared, and negotiated collectively through relatively low barriers for participation. While the arts offer important inroads to epistemology because they are experiential, in classrooms, the arts can be framed in ways that are intimidating, exclusive, and isolating for students who have less experience with the arts or who have learned not to see themselves as artists. Collage itself is a relatively accessible form of art but limiting collage to the use of color and simple shapes further encouraged inclusivity by de-emphasizing technical artistic skill and emphasizing process and meaning making. In the whole group conversation that followed the collage making and sharing, Esme said that she had been skeptical about the activity at first, not sure that it would add anything meaningful to her knowledge of the book. In the end, she expressed "surprise" by what the methodology opened up, which from her perspective was a new space where "everyone [could]

talk about [the book] and *enter* – it's really encompassing." This entry point was significant because it provided an inclusive context for the individual and collective negotiation of meaning. In the whole group discussion, students cited further implications for inclusion, pointing out how collage as a literacy practice would be open to any student, including students with language differences and English Language Learners. Dimitri, who had been concerned that his collage would not add anything to the class's understandings, noted that the practice could allow for students who may not typically share verbally in class to engage in a new way and to see how their contributions informed collective sense-making. Some may question whether children would be able to articulate their collages as insightfully as teachers, a question that was raised by the teacher candidates in this class. I shared with them how I first encountered and practiced this methodology in my own sixth grade classroom and showed examples from students with a wide range of writing skills were able to access depth of meaning through the encompassing nature of visual symbolic representation and low barriers for participation.

Conclusion

Collage can be considered as an arts-based approach to transformative praxis; it offers both a theory and a practice for literacy teachers and their students. Collage required no specialized resources, putting it well within reach as a mode of arts-based learning possible for any literacy classroom. And it challenged many of the pervasive assumptions that have long cast art as non-essential and non-academic – among them that it requires money, that it is useful only to those with talent, that it requires "doing" versus "thinking," that it is a form of entertainment, and that it requires specialists to teach it (Davis, 2008). As a framework for literacy teaching, collage provided a way to think about knowledge in classrooms. Art is not purely representational, it does not merely reflect what is seen- it shapes it, and thus is a way to generate new knowledge. As a methodology, collage provided a structure within which students could grapple with story meaning in ways that resist pre-determination, rely upon process, and encourage individual and collective participation. Because collage is, by definition, hybrid and assembled, as a framework and methodology it centers multiplicity versus singularity and can thus support an anti-normative agenda in literacy teaching and learning. Butler-Kisber (2008) argues that collage can "counteract the hegemony and linearity in written texts, increase voice and reflexivity… and expand the possibilities of multiple realities and understandings" (p. 268). These invitations can be provocative ways to critique normative knowledge and taken-for-granted ways of knowing where knowledge is pre-determined and textual authority is held by the teacher. If it is true that teachers are always in the process of becoming, and become something different as the result of a pedagogical encounter (Spector, 2015), we as teacher educators have to expand the sorts of pedagogical encounters we offer. This will allow teachers to become inquirers, shapers, and negotiators of meaning, so that these identities will likewise be available to the students they teach.

References

Alcoff, L. & Potter, E. (1993). *Feminist epistemologies.* Routledge.

Alrutz, M. (2013). Sites of possibility; applied theatre and digital storytelling with youth. *The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, 18*(1), 44-57.

Arts Education Partnership. (2004). *The arts and education: New opportunities for research.* AEP. https://eric.ed.gov/?q=source%3A%22Arts+Education+Partnership%22&id=ED516748

Bang, M. (1991). *Picture this: How pictures work.* Chronicle Books.

Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning.* Duke University Press.

Barone, T., and Eisner, E. W. (2011). *Arts-based research*. Sage.

Belliveau, G. (2006). Engaging in drama: Using arts-based research to explore a social justice project in teacher education. *International Journal of Education and the Arts, 7*(5), 1-17.

Bhukhanwala, F., Dean, K. & Troyer, M. (2016). Beyond the student teaching seminar: Examining transformative learning through arts-based approaches. *Teachers and Teaching, 23*(5), 611-630.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (4th ed.). Pearson.

Bomer, R. & Maloch, B. (2012). Diverse local literacies and standardizing policies. *Language Arts, 90*(1), 44-52.

Bourriaud, N. (1998). *Relational aesthetics*. Les Presses du Reel.

Brass, J. (2014). English, literacy, and neoliberal policies: Mapping a contested moment in the United States *English Teaching: Practice and Critique 13*(1), 112-133.

Britzman, D. (2003). *Practice makes practice: a critical study of learning to teach* (Rev. ed). State University of New York Press.

Britzman, D. (2007). Teacher education as uneven development: Toward a psychology of uncertainty. *International Journal of Leadership in Education. 10*(1), 1-12.

Broderick, D. (2015). *Art as inquiry: Cultivating critical arts-based practices in an early pre-service teacher education program* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Pennsylvania.

Butler-Kisber, L. (2008). *Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative, and Arts-Informed Perspectives.* Sage Publishing.

Butler-Kisber, L. (2008). Collage as inquiry. In J. G. Knowles & A. L. Cole (Eds.), *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues.* Sage Publishing.

Butler-Kisber L. (2007). Collage as analysis and representation. In Knowles J. G., Luciani T.C., Cole A. L., & Neilsen L. (Eds.), *The art of visual inquiry* (pp. 265–281). Backalong Books.

Butler-Kisber, L. (2017). *Lynn Butler-Kisber defines collage inquiry* [video]. Sage Publishing https://methods.sagepub.com/video/lynn-butler-kisber-defines-collage-inquiry#:~:text=Abstract,one's%20understanding%20of%20a%20subject.

Butler-Kisber, L. & Poldma, T. (2010). The power of visual approaches in qualitative inquiry: The use of collage making and concept mapping in qualitative research. *The Journal of Research Practice, 6*(2), 1-16.

Cahnmann-Taylor, M. & Siegesmund, R. (2008). *Arts-based research in education: Foundations for practice.* Routledge.

Campbell, E. (2015). Glimpses of uncertainty in teaching. *Curriculum Inquiry, 37*(1), 1-8.

Catts, H., & Kamhi, A. (2017). Prologue: Reading comprehension is not a single ability. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 48*(2), 73-76.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Fries, M. K. (2001). Sticks, stones, and ideology: The discourse of reform in teacher education. *Educational Researcher, 30*(8), 3-15.

Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. L. (2009). *Inquiry as stance: Practitioner research in the next generation.* Teachers College Press.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. M. (Eds.). (2005). *Studying teacher education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Collins, P. H. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness and the politics of empowerment.* Routledge.

Comber, B. (2011). Changing literacies, changing populations, changing places: English teachers' work in an age of rampant standardization. *English Teaching, 10*(4), 5-22.

Conrad, D. (2002). Drama as arts-based pedagogy and research: Media advertising and inner city youth. *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 48 (3), 254-268.

Cran, R. (2014). *Collage in twentieth-century art, literature, and culture: Joseph Cornell, William Burroughs, Frank O'Hara, and Bob Dylan.* Routledge.

Davis, D. (2008). Collage inquiry: Creative and particular applications. *Learning Landscapes, 2*(1), 245–265.

Davis, D., & Butler-Kisber, L. (1999, April). Arts-based representation in qualitative research: Collage as a contextualizing analytic strategy. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Davis, J. H. (2008). *Why our schools need the arts.* Teachers College Press.

Eisner, E. (2009). What education can learn from the arts. *Art Education, 62*(2), 6-9.

Delandshere, G., & Petrosky, A. (2004). Political rationales and ideological standards of the standards-based reform of teacher education in the US. *Teaching & Teacher Education, 20*(1), 1-15.

Ellsworth, E. (2005). *Places of learning: Media, architecture, pedagogy.* Routledge.

Edmiston, B. (1998). Choosing an ethical self in drama. In J. Wilhelm and B. Edmiston, *Imagining to learn: Inquiry, ethics, and integration through drama* (pp.55-84). Heinemann.

Enciso, P. (1990). *The nature of engagement in reading: Profiles of three fifth-graders' engagement strategies and stances* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Ohio State University.

Evans, J. (2015). *Challenging and controversial picturebooks: Creative and critical responses to visual texts.* Ashgate.

Fisher, M. T., Purcell, S. S., & May, R. (2009). Process, product, and playmaking. *English Education, 41*(4), 337-355.

Fleckenstein, K. (2003). *Embodied literacies: Imageword and a poetics of teaching*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Foucault, M. (1988). An aesthetics of existence. In L. D. Kitzman, (Ed.), *Michel Foucault: Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings, 1977-1984* (pp. 47-53). Routledge. (Original work published 1984)

Gadamer, H. G. (1960/1968). *Truth and method.* The Crossroad.

Gadsden, V. (2008). The arts and education: Knowledge generation, pedagogy, and the discourse of learning. *Review of Research in Education, 32*, 29-61.

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

Goldstone, B. (2004). The postmodern picturebook: A new subgenre. *Language Arts, 81*(3), 196-204.

Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change.* Jossey-Bass.

Grushka, K. & Young, B. (2014). Using arts-based methods in pre-service teacher education: Perzine pedagogies. *Studying Teacher Education, 10*(3), pp. 275-289.

Guattari, F. (1995). *Chaosmosis.* Indiana University Press.

Harding, S. (1991). *Whose science? who's knowledge?* Cornell University Press.

Harris Poll (2005). *Americans for the Arts. Retrieved October 10, 2018 from:* https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/pdf/news/press-releases/2005/06/New-Harris%20Poll-Reveals-93-Percent-of-Americans-Believe-Arts-are-Vital-to-Well-Rounded-Education.pdf.

Hasebe-Ludt, E., Chambers, C. M., & Leggo, C. (2009). *Life writing and literary metissage as an ethos for our times.* Peter Lang.

Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and time* (R. MacQuarrie, Trans.). Harper & Row.

Holbrook, T. & Pourchier, N. M. (2014). Collage as analysis: Remixing in the crisis of doubt. *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*(6), 754-763.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress.* Routledge.

Hursh, D. (2007). Assessing No Child Left Behind and the rise of neoliberal education policies. *American Educational Research Journal, 44*(3), 493-518.

Irwin, R. (2013). Becoming A/r/tography. *Studies in Art Education, 54*(3), 198-215.

Irwin, R., Beer, R., Springgay, S., Grauer, K., Xiong, G., & Bickel, B. (2006). The rhizomatic relations of a/r/tography. *Studies in Art Education, 48*(1), 70-88.

Iser, W. (1978). *The rudiments of a theory of aesthetic response.* John Hopkins Press.

Janks, H. (2009). *Literacy and power.* Routledge Press.

Jocson, K. (2018). *Youth media matters: Participatory cultures and literacies in education.* University of Minneapolis Press.

Jones, S. & Woglom, S. (2016). *On mutant pedagogies: Seeking justice and drawing change in teacher education.* Sense.

Kress, G. & Van Leeuwan, T. (1996). *The grammar of visual design.* Routledge.

Leggo, C., Sinner, A., Irwn, R., Pantaleo, K., Gouzouasis, P., Grauer, K. (2011). Lingering in liminal spaces: A/r/tography as living inquiry in a language arts class. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 24*(2), 239-256.

Leland, C. & Harste, J. (1994). Multiple ways of knowing: Curriculum in a new key. *Language Arts, 71*(5), 337-345.

Lewis, P. J. (2011). Collage journaling with pre-service teachers: A readers theater in one collage. *Review of Qualitative Research, 4*(1), 51-58.

McDermott, M. (2002). Collaging pre-service teacher identity. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 29*(4), 53-67.

McKoewn, M. G., Beck, I. L., & Blake, R. G. K. (2009). Rethinking reading comprehension instruction: A comparison of instruction for strategies and content approaches. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(3), 218-253.

Medina, C. & Campano, H. G. (2006). Performing identities through drama and teatro in multilingual classrooms. *Language Arts, 83*(4), 332-341.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1967). *The phenomenology of perception*. (C. Smith, Trans.) Routledge.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1994). *Picture theory: Essays on verbal and visual representation.* University of Chicago Press.

Nikolajeva. M. & Scott, C. (2001). *How picturebooks work.* Routledge.

Ogawa, R. T., Sandholtz, J. H., Martinez-Flores, M. & Scribner, S. P. (2003). The substantive symbolic consequences of a district's standards-based curriculum. *American Education Research Journal, 40*(1), 147-176.

Olshansky, B. (1994). Making a work of art: Image-making within the writing process. *Language Arts, 71*(5), 350-356.

Oreck, B. (2004). The artistic and professional development of teachers: A study of teacher attitudes and use of the arts in teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 55*(1), 55-69.

Philadelphia Museum of Art. (2019). *The art of collage and assemblage* [Exhibition of collage]. Exhibited at Philadelphia Museum of Art June 8 – September 2.

Richardson, L. (1997). *Fields of play.* Rutgers Press.

Rhoades, M. (2012) LGBT youth + video artivism: Arts-based critical civic practice. *Studies in Art Education, 53*(4), 317-329.

Russell, J. & Zembylas, M. (2007). Arts integration in the curriculum: A review of research and implications for teaching and learning. In Liora Bresler, (Ed.). *International handbook of research in arts education.* Springer.

Schjeldahl, P. (2010). Between the lines: What has become of drawing? *The New Yorker.* November 29 issue. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/11/29/between-the-lines

Seigel, M. (1995). More than words; the generative power of transmediation for learning. *Canadian Journal of Education, 20*(4), 455-475.

Serafini, F. (2011). Creating space for children's literature. *The Reading Teacher, 65*(1), 30-34.

Serafini, F. (2012). Taking full advantage of children's literature. *The Reading Teacher, 65*(7), 457-459.

Serafini, F. (2015). Considering fine art and picturebooks. *The Reading Teacher, 69*(1), 87-90.

Serafini, F., Kachosky, D. & Aquilera, E. (2015). Picturebooks 2.0: Transmedial features across narrative platforms. *Journal of Children's Literature, 41*(2), 16-24

Simon, R., Hicks, B. L., & Walkland, T. (2018). "But in the end you are all beautiful": Exploring gender through digital composition. *English Journal, 107*(3), 39-46.

Simon, R., Bailey, A., Brennan, J., Calarco, A., Clarke, K., Edwards, W., Fukiwara, C., Kalan, A., Kruja, J., McInnes-Greenberg, E., Pisecny, A. (2014). "In the swell of wandering words": The arts as a vehicle for youth and educators' inquiries into Holocaust memoir "Night", *Penn Perspectives on Urban Education, 11*(2), 90-106.

Sipe, L. (1998). The language of picturebooks. *Journal of Children's Literature, 24*(2), 66-75.

Sipe, L. (2012). Revisiting the relationship between text and pictures. *Children's Literature in Education, 43*(1), 4-21.

Smith, T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous people*. Palgrave.

Spector, K. (2015). Meeting pedagogical encounters halfway. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 58*(6), 447-450.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory.* Sage.

Street, B. (2003). What's new in new literacy studies: Critical approaches to literacy in theory and practice. *Current Issues in Comparative Education, 52*(2), 77-91.

Sumara, D. (1996). *Private readings in public: Schooling the literary imagination*. Peter Lang.

Taubman, P. (2009). *Teaching by numbers: Deconstructing the discourse of standards and accountability in education.* Routledge.

Thomas, E., Stornaiuolo, A. (2016). Restorying the self: Bending toward textual justice. *Harvard Educational Review, 86*(3), 313-338.

Whitney Museum of American Art. (2020). *Vida Americana: Mexican muralists remake American art,* 1925-1945 [Exhibition of murals] Exhibited at Whitney Museum of American Art February 17, 2020 - May 17, 2020.

Wild, M. (2007). *Woolvs in the sittee.* (A. Spudvilas, Illus.). Front Street Press.

Wolfenbarger, C. D. & Sipe, L. (2007). A unique visual and literary art form: Recent research on picturebooks. *Language Arts, 84*(3), 273-280.

Wyse, D., Pandya, J., & Doecke, B., (2012). English teachers' work in an era of standardization. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 11*(3), 1-97.

Zapata, A. Fugit, M., Moss, D. (2017). Awakening social justice mindsets through visual thinking strategies and diverse picturebooks, *Journal of Children's Literature, 43* (2), 62-69.

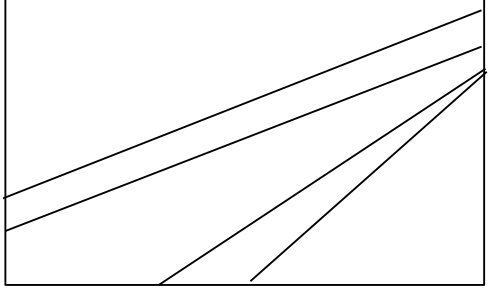
Appendix

Picture This: Perception and Composition, by Molly Bang
1991, Boston, MA: Little, Brown

1. Smooth, flat, horizontal shapes provide a sense of stability and calm.

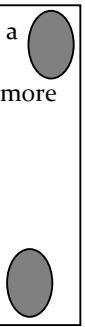
2. Vertical lines are more active. They go against the gravity, and imply energy by reaching up to sky.

3. Diagonal lines are dynamic; they imply tension or motion.



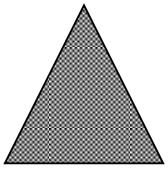
4. The upper half of the picture is a place of freedom, happiness, or triumph: objects placed here feel more spiritual.

The bottom half of a picture feels more threatening, heavier, more constrained and grounded.

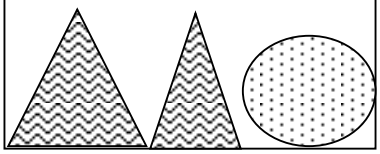


5. Center page has the greatest attraction.

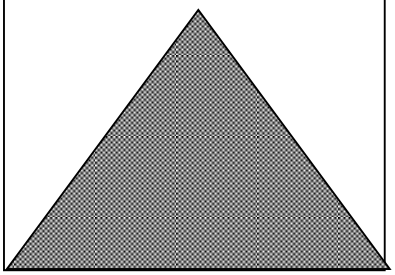
6. White or light backgrounds feel safer to us than dark backgrounds because we can see well during the day, and less so at night.



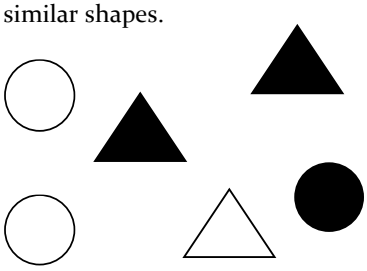
7. Pointed shapes provide a scarier or more unsettled effect. Rounded or curved shapes connote a sense of security.



8. The *larger* an object is on the page, the stronger it feels.



9. We associate similar colors more readily than similar shapes.



10. We notice contrasts. Contrast enables us to see better.