

PATHWAYS TO CRITICAL LITERACY THROUGH DIGITAL MEDIA CREATION

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TWO STUDIES: SITES FOR ENGAGED LEARNING

- DigMe Project: examined engagement in learning in ELA through the analysis and creation of digital media.
 - Bright Stars: examining school, library, and community-based urban settings that position youth as knowledge producers, meaning-makers, and creators of their own learning through the use of digital technologies
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CRITICAL LITERACY

An understanding that texts are not neutral and that the way texts are constructed should be analyzed and challenged.

- How Texts Position Readers
 - How Readers Position Texts
 - How Texts and Readers are Positioned within Social, Cultural, Historical, and Political Contexts
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QUESTIONS

How does this text (video) position you?

- Who does this video think you are? What sort of person does the video address?
- What does this clip make you desire in terms of outcome?

How do you position the text (video)?

- What assumptions do you bring to the video that shape how you view it?
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NIKE VIDEO

- Better For It

CLAIRE'S VIDEO

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByOVRZDmEG2JX28zeGxoZnpKQms/view?usp=sharing>

ASSUMPTIONS OF CRITICAL LITERACY

- All texts are constructions.
 - Each person interprets messages differently.
 - Texts serve different interests.
 - Each medium develops its own “language” in order to position readers/viewers in certain ways.
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Modeling Habits of Mind

For our students reading the word can entail critical readings of the world, learning to be curious, skeptical, engaged, and non-complacent. But there is a preliminary step that we as teachers must make--teaching literacies requires first that we undertake readings of the world.

--Allan Luke, "Literacies as Social Practices." English Education

CRITICAL LITERACY IN ACTION

- READING SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTS
 - Make connections
 - Reflects a range of genres and media
 - READING MULTIPLE TEXTS ON SIMILAR THEMES (JUXTAPOSITION)
 - Critique the values or voices the texts promote
 - Evaluate the social, cultural, historical frameworks
 - Understand that meaning is not fixed
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CRITICAL LITERACY IN ACTION

- READING FROM A RESISTANT PERSPECTIVE
 - What are other possible constructions of the world?
 - Who does the text reject or silence? Whose voices are missing or discounted?
 - Whose interests are served by the text? Whose are not?
 - PRODUCING COUNTER-TEXTS

Writing and other media to counter dominant frameworks
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CASE STUDY: USE OF NON-STANDARD ENGLISH IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

Context:

- Course: IB Language and Literature
 - Unit Focus: Language In Cultural Context
 - Anchor Texts:
 - *How The Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*
 - *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
 - Supplementary Texts Included:
 - bell hooks on “The Language Of Power”
 - Gloria Anzaldua’s “How To Tame A Wild Tongue”
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CASE STUDY: USE OF NON-STANDARD ENGLISH IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS

- Big Idea: Both texts seamlessly integrate non-standard English within the narrative.
 - Essential Question: How does the integration of non-standard English impact the message readers receive?
 - Follow Up Questions:
 - Who does this text think you are? (Text positions reader)
 - How does your cultural context impact your understanding of the text? (Reader positions text)
 - How does the text challenge or reinforce existing social or cultural norms?
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CASE STUDY: USE OF NON-STANDARD ENGLISH IN ENGLISH CLASSROOMS



bell hooks writes, “In the classroom setting, I encourage students to use their first language and translate it so they do not feel that seeking higher education will necessarily estrange them from that language and culture they know most intimately” (“The Language Of Power”).

Anzaldua writes, “Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself. Until I can accept as legitimate Chicano Texas Spanish, Tex-Mex, and all the other languages I speak, I cannot accept the legitimacy of myself” (“How To Tame A Wild Tongue”).

A STUDENT'S RESPONSE

- Student produced short film featuring interviews with students and teachers on the issue of the use and integration of non-standard English in core subject classrooms.
- <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ajTTpjP3-7ygJ19OufuMDrh81lyj-hbS2aMiQn8oM68/edit?usp=sharing>

TRANSITIONS

- Critical Literacy  Critical Engagement
- Print Texts  Multimodal Texts

CONTEMPORARY CHANGES IN ELA

- New definitions of what counts as a text and new ways of responding to texts, using digital tools.
 - Expectation among youth that the texts they read will serve the purposes of identity representation and affinity building (e.g. spoken word, fanfiction, zines, online journals).
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Critical Engagement through Digital Media

Agency

Critical Awareness
and Social Action

Production

Opportunity to produce media
rather than merely analyze

Counter-
Narrative

Identity

Connections to race,
ethnicity, gender, and youth
culture

Circulation

Circulation of ideas (informal
circulation in class, school,
community, and on internet)

PODCASTING UNIT

- Listening...(What's a podcast? What kinds of podcasts are out there?)
 - Deconstructing...(What are the components? How are the tracks put together?)
 - Analyzing...(What does it mean? Why does it matter? Purpose/Audience)
 - Creating...(What do I want to say? What do I want to learn about?)
 - Sharing...(Authentic audience, “nudging”)
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STUDENT PODCASTS

Corey & Walter- Standardized Testing

Ericka and Erika- Diversity at Washburn (start @ 2:55)

Other Podcast Topics Included:

- #Blacklivesmatter vs. #alllivesmatter
- Perceptions of Minneapolis Northside
- Local Indie Music Scene
- Biculturalism & Identity
- KSP: Video Games & Education
- Parenting & Childhood Cancer

AGENCY

“Oh no! I hate listening to the recording of my voice! Plus, it’s really awkward.’ This was the first thought that I had when we were introduced to this assignment. There was also a side of me that was very enthusiastic about this project- going out in the world to get a better outlook of the issues of our lives.” -Ericka H

AGENCY

“I actually learned a lot about my topic through this process. The interviews were enlightening. I learned way more about specific programs available in Minneapolis for those struggling with homelessness. It was also a really good experience to just go downtown and talk to people about their own lives.”

-Addi

IDENTITY

“This project helped me open up and get out of my comfort zone regardless of how shy and reserved I am. It was definitely a dear piece of who I am. It was a great experience and I surely consider not stopping here with podcasting.” -Marwa

PRODUCTION

“We discovered that we had to slim down some of our script because our podcast was too long, which was interesting and challenging. It’s much harder to convey a message fully with less time/words than it is in many words.” -Walter

CIRCULATION

“These podcasts were a meaningful way to end our senior year. It is a trace that each one of us has left behind.”

-Ericka H.

[The podcast] was motivating because I wanted it to be just about perfect because it was going on the internet and you know you want to try and do your best if it's going to be on the internet because you wouldn't want to embarrass yourself.

PARTICIPATORY CULTURE: FEATURES (JENKINS, ET AL., 2009, P. 3)

- Relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement
 - Strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others
 - Informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices
 - Members believe their contributions matter
 - Social connection with one another
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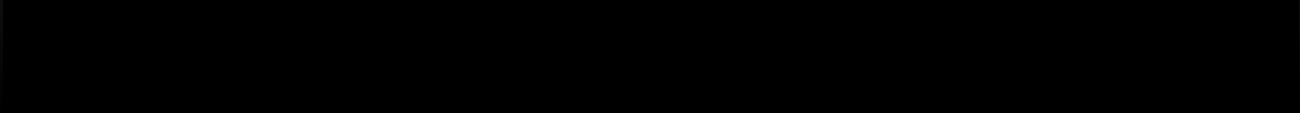
PARTICIPATORY AND ENGAGING CLASSROOMS

Creation-centric, problem-driven,
and socially-embedded, while also being mediated
by traditional texts and digital tools

CRITICAL CITIZENSHIP

Given an increasingly visual and global culture, it is important to develop in young people the capacity for critical citizenship so that they can “read” the linguistic, visual, and aural signs and symbols that inundate their lives, public and private.

HANDS BY DAVID CRUZ NAVA



YOUTH RESPONSES

- Most intellectually challenging course they've ever had.
 - Hardest work they've ever been asked to do in school
 - Value the authentic audience and feeling of competence when they meet their goals.
 - Feel respected (“She makes you feel like she wants you to be here and wants you to learn”)
 - Able to key into their identities, communities, and interests outside of school
 - Motivated to work hard beyond requirements
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REDEFINING RIGOR: CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT

- A stance that combines critical distance with immersion and emotional investment.
 - Engaging students in media production creates the conditions for critical engagement.
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What we've learned, we can take to
the real world. We're our own critics
now.

Chevy (12TH grade)

QUESTIONS?

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