

# *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*

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Special Issue – Celebration of Higher Learning and Research



Northern Lights, Lynn Lake, Manitoba



# *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*

**Volume 8, Issue 3, 2016**

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Mr. Thomas Gallant, Principal (retired)  
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Lynn Lake, Manitoba



## **INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR**

Welcome to the seventeenth issue of the *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, devoted to rural, northern, and Aboriginal education. Our authors for volume 8, issue 3, are BU Faculty of Education professors, and current and past BU Faculty of Education graduate students, who presented at our first annual Celebration of Higher Learning and Research in May 2016. I thank these educators for sharing their work. Together, they have produced a collection of articles that demonstrate best practices in Manitoba teaching and research.

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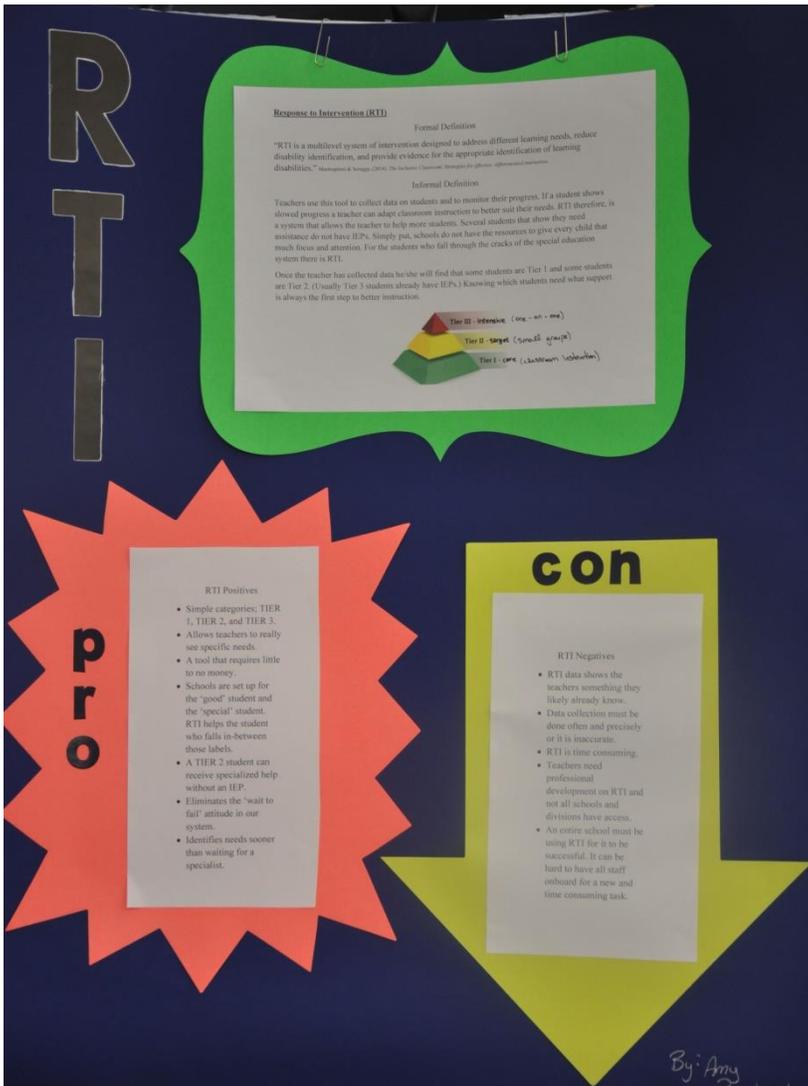


Time	Item	Presenter(s)
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Posters on Display: Response to Intervention (RTI) Little PEEPS – Programming Enrichment & Engagement for Preschool Success Return to High School: A Real Life Journey	Amy Bouchard Shannon Vogel & Vicki Lamb  Shelley Kokorudz
9:00 a.m.	Opening Remarks by the Dean of Education and Associate Vice-President (Research)	Dr. Heather Duncan
9:05 a.m.	Unpacking the Call to Action in Early Years Education: Teaching Global Citizenship Through a Critical Lens	Lynn Nicol
9:50 a.m.	What We Glean From the Silver Screen: Inaccurate Messages About Educational Leaders as Perpetuated by School Movies	Sherry Baker
10:10 a.m.	Using iPads to Develop a Sense of Story (with Aiden)	JulieAnn Kniskern & Cheryl Klassen
10:30 a.m.	Little PEEPS – Programming Enrichment & Engagement for Preschool Success	Shannon Vogel & Vicki Lamb
10:45 a.m.	Designing Lessons for English Language Learners: A Sea of Talk	Jennifer Flight
11:30 a.m.	Return to High School: A Real Life Journey	Shelley Kokorudz
11:50 a.m.	Lunch (provided)	
12:30 p.m.	Intentional Planning That Engages Students Without Moving the Targets	Linda Jameson
1:15 p.m.	You're Healthier in 4 Minutes	Debbie McNeill
1:30 p.m.	Employability Assets for a Diversified Workforce: Surprises From the Experts	Dr. Karen Rempel
2:00 p.m.	The Effect of the School Principal in Creating an Inclusive School Culture During Times of Change and Challenge	Ayodeji Osiname
2:15 p.m.	Hands-On Learning With Book-Art Projects	Eric Lowe
3:00 p.m.	Closing Remarks	Dr. Marion Terry

## Book Review

### ***Response to Intervention: Principles and Strategies for Effective Practice*** (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2005)

Amy Bouchard



The greatest learning comes from sharing and responding to circumstances and the world around us. When we share ideas and collaborate our knowledge, deep understandings can be reached. The adage that two heads are better than one is very true. When we review each other's work, we find the successes and can implement them. We can also locate the drawbacks and advance toward a solution together. Peer-reviewed work is reliable because it has been seen by several professionals. Although I have never been published, nor have I ever collected valid quantitative or qualitative data, I have worked in the general classroom on a daily basis. I have reviewed the book *Response to Intervention: Principles and Strategies for Effective Practice* (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2005), and how it applies to the general educator.

Authors Brown-Chidsey and Steege wrote about Response to Intervention in a formal and systematic way, making this book a treatise. The credentials for these authors are both impressive and applicable to the book's content. Brown-Chidsey is an associate professor of the School of Psychology at the University of Southern Maine. She taught as a general educator and within special education for ten years. Lastly, she is a certified school psychologist and licensed psychologist. Her colleague Steege is a professor and clinical coordinator in the same program at the University of Southern Maine. Before working in Maine, he was a pediatric psychologist at the University of Iowa College of Medicine. Both authors have published on assessment and intervention before their 2005 publication. Both approached the Response to Intervention work as researchers using qualitative and quantitative research methods to show their findings.

Brown-Chidsey and Steege have experienced through past work that students who have difficulty in the classroom, but who do not qualify for funding, are "falling through the cracks." Their

book is aimed at giving school psychologists and educators a way to address these situations so that fewer students are left behind. They resolved that to help these students, school professionals need to understand and use Response to Intervention (RTI). Therefore, this book's target audience is professionals within the school system who already understand the everyday struggles facing today's students, parents, and schools. Although RTI is a program with clearly shown benefits, it is unrealistic for use by a general educator. I believe that RTI would require extensive training, teamwork, and time. Also, RTI would have to be a school or school division initiative, whereby all staff would need to be on board with the program.

### **Overview of the Book**

The book begins with an explanation of what RTI is, starting with a basic definition and then breaking down RTI step by step. In its most basic form, RTI is a way for general educators to intervene when extra funding is not made available for a student who is struggling within the classroom setting. RTI uses systematic and data-based activities to achieve success. When broken down further, RTI has three tiers: help all students in the classroom, give those who need it some more intensive instruction, and use assessment to identify a specific disability. General educators often do this already without realizing that they are doing it. RTI builds on what general educators are already doing, but in a more systematic and data-based way.

To achieve RTI within the classroom, there is a problem-solving plan with five steps. Although the parameters of the model are clear and easy to understand, doing these five steps is not practical for a general educator. Essentially, the steps require keeping close records of certain students throughout the day. This simply would not work in a general classroom because there would not be time. If teachers took the time to keep these records, they surely would have to neglect other tasks.

Brown-Chidsey and Steege claimed that RTI is not an "add on" to a teacher's already busy day, but a method that will replace instructional strategies that are not working. I believe that this is extremely hard to do without training and extra support for the teacher. There is no suggestion at this point in the book for how teachers are to transition smoothly from their current practices to RTI. Changing the way in which a teacher gives instruction within her/his classroom takes extensive energy from all who are involved.

The overall intention of RTI is that students deserve effective instruction, that continuous assessment leads to skill improvement, and that adjustments should be made based solely on data. I completely agree with the intentions of RTI, and I believe that most general educators would understand the premise of the program, but struggle with implementing it.

Funding for students with disabilities has strict constraints. If a school wants to receive extra funding to pay for any assistance in the classroom, the student must be tested in various ways. Tests done on students, whether medical or psychiatric or IQ, are for the purpose of telling parents what their child needs to be healthy and successful. These tests also tell the school, and teachers within the school, what supports are needed to ensure that the student stays healthy and successful. Unfortunately, Brown-Chidsey and Steege have found that IQ tests do not reveal many learning disabilities. This means that students may undergo the tests but receive false results, reaffirming the author's viewpoint that too many students are being left behind. RTI is a method that can identify learning disabilities when formal tests, such as the IQ test, can not.

Data gathered by using RTI will help the teacher to make adjustments within the classroom, but it can not be used to apply for funding. Therefore, RTI is the alternative to funding when funding has been denied. It is therefore is a commendable tool if time permits solid data to be recorded.

If a school decides to use RTI actively, Brown-Chidsey and Steege are clear that all interventions must be based on evidence, not assumptions. True data must be collected in a way that can be explained and recreated. This enables professionals to study the procedures and make adjustments based on facts. Each school will have different data results, because of differences in their demographics. That said, the data gathering method should be recorded extensively. This ensures the likelihood of success, because an exact formula was used. If progress does not

happen, the formula provides an easy way to retrace one's steps and adjust. Sharing testimonials with the school team is a useful way to gain insight, but it does not count as evidence that the intervention worked or did not work. True evidence needs the following:

- Clearly defined independent variables(s) (i.e., intervention).
- Clearly defined dependent variable(s) (i.e., data).
- A set of procedures to consistently implement the independent variable.
- Procedures for accurately measuring the dependent variable.
- A design that controls for threats to the internal validity of the study.

(Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2005, p. 35)

I agree that only evidence-based interventions can truly be recreated, analysed, and published. I also believe that the method of correctly collecting data would have to be shown to all staff members involved with RTI, which would take more training and time.

Chapter seven in the book gives ten clear steps for using RTI as an assessment tool. Some of the steps include recording benchmarks/data three times a year. Then those results are used to identify who is below grade level so that those students can be given more repetitive and intensive instruction. In the school [where] I currently work, this benchmarking practice is already being done. Students below their grade level, for example in reading, go to a reading recovery program twice a week. As a general educator, my question is, how is RTI different from what is already being done within my own work place?

The case studies in this book are excellent examples of what intervention can do. They demonstrate that the sooner a student is assessed and any problems are identified, the sooner the student can get on track. There is no denying the benefits of meeting the needs of all students, funded or not. Having an entire chapter on how to write RTI reports for student files is also helpful. Reports should be in parent friendly language and formatting and be easily recreated, which the ones in chapter ten are.

Lastly, the book dedicates a chapter to training personnel in the school. This chapter was the one I was most interested in. Staff would need extensive training in RTI in order to use it effectively and accurately. The training is clear and written in a user-friendly manner.

## Evaluation

Aspects of the book that I consider positive are the ideas that no student is left behind, that teachers are active in assisting resource teachers, and that parents/students can have a plan in place when funding falls short. These are all attributes that make RTI a contender within the school system.

It is and will always be the schools' job to provide appropriate education for all students, regardless of needs. Needs can not be met by just the teacher in today's schools, but rather by a collaborating team. Even when a student does not have funding, a team needs to be in place to ensure that the student receives the proper interventions. RTI could be a viable option for school teams to utilize in order to ensure student success.

This book has several praiseworthy aspects, and the overall concept of RTI is a wonderful one. However, as noted throughout my overview of the book, I have some concerns about the execution of the program. The program components that need to be considered further and with a critical eye are as follows:

- Finding the right curriculum to use for data/benchmarking subject levels.
- Training all staff.
- Funding the training.
- Getting all staff "on board" with participating in RTI.
- Finding time to collect the data/benchmarking results.

- Educating parents/families on the process of RTI.
- Once data/benchmarking results are in, actually using them in a constructive way to create real change for students.

My concerns are echoed by Mastropieri and Scruggs (2014), who wrote that success with RTI varies and procedures need to be made clearer. There are still concerns over the mechanisms of RTI and whether schools are implementing the program correctly. Mastropieri and Scruggs also separated RTI into tiers, but the tiers are different from the ones in the Brown-Chidsey and Steege's book. If RTI can be rewritten so differently between two texts, the rules that govern the program must not be clear. Although the authors were clear in their writing, who can say that their RTI is a better version than another's? Overall, I find great concern with having an entire staff learn a program that has no distinct path.

### **Conclusion**

The book *Response to Intervention: Principles and Strategies for Effective Practice* is written in clear and easily understood language. Brown-Chidsey and Steege show creditable data and research in several areas, and the findings are clearly charted. The book was easy to read, and made the concept of RTI very clear. I enjoyed reading it and learning about the methods shared about RTI. Nevertheless, this program is yet another initiative that needs further modification before it is ready to be launched in schools. Brown-Chidsey and Steege failed to document the shortcomings of RTI, but simply stated that if a teacher does appropriate intensive instruction, then the data should show improvements. RTI sounds blissfully simple, and is frankly too good to be true.

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### **About the Presenter**

*Amy Bouchard is nearing completion of her graduate diploma in special education from Brandon University. She currently teaches middle years French and English for Southwest Horizon School Division. She and her husband have a small daughter, and they enjoy being outside in their garden with her.*



## **Unpacking the Call to Action In Early Years Education: Teaching Global Citizenship Through a Critical Lens**

**Lynn Nicol**

*Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this conference. It was a privilege to present, and an honour to represent my family and Brandon School Division. I am currently working toward a Master of Education in curriculum and instruction. It is my pleasure to share with you the thinking behind my presentation, based on an article that has been published in the BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education (Nicol, 2016a) and in The MERN Journal (Nicol, 2016b).*

This is a topic that I am passionate about. I believe that all ages would benefit from a discourse in Human Rights Education (HRE) in global citizenship discussions – inside and outside of formal educational spheres. In actuality, on a recent trip abroad, I engaged in a conversation with a young man who wanted to know my purpose for travelling. When I told him about presenting at a human rights conference, he asked “What are human rights?” Through the course of conversation, I learned that his family lives in Sweden, relocated as refugees from Argentina. Further, it turns out he was a guest on a Canadian radio program this past February. He was discussing the Canadian government commitment of sponsoring 25 000 refugees from Syria in a span of four months, relative to the Swedish commitment of 25 000 people per month. As a freelance journalist, he had professional and personal expertise in this topic, yet he asked me, “What are human rights?” This confirms the urgency in situating rights-based, social justice edification in all the spheres of influence each of us holds. In my school division, if students are exposed to citizenship education, it is exclusively through the lens of the personally responsible citizen “doing good” because it “feels good.” It is my goal to support educators in adopting praxis to guide students in engaging citizenship education that moves beyond this ideology, to that whereby students have the critical literacy to probe and respond to the causal agents of injustice. To this end, our division has but one course in grade 12, and it is an optional course at that. In early years education, it is a lonely landscape. I believe that this work must attend all educational spaces, at all grade levels and across all curriculums, which is indeed a challenge.

Global Citizenship Education (GCE), in its noblest terms, is a commitment made by educators to provide students with opportunities to situate themselves as citizens within a global community. My presentation addressed the lay of the land for global citizenship and human rights education in early years spaces. Drawing upon the context of my experience educating through school-based, divisional, and provincial mandates, my work exposed that Manitoba educators face a dearth of resources for holistic citizenship education in early years classrooms. The discussion emphasized the need for a vibrant discourse on the placement of social justice resources in early years to inform and support educational experiences that move beyond acts of charity. Only through disruptive pedagogies that challenge structures of power and privilege are requisite spaces of interrogation created. This is crucial to the deliberative discourse necessary for education that moves beyond charity to actions of solidarity around equity and social justice – locally, nationally, and globally. It has become clear that I must keep one important aim close at hand: that is, to unpack the exclusively charitable response that attends much classroom instruction.

**BRANDON UNIVERSITY  
BRANDON, MANITOBA, CANADA**



## **GRADUATE STUDENT, EDUCATOR, PARTNER, & PARENT**

I would like to provide you with a bit of background to situate the internal development of this topic. I bring to this discussion personal, familial, occupational, and academic perspectives on the topic of human rights. I come from a small, strongly conservative, agricultural community in the heart of the prairies. When I graduated from high school in 1980, I had worked with my father since childhood, attending to farm chores. I loved the dairy, and would later introduce beef, sheep, and poultry production to this operation. In 1983, a bit of a bombshell hit – not predicated on any situation or circumstance – it just happened. I was driving into our community of 45,000 people when I was struck by the desire to get out into the big wide world that existed beyond “Life on the Farm.” I started travelling in 1985 and never looked back. For example, I backpacked solo through Israel and Europe for ten months. I also lived and worked on a Kibbutz in Israel, and I participated in international Work Camps in Belgium and the former countries of Czechoslovakia and East Germany. At that point, travel and solidarity work became forever entwined.

In 1986, I spent three weeks as a Witness for Peace in Nicaragua during the Contra-Revolution War, staying with villagers in areas targeted by the Contra forces – with the aim that an international presence may spare their village and its inhabitants from attack. In 1987, I went to Libya on an “all expenses paid trip” that turned out to be absconded student funds used as a propaganda campaign to mark the first anniversary of the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi by the “American fleet.”

In 1988, I graduated from university with a Diploma in Agriculture, and I found myself caught between a passion for farming and a yearning for development work. I farmed with my parents for seven months and then accepted a ten-month volunteer position with Canadian Crossroads International. This took me to St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean, where I met and married my husband. We have three children – two sons and a daughter – and we maintain very close ties with our “West Indian” (oops – colonial vernacular) Caribbean culture.

After welcoming our children, we connected with the larger world through local development initiative organizations, and welcomed many world citizens into our home. We of course travel to the Caribbean when we can afford to do so. We were (are) somewhat of an exception, and a most radical departure from normative Eurocentric patterns of awareness and behaviour as they are expressed in our western Manitoba community.

## THE GENESIS: “FAMILY” RIGHTS

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- × Ethnolinguistic & colour/culture prejudices
- × Family bias – too white to be black & too black to be white
- × Conservative, gender-striated world of agriculture

My family has felt the expression of prejudice and bias, in both Canada and in the Caribbean. My husband won a human rights case for discrimination from employment based on colour – and he refused to begin a second case just a few years ago when vying for work in the oil industry. Last year, I challenged the linguistic department at my school and in our division, that people from the Caribbean are “NOT” language learners. Their first language is English (or French) – the issue of an accent is that of the listener, not the speaker. It is curious to me that the white “British” accent educator in our school is not considered a language learner, but the children of colour are. This remains a very hot topic in our home!

As a family, we learned quite quickly that ethnic bias holds family spaces. My children were too white to be black in my husband’s country, and too black to be white in mine. I taught my children to self-identify as “brown” – a category that exists only in the vernacular of those working to strike spaces for identity affirmation. Come on! Is Obama really a “Black” president? I am bothered to share that this summer while she was at work, some random white, older man came up to my beautiful daughter and told her that she was “what was wrong with the world.” Shocked, she asked, “Why – because I am brown?” After sharing this loaded comment, the man just walked away. Yes, really – racism exists in Brandon.

In 2008, the myth of the “family farm” became debunked for me, and I hung up the last of the milking machines and took up my teaching degree. I have been a teacher in the public school system for the last 6 years, teaching grades one to six (6-12 year olds). I am now a “recovering farmer” after leaving the farm in 2013 when it became blatantly obvious that intergenerational transfer would never happen, because I was the wrong gender and because I married someone from outside of our culture. The farm now rests in estate status, soon to be sold to the highest bidder.

I mention these things to reinforce that I have personal ties with issues of equity and social justice, which is important formative knowledge when working to provide equity and rights-affirming education in my classroom teaching practice. My background experience and commitment to global citizenship are somewhat rare in our school division, and there are few foundations of support for those less intimately connected who would wish to try.

## **EDUCATIONAL SPHERES OF INFLUENCE**

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- × **In a world where the local is informing and influencing the global and vice versa, or as it is now known as a glocalized world, the kind of citizenship that schools establish should be locally deep and responsible, but also globally aware and inclusive. (Shultz & Abdi, 2007, p. 9)**

The ideological framework and lived experiences from which teachers work when establishing their own GCE theory and pedagogy affect the learning experiences that they offer to their students. These experiences, in turn, shape the actions that students take when they seek opportunities to help others. Therefore, it is necessary for educators to understand the potential action-oriented responses associated with various terms utilized in the field of global citizenship and rights-based instruction. Embedded in this document are the “Kinds of Citizens” as conceptualized by Westheimer and Kahne (2003). This representation of the varied kinds of citizens, actions, and core assumptions associated with each category are foundational concepts that guide me in creating learning events that are rooted in justice oriented/rights-based citizenship.

Educators in Manitoba must frame their practice within the context of the Government of Manitoba’s terminology. Social studies teaching is constructed with citizenship as a foundational concept, with global citizenship identified as “an ethos motivated by concern for humanity, society, the planet and the future and is activated by self-empowerment” (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015, “Citizenship,” p. 2). However, the guiding documents offer very few opportunities to construct spaces for learner empowerment that affords the individual and collective claiming of rights and freedoms while respecting, upholding, and when possible standing in solidarity with marginalized groups working to claim and achieve their inalienable human rights. The educational scaffolding simply does not exist!

## **EDUCATION MANDATES**

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***We underscore the political implications of education for democracy and suggest that the narrow and often ideologically conservative conceptions of citizenship embedded in many current efforts at teaching for democracy reflects [sic] not arbitrary choices but rather political choices with political consequences. (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003, p. 47)***

Early years educators must follow teaching mandates to construct the foundational parameters through which students learn to situate themselves in relation to the world around them. Given the school, divisional, and provincial policies guiding early years’ instruction, it is no wonder that early years educators are reluctant to engage in critical, deliberative dialogue with their students.

## GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP – GRADE 3/4

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- ❖ **Manitoba Government:** “an ethos motivated by concern for humanity, society, the planet and the future and is activated by self-empowerment” (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015, “Citizenship,” p. 2).
  
  - × **Brandon School Division Strategic Plan - Global Citizenship Ethical Citizenship –**
    - \*respect for diversity/cultural competency
    - \*sense of community involvement
    - \*volunteerism
    - \*global awareness
  
  - ❖ **Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning**
    - \*Grade 3 Cluster 2 Communities of the World
- 

Global citizenship is the second goal identified in Brandon School Division’s current strategic plan that codifies global citizenship into three categories, including ethical citizenship. At face value, it would appear that the specific competencies of respect, community involvement, volunteerism, and global awareness would embrace GCE. However, these learning opportunities focus on individual, locally based acts of charity. A critique of the programming would suggest that this initiative falls short of moving beyond charity-based actions.

Manitoba’s early years social studies curriculum dedicates one cluster in grade 3 for HRE. The flaws in this initiative are multifaceted. For one, students’ exposure to citizenship education is through teaching and learning practices that are exclusively charity and service based. This narrow perspective fails the students by denying them the opportunity to initiate an understanding of critical discourse about the economic, social, and political institutions that favour positions of power and privilege. Holistic GCE entails an involvement with political questions, including consumerism and the distribution of wealth and resources – values and practices that schools unequivocally hesitate to challenge. Moreover, students have an opportunity to consider the global “other,” but exclusively through the lens of service and aid. In addition, the development of critical literacy and transformative learning is placed solely in the trust of those educators who (like me) personally embrace deliberative inquiry and emancipatory literacy. A dearth of available teaching resources in this area has meant that not all educators have acquired the wider perspective that the subject demands. In addition, there is no requisite HRE program for grade 4 students, effectively denying these students their right to this learning. This void, in fact, falls far short of what the United Nations and all its conventions and teaching instruments would profess as obligatory, rights-affirming practice (Osler & Starky, 2010; Struthers, 2015).

When viewed through a critical lens, divisional and provincial mandates support citizenship learning that is individualized in focus and narrow in scope; students can not access rights-based and justice-oriented GCE. This is, indeed, a travesty. The critical thinking that goes along with the idea of giving to others in need must be introduced in these first years of school, in order for students to begin to form ways to approach the problems of inequity in all of its forms. Teachers must accompany their students beyond the notion of charity, despite evoking the feeling that giving satisfies an emotional desire for a connection to others. They must move, together, beyond merely investigating service providers that assist people in accessing their human rights, toward critiquing public policy and frameworks that require support in order to claim those rights. The effort to expand the focus of social justice education in this way is challenging but critically important. It is crucial work to bring to the early years sphere, because it is critically informed students, empowered as effective change agents, who will challenge local, national, and global oppression and inequality.

**Take every penny you have set aside in aid for Tanzania and spend it explaining to people the facts and causes of poverty.** (Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania, as cited in The Inter-Council Network, 2015, "Good Practices")



In the final paragraphs of this article, I would like to share with you several key ideas that have been pillars for my work in informing myself in ways to support students in the probe for informed understandings upon which to draw as they work toward acquiring a global perspective of ethics, rights, and responsibilities through GCE.

The responsibility to unpack action-based GCE belongs exclusively to those whose personal ideologies call for more meaningful interface with rights-based, social justice. Policymakers lag behind in this mission. Currently, it is a lonely landscape for early years global citizenship educators. Digesting the discourse presented through the work of Westheimer and Kahne (2003) has transformed the dialogue that I construct around equity and justice education. Westheimer and Kahne identified three kinds of citizens, which I offer for your review. Where does your instructional capacity guide children?

## KINDS OF CITIZENS

Personally Responsible	Participatory	Justice Oriented
Acts responsibly in community	Active member of community organizations and/or improvement efforts	Critically assesses social, political, and economic structures
Works and pays taxes	Promotes economic development	Seeks out and addresses areas of injustice
Obeys laws	Organizes community efforts to care for those in need	Knows about social movements and how to effect systematic change
Recycles, Gives blood	Cleans up environment	
Volunteers to lend a hand in times of crisis	Knows how government agencies work	
	Knows strategies for accomplishing collective tasks	
<b>Where would a refugee</b>	<b>sponsorship group fit?</b>	

## SAMPLE ACTION

Personally Responsible Citizen	Participatory Citizen	Justice Oriented Citizen
Contributes food to a food drive	Helps to organize a food drive	Explores why people are hungry and acts to solve root causes

## CORE ASSUMPTIONS

Personally Responsible Citizen	Participatory Citizen	Justice Oriented Citizen
To solve social problem and improve society, citizens must <b>have</b> good character; they must be honest, responsible, and law-abiding members of the community	To solve social problem and improve society, citizens must <b>actively</b> participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures <small>Source: Adapted from Westheimer &amp; Kahne, 2003, p.52</small>	To solve social problem and improve society, citizens must <b>question</b> and change established systems and structures when they reproduce patterns of injustice over time

It is a normal human impulse to want to help those caught in the wake of natural and human-constructed disasters. Compassion impels us to act, which “binds us together as human beings” (Nutt, 2011, p. 123). However, when responsive acts of humanity are not interconnected with accurate knowledge of the locale-specific economic, political, and social systems at work, there is a cost attached to the urge to do good. When people act without an awareness of the full context of those charitable acts, they risk perpetuating the very issues that they are attempting to address.

There are very real costs attached when citizens “do good because it feels good.” Let us move with our students beyond acts that are exclusively charitable, to those that challenge and address the inequities and injustices created by the social constructs of power and privilege.

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### **About the Presenter**

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## What We Glean from the Silver Screen: Inaccurate Messages About Educational Leaders as Perpetuated by School Movies

Sherry Baker

### Abstract

*School films depict educational leaders as lone miracle workers. Students of colour and/or from low socio-economic backgrounds are shown as victims in need of a saviour, who appears in the form of a (usually White) teacher who lacks the qualifications and experience to work with students living in poverty. Freedom Writers, Music of the Heart, and Dangerous Minds teach moviegoers (the public) that these students require only underqualified, inexperienced, caring, Caucasian teachers, even though the research shows otherwise.*



Popular school movies such as *Freedom Writers* (2007), *Music of the Heart* (1999), and *Dangerous Minds* (1995) are heralded as inspirational school films that tug at the heart strings, but these films send erroneous messages to the public about educational leadership and teachers. In each film, the White, inexperienced and/or underqualified teacher successfully changes the lives of her students for the better, and ultimately “saves” them from themselves, their families, and their impoverished communities. The teacher becomes a lone, White Saviour who receives very little support from her colleagues and/or the community. The overarching purpose of this article is to debunk the inaccurate representations of educational leaders as portrayed in these movies. The article also analyses the characters and plot lines of three school movies that perpetuate colonialist attitudes and beliefs, racial stereotypes, and the “us versus them” mentality among social classes.

*Freedom Writers, Music of the Heart, and Dangerous Minds* paint children and communities affected by poverty with a wide, stereotypical brush. Most of the students are of African-American and/or Latino descent; generally speaking, they are not White. Additionally, they are portrayed as low-achieving, troubled youth who do not seem to value education. They and their communities are characterized by chronic cycles of poverty, which include gang activity, drugs, crime, broken families, inadequate housing, and a general sense of despair – a group in desperate need of a saviour. The movies highlight the accomplishments of the teacher, making the students, their families, and the community into obstacles to be overcome. This article challenges the stereotypical “silver screen” characterizations of children and communities affected by poverty.

### The General Storyline of Popular School Movies

The school movies’ storylines are very similar. Each protagonist is a White female teacher who is either underqualified, like Louanne Johnson (Michelle Pfeiffer) in *Dangerous Minds*, or inexperienced, like Roberta Guaspari (Meryl Streep) in *Music of the Heart* and Erin Gruell (Hilary Swank) in *Freedom Writers*. Despite her lack of experience, each teacher works effectively with challenging students of colour who come from impoverished neighbourhoods. In each film, the inexperienced but well-meaning Caucasian teacher beats the odds, and almost single-handedly creates positive change in the lives of her students, even though many other experienced teachers before her have tried and failed. Many movies, school-based and otherwise, follow this all-too-familiar storyline; they are known as “White Saviour Films.”

## Common Elements of the White Saviour Film

In White Saviour Films, inferior persons or groups of marginalized people overcome the obstacles in their lives and realize their full potential, but only with the help of a lone, White Saviour (Cammarota, 2011). In the school movies *Freedom Writers*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Dangerous Minds*, the following White Saviour messages are woven into the storyline:

- The teacher, the White Saviour, is the catalyst for positive change.
- The students of colour, the inferiors, are in need of saving, but they do not even realize it. They are depicted as helpless, unknowing victims who lack the desire, motivation, and ability to recognize and/or reach their full potential.
- The teacher reinforces the belief that anyone can have a better life through hard work, good choices, and perseverance.
- The success of the students is credited to the teacher.
- Success/positive change is limited to a small, select group (the students). The school, the teachers, the education system, and the larger community remain unchanged.
- The teacher's efforts and accomplishments (saving the students) are the main focus.
- By the end of each film, the students are "better off," thanks to the teacher, and the teacher is even better than she was at the beginning of the story.

### A Common Setting Sets the Stage

Each school film's setting is an important element, because it enhances and reinforces the idea that the students of colour are indeed inferior, out of control, and in need of saving. Each story takes place in a large urban American centre. In *Dangerous Minds*, the schoolyard resembles a prison yard complete with chain link fencing, graffiti, drug deals, violence, racial segregation, and rap music, and the moviegoer has good reason to suspect gang activity among the students. Coolio's "Gangsta's Paradise" plays during the opening credits; this is a song that one would not generally associate with students or a school setting, but it serves to remind the viewer that these are not regular students and this is no regular school.

*Freedom Writers* has a similar school setting. The students appear disrespectful and threatening, indifferent about education, and resistant to authority figures of any kind. As in *Dangerous Minds*, the opening scene evokes a sense of fear, but the fear is created differently. *Freedom Writers* begins with television news reports of the 1992 riots that ensued after Rodney King was severely beaten by members of the Los Angeles Police Department. The news reports heard during the opening scene, as well as the text that is flashed across the screen, remind viewers that there had been "over 120 murders in Long Beach following the Rodney King riots" and that "gang violence and racial tension are at an all-time high." It is interesting to note that movie producers used news coverage clips from 1992, even though the *Freedom Writers* movie was not released until 2007. Later, we learn that Erin Gruell decided to become a teacher when she saw news coverage of the Rodney King riots. However, the opening scenes of *Freedom Writers* effectively create fear in the minds of the viewers before the movie even begins.

*Music of the Heart* is set in an elementary school. While there are no overt signs of gang activity among the students themselves (presumably due to their young age), viewers learn very quickly that the school is located in an impoverished neighborhood. Similar to the schoolyard setting in *Dangerous Minds*, the East Harlem neighborhood is characterized by poverty, graffiti, gang activity, and low-income housing, which leads viewers to view the community as no place for children. Similar to both *Dangerous Minds* and *Freedom Writers*, most of the students and community members are of African-American and/or Latino descent. The age of the students in *Music of the Heart* is important. Because these students are much younger than the high school students depicted in *Dangerous Minds* and *Freedom Writers*, moviegoers may believe that they stand a better chance of being saved. Whether the feelings created at the beginning of these three

school films come from a place of fear or from a place of pity, the stage is set for the White Saviour to swoop in and save the day.

When the White Saviour (the teacher) arrives on the scene, she is taken aback by what she sees. The viewer is aware that she is entering a world that is foreign to her. In addition to being out of her element as she enters the schoolyard, she appears to be afraid and threatened, and to a lesser degree saddened by what she sees. Again, the teachers' responses to the students support the ideas that the students are either out of control and in need of civilizing, or helpless and pitiful and in need of saving – either way, they are characterized as needy.

One final, but important, commonality in White Saviour Films is that the positive changes made by the inferior group are not necessarily significant in the big scheme of things. The students in *Freedom Writers*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Dangerous Minds* simply take on the values, mannerisms, and behaviours of their White Saviour teacher. They experience success in school, but are still required to return to their homes where White values, mannerisms, and behaviours are presumably irrelevant. The systemic barriers brought about by historical, racially motivated events remain intact and fully operational. Where did the idea of a “saviour,” particularly a “White Saviour,” come from?

### Origins of the White Saviour

Hughey (2014) traced the origin of the concept of the White Saviour, which dates back to the late 1600s. The idea of otherness (non-White others) was born when European explorers encountered Indigenous peoples during colonizing missions in newly-discovered lands. The term “noble savage” first appeared in John Dryden’s 1672 play, *The Conquest of Granada*. The terms “nature’s gentleman” and “exotic savage” have also been used to describe non-White others who were often characterized as moral and courageous, in touch with the natural environment, unmotivated by materialism, and simplistic in nature (Hughey, 2014, p. 8). These early terms and descriptions bring to mind adjectives such as primitive, animalistic, and unsophisticated, and generate images of sub-human creatures as opposed to fully-developed human beings who embrace a different way of life.

By 1845, the term “manifest destiny” was coined in the United States. This term gave racial and religious responsibility for the non-White others to the White Americans. By this time, White Americans had characterized themselves as heroic, virtuous, and divinely inspired saviours, destined and obligated to spread their inherent goodness to non-White others (Hughey, 2014). At the same time, similar sentiments and actions that aligned with the concept of manifest destiny were occurring in Canada. Beginning in the early 1800s, the Canadian government passed laws that called for the removal of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children from their parents, homes, and communities. Aboriginal children were placed in federally funded, church-run boarding schools that were most often located far from their homes and communities. Many of the children remained at these schools for years, and it was expected that education and Christianity would civilize and save Aboriginal people (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2014). Gone were the days of discovering and observing the Indigenous and/or non-White others; the White people took it upon themselves to save the others through forced assimilation, under the guise of paternalism (Hughey, 2014).

The idea of the White Saviour continued through the 19th century. Rudyard Kipling’s 1899 poem “The White Man’s Burden” spoke of the White person’s responsibility and/or obligation to rule over the non-White others for their own good. Originally written for Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, the poem was later referenced when the U.S. usurped the Philippines from Spain during the Spanish-American War (Hughey, 2014). Until the end of the 19th century, White dominance and paternalism – and the idea of the White Saviour – seemed to be implanted and largely accepted in North America, at least by White people. By the turn of the century, however, the non-White others were not so accepting of notions of White superiority, and this created fear and discomfort in the hearts and minds of the so-called superior group.

Human rights movements in the U.S., and calls for decolonization by nations under U.S. and European control, began in the early 1900s. These movements threatened to upset the social situation that White people had become accustomed to dominating. The term “Great White Hope” emerged and lasted through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and became the symbol of racial anxiety among White Americans (Hughey, 2014, p. 10). Interestingly, the term “Great White Hope” emerged in the sports and entertainment world when Jack Johnson became the first black US heavyweight boxing champion. Johnson held the title from 1908 to 1915, which did not sit well with White Americans. As White contenders came forward to try to take the heavyweight boxing title from Johnson, White boxing fans referred to each new opponent as the Great White Hope. According to Hughey (2014), White Americans wanted a White boxing champion, because some believed that Johnson’s winning streak threatened the concept of White superiority and encouraged the human rights activists to continue their fight for social equality.

As blatantly racist as this example sounds, the term “Great White Hope” did not end in the early 1900s. In the 1930s, Joe “the Brown Bomber” Louis was another seemingly unbeatable black boxing champion. When Nazi boxer Max Schmeling finally defeated Joe Louis, even Adolf Hitler chimed in, stating that Schmeling’s win was evidence of Aryan supremacy. In the 1980s, Larry “the Hitman” Holmes, a black boxing champ, was set to defend his title against Gerry Cooney. Racial tensions among boxing fans increased, and White supremacist groups and black activist groups alike vowed to attend this racially charged boxing match. The Great White Hope in these examples is indeed a White Saviour, but for a different group of people and for different reasons. According to Hughey (2014), White Americans needed a White Saviour to restore and reinforce a social situation wherein White people would have authority, dominance, and control over non-White others, even in the boxing ring, and especially during a time of social unrest when the non-White others were beginning to demand equal rights.

Hughey (2014) outlined American film themes as they appeared throughout the 20th century. The saviour in each film changed from decade to decade, depending on what was going on in the U.S. at the time. Generally speaking, however, whether the White Saviour was the hero in the sense of White versus non-White others, or was upholding White American interests, the saviour was used to reassure White Americans of their inherent dominance during times of political and/or social unrest.

- Human rights movements began in the early 1900s. According to Dr. Lawrence Reddick, curator of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature of the New York City Public Library, 75% of the films produced and distributed from the early 1900s until the 1940s were anti-Negro in nature (Hughey, 2014, p. 13).
- Films produced during the 1950s were anti-Communist in nature, due to the Cold War.
- During the 1960s, race-based films adapted from literature were produced and distributed, and the first White Saviour Film, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962), was shown in theatres.
- The *Blaxploitation* genre emerged in the 1970s. This genre featured strong, black characters who were unwilling to give in to anyone, especially White people. This genre served to demonstrate social discontent in response to racial inequalities.
- During the 1980s, the White Saviour Film genre exploded onto the silver screen with movies such as *Cry Freedom* (1987), *Mississippi Burning* (1988), *A Dry White Season* (1989), and *Glory* (1989). Hughey (2014) suggested that the White Saviour Film trend of the 1980s may have been in response to the *Blaxploitation* trend of the 1970s.
- Since the 1980s, several race relations-based and White Saviour Films have been produced and distributed in theatres. These include the school films *Dangerous Minds* (1995), *Music of the Heart* (1999), and *Freedom Writers* (2007), examined in this article.

In this general synopsis of the origin of the White Saviour, one can see how the idea has emerged and evolved from the days of exploration and colonization to Hollywood’s present-day silver screen interpretations. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, specific film genres featuring a White Saviour have been produced in an apparent effort to reassure the White population of its superior

social standing, depending on the political and/or societal events taking place at the time. Although movies are generally perceived as entertainment, White Saviour Films such as *Dangerous Minds*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Freedom Writers* serve to cultivate and maintain colonialist attitudes and beliefs, stereotypes around issues of race and poverty, and the hierarchy among the social classes. Is this a coincidence, or are movie producers and other media moguls attempting to educate the public in order to maintain an unspoken White agenda?

### Simply Entertainment, Right?

Not unlike our American neighbors to the south, Canadians flock to the movie theatres or tune into Netflix as a source of entertainment, but does the entertainment we consume impact the way we conceptualize the world in which we live? If so, what are the implications with regard to how we think about issues around race, social class, and poverty? While this article focuses on White Saviour school movies, it is worth mentioning that television programming in the U.S. is controlled by five transnational corporations: Time Warner, Disney, News Corporation, General Electric, and Viacom. These massive American corporations own and operate networks or channels with names that are familiar to Canadian consumers – CNN, HBO, ABC, A&E Biography, Fox, National Geographic Channel, NBC, MTV, Nickelodeon, etc. (Leistyna & Alper, 2009, p. 501). Leistyna and Alper (2009) suggested that television shows controlled, produced, and distributed by these corporations are used to educate the public by reinforcing the complex levels of social class, which are the essential components of any capitalist society. This form of education, however, is referred to and/or disguised as entertainment, and it reminds consumers (citizens) about who fits where within the class hierarchy of the capitalist society.

Leistyna and Alper (2009) provided a detailed history of the evolution of television programming in relation to social class, upward mobility, race relations, and gender roles, and at the same time stressed the importance of viewers' critically examining the ways in which messages embedded in various television shows may affect the way they view the world in which they live. Leistyna and Alper (2009) stressed the importance of critical media literacy, but others may argue that television programming is indeed harmless entertainment, and nothing more. Some might go so far as to say that some television shows, black situation comedies in particular, have attempted to depict people of colour in a positive and hopeful light, albeit through a humorous lens. While many situation comedies feature successful American people of colour, television shows, not unlike White Saviour Films, lead viewers to believe that the success of these television characters is dependent on meritocracy.

Meritocracy is the belief that anyone can be successful through work hard, good choices, and persistence. The rewards for adopting such values and behaviours are many – employment opportunities, wealth, a comfortable lifestyle, and material goods. According to meritocracy, the race to the top is a fair competition that is accessible to anyone who is motivated to go for it; in other words, success is a choice. Meritocracy does not, however, take historical injustices, race relations, social class inequities, and/or poverty into consideration. One could argue that the concept of meritocracy is fair only to those with firmly established, class-based advantages; to the White Saviour, meritocracy is simply common sense (Howe, 2015).

Black situation comedies, like the White Saviour School films mentioned in this article, present the concept of meritocracy as factual and accessible to all, regardless of race or its associated social inequities. For example, in *The Jeffersons* (1975-1985), George was the owner of a dry cleaning business. Through hard work and determination, George became a successful, self-made, African-American businessman who was finally able to move his family to the good side of town. With grit, motivation, and a strong work ethic, George experienced social mobility (Leistyna & Alper, 2009). The teachers in the White Saviour school films *Freedom Writers*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Dangerous Minds* shared a very similar message with their students of colour – if you work hard enough, you can have a better life.

*The Cosby Show* (1984-1992) told the story of a loving, affluent African-American family that was living the American dream. *The Cosby Show* was different from *The Jeffersons* in that the

Huxtables were depicted as educated, wealthy, and stable from the very beginning. On one hand, *The Cosby Show* cast African-Americans in a very positive light. On the other hand, the sitcom made it seem like racism and poverty were problems of the past (Leistyna & Alper, 2009). In fact, there was no real acknowledgement of how slavery, racism, and poverty might have made it difficult for people of colour to gain access to the American dream as readily as the Huxtables did. Similarly, the students in the White Saviour school films *Freedom Writers*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Dangerous Minds* were presented “as is” with no explanation of how the dark parts of U.S. history (colonialism, slavery, racism) contributed to the students’ present-day situations. Without any knowledge of the historical context, one who lacks critical media literacy skills could assume that the Huxtables and the students in the White Saviour school films simply chose their lots in life.

The *Fresh Prince of Bel Air* (1990-1996) told the story of Wil, an African-American teenager who was getting into trouble on the streets of West Philadelphia where he resided with his single mother. The solution in this black sitcom was easy: Wil moved to Bel Air to live with his wealthy, successful relatives. Wil achieved social mobility by leaving his community, his friends, and even his mother behind, and he did so with little to no social-emotional repercussions (Leistyna & Alper, 2009). Instead of a White Saviour to give him a chance at a better life, Wil’s well-to-do African-American relatives (not unlike the Huxtables) took him in. While living in Bel Air, Wil was taught the behaviours, mannerisms, and values that would prepare him for success in the affluent Los Angeles neighbourhood, which was far removed from his former home and lifestyle in the West Philadelphia ghetto. Similar to the students in the White Saviour school films, Wil was rescued by people who belonged to a higher socio-economic class. Wil’s relatives came to love and accept him, but viewers were constantly reminded that Uncle Phil and Aunt Vivian, not unlike the teachers in the White Saviour school films, were indeed the benevolent heroes, and that without their intervention Wil would not have experienced the good life.

These black situation comedies featured characters and families who were depicted as successful, humorous, and loveable, but a viewer with a critical eye for media could argue that the messages embedded in these television shows, similar to those embedded in White Saviour Films, reflected meritocracy. Black sitcoms and White Saviour films alike serve to perpetuate the idea that success is a choice, and is therefore accessible to anyone who wants it. However, meritocracy ignores historical, socio-economic, political, and/or racial issues as credible barriers to achieving success. Meritocracy is thus very closely related to White privilege, which, as the name suggests, favours White people over non-White others.

### **Meritocracy and White Privilege**

Many scholars claim that race is a socially constructed concept, created by identifying and dividing people on the basis of skin colour. In North America, this identification and division relies on two broad categories: White and non-White (Hughey, 2014). While most people do not want to be labelled as “racist,” many would admit, either out loud or silently (depending on which category one belongs to), that the White category of people has historically been touted as the superior group, or the superior race. “White privilege” refers to the advantages and opportunities afforded to White people, almost automatically, based solely on the colour of their skin, and can therefore only occur in a society that is racially compartmentalized. White privilege is essentially an expression of societal, institutional, and political power that, according to Torino (2015) is not readily or routinely analysed, acknowledged, or recognized by White people.

Exploring the realities of White privilege could result in positive societal outcomes such as renewed respect, understanding, acceptance, and empathy among people belonging to different racial groups. While many would agree that such an endeavor could bring about positive outcomes, others would deem the outcomes as consequences for White people. Exploring White privilege would mean identifying and confronting one’s own biases about non-White others, learning about history from the viewpoints of the so-called inferiors, and acknowledging that White people have not been successful in life due to innate goodness, hard work, and perseverance, but rather

through historical forms of racism (colonialism) as well as present-day practices and policies that keep people of colour at a disadvantage (Torino, 2015).

White Saviour school movies reinforce the ideas of meritocracy, but fail to acknowledge the realities of White privilege. In each film, a White teacher tells her students of colour that they can be anything they want to be through hard work, better life choices, and sustained effort. The teacher's enthusiasm and commitment to the students convinces viewers that with the help of the White Saviour, the non-White students in the school films could succeed in life, if only they would try. While the concept of meritocracy is not necessarily a bad thing, it is definitely more challenging for individuals who are faced with obstacles linked to racism and poverty. For individuals who are already in positions of power (White privilege), meritocracy is more accessible, more relevant, and presumably more promising.

In *Freedom Writers*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Dangerous Minds*, Hollywood teaches the movie-going public about the White Saviour, race relations, racial stereotypes, and poverty. Hollywood also endorses meritocracy ideals without acknowledging White privilege, thus reinforcing the idea that one group (White) is innately better and more capable than the other group (people of colour). Finally, Hollywood frames each racially charged White Saviour story in a softer, humanitarian, feel-good fashion, and at the same time positions the White Saviour as the ultimate hero in the White versus non-White story. Although the film industry is most often associated with entertainment, one can argue that the media we consume has the ability to impact the way North Americans make sense of the world in which we live. If this is true, then what are the implications for school leaders, teachers, students, and communities who must live and work together in the real world?

### **Real Life Poverty in Manitoba, Canada**

Educational leaders who know the members of their school communities know that poverty affects students and families in different ways. The schools here in Manitoba do not often look like the opening scene from *Dangerous Minds* (1995). All schools are different, and while some are located in wealthier areas of a town or city, one can be sure that the effects of poverty touch all schools in one way or another. Campaign 2000 reported the following statistics as part of the 2014 Manitoba Child and Family Poverty Report Card:

- 20% of all children in Canada and 40% of Aboriginal children residing off reserve live in poverty.
- Winnipeg food banks feed approximately 20,000 children each month.
- Over 60,000 Manitobans rely on food banks each month.
- Nearly 84,000 Manitoba children are affected by poverty.
- Manitoba children whose families are new to Canada, Aboriginal, and from single-parent households are even more profoundly affected by poverty.

While these statistics are concerning, they do not take into account children and families living on First Nations reserves; therefore, the numbers are likely much higher. In many cases, safe drinking water, adequate housing, job opportunities, child care, and equal educational opportunities are lacking in First Nations communities. Families in these communities are still struggling to heal from the impacts of Canada's Indian Residential School system and, as a result, there are more Aboriginal children in foster care as compared to non-Aboriginal children (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015). In addition, First Nations schools receive approximately \$3500 less per year, per student, than provincially-funded public schools. This is because funding for First Nations schools is determined by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), which is part of the Federal government. These are just two examples of historical events and political control that continue to negatively impact Aboriginal people in Canada today. As a nation, we are only beginning to talk honestly about these issues.

Families new to Canada are also more profoundly affected by poverty because many are starting their lives over. Language barriers, cultural differences, affordable housing, job

opportunities, and transportation are just a few obstacles that newcomer families must navigate through when they arrive in Canada. In the school setting, language barriers and cultural differences pose challenges for school administrators, teachers and, of course, families and students new to Canada. As school leaders work to communicate with newcomer families in an effort to help them get into the school routine, the implications and realities of moving one's family to a foreign country and culture are often forgotten. Many newcomers to Canada have left family members, familiar cultures, community supports, and their *homes* behind; school leaders and teachers need to be ever cognizant of these very difficult and personal realities that add to the poverty-related stresses of moving to Canada.

The realities of poverty and its effects on non-White Canadians closely parallel the challenges faced by students in the *White Saviour* school films. Informed and empathetic educational leaders, however, need to understand that compelling speeches based on the tenets of meritocracy will do very little to create any kind of lasting change in the lives of the students and families affected by poverty. Educational leaders also need to know that well-meaning, inexperienced teachers, like those depicted in the *White Saviour* school films, can not realistically "save" anyone, nor are such heroic services invited or necessarily appreciated by non-White Canadians. Furthermore, while the school films discussed in this article depict the *White Saviour* teacher as caring, enthusiastic, and capable, the storylines also imply that, even with years of experience, all other teachers are essentially incapable in comparison. In the real world, it is more likely that educational leaders and teachers would benefit from explicit and ongoing learning opportunities that would apprise all stakeholders of the historical events, as well as current systems and policies, that make it extremely difficult for fellow Canadians, perceived as "others," to realize their full potential. Only then can real change happen.

### **Recommendations for School Leaders Dealing With Issues of Race and Socio-economics**

Leading others to understand race relations and socio-economic differences is not easy, but it is an important responsibility for educational leaders who seek to provide all students with fair, equitable, and relevant learning experiences and skills that will be applicable in real-world situations. Effective school leaders need to walk the talk; they need to demonstrate, guide, and provide continued support in order to enact real change. A good first step is self-examination.

Torino (2015), who works with White counselling trainees, advocates examining personal biases and exploring ideas around privilege as a way to recognize and acknowledge one's feelings and beliefs about non-White others. White pre-service teachers would also benefit from introspection of this nature, because White teachers will inevitably come into contact with non-White students, families, and colleagues on the very first day of school. While most people keep their biases about perceived "others" to themselves, these hidden beliefs are revealed in other ways. The reactions of the teachers in *White Saviour* Films demonstrate this point very clearly. While no words are spoken, it is immediately obvious that the *White Saviour* teachers feel fear and/or pity for the students they encounter on the very first day of school. These feelings can negatively affect how school leaders and teachers interact with students whom they perceive to be threatening or disadvantaged (lowered expectations for academic achievement, a heavy focus on behaviour management, less of a focus on relationship building, etc.). For these reasons, school leaders and teachers alike need to recognize and acknowledge their personal biases and beliefs about individuals perceived as others. The next step for school leaders and teachers is to understand when and why biases about perceived others came into being.

Once school leaders and teachers have identified and acknowledged their biases about perceived others, it is time to learn. Some will need to learn about Canadian history in order to understand the current conditions challenging our Aboriginal population. Others will need to learn about conditions in other countries in order to understand why so many people choose to immigrate to Canada. White privilege and the concept of meritocracy must also be explored and revisited as school leaders and teachers learn about themselves in relation to perceived others. It is important to note that these learning experiences may be difficult and emotionally draining.

School leaders can also expect to meet resistance; exploring one's personal biases around race-relations and White privilege can threaten and/or criticize everything that an individual has come to know and believe. For these reasons, school leaders hoping to enact systemic change must stay the course and revisit these topics often. Equally important is the school leaders' involvement in the process. Conversations about personal biases, race relations, privilege, and power are difficult conversations that can take place only in a safe environment.

Self-examination and courageous conversations are only the starting points on the road to understanding, respect, empathy, and acceptance among all people. School leaders and teachers are in an advantageous position for enacting systemic change. While it is unrealistic to believe that all school leaders and teachers will jump on board in the name of social justice, it is reasonable to assume that many will. When this happens, school leaders and teachers who are truly committed to social justice for all may start to question and challenge age-old instructional methods, curricular content, and the traditionally disconnected, distant relationship between the school and the parents and families of the children who attend. If school leaders, teachers, and students seek to learn about our nation's history, as well as historical events that continue to oppress certain groups, the potential for enacting systemic change becomes a real possibility. After examining their own biases and beliefs, educators may choose to teach their students to do the same, thus opening the door to emergent and meaningful learning opportunities that have the potential to end racism. This approach is only a starting point for school leaders, but it is far more promising, equitable, and genuine than that taken by the lone White Saviour.

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### About the Presenter

Sherry Baker is completing her M.Ed. in educational administration. In her 2011-12 Project of Heart, grades 7 and 8 students learned about the history and legacy of Canada's residential school system through art. The tiles that pay tribute to the children who did not survive the residential school system have been on display in the Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg.

## Using iPads to Develop a Sense of Story

JulieAnn Kniskern and Cheryl Klassen  
(with Aiden)



*“Thank you for believing in me.”*

This was the message that was conveyed to me by 5 year-old Aiden, one of the senior kindergarten children in the all-day, every-other-day classroom in which I studied the students’ writing throughout the 2015-2016 school year, from September to June. Aiden was an interesting child because he always had a “plan” for whatever he wrote. He always considered what he was going to write. Most times, he would draw a diagram of what he was going to write about. Then he would begin his story.

During the months of April, May, and June, I was the classroom “Writing Centre.” Any students who wanted to write a story would come to the table at which I was sitting, and we would discuss what tools they wanted to use when they were writing/composing their story. The choices that the students had were pencil, pen, coloured markers, crayons, paint, and either paper or an iPad computer.

Aiden usually selected paper and pencil or markers. Before he wrote any words/letters down on his paper, he would always make a plan. He said that his dad, who is a carpenter, always made a plan before he constructed anything – and he was doing what his dad always did. Also, Aiden’s mother always wrote lists, so Aiden was also a list maker to make sure that he had the necessary items to make whatever he was constructing. Aiden and I would discuss his plans. Then he would search around the classroom for whatever he needed to construct and write about what he made.

Aiden planned and made a variety of items within the classroom. Sometimes he needed to take his plans home and he constructed his final product with his dad. One example was his leprechaun trap. Around St. Patrick’s Day, Mrs. Klassen, the senior kindergarten teacher, had read a story about leprechauns and how difficult they were to capture. Most of the students made two-dimensional leprechaun traps, but Aiden took his drawing home and constructed a three-dimensional leprechaun trap with his dad. A few days later, he brought it to school to show the other children. The other children in the class were fascinated with what he had made and they, too, wanted to make three-dimensional objects/traps just like Aiden. He always was willing to help

children with creating their own three-dimensional objects that were a part of his story telling. Every object that Aiden made always had a story attached to it. His imagination was quite compelling.

At the end of the school year in June, Aiden found some balloons while he was scouring around the classroom looking for some objects to inspire him to create a new story. The day was quite windy, and when Aiden came in from recess he decided to make a kite. The kite was made of construction paper, but he discovered that the paper was too heavy to fly. He needed something lighter. He redesigned his kite with plain white newspaper material for the body. Again, it needed something else to get the kite off the ground. This is when he put a balloon on each end of triangular-shaped kite. This helped to raise the kite into the air.

As he experimented with the right number of balloons to give lift-off to his kite, it was interesting to listen to Aiden talking through the problem. Several other students were now gathered around Aiden. They had also fashioned kites following Aiden's initial plan, substituting different types of paper to get their kites light enough to lift off the ground and experimenting with size, shapes, and colours to see which items made a difference in flying the kites that they were constructing. It was fascinating to listen to the students constructing their kites. Some were doing "self-talk", and others were talking to each other about the best way to construct their kites. Suddenly, it was time to clean up and get ready to go home. The children who were constructing kites took them home to continue working on them with a sibling or parent.

Aiden was often the catalyst for classroom events that happened around the Writing Centre. While many children would come to the Writing Centre without a plan, Aiden always had a plan, and then, through discussion, his plan would be fleshed out and together we would write the rest of his story. Sometimes I would scribe for Aiden, especially when he was so eager to get his story on paper that the words just came tumbling out. Other times, he wanted to physically write his story as he pondered which way he wanted the narrative to go. At these times, Aiden applied what he had learned from Mrs. Klassen about the different shapes and sounds of the upper and lower case alphabet letters and words in his "Writing Book."

Aiden was always in charge of his learning. At the Writing Centre in the afternoon, I always had a variety of tools for writing/composing, and the students always had a choice. Some students, like Aiden, came to the Writing Centre almost daily. He had adventures, and he wanted to tell everyone about them. Sometimes he didn't finish his stories in class, and he took them home to finish with his mom or dad. Eventually, he brought his stories back to class and often shared them with the class during "Show and Tell" or "Author's Chair" time.

Aiden's classmates were very respectful and enjoyed listening and responding to Aiden's adventure stories. Aiden's family is building a new house, and Aiden is participating in the process. One day, something very heavy fell on his dad's foot and he had to be taken to the hospital in Brandon. This was very frightening for Aiden. His father had to remain in hospital for several days. Aiden was very upset about his father's injury, and this dominated his stories for several weeks. Later in the winter, Aiden's dad developed pneumonia and had to be hospitalized again. This was another scary event for Aiden. He needed to understand that whatever the hospital's doctors recommended was what needed to be done for his dad to get well. Aiden was very relieved when his Dad was able to come home.

Aiden and his dad loved to go ice fishing on Oak Lake in the winter. Aiden wrote elaborate stories about all of the equipment needed first to haul the ice shack onto the ice with the snowmobile, and then to make a hole in the ice with an auger so that the actual fishing could begin. Aiden described the fish that he and his dad caught and brought home for his mom to cook for supper. He said that the fresh fish dinners were delicious! Although other students in the class went ice fishing with their fathers and grandfathers, none of them described in depth and illustrated the process of preparing to ice fish, as well as the process of catching fish through the ice, culminating in actually eating the fish that were caught.

While Aiden had beginning, middle, and ends to his stories, many of the other students in the class could do only one or two parts of the writing process, but not all three parts and bring it to a conclusion. Aiden was quite precocious in his understanding of the three basic parts of a story (beginning, middle, and end), as well as characterization and plot. He also provided a great deal of

description to his stories. His stories were complex in the details that he provided to explain the various events and characters that he portrayed.

Aiden is a prime example of how a 5 year-old child develops a sense of story. Our research project, which studied the relative usefulness of using the iPad “Sense of Story” application to develop a sense of story with senior kindergarten children, revealed some notable findings:

- When given a choice of traditional writing/drawing utensils or iPads, most of our young students chose pencil-and-paper over technology. Many had prior experience with iPads as a gaming device. They may have associated iPads with fun-and-games, instead of with academic learning, or they may have viewed the traditional writing tools as something “new.”
- All of the students used illustrations in their stories. Some, like Aiden, drew the pictures or made other visual constructions – and then developed their storylines. Others created the storylines first, and then added illustrative components. Regardless of which came first – the story or the illustrations – the children enjoyed experimenting with writing utensils, colours, shapes, and textures.
- The teacher makes the difference! Mrs. Klassen is an experienced teacher who understands children and how their creative juices flow. She is a master of facilitation in the early years classroom, orchestrating opportunities for children to use their imaginations and apply more formal classroom lessons to less formal learning contexts.
- The children make another difference! Aiden and his classmates openly contributed to each other’s learning and writing experiences. Their imaginations were the fuel that Mrs. Klassen ignited in the classroom. Every child is delightfully different, bringing various sets of experiences, skills, and ideas to the classroom context.

*“Thank you, Aiden, for believing in us.”*

### **About the Presenters**

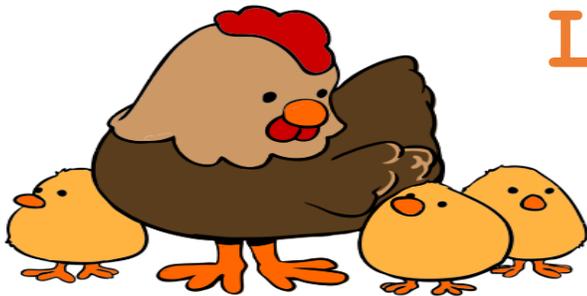
*JulieAnn Kniskern is an assistant professor in BU’s Faculty of Education. Children’s literacy development is her teaching specialization and her professional passion. JulieAnn is thrilled to be working with former student Cheryl Klassen in this early years research project.*

*Cheryl Klassen is passionate about teaching kindergarten in Fort la Bosse School Division. She has been privileged to reunite with her former professor JulieAnn Kniskern to explore writing and technology use with young children. Encouraging her students to create and wonder is a daily priority in her student-centred classroom.*



## LITTLE PEEPS

Shannon Vogel  
and  
Vicki Lamb



# Little PEEPS

Programming Enrichment &  
Engagement for Preschool Success

Little PEEPS was held for 7 sessions (Nov. 25, Dec. 9, Jan. 13, Jan. 27, Feb. 10, Feb. 24, and Mar. 23) from 4:00 to 4:45 pm. Families were initially contacted through emails and posters sent out by teachers within Riverheights School. Shannon Vogel hosted each session in her grade 1/2 classroom with the average attendance of 15 children and their parents. Jan Pilling (MS. CCC-SLP) stressed within each session that all children need training and practice to develop strong phonological awareness. Two children were referred to speech and language services through this program.

The goal was to invite three to five-year-olds with a parent to attend sessions that incorporated multiple intelligences and UDL strategies. Each session provided activities for language development, phonological awareness, and literacy and numeracy concepts. After an initial group story, children moved through stations with their parents, promoting listening, hearing, speaking, representing, and viewing skills. Preschoolers were supported in exploring their thoughts, ideas, and feelings, and in collaborating with same-age peers. Families were also supported in responding personally and critically to oral and literacy texts. Sessions typically ended with a music component related to the session's theme. Resource packages were provided for parents to enhance learning in the home setting and to prepare their children for kindergarten. Take-home "lit kits" were created to send home for each child and parent to continue the concepts learned during group sessions.

The highly structured learning stations, lessons plans, Universal Design for Learning strategies, and infusion of Aboriginal perspectives created dynamic and engaging learning opportunities for future Brandon School Division students. Vicki Lamb, Shannon Vogel, and Jan Pilling encouraged the clarity and artistry of communication skills and pre-literacy skills for families with young children. Little PEEPS will continue to run during the 2016-2017 school year.



### **About the Presenters**

*Shannon Vogel teaches grade one at Riverheights School in Brandon. She plans to use her M.Ed. in special education to pursue special education programming that will improve equity, rigour, and student achievement for exceptional learners. Shannon is happily married to her husband Curtis, and loves being a mother to her two grown sons, Brayden and Tyler.*

*Vicki Lamb teaches grades 2/3 and Reading Recovery at George Fitton School in Brandon. She recently completed her M.Ed. in special education at Brandon University. Her graduate research focused on the low literacy achievement of Manitoba students and obstacles that interfere with literacy growth. Vicki has worked as an educator in a northern community and in a variety of multi-age classrooms, and has taught numeracy support in her 17 years of teaching.*



## **Supporting English as an Additional Language Learners: A Sea of Talk**

**Jennifer Flight**

English as an additional language (EAL) learners are increasing in Manitoba. They currently comprise 14% of our grade 1 population (A. Matczuk, personal communication, August 4, 2016), which translates to about three students per classroom. These young learners are “trying to master academic skills, including initial literacy, in a language in which they do not have full proficiency yet” (Rodriguez-Eagle & Torres-Elias, 2009, p. 53). Teachers need strategies to help these students engage in meaningful conversation in a new language, in addition to learning to read and write.

Research on the teaching of young EAL learners is limited (August & Shanahan, 2006; Espinosa, 2010). To learn more about supporting students and teachers, I undertook a study to identify effective teaching practices used in individual lessons by experienced Reading Recovery® Teacher Leaders. Reading Recovery is an early literacy intervention that provides one-on-one teaching to grade one children who are most at risk in literacy learning, but I believe some of the techniques can be applied by the classroom teacher in whole-class, small-group, and individual instruction. My recommendations include what teachers can do to understand each child’s current ability to use language and how best to teach with a focus on assessment.

In Reading Recovery lessons, teachers support language development through the literacy tasks of reading books and writing stories. Engaging in conversation, reading, and writing all contribute to language learning. Rigg and Allen (1989) explained, “Writing, speaking, listening, and reading all nourish one another; we don’t wait for mastery of one before encouraging developments of the other three . . . They need not be fluent English-speakers before they can write and read” (p. xiii). Both Reading Recovery lessons and early years classroom instruction bring together the tasks of speaking, reading, and writing. The question is, what can teachers do to enhance instruction in order to support the needs of the child as a language learner?

### **Recommendations for Supporting EAL Learners**

Teachers need to see EAL students as capable learners, expecting participation in speaking, reading, and writing tasks. Children enter school “with two self-extending systems in place – making sense of the world and knowing how to learn language” (Neal, 2009, p. 105). EAL children have also learned to make sense of their world through engagement in family and community life. They have learned to speak the language of the home. They are learners.

Studying our teaching and decision making with respect to teaching EAL learners can help us to become more effective teachers. The teacher’s understanding of an individual student’s strengths is important. The following ideas may support classroom teachers in monitoring the development of a child’s language competencies, planning instructional opportunities to extend learning, and reflecting on the effectiveness of instructional decisions.

#### **Monitor the child’s oral language.**

Teachers need to be meticulous observers of the EAL child’s spoken language. Observation of spoken language is challenging, because the act of speaking is heard but not seen. Teachers need to become sensitive to the child’s use of language, because “the better the teacher understands how the child is going about his business of constructing the new language, the more effectively she can support the child’s work – by providing, observing, and responding appropriately” (Lindfors,

1991, p. 469). The following are three ways to monitor a child's use of language, thus making the child's oral language more visible:

### 1. **Administer and reflect on assessment tasks.**

Early reading and writing measures administered in English provide a valid means of screening young EAL learners (Chiappe & Siegel, 2006; Geva, 2000). Assessment tasks such as *An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay, 2013) can support the teacher's careful observation of a EAL child's oral language and interactions with print.

The assessment task *Record of Oral Language: Observing Changes in the Acquisition of Language Structures* (Clay, Gill, Glynn, McNaughton, & Salmon, 2015) helps "teachers to observe and understand changes in young children's language" by "sharpen[ing] teachers' hearing of what children say, and improv[ing] the accuracy of the records they make" (p. 7). In administering this task, the teacher asks the child to repeat single sentences within a set (or sets) of sentences. For the EAL learner with limited use of English, the teacher begins with the Level 1 sentences. The *Record of Oral Language* provides a test score, which can confirm when a child needs additional language development. For instance, a child scoring below 13 "will need extra time and more conversations, and more enriching activities in oral language delivered concurrently with the reading and writing programmes of the classroom" (Clay et al., 2015, p. 22). The child's correct and incorrect attempts also provide evidence of the language the child can imitate and likely use in speech, and language structures that need to be learned.

Assessment supports the teacher in understanding the language the child is able to use and in making decisions about teaching. For example, the Level 1 sentence "My brother's knees are dirty" (Clay et al., 2015, p. 20) may be repeated by a child as "My brother knee is dirty." The teacher deduces that the meaning of the sentence is intact and that the child can use the possessive pronoun "my." The teacher also notes that the child is not yet using the possessive ending of "'s," using an "s" on the end of a plural noun, or making correct subject/verb agreement ("is" for "are"). Such patterns make visible the child's ability to use language.

Select assessment tasks might be re-administered to better understand increasing language competency. In this study, Teacher Leaders re-administered the *Record of Oral Language* task, in order to confirm their daily observations of the child's language development.

### 2. **Use video or audio recordings to assess the child's current use of language.**

Teachers become attuned to listening for the meaning of the child's message in order to respond. Concurrently listening for both understanding and for how a child uses language structures is challenging. Recording and transcribing the child's spoken language enables the teacher to listen to the child's use of language, the way in which the child puts words together to convey his/her message.

To make the child's use of language visible, classroom teachers might keep an ongoing record of the transcriptions of oral language samples.

We know something has changed in the child's language when we hear him construct part of a sentence in a new way. If we keep a note of the longest sentence we have heard him use, we can update it when a longer one comes along. Length of utterance is a reliable indicator of growth in early oral language skills. (Clay, 2005, p. 51)

In addition to the length of utterance, teachers might reflect on the clarity of meaning and the change toward more standard English grammar use.

### 3. **Observe reading behaviours as a way to monitor oral language development.**

Teachers can administer and evaluate Running Records of continuous text reading (Clay, 2013) in view of the overall emphasis on creating meaning while reading. Each word that the child

reads correctly is marked with a check mark. The check marks make visible for the teacher language (words, phrases, sentences) that the child is able to use.

Given evidence, teachers may put less emphasis on errors due to language not yet within the child's control. In Figure 1, the child is not yet able to use the past tense verb "ran." Knowing that the child is not yet using past tense verbs in his oral language, the teacher needs to evaluate: Is the child's understanding of the story affected by the substitution? Is the repeated error something to note for later instruction? Running Records support the teacher in better understanding the child's current language capabilities, in preparation for instruction.

**Figure 1. Running Record Sample**

Page	Title	RW	10	E	SC
	Kitty Cat & Fat Cat	98 25			
3	not / run ran				
5	cat cat				
7	comes / SC tail				
	up went				

Page	E	SC
9	looking / looks looked run ran	
11	great exp. run ran	
13	comes / SC I	
15	run ran run ran run ran / house / SC home	
16	jump / # / T went	

**Monitor your own use of language.**

Teachers need to monitor and sometimes modify the language used with the EAL learner, and use what Krashen (1983) called comprehensible input. Krashen suggested that language acquisition takes place when the learner is exposed to language that is comprehensible and contains "i + 1." The "i" represents language that the learner currently controls, and the "1" represents language that is just slightly more complex or the next step. Krashen explained, "We acquire language when we understand messages that contain aspects of language (vocabulary, grammar) we have not yet acquired, but that we are 'ready' to acquire" (p. 3).

Teachers need to be attuned to the EAL learners' ability to understand the language used in instructions, explanations, and conversational exchanges. Teachers need to determine how simple or complex their language should be when engaging with learners. Video and/or audio recordings of teaching interactions can be used to evaluate the teacher's use of language, in order to determine if his/her language is comprehensible to the child.

Prompts or calls for action on the part of the learner are used regularly in teaching. The teacher reminds the child to do something he/she knows how to do, or invites the student to respond after a new strategy has been taught. A prompt might be direct, such as "Put them all together so that it sounds like talking," or be open-ended, "Try that again" (Clay, 2005, pp. 205,

206). Video and/or audio recordings can help the teacher to assess whether his/her prompts are understood by the child. A child who does not understand a prompt will emit observable behaviours such as not attempting or completing the task. Carefully monitoring enables a teacher to make adjustments to the language that he/she uses as prompts. For example, a child was observed not to respond to prompts of three or more words in length. When the Teacher Leader used one and two-word prompts, the child responded more appropriately.

Teachers should be cautious of their language when explaining something new to an EAL child. Neal (2009) described four common literacy challenges for EAL learners: unknown concepts, unfamiliar vocabulary, abstract ideas, and restricted access to English structure.

Video and/or audio recorded lessons offer opportunities to check a child's understanding. The teacher's meaning can be made more explicit by shortening the length of sentences used in oral speech, by considering vocabulary usage, and by adding meaning through the use of expression, props, and actions. For example, a child who confuses "in" and "on" might benefit from using props in combination with talking through the action in meaningful phrases or sentences, such as "The boy is in the car" or "The boy is sitting on the chair." Teachers who are aware of the child's use of language and responses to the teacher's language are positioned to refine their language of instruction to increase student understanding.

### **Value the child's first language knowledge.**

A child's control of English might be best developed through finding ways to build on his/her first language knowledge. The EAL student should be given opportunities to teach his/her first language to a peer, small group, or the whole class. Here are a few examples:

- Invite the child to become the teacher through teaching phrases in his/her first language.
- Create books that use vocabulary from the child's first language.
- Prompt the child to say phrases and/or name vocabulary words in his/her first language, as a means to link his/her home language and English.
- Use picture dictionaries in the child's first language, in order to build vocabulary.

Making connections to the child's first language knowledge supports the child in making more efficient links to accessing language in English. For example, an EAL child read the sentence "Kitty cat ran up the curtains" as "Kitty cat ran up the . . . [pause] . . . cortina, we call them" (the Spanish word for curtains.) The teacher praised the response and supplied the English equivalent, fostering a curiosity in the child to ask questions about new words. These links support the learning of language.

### **Maximize school and home connections.**

In order to maximize EAL learning, teachers and parents need to work together, so the parents become co-educators. "Bridging home-school differences in interaction patterns or styles can enhance students' engagement, motivation, and participation in classroom instruction" (August & Shanahan, 2006, p. 7). The following are ways to foster these connections with families:

- Invite parents to the school. When meeting with parents, spend more time listening to the parents and less time talking. Parents might interpret school task expectations in the first language so that the child better understands what to do at school.
- Make connections to home experiences. Sending a camera home can be a means to learn more about the life of the student. Photos can support the child as a storyteller. For example, based on a photo of his Auntie's cat, one child was able to tell many stories about the cat's adventures, which were then made into a little book.
- Provide literacy activities for home practice. Consider using dual language books. Send books home for parents to read to the child in the language of the home, and encourage families to talk in their home language about books. Linking the home language to books

read in English helps the child to “build the conceptual base for high level functioning . . . Strange as it may seem to teachers who are not bilingual, it is quite possible for a text written in one language to be discussed in another language” (Cazden, 2005, p. 5).

Parents are a valuable support for their children as language learners in both first language development and in providing additional opportunities to practise using the English language.

### **Make more time for student talk.**

Learning to speak, read, and write in a new language requires massive opportunities to practise using the language in meaningful ways. Children learn language not through repetition, but by using language of their own construction. Lindfors (1991) emphasized the need for meaningful language experiences:

Second-language learners who do rehearsal practice drills get better at doing rehearsal practice drills; but it is second-language learners who engage in communicating in the second language who get better at doing that: communicating in the second language. A child develops language – first or second – by engaging in *language*, and that means engaging in communication. (p. 470)

It may be difficult to provide more opportunities for conversation in a busy classroom, but Clay (2015a) reminded teachers, “If the child’s language development seems to be lagging it is misplaced sympathy to do his talking for him. Instead, put your ear closer, concentrate more sharply, smile more rewardingly and spend more time in genuine conversation” (p. 69). More opportunities for student talk are available through engaging in reading and writing tasks.

### ***reading instruction and oral language development***

A challenge for EAL learners is that “they have not developed an ‘ear’ for a range of English language structures to use as a resource in beginning to read” (Neal, 2009, p. 98). Teachers might give attention to oral language by considering the following instructional techniques:

#### **1. Read storybooks aloud.**

Read-aloud experiences expose children to more complex or literary language, which has potential to expand their use of language (Cazden, 2005; Neale, 2009; Rigg & Allen, 1989).

When a story is read to children, the shape of the story is created, the characters emerge, and the style of discourse and literacy turn of phrase are “heard.” As a consequence, prediction and anticipation become easier at a second hearing. When the language of books is read aloud, this introduces new language forms to the ear making them a little easier to listen to the next time. (Clay, 2015a, p. 264)

Furthermore, “Reading books aloud to children is important for later literacy for all children . . . ; the procedures used may need to be adjusted for [EAL] children” (Espinosa, 2010, p. 158).

Adjustments include increasing opportunities to engage in conversation before, during, and after reading stories. Pre-reading activities are recommended to introduce vocabulary and structures, followed by conversation during the reading of the book, and follow-up activities for the child to have an opportunity to use the vocabulary and structures of the book (Espinosa, 2010). The EAL learner benefits from hearing and engaging in conversations about stories that are just slightly more complex than the language he/she is currently using. Educational assistants or classroom volunteers might also be trained to read and discuss storybooks with EAL children.

#### **2. Use stories, not patterned texts, to foster comprehension.**

For both read-aloud books and books for reading instruction, use books with stories, because “real stories that hang together [boost] the child’s ability to construct meaning while reading” (Kelly,

2001, p. 8). Similarly, Neal (2009) stated,

Because the structure of the language of instruction, English, is not available to them as a resource, and they have not learned the letters, common words, and sounds of English, meaning becomes the primary resource to draw upon in their early experiences in learning to read in their second language. (p. 89)

Selecting materials for beginning reading instruction is challenging. The teacher needs either to consider stories that are well supported by the child's experience or prior knowledge, or to support the development of meaning before the child reads the story.

To ensure that materials for early reading instruction will be accessible to the reader, the teacher might first use the child's dictated stories, which are grounded in meaning and personal language structures. When these stories are made into books, they support learning to read because the child can access the meaning of the story while learning about letters, words, and punctuation. The books can be read and reread until the child notices errors and attempts to problem-solve at his/her difficulty level, thereby increasing the accessibility of published books.

### **3. Talk more about books.**

Encourage the child to talk about books before reading, during reading, and after reading. When the teacher introduces a new book, he/she supports the child in accessing meaning as a resource. The teacher might ask the child to retell the story before reading the book. From this retelling of the story, the teacher can gauge the child's understanding of concepts and consider the language used by the child. If necessary, ideas can be clarified or confirmed. When a child hears and repeats language structures while previewing a book, it is "much more likely that the [language structures] will be assimilated into the child's expansion of his invisible, internal, English language system" (Cazden, 2005, p. 5).

In an individual or small-group setting, provide opportunities for talk during the first reading of the story, in order to prompt learner responses. The teacher has the opportunity to work with vocabulary, link the visual representation of a word with an illustration, use actions to explain meanings, and encourage repetition and practice (Espinosa, 2010, p. 157).

After reading the story, provide further opportunities for the child to talk about it, such as by retelling the story in his/her own words. Retelling provides opportunities for the child to use the language of the book, developing oral language and strengthening understanding of the story.

### **4. Provide more practice in rereading familiar books.**

Teachers can increase the quantity of familiar reading for the EAL learner by encouraging him/her to reread the same book for more repetitions than might be typical. When a child rereads the same book multiple times, there is repeated exposure to vocabulary and structures. With each rereading, the child has opportunities to deepen his/her understanding of the story. Children benefit from rereading familiar stories because "they look at them again in the light of new knowledge they have gained" (Clay, 2015b, p. 177) and the language and ideas presented in the story become predictable. These language structures may then be applied to talking or writing, deepening comprehension and accessing more information that is available in print.

### **5. Provide opportunities for the child to use language in flexible ways.**

Consider linking the language used in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. When learning to use a new language structure, the child needs to use the language in a personal way, not just repeat a word. For example, the phrase "Where, oh, where is teddy bear?" might be played with orally by the child, as "Where, oh, where is my pencil?" or "Where, oh, where is Zachary?" When the teacher suggests ways in which to vary language, and when the child has opportunities to vary the language that he/she uses, oral language is developed.

## ***writing instruction and oral language development***

Teachers can provide opportunities for EAL learners to compose ideas for writing through conversation and telling self-composed stories before writing the story. Clay (2004) suggested, "Create the need to produce language. Tempt children to have something to say" (p. 10). There is motivational value in meaningful messages that the child composes him/herself (Clay, 2015b). Make an effort to learn about the child's experiences, because talking and writing about the child's experiences honours the child. Some examples include writing about a drawing/photo of the child in cultural dress, sending home a camera so that the child can share his/her home life, and providing opportunities for the child to talk about difficult subjects, such as war or life in a refugee camp. Once the child has written his/her story, sharing and celebrating the child's story is a message to the child that his/her ideas and experiences are valued.

### **Value meaning.**

Regard meaning as the most important source of information. Regardless of the task – engaging in conversation, reading books, or writing a story – meaning is critical. Put more emphasis on developing meaning through conversation than on considerations of structures, vocabulary, and solving words. Students acquire language through engaging in meaningful conversation with more competent speakers who "attempt to understand what a child means, what he or she is thinking, and then respond to the child's utterances in order to sustain the conversation" (Lyons, Pinnell, & DeFord, 1993, p. 169). Conversation develops joint understanding between child and teacher.

Clay (2015b) described the critical concept of meaning in the tasks of thinking, speaking, listening, reading, and writing:

Comprehending is not just a literacy task . . . It is what a child is doing when holding a conversation with someone, listening to someone reading aloud, or reading on his or her own, at any time or place. It is not an aspect of thinking that emerges only after children have done the reading or pass through the first two years of school. . . . Comprehension lies in what learners say, what is read to them, and what they read and write; learners should know that all literacy acts involve comprehension. (p. 217).

As teachers, we must be cautious that we are not simplifying literacy tasks for the EAL learner and eliminating or undermining the child's ability to comprehend.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers can work to support children as English language learners by critically reflecting on their teaching. Teachers need to be thoughtful observers of the child's current control of language and carefully consider how to extend language learning through the tasks of speaking, reading, and writing. Teachers can encourage the child to make links between the language of the home and the language of the school, English. Teachers should honour the child's experiences and interests, keeping the development of meaning at the forefront of all literacy activities. Through participation in the tasks of reading and writing, the language learner learns to make sense of his/her world in English. Through observations, actions, and conversation, teachers support and provide opportunities for language learning. Given instruction designed for the individual child, built on a foundation of meaningful exchanges, the EAL child learns to add English to his or her repertoire as a conversationalist, a reader, and a writer. Well stated, in the words of Britton (1970), "Talk is the sea upon which all else floats."

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### **About the Presenter**

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# Under Construction: Journey of Re-entry to Adult Education Programs

Shelley Kokorudz

## Abstract

*My research is a work in progress. This paper discusses the potential project that will utilize narrative inquiry to learn about the lived experiences of adults over the age of 45 who have made the decision to re-enter a high school program to complete grade 12. I review the literature surrounding adult learning and early exits from high school. Transformative learning theory and reflective inquiry are also mentioned as possible theories in the understanding of the data that will be collected and as a means to extend thinking about ethics that ultimately will impact the research process.*



**RETURN TO HIGH SCHOOL: A REAL-LIFE JOURNEY**  
A Conceptual Framework for Anticipated Doctoral Research By Shelley Kokorudz, University of Regina Doctoral Student

BACKGROUND	METHODOLOGY	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	INITIAL QUESTIONS RESEARCH PUZZLES	PARTICIPANTS	REFERENCES
Mature adult students re-entering high school have rich narratives to share. Stories of their lived experiences will extend our understanding of the mature adult learner re-entering high school and may even serve to disrupt some of the current understanding of the adult learner. It is the researcher's intent to co-construct these narratives and using narrative inquiry "as an approach to the study of human lives conceived as a way of honoring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 17)	Narrative Inquiry is being considered as it relates to educational research. The researcher intends to better understand the lived experiences of mature adult learners as they reflect on their re-entry to high school. "Narrative inquiry begins and ends in the storied lives of the people involved...through the inquiry, we seek ways of enriching and transforming that experience for themselves and others" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 18). The researcher puts her life alongside the lives of others, intentionally coming into relation with participants. Stories become co-composed. Narrative inquiry becomes a deeply ethical undertaking (Clandin, 2013) whereby both participant and researcher engage in a relational undertaking that affects both researcher and participant in their understanding of who they are and who they are 'becoming' in each of their landscapes.	The work of Malcolm Knowles (2015) in the area of andragogy will be considered in the review of the data attained. A review of the literature surrounding premature exiting and ...allows narrative inquirers to from high school and characteristics of adult learners will be essential as these concepts contribute to the notions of self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn. Jack Mezirow's (1991) work in transformation will also be important, as will the work of Paulo Freire (1970) in the process of "conscientization". Jardine (1998) reminds researchers that the "goal of interpretive work is not to pass on objective information to readers...but to evoke in readers a new way of understanding themselves and the lives they are living. Good interpretation leads good or final...but it keeps the story going, in this sense it is fecund" (p. 42).	"The subtle shift from research question to research puzzle creates reverberations as it bumps against dominant research narratives ...allows narrative inquirers to make explicit that narrative inquiry is markedly different from other methodologies" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 42). The researcher begins her quest with 2 pieces in the building of the puzzle: 1. How is the re-entry of mature adults to high school experienced? 2. How do these mature learners see themselves 'becoming' in consideration of this re-entry?	Mature adult learners attending an adult community high school will be invited to participate in this research. The researcher is particularly interested in hearing the stories of adults who have been away from high school for a long period of time. "By way of story telling, we allow stories to travel from person to person, letting the meaning of story become larger than an individual experience or an individual life" (Kim, 2016, p. 9). Participants over the age of 45 will be purposively selected. Other factors such as cultural backgrounds or gender will not be of importance in the consideration of participants for this study.	Clandinin, J. (2013). <i>Engaging in narrative inquiry</i> . California: Left Coast Press. Freire, P. (1970). <i>Pedagogy of the oppressed</i> . New York: Herder & Herder. Gadamer, H.G. (2004). <i>Truth and method</i> . New York: Seabury Press. Jardine, D.W. (1998). <i>To dwell with a boundless heart</i> . New York: Peter Lang. Kim, J. (2016). <i>Understanding narrative inquiry</i> . California: SAGE. Knowles, M., Holton, E., & Swanson, R. (2015). <i>The adult learner. The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development</i> . New York: Routledge. Mezirow, J. (1991). <i>Transformative dimensions of adult learning</i> . California: Jossey-Bass.

This paper discusses the literature surrounding adult learning. It examines the challenges associated with re-entry to adult education spaces and briefly discusses some of the theories associated with adult learning. The paper also describes the potential research project that will involve a narrative inquiry to better understand the lived experiences of adults who re-enter high school spaces later in life. The intention of the paper is to describe the methodological process for the narrative inquiry and review the literature associated with adult learners

## Contextualizing the Project

For nearly a decade, I have worked with adult learners who have returned to an adult learning center to complete their high school diplomas. My intrigue rests with mature adult learners over the age of 45. I am fascinated by their decision to re-enter high school and complete a piece of their education from which they chose to exit prematurely many years earlier in their lives. At a time when North American culture might suggest that this group of individuals should be planning or

considering retirement, their journey assumes a different direction, one with educational overtones. I am on a quest to learn more about the experiences of adult learners during this time of re-entry. I expect to gain new insight from their stories that might extend the literature surrounding adult learners and create some tension in the “mosaic of theories, models, sets of principles, and explanations that, combined, compose the knowledge base of adult learning” (Merriam, 2001, p. 3).

As well, I am interested in learning about their pedagogical experiences. Taylor & Trumppower (2014) linked their learners’ negative past experiences to teaching methods that were “neither relevant nor meaningful” (p. 3). I wonder whether my research participants’ return to an adult high school space is an enjoyable and fulfilling adventure. In particular, I am curious about their learning experiences as they apply to literacy, because “Canada’s economic future requires finding new ways to increase literacy and essential skills” (Taylor & Trumppower, 2014, p. 3). Using Wlodkowski’s Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching as a model in their research with two adult high school programs in Eastern Ontario, Taylor & Trumppower (2014) discussed engaging pedagogical practices that promote meaningful and motivational engagement of adult learners in their re-entry to high school programs. One of my research aims is to learn more about my Manitoba participants’ responses to their literacy experience, since teacher instruction influences the students’ response and skill development surrounding literacy.

### **Brief Overview of the Literature**

The American Council on Education (ACE, 2007) studied “the changing demographics of adults aged 55 to 79, their motivations for participating in higher education, and the obstacles that prevent broader participation” (p. 3). Because of advancements in health care, many more people are living into their 80s and 90s. Therefore, instead of retiring, adults 55 to 79 years old “are entering the third age of life . . . defined by personal achievement and learning for self-development – with new plans for their later years in mind” (ACE, p. 4). The change in demographics has significant implications for adult education, especially because “those with at least some college are nearly twice as likely to work past traditional retirement age as those without a high school diploma” (ACE, p. 7). Not only are higher education spaces such as colleges and universities experiencing increased enrolment among this demographic, adult high school spaces are also seeing a re-entry of older adults who have prematurely exited their former high school education spaces.

While studying adult high school programs in Ontario, Pinsent-Johnson, Howell, and King (2013) found that “just under 14% of Ontario adults aged 26 to 64” and 34% of Ontario’s Aboriginal adults had not completed high school (p. 5). They also discovered that more than half of Canada’s high school dropouts later return to earn a high school diploma for the following reasons: “PSE [postsecondary education], . . . a job, personal accomplishment, improve English language skills” (p. 23). Remaining in the work force is therefore not the only motivating factor for older adults to pursue education. Serrat, Petriwskyj, Villar, & Warburton (2016) suggested that older adults’ civic participation in politics is beneficial to their person growth and community development. Therefore, some aging adults will return to learning spaces to increase their knowledge base to engage in civic participation.

Mackinnon (2013) reported significant numbers of Aboriginal people returning to secondary and post-secondary educational programs for adults in Winnipeg, Manitoba: Urban Circle Training Centre (UCTC), BUILD (Building Urban Industries for Local Development), and the University of Manitoba’s Inner City Social Work Program (ICSWP). MacKinnon described these learners as adults “who have not completed their education and training through the traditional trajectory (post-secondary education directly following completion of secondary education), and who typically have low socio-economic status, minimal access to resources and supports and responsibilities beyond those of the mainstream student” (p. 49). In her discussions with these “second chance learners” (p. 49), Mackinnon reported,

Most of the adult learners described their training experience as part of a bigger journey toward personal development, rather than simply a means of entering the labour market. The majority of individuals placed greater emphasis on the relationships they built, the healing they experienced and the life lessons they learned. While all acknowledged that finding secure, decent paying employment was a goal, it wasn't their only goal. . . . They spoke more of aspirations tied to their values regarding family, becoming more engaged in community life and finding personal fulfilment. (p. 55)

The choice to return to education can be a complex process for adults, and their formal education process can be challenging. In order to remain focused on the targeted participants for this author's potential research, literature reflecting explanation for premature exiting from high school and the challenges that are encountered during re-entry to adult high school programs (secondary programs) will remain the focus.

### **But . . . Why do they leave?**

With the number of adults returning to adult high school programs, insight into the premature exits from original high school spaces is important. Although the rate of dropouts appears to be dropping, Raymond (2008) found a gender difference in the rate of dropouts (as cited in MacGregor & Ryan, 2011, p. 148). More males tend to drop out than females, but more females return to complete their high school diploma. Interestingly, Bradley and Goldman (1996) found that if adults return too early after leaving, they tend to have less success (as cited in MacGregor & Ryan, 2011, p. 148). In Chuang's (1994) study, "male dropouts most often cited work-related reasons; whereas female dropouts most often cited family-related reasons [such as] marriage and/or pregnancy" (as cited in MacGregor & Ryan, 2011, p. 149). In their report, Pinsent-Johnson et al. (2013) listed the following reasons for dropping out: difficulties in personal life, not interested in school, wanting or needing to work, problems at home, immigration, being bullied, drugs, death of a family member, lack of caring and motivation, poor self-esteem, and mental health issues (p. 26).

Despite their reasons for leaving, understanding the lived experiences surrounding their re-entry becomes essential to ensuring optimum learning spaces for these learners. Many adult learners retain negative memories of their high school years (MacGregor & Ryan, 2011). Lange, Chovenac, Cardinal, Kajner, and Acuna (2015) referred to low-income adult learners as "wounded – physically, psychologically, intellectually, and spiritually" by their unsuccessful prior schooling, to the point that that "this reality becomes an identity embodied as being an incompetent and incapable learner" (p. 84)

Even when the reason for a premature exit from high school is as simple as boredom (MacGregor & Ryan, 2011), the adult who is returning to high school may encounter many challenges in the process of re-entry. Understanding these challenges is important in the process of providing adequate supports and programming for these adult learners.

## **Challenges in Re-entry**

### **Discourses**

An examination of the discourses that surround adult education reveals a gradual change "from speaking about lifelong education to starting to speak about lifelong learning" and "from a more humanistic notion of adult education to a more economically driven one, as well as framed within a neoliberal discourse on how governing should operate" (Sandberg, Andreas, Dahlstedt, & Olso, 2016, p. 104). Lifelong learning implies that adults need consistent learning and have a responsibility to acknowledge this need and to be independent in their perpetual ongoing journey to be learners in both formal and informal spaces.

Because adult education has focused on creating an employable work force (Field, 2010), it has targeted “the unemployed, migrants, single mothers, and individuals on social benefits, as well as those at risk of losing their jobs” (Sandberg et al., 2016, p.104). Thus, adult education serves to convert “displaced and abnormal citizens . . . into desirable subjects” (Sandberg et al., 2016, pp. 104-105). This attitude shapes the thinking of both educators and adult learners. Students become positioned as “subjects of deviation” (Sandberg et al., 2016, p. 115), either because they failed to complete high school or because they failed to sustain employment.

Another adult education discourse focuses on the “second chance” label attached to adult high school programs, which assumes “that students ‘squandered’ their opportunity to obtain a high school credential the first time around” (Pinsent-Johnson et al., 2013, p. 13). The label is not only inaccurate, but also potentially damaging to the students’ identity as learners and to the adult high schools’ educational credibility. The second chance label is another deficit discourse.

Nevertheless, the prevailing public discourse views adult education “as a route toward active citizenship, social justice, and well-being” (Sandberg et al., 2016, p. 117). Many adults see adult high school as their route to a better future for themselves and their families. Unfortunately, other real barriers exist that contribute to an adult learner’s difficulty in returning to school.

### **Risk of Exclusion**

Older adults often feel excluded before they even enter the doors of the classroom. These individuals are often thought of as illiterate and have been “designated as being in need of support and encouragement in terms of performing further study” (Sandberg et al., 2016, p. 109). They may feel uneasy about entering a learning space with students who may be considerably younger (ACE, 2007), and they harbour fears of academic inadequacy, often carrying over difficult memories from previous educational experiences.

Overcoming feelings of exclusion requires “a respectful learning environment” (Taylor & Trumppower, 2014, p. 7). Adult learners benefit from feeling connected to each other (Cranton, 2010) and to their instructor (MacGregor & Ryan, 2011). Inclusion for these students is also dependent on building confidence in the program of delivery, because previous educational experiences may have taught them that “they cannot trust the system” (MacGregor & Ryan, 2011, p. 152). Thus, although exclusion may be a barrier that adult learners bring to the classroom, the classroom itself can be a means to foster inclusion.

### **Financial Means**

Because most adult learners are low-income individuals, they have financial concerns that affect their decisions to enter secondary and post-secondary programs (Pinsent-Johnson et al., 2013). They may also struggle with time constraints, daily jobs, and family commitments (Normand & Hyland, 2003). These adults understand that a return to education could benefit them into a more sustainable economic state, but realize that it is also a sacrifice to try to balance current responsibilities that often have very little room for flexibility.

### **Other Considerations**

Besides the barriers already discussed, other challenges exist for adults who wish to re-enter educational spaces. Some of these problems include access to technology, lack of technology literacy, remote community placement, and numerous personal matters that are specific to individual learners (ACE, 2007). Policy makers and institutions indeed have a challenge in meeting the demands of this learner population.

## Theoretical Framework

Malcolm Knowles' work in andragogy is being considered for a theoretical perspective of this research (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2015). A review of the literature surrounding premature exiting from high school and characteristics of adult learners will be essential, because these concepts contribute to the notions of self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn. Jack Mezirow's (1991) work in transformation will also be important, as will the work of Paulo Freire (1970) in the process of "conscientization." Jardine (1998) reminded researchers that the "goal of interpretive work is . . . to evoke in readers a new way of understanding themselves and the lives they are living. Good interpretation is not good or final . . . but it keeps the story going, in this sense it is fecund" (p. 42).

As early as 1968, Knowles proposed the concept of andragogy to distinguish adult learning from the pedagogy of pre-adult schooling (Merriam, 2001). Over time, however, researchers saw that, in fact, some characteristics of adult and pre-adult learners crossed into both categories of learners. By the end of 1980, Knowles "moved from an andragogy versus pedagogy position to representing them on a continuum ranging from teacher-directed to student-directed learning" (Merriam, 2001, p. 6). Still, concepts of andragogy cause educators to think about adult learners as independent, social beings with a range of life experiences that can impact their learning (Merriam, 2001).

Merriam (2001) and Hoggan (2016) discussed transformative learning and its theoretical connection to adult learning. Thought of as much more than a simple linear process, transformational learning enables researchers to broaden their understanding of adult learning. Merriam described its use as "explicating the meaning-making process. It is not *what* we know but *how* we know what is important" (p. 22). Relationships, feelings, and contexts are all important in the process of understanding transformative adult learning.

Hoggan (2016) defined transformative learning as "processes that result in significant and irreversible changes in the way a person experiences, conceptualizes, and interacts with the world" (p. 71). True transformation is further described as having depth, breadth, and relative stability. One of my research goals is to uncover the transformative processes that define learning for my adult high school participants.

## The Research Plan

### Methodology

Christians (2011) defined humans as "communicative beings within the fabric of everyday life. Through dialogic encounter, subjects create life together and nurture one another's moral obligation to it" (p. 70). Narrative inquiry privileges a researcher in the journey to gain knowledge and understanding of the lived experiences of others in "a sacred space" (Kim, 2016, p. 103).

Narrative inquiry is being considered as it relates to educational research. I intend to understand the lived experiences of mature adult learners as they reflect on their re-entry to high school. "Narrative inquiry begins and ends in the storied lives of the people involved . . . through the inquiry, we seek ways of enriching and transforming that experience for themselves and others" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 18). The researcher puts his/her life alongside the lives of others, intentionally coming into relation with participants. Stories become co-composed. Narrative inquiry becomes a deeply ethical undertaking (Clandinin, 2013), whereby both participant and researcher engage in a relational undertaking that affects both researcher and participant in their understanding of who they "are" and who they are "becoming" on each of their landscapes.

### Questions

"The subtle shift from research question to research puzzle creates reverberations as it bumps against dominant research narratives and . . . allows narrative inquirers to make explicit that

narrative inquiry is markedly different from other methodologies” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 42). I begin my quest with two pieces in the building of the puzzle:

1. How is the re-entry of mature adults to high school experienced?
2. How do these mature learners see themselves “becoming” in consideration of this re-entry?

## Participants

Mature adult learners attending an adult community high school will be invited to participate in this research. I am particularly interested in hearing the stories of adults who have been away from high school for a long period of time. “By way of story telling, we allow stories to travel from person to person, letting the meaning of story become larger than an individual experience or an individual life” (Kim, 2016, p. 9). Participants over the age of 45 will be purposively selected. Other factors such as cultural backgrounds or gender will not be considered in the selection of research participants.

## Closing Remarks

Adult learners embody a wide range of life experience and are vessels filled with stories waiting to be told. Co-constructing these stories with participants holds exciting potential in furthering the understanding of adult learning, particularly the inquiry of adults who are approaching or are within retirement age. Their decision to re-enter a high school program during their *third age* in life contains awe-inspiring tales of desires to increase learning and may even transform their own way of being and becoming. Perhaps even more important than basic skills in math, computers, and literacy, their return to high school may reveal deeper transformative realizations that will expand our current understanding of lifelong learning. I look forward to the research journey that will most certainly yield wonderful secrets in contribution to the current body of literature that informs understanding of adult learning.

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### **About the Presenter**

*Shelley Kokorudz is an assistant professor at BU. She is currently completing a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction through the U. of R. Her dissertation focus is the lived experiences of mature adults as they return to adult education centres to complete high school. Her other research interests include learning disabilities (particularly those related to literacy development) and pedagogical practices that promote inclusion and foster social justice.*



## You're Healthier in 4 Minutes

**Debbie McNeill**

*"There's lots of people in this world who spend so much time watching their health that they haven't the time to enjoy it."*

– Josh Billings

### **What Is Health and Does Stress Help or Hinder?**

Traditionally, the image of how people should look is in the process of changing. People are changing their views of what is healthy. Ideas are changing about what "healthy" looks like and we are incorporating technology to manage our health goals.

Mr. Billings had me thinking about what people are doing to stay healthy: eating only certain types of food, or running only because it is healthy, or constantly researching what they should do to be healthier – to the point that they are not enjoying the art of healthy living, but living to be healthy.

If one were to ask a professional athlete, "How fit is fit?" the answer would likely relate to personal goals. For example, a weightlifter may cite the amount of dead weight lifted, or a biker may cite the total number of laps within a certain time frame. Thus, health is defined differently for different reasons. Health through one's intellectual, social, physical, or emotional areas is a personal challenge, and stress can be a major component of what one's understanding of health status may be.

When stress is added to the above four areas, it can act like a friend and encourage one to be better, or it can become the enemy and create more stress, which then becomes unhealthy. Either way, stress for me is the measuring device that helps me to manage my daily activities. Whether people embrace their health through diet, exercise, or some combination of diet and exercise, and regardless of the manner of diet or exercise, health is an individual process.

How I manage stress determines my health level. The stressors in my life have pushed me to define how, what, and when I accomplish tasks. The stressors are part of my intellectual, social, physical, and emotional states, which guides me through the various areas of health. Stressors can be healthy or a negative major component for individual people. For me, stress sets up the fight or flight response. People like me are so busy that stress levels can dominate on a daily basis. Daily stress impacts my four areas of emotional, physical, social, and intellectual well-being.

### **Emotional Health**

My emotional health is definitely a manageable area. I like to think that I am able to control many aspects of my well-being, including the emotions that create some ups and downs in my daily journeys.

When Professor Terry asked me to participate in a conference that she was organizing, I responded with an enthusiastic "yes." However, I experienced a few stressors or dilemmas. My first dilemma was what to present; after much deliberation, I chose health. This is an area that I enjoy and understand. I participate in improving my health through a variety of activities. My second dilemma was the presentation length, which was to be 5-10 minutes. My third dilemma was arriving in Brandon at the university on time, because I had to travel from Winnipeg to Brandon. My fourth

and final dilemma was that I wanted something that was fun and that everyone would be engaged with.

Therefore, the quick and simple “4 Minute Fitness” workout by Dr. Keith Jeffery was the victor in my decision. I had been introduced to this neat, compact resource as a volunteer while I was on the MTS Wellness committee. The five simple exercises would be easy for me to introduce and engage the other participants in the workshop. The second dilemma was solved because, as the title states, 4 Minute Fitness, time was on my side. The third dilemma was one that I had some control over if I could time my departure from Winnipeg. If I were to leave early from Winnipeg, I would get into Brandon on time with minutes to spare. However, my early morning run to raise awareness and donations for a “mindfulness” cause with the Women’s Mental Health Organization left me with only seconds to play with. My third stressor kicked in when I realized that I would be late. I reminded myself that Dr. Terry is very patient and understanding while I decided not to waste precious time by pulling over and phoning to let her know of my delayed arrival time. I just kept driving west.

My stress at that point was decidedly unhealthy. I considered pulling over and advising Dr. Terry to cancel my presentation, which would eliminate my stress. My flight response wanted to take control, and I could turn around and head back to Winnipeg – and that would be that.

My personal commitment to follow through from beginning to end is what kept me in the fight and on the Trans Canada Highway heading west. I finally arrived in my state of stress, and entered the room where other participants were attentive to the presenter who was completing his session. I caught the attention of the organizer, Dr. Terry, who breathed a sigh of relief (or it could have been an “it’s about time” sigh). Either way, I was sitting, taking in breaths of calm air and mentally preparing for my presentation, which was to be up next. There was a 5-minute break and then I was introduced to the group.

#### **4 Minute Fitness**

I introduced myself and explained my presentation as a form of Tai Chi but in a “Mindfulness” movement.

*Stand straight, knees slightly bent and ready to relax. Breathe deeply in and out.*

This beginning is a must for me, to settle and prepare for the remainder of the introduction to Dr. Keith Jeffery’s 4 Minute Fitness.

##### *Step One*

Breathing is a very important and powerful body cleansing that we should be doing at all times. Breathing releases the stress in stressful situations. Breathe in deeply, pushing the air out, not in and up to the lungs, but down by expanding the stomach walls and opening the blood vessels. I do this breathing exercise in time frames when waiting is the only solution, at malls and grocery stores. This can be done while sitting and waiting in traffic jams in busy time frames.

##### *Step Two*

Bend the knees as you release the breath. Feel your body. Then return to standing. This small movement can stretch the body muscles and makes us mindful of what the body is doing.

##### *Step Three*

Calm the centre of the body and mind. Slowly breathe as you move your arms (one at a time) in a circular motion and bring them down through the center of the body. This creates balance or flow of the breathing and body movement.

#### *Step Four*

This next move reminds me of a multi-tasker, going in constant motion but handling the tasks at hand. A yoga stance is used as you stretch your arms to the side of your body, slowly switching directions while breathing through each movement.

#### *Step Five*

The final exercise is a combination of bending knees and arms, then opening the arms wide as you stand tall. This movement stretches the chest muscles, which completes a brief yet fulfilling 4 Minute Fitness that can be done anywhere at any time.

This, for me, is a carry-all exercise without the yoga mats, weights, or other items that others may use to be physically healthy. This activity provides a burden-free emotional state of well-being.

### **Summation**

The participation level for those in attendance was a positive experience, and many shared positive feedback of the simple yet practical exercise. My choice of presentation offered an overall view of a simple yet engaging opportunity to try a new take on a less physically demanding energy builder.

My emotional area was settled and my overall well-being was calm. I had fulfilled my obligation and saved face with my patient Dr. Terry. All went well.

This is but one of many situations that have tested my emotional health, with stress as a contributing factor. As a parent, I have had to deal with maintaining a happy home environment with my three sons and husband. I have been fortunate to maintain a home and busy lifestyle while continuing my own personal growth with the support of my husband – which helps to release some stress.

### **Physical and Social Health**

I enjoy running, swimming, and biking. These activities push my body to the limit. At times, my physical stressors prevent me from continuing my daily activities. For me, it is a good feeling to understand what my body is capable of doing and when it is telling me to slow down. Up until four years ago, I ran for my personal pleasure of running, but I finally committed to a 10k run while working overseas in Beijing, The Great Wall Marathon. I enjoyed this unique experience both for the location of the run and the personal challenge that I wanted to create and fulfill. Since that initial 10K run, I continue to participate in other runs such as the Women's Mental Health Runs sponsored by the running room and other businesses. These runs raise public awareness of mental health, and I encourage others to participate in a worthy run. Even though it is an individual run, many others are participating in the same goals and purpose, which then provides the social health networking.

The biking component helps to build up my leg muscles for the running and gives me a good tour of the area I bike in. Swimming is a very manageable activity that I can enjoy all year round and support the local swimming and recreation services in the community. My personal goals are designed by me for flexibility and change. I do not have to compare myself to others, but do these activities because they enhance my overall well-being and reduce the stress that builds up throughout the day.

### **Intellectual Health**

Diets, to my understanding, are more of an intellectual form of growth and change. This diet change can feed off itself in a positive result by meeting the goal weight over a certain length of time. The negative effect develops into an unhealthy image that may cause a person to become seriously ill. The diet industry has many well-known artists and stars advertising the success of

following a low-calorie diet or other food-reducing diets such as Weight Watchers and Atkins, to name a couple.

My thought is that the diet part of measuring health has a purpose when used to maintain a healthy lifestyle over a long period of time, but not when used just for the quick fix that others use diets for. I believe that food is meant to be enjoyed, but the amount of the food enjoyed is the main factor. The people I have met who go on a diet do so to get skinny, not to get healthy. The diets are their way of controlling how they look, not how they feel.

My friends or family have viewed as positive the results that they have experienced from diets that curb high-calorie foods or sugars. The Weight Watcher users saw their weight decrease by following the recommended calorie intakes of food measured out in small amounts according to the person's physical make-up and other criteria. This portion control worked well for them while on the diet, but when they stopped following the rules their weight returned quickly and sometimes doubled. They were displeased with this unknown factor of the diet. I never really heard them say, "I need to be more disciplined when I go off the recommended guidelines." What I did hear was, "Oh, this diet is not good because I have gained all my weight plus more back."

Many other gimmicks are available to those who want to lose weight. The "skinny-jean pill," for example, is a little pill that induces quick weight loss when ingested, so the advertising in the media areas deliver. Does the media share with the viewers what potential health risks are involved as a result of taking the "skinny pill"? I have not truly heard of the risks of taking any type of weight loss diet pharmaceuticals. I then ask, "How can taking weight lose products be healthy for a person?" This is the type of critical thinking that I would encourage others to implement regarding any type of quick weight loss.

Diets are not a healthy way to lose weight and keep it off. I view diets more as a quick fix. The thin models in the fashion magazines show the reader the unhealthy side effects of diets. This thin image is a false image of what the real people in the larger society do not look like. Diets that really do not provide much of anything in the way of nutritional value should be recognized as unhealthy in the long run. Diets need to be about managing healthy foods over a long period of time and maintaining a healthy daily activity routine. They should not be used for short intervals of quick weight loss or as agents of yo-yo dieting that misconstrues thin as "in" images of health.

In my role as a home economics instructor, I felt it my responsibility to make sure that students understood what healthy should look like for them and others. Working with young adults, it was important that they knew what good health could be and what bad health was. The students and I went through various areas of healthy lifestyles and food choices, the pros and cons of diets, and the importance of good nutrition. We examined what they should be aware of in the way of the types of food that were healthy and affordable.

As a group, we sifted through many recipes that would be practical and tasty, yet inexpensive to prepare. Hamburger was the easiest to work with – and the most affordable. It could be prepared in many different and delicious ways that the students liked. It was the cheapest meat to buy within a healthy food range. Food does not have to be expensive to be healthy; it just needs to be healthy food. Another tasty dish was bannock, which is a staple in many of the Aboriginal diets but is made differently by different people. The students had fun working with this simple food and discovered many other ways to enjoy bannock as a taco, pizza pop, and many other inexpensive dishes with the ingredients from their kitchens.

Over the years, I have eaten healthy foods because of the direction and guidance of my mother. We ate home-cooked meals, not processed products. Her idea of healthy had been well established before I understood what healthy was. She taught me the basic rule of cooking: keep it simple, sizes small, and tasty. I passed on this healthy tradition of making my own home-prepared meals with my own children, all of whom are great cooks. From simple soups to tasty desserts, my mother made most of the dishes from scratch. She was also an avid outdoors person, who enjoyed morning and evening strolls. She was always walking here or there, and I would be running to keep up to her steady pace. It was her combination of healthy food choices and daily walks that kept me in a healthy state of well-being.

## Eating and Exercising

There was nothing more challenging than finding a system that works for me. The importance of maintaining a healthy me is as important as sifting through all the gibberish on television and in magazines that jump out at me to try this diet or this exercise or this medicine. I find it very absurd that there is such media coverage on selling “healthy” through diets, exercise programs, and pharmaceuticals. It is very difficult for the average person to make healthy decisions that will work for them as individuals.

One example of my own self-advocacy was when I was prescribed Lipitor for borderline cholesterol levels. After taking the medication for a year with no change to my cholesterol readings, I asked my doctor to take me off Lipitor. He hesitated but finally agreed, with the proviso that I had to maintain my healthy eating habits, continue my daily routine of exercises, and complete follow-up testing over the next 12-month period to see if there were level changes to my cholesterol. I picked random exercises from magazines that I liked or have wanted to try out. I looked at many different food preparations that use less salt, oils, and or fats. With the inclusion of these specific exercises and healthy food choices, I continue to maintain my cholesterol levels – without the use of Lipitor.

I choose my meals for the traditional preparation required. Since I have no microwave in my house and haven't for a number of years. I rely on the typical traditional warming up of foods and preparing dishes on the stove top and baking in the oven. Then there are salads upon salads of recipes that one can make with a variety of healthy vegetables and everyone can enjoy. Recently, there have also been more and more health programs that are more inclusive of exercising and eating healthier.

The more programs incorporate both healthy eating and exercise, the more people like my niece and her “beach body buddies” can meet their personal goals together. She has a daily exercise program that she has been doing over the past half year or so. Drinking a high-protein shake every morning and receiving a predesigned menu plan for daily food preparation are what motivate her to be successful. She also goes online with her friends and helps them through decision making and motivation skills to keep on track. This program has worked for her, and the combination of healthy eating and daily exercise has shown me and others that if one wants to be healthy it requires a positive mind and attitude to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The combination of a little of this, a tad of that, and a bit extra of something else have been what I think to be best for me. The combination of different exercises at different times permits flexibility and keeps my body and mind alert so they do not become comfortable with the same routine. Athletes who practise the same way over the same time frame on the same program may reach a specific goal, but that approach does not provide the mind or the body with different challenges.

The food that I enjoy is, and always has been, best for me. The pasta dishes, rice pilafs, chicken dishes, and various salad greens are tasty for me and for the family and friends that sit down at the table. That is another area that to me is important: the family meals that traditionally were all sit downs around the dinner table, enjoying each other's company and chatter. This special visit with family is slowly eroding because of the constant need to go, be here, be there lifestyle, the hurry up and run to the next event or job. I have always tried to maintain the family gathering around the dinner table, if not for all meals at least for the final meal of the day, supper.

Over the years, I have incorporated various routines that include family, exercises, and healthy eating. Something that has worked for me is family walks. In the winter, outdoor activities include skiing, ice fishing, skating, and hikes. These activities are not physically demanding but intellectually enjoyed. I participate and enjoy the less stress of yoga, the stretching of the muscles and balance of the whole body. It relaxes my body and mind as Tia Chi can in the 4 Minute Fitness routine. The “mindfulness” of how my body moves and my breath flows is what I embrace.

## Technology

This new fad of managing one's health and stress has been stressful for me. Numerous health apps are available for those who want to monitor their every movement all day, including sleep habits. I think this is stressful and supports Josh Billings' quote that started this article. I enjoy the use of technology in my everyday living. I make it a point to be updated with using technology to maintain contact with people who have similar interests in health. Health apps, such as the one I use to track my steps or running and biking distances and time, are handy. With a tap of a button, I can see my results over a day or a month of activity. I do not use the technology to distract me from the natural sounds of environment. The natural sounds that surround me relax me. I don't understand how others can have "constant noise" interrupting their "mindfulness" of the here and now. My inclusion of technology provides me with a daily reminder that I should be more active on the days that I have been lax while doing papers for my professor. For some, apps are a necessary form of indulging in a healthier way of wellness. For me, technology is a reminder that urges me to manage my own health with a few areas of stress to motivate me to a healthier state of well-being.

## Conclusion

I have always been an active participant with my continued growth in my own personal health. I make it a point to maintain healthy food choices and healthy activities that will benefit me. From the yoga, biking, running, and swimming I tend to be less stressed and more relaxed after stretching, peddling, striding, and stroking those annoying stressors that tense overall well-being. The daily routine of health feeds my other areas of emotional, physical, social, and intellectual well-being through the de-stressing of what I can manage. Maintaining my health without all those media images of what health should look like provides me with the mindfulness to be aware of what health is to me. Fueling the body with diets of false health values or using over-the-counter medication is not for me. I value critical thinking and reflective learning to be more aware of the here and now mindfulness that fulfills the four areas of my healthy well-being. Recognizing stressors before they encumber me has been far more effective and manageable to activate a combination of exercise and healthy food choices that work for me. It is my personal commitment to maintain my health with less stress for a lifelong well-being of health.

My views are solely my views on my health and they have been the basis of continued health to help guide my personal growth. Less stress equals a healthier me!

## ***About the Presenter***

*Debbie McNeill is passionate about learning. She anticipates completing her M.Ed. in 2017. Her education has provided opportunities to work in diverse environments. For example, while working as a principal in a blended Manitoba program in China, Debbie had the challenging yet rewarding experience of trying to blend two discrete cultures and respect the differences of each.*

# The Effect of the School Principal in Creating an Inclusive School Culture During Times of Change and Challenge

**Ayodeji Osiname**

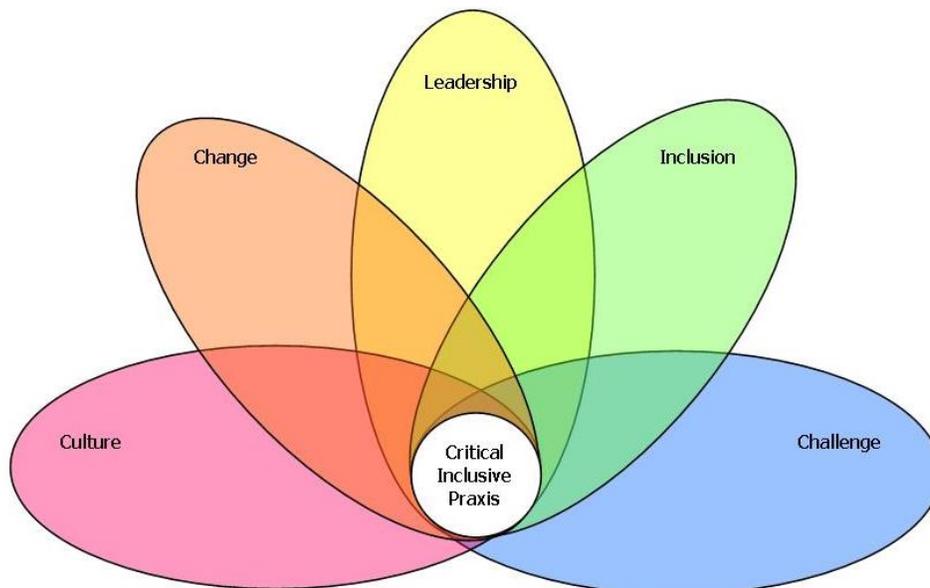


The purpose of this study was to examine the different leadership styles or ways that selected school principals use to encourage and sustain an inclusive school culture that eschews group think, to embrace difficult issues and challenging people while sustaining a positive culture, and to build a school community that supports diversity and embraces change. This research was guided by the following research questions:

- How do principals in diverse schools conceptualize and vary leadership styles to encourage and sustain an inclusive culture in the school?
- How do principals negotiate the politics of school change to deal with difficult issues and challenging people in the school while sustaining a positive school culture?
- How do principals build cohesive cultures in their schools while addressing challenging situations?

## Conceptual Framework

In order to sustain a strong culture that embraces diversity and supports change, the school principal must understand and engage five aspects: culture, change, leadership, inclusion, and challenge. To this end, there is need to understand how these elements intersect with one another in the realization of an inclusive culture.



The framework places critical inclusive praxis at the center of the illustrative Venn diagram. This reinforces that the school principal is charged with responsibility of transforming the school through reflective, critical, and dialogical action.

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*The use of critical inclusive praxis will enable the school principal to identify, recognize, and acknowledge the challenges in the school and the school community.*

*Schein (1992) explained that organizational cultures are created in part by leaders; the most decisive functions of leadership are the creation, the management, and sometimes the destruction of culture (p. 2).*

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Critical pedagogy promotes and provides coherence to the theoretical landscape of the fundamental principles, beliefs, and practices that contribute to an emancipatory ideal of democratic schooling (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2009). Critical pedagogy focuses on educating the subject to reflect and to act in order to create a more democratic, equitable society. The main purpose of critical pedagogy is to use education as a means to bring about a more socially just world.

Praxis relies on both theory and practice as we become critically reflective practitioners. Praxis relies on theory to illuminate human activity, which then provides a better understanding of human existence for further action or practice (Darder et al., 2009). Praxis provides a means to transform the world through reflective, critical, and dialogical action.

School principals can not create democratic, equitable schooling if they are not committed to and engaged in reflective, critical, and dialogical action. On the other hand, a critical inclusive praxis will enable the principal to reflect and act in ways that build a culture of schooling that serves the common good and promotes democracy. To this end, use of the framework will enable the principal to collaboratively transform the school and create equitable, just education for every student.

## **Methodology**

The research relied on a qualitative case study approach (Creswell, 2012; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Stake, 1995; Merriam 1998). This case study was intended to garner insights from five selected principals of schools in southwestern Manitoba, Canada. The author engaged in an interaction (i.e., interview) with these principals to learn about their lived experiences, particularly their patterns of behaviour related to their leadership approaches within the five articulated aspects of a critical inclusive praxis.

### **Purposeful Sampling**

These school principals were selected from two public school divisions in southwestern Manitoba and one private school. Factors such as gender balance and varying school demographics were considered in selecting the school principals.

### **Data**

The author analysed all data in this study by hand, using open coding, and by computer, using N-vivo software. Data were coded by segmenting sentences based in the actual language of the five participants. The description and themes were preceded by descriptive information about each participant in the study that provided a context for the information that they provided. The five elements of the Critical Inclusive Praxis were also used as a base to analyse data for the study.

## Findings

The themes that emerged in each of the five elements of the conceptual framework indicate how the principals, who were participants in this study, developed an inclusive school culture in their school communities.

<b>Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaborated and communicated</li> <li>• led with encouragement</li> <li>• built positive relationships</li> <li>• sustained a renewal process</li> <li>• took responsibility for students</li> </ul>
<b>Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• varied leadership approaches</li> <li>• activated involvement and support from teachers and parents</li> <li>• became attuned to concerns</li> <li>• addressed resistance to change</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• took a decisive approach</li> <li>• adopted a supportive style</li> <li>• aspired to be visible and inviting</li> <li>• assumed a servant leadership style</li> <li>• developed a value-based situational leadership style</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopted a growth mindset</li> <li>• encouraged dialogue</li> <li>• provided a supportive environment</li> <li>• established a safe and caring environment</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• faced conflicts with a positive attitude</li> <li>• resolved conflicts with the use of a mediator</li> <li>• addressed with initiative, and empowered by bystanders to address bullying</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

This study expands our understanding of how principals negotiate the political dynamics within their schools, and vary leadership styles to encourage and sustain an inclusive school culture. The study pointed to the importance of building strong and positive relationships within the school community, because that informed the work of the selected principals. The principals recognized the need to nurture people, to inspire people, to pay attention to people's concerns, and to build relationships of open-mindedness and care.

A critical inclusive praxis model that includes the aspects of culture, change, leadership, inclusion, and challenge was the appropriate model to address the complexity of the work that leaders do in crafting inclusive school cultures. In these times of global interaction and global conflict, it is critical that school leaders learn how to develop school communities that bring people together and that encourage positive, supportive relationships. This study could serve as a guide for principals who desire to negotiate the critical dynamics of diverse schools and to create just and democratic schools.

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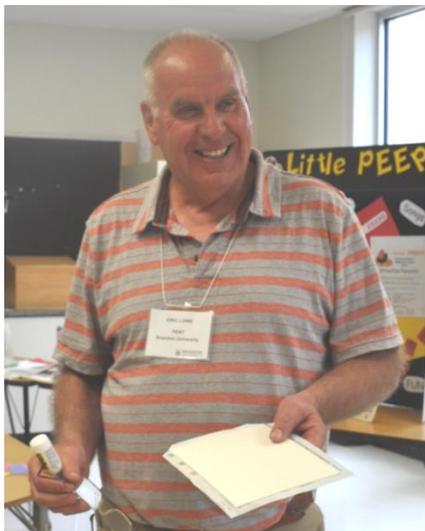
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## About the Presenter

*Ayodeji Osiname recently completed his M.Ed. in educational administration from Brandon University. The master's thesis upon which he based his presentation won the 2016 Margaret Haughey Award from the Canadian Association for the Study of Educational Administration (CASEA). In fall 2016, Deji will start his Ph.D. in Education at the University of Manitoba.*

## Hands-On Learning with Book-Art Projects

Eric Lowe



Classrooms have a diverse learning population; individual students have their own unique strengths and weaknesses. Some of these learners require hands-on activities, but these are being lessened due to technology whereby information is often gathered in a passive manner. Hands-on activities that engage the participant through a trial and error process, constantly making new decisions and seeing new possibilities, are disappearing. Educators can provide enriching learning opportunities that will integrate hands-on learning activities, individualizing a student's learning curriculum. During hands-on activities, individuals experience real problem solving, critical thinking, reflection, and observation in an interactive social environment. Creating opportunities for individual students to excel will fulfil their full potential. Hands-on school programs will "improve memory and concentration skills, develop decision-making and critical thinking skills, enhance communication and listening skills, help children to establish spatial-temporal relationships between objects and encourage focus and discipline" (Lake, 2015, p.1). Heightening individuals' observation skills and knowledge of art as a visual language gives them an increased awareness and respectful understanding of their environment. This sensitivity is a vital component of a sense of personal well-being.

Today's classrooms need to stimulate the minds of tomorrow. Teaching students to be creative is an important part of education. We need to value creativity and inspire inventive individuals for the major problems that our world is facing. Therefore, our society needs to provide more creative and challenging hands-on activities that engage individuals in creative and critical inquiry for everyday problem solving. Learning through the arts and art-integrated activities offers a unique hands-on learning experience, wherein individuals learn how to create personalized art-integrated projects. Individuals require basic hands-on working skills and practical knowledge for everyday life. Holistic hands-on projects provide a deep-rooted learning experience, which will better meet the needs of society and help to solve the current problems of our educational system.

The primary focus for this session was hands-on-learning with the integration of book-art into different subject areas at all age and grade levels. Book-making and the roles that books have played in recording history is very important. What we know of our social, political, economic, and geographical human history is whatever has been documented in written form, first on stone, then on scrolls, and finally in book form. Book-art can be linked or added to enrich the curriculum in all courses, engaging students in their own learning experience. Creative book-art projects can inspire students in peer cooperation, personal exploration, imagination, reflection, self-critical thinking, sharing ideas, and an ongoing learning experience that often involves parental participation. This session served as an introduction to demonstrate how students can create their own pop-up, accordion, and flag books. These book ideas can be used for a variety of purposes.

The expectation of this session was to familiarize the participants with book-art and the many ways to incorporate this skill into an engaging learning experience. Hands-on projects motivate students' personal interests, providing them with real problem solving and creative learning experiences. Workshop participants would gain the confidence and ability to demonstrate book-making techniques after attending this session.

## Pop-Up Book

“Pop-up” is a general term that includes various forms of movable books: either part or the whole book pops up. Usually, a center section has a pop-up motion created by turning a page, pulling a tab, or turning a wheel.

Some pop-ups rely on cuts made in the center of the page. The pop-up attachment usually has cut-out shapes, often with tabs slipped into the parts that are attached to the center page (the base paper page is where the pop-up is attached). It's a paper folding trick that children love. It is like a magic trick, and they want to know how it is done. The element of surprise is a unique and fun way to attract their attention.

### Materials

- Paper for the pop-up book: 18" x 24"
- Paper for the exploding shapes: 2 of the small pop-up shapes. 90-lb. paper is best. Optional—if you use a contrasting colour under the pop-up shape, you will need paper for two of the large shapes.
- Two pieces of heavy cardstock or matt board: 6¼" x 9¼"
- Cloth material for covers or paste paper, old calendar pages, photocopies of designs
- Pencils, markers, coloured pencils, &/or gel pens
- Scrap paper (or old phone books) for gluing

### Tools

- Glue sticks
- Rulers,
- Scissors, matt knife

### Procedure

1. Fold the 18" x 24" sheet parallel to the short edge: in half, then in half again on one side, and then in half again on the other side. You should end up with one mountain peak and two valleys ("W" as a side view).
2. Now fold the paper in half the other way (parallel to the long edge).
3. When you cut along the centre of the middle inside fold, you will have an eight-page pop-up book.

### Pop-Up Book Examples



## Accordion Fold Book

The accordion book originated in Asia. It was first used to replace scrolls that had become unmanageable, taking up too much space because of their size and length. The pages of an accordion folding book are very similar to the folds of an accordion. In an accordion fold book, both sides are folded together. When the book is opened, the two sides fold out like an accordion.

The accordion book is made of a continuous folded sheet of paper and is often enclosed between two covers. It can either be expanded outward or kept flat. Paper used for the inside sheets can be of the weight of drawing paper, heavy wrapping paper, or coloured construction paper. Heavier materials may also be used, such as matt board or thin Bristol board.

This book format is suitable for a variety of continuous images, because the pages can be pulled out in one seamless extension.

If used as a scrapbook, the accordion book will hold as much mounted material as desired without bulging at the open edge. The inside paper, which is folded into sheets, may be the same size as the card stock cover or slightly smaller.

If the book is to stand, stiff paper the same size of the cover will work best. Accordion books work well for displays because you can stand them up and view both sides, and open them to show all pages.

The finished size of the accordion book will vary, depending on the size of the paper and the number of pages that the student wishes for his or her project.

### Materials

- 18" x 24" paper cut in half, to create strips 9" x 24"  
Tip: (the length should be greater than the width).
- 6¼" x 9¼" cardstock for covers, two per student
- Cloth material for covers or paste paper, old calendar pages, photocopies of designs
- Have the students select images from magazines, calendars, etc.

### Tools

- Bone folder or wooden craft stick
- Scissors, matt knives
- Rulers
- Glue stick

### Procedure

1. Fold the paper in half and crease the edge, using a bone folder, or ruler.
2. Fold one end to meet the center fold, creasing the edge of the paper.
3. Now reverse the direction of this fold.
4. Depending on the pages required, a hinge piece may be added to create a continuous accordion.
5. Then attach the covers to either end of the accordion.

### Accordion Book Examples



## Flag Book

The spine of this book is an accordion. Pieces of paper called flags are glued onto the spine, as are the covers.

The idea behind this book is that an accordion fold has two sides, each going a different direction. If the flag is pasted to one side of the fold, it will go one direction; if pasted to the other side, the flag will lie pointing in the opposite direction.

The flags could have images on one side and words on the other, images and images, words and words, or the two sides may be used to tell two sides of a story.

The finished size of the book is 6¼" x 9¼".

### Materials

- 18" x 24" cardstock paper or drawing paper for the accordion spine, one per student
- 6¼" x 9¼" cardstock paper for the covers, two per student
- Cloth material for covers or paste paper, old calendar pages, photocopies of designs
- Writing paper, envelopes, or CD covers for flags (flag size approximately 6" x 9")
- Scrap paper (or old phone books) for gluing

### Tools

- Bone folder or wooden craft stick
- Scissors, matt knives
- Rulers
- Glue sticks

### Procedure

1. To make the spine, fold the 18" x 24" paper widthwise. (Refer to the folding directions for the accordion fold book.)
2. To attach the covers, apply glue to the underneath side of the last tab, and glue to the inside of the back cover. Repeat for the front cover.
3. When the front cover is attached, apply glue under this last tab. Do the same for the back cover.

### Flag Book Examples



### About the Presenter

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We invite current and past BU Faculty of Education graduate students to submit the following types of manuscripts.

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  - reports of educational research completed or in progress
  - in the range of 2500 to 5000 words
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  - in the range of 2500 to 5000 words, including the title, abstract, and list of references
- **Special Interest Papers**
  - papers of useful, practical interest (such as proposals for services and programs), including a literature base
  - in the range of 1500 to 3000 words, including the title and list of references
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  - topics of interest to pre-service teachers
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### **Note to authors:**

Prepare your manuscript according to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Use double-line spacing, one-inch margins, and Times New Roman 12-point font. Include the title of your manuscript, the type of submission (refereed article, etc.), your name, email address, and a 50-word biography on the title page. For a refereed article written by a graduate student or a research report written by a professor, insert a 100-word abstract below the title on page 2.

Send your manuscript electronically to Dr. Marion Terry, Editor (terry@brandonu.ca), as an email attachment in Microsoft Word. All manuscripts that adhere to the content and style requirements will be reviewed.

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  - digital photographs are preferred, but we will photograph the original painting if necessary
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  - digital photographs only
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  - digital photographs are preferred, but we will photograph the original drawing if necessary
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  - digital images only

### Note to artists:

If we accept your submission, you will retain ownership of the original artwork, and your name will be added to the list of credits for that issue of the journal.

We are looking for “real-life” images of people, animals, objects, and landscapes. Our covers are reproduced in full colour, so we prefer colour over black-and-white artwork. The journal is dedicated to rural, northern, and Aboriginal education, so we require images that reflect these themes.

If you are submitting original artwork, bring or mail it to –

Dr. Marion Terry  
Faculty of Education  
Brandon University  
270-18<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brandon MB R7A 6A9

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