Black Males and Texts: A Study of Dialogic Literacy Experiences

BY

MELLISSA GYIMAH-CONCEPCION
B.A., University of Kent, 2009
M.A.W.P., DePaul University, 2013

THESIS

Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Curriculum and Instruction (Literacy, Language and Culture)
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Chicago, 2019

CHICAGO, IL

Defense Committee:

Alfred W.Tatum, Chair and Advisor
James Gavelek, Literacy, Language & Culture
Sakeena Everett, University of Georgia
Michael K. Thomas, Educational Psychology
Tonya Perry, University of Alabama at Birmingham

This dissertation is dedicated to all those who tirelessly encouraged me, believed in me and kept me motivated and inspired.

To my sister, Memory Kwablah, who is the most compassionate person I know, and one of my biggest cheerleaders. She has taught me that I can be brutally soft, and what unyielding support looks like. She has also held me accountable in the most loving and empathetic ways possible. She is one of the first people who taught me what unconditional love looks like. She is the best sister a girl can have.

To my mother, Bernice Kusi, and father, Richard Gyimah, who have supported me in many ways. When I moved across the Atlantic to further my education, they let me go and told me to be great. As first-generation Black immigrant parents, I am inspired by their courageousness and determination; they taught me the importance of having high expectations and a great work ethic.

To my husband, Hansel Concepcion, who consistently believes in my Black Girl Magic, even when I have moments of doubt and despair. He has been my peace during this dissertation process, my encourager and an ever-listening ear. He continues to teach me about steadfast loyalty, faith and love. I am thankful for how differently he sees the world to me, as this has taught me the value of perspective.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

you will find your way.
it is
in the
same place
as your love.

-- naayirah waheed

I wish to express genuine thanks for each member of my committee. Each of you has been inspirational and have gone above and beyond for me on this journey. You have mentored me, guided me, gone to bat for me, and helped me to understand the work that must go into being a researcher and teacher.

Dr. Alfred Tatum, my Committee Chair and advisor, has taught me what it means to ask hard, important questions. You helped me truly understand what exactly it was I wanted to research and why. You have continuously challenged me to think about "why this text for this Black boy right now?" You have prompted and pushed my thinking beyond what I thought was possible, but also lit a fire in my belly to do the work. You have taught me how to refine my research and understand how to be an honest, present researcher. I value all the time and energy you put into my work and me as a person and scholar.

I wish to thank Dr. Sakeena Everett, who mentored me, consistently believed in me, challenged me, and encouraged me to value and tap into all of my multiple identities. You have gone out on a limb for me consistently. I will not forget the prayers, the texts, the phone calls, and tears, all so I can be and know my excellence. I truly value and appreciate your personal and professional support and guidance in my life. Your

knowledge about international students, and Black women in the world of academics, has caused me to grow in ways I did not think of, but also has helped me think of my research on a macro level. Thanks for advocating for me and seeking to illuminate and help me understand my unique perspectives.

I wish to thank Dr. Michael Thomas for his generosity, and helping me with everything from my comprehensive exams, to book references, sparking unique ideas, helping me prep for job talks and interviews, as well as helping me with methodology questions. You have never tired of helping me and have been so incredibly patient with me. You have given me so much of your time and I will not forget that.

Thank you to Dr. Jim Gavelek, who believed in me from my first day as a student. You took the time to meet with me, talk to me about my interests and what I want to do when I "grow up", as well as just to get to know me. I appreciate that. You encouraged me to think about the bigger picture and understand how I would or could be situated in the world of research. Thank you for inspiring my love of theories and theorists, one of which is used in this dissertation. I will forever have a love for theory because of you.

Dr. Tonya Perry, I wish you thank you for simultaneously mentoring me, loving on me and seeing me as your equal. You taught me how profound it is to be present on a personal level and professional level, and to be open to the brilliance that surrounds us. I am touched by how easily and quickly you decided to jump in and be my outside committee member, but also by how quickly you believed in me. I am touched by your faith and humility.

I wish to thank all of my friends and family who have journeyed though this process with me. Who have lamented with me, and who have shared in my joy and

laughter. Those who have brainstormed with me and made sure I exercised self-love – thank you. A special thanks goes to my sister Memory Kwablah, my parents Bernice Kusi and Richard Gyimah, and my husband, Hansel Concepcion for spurring me on during the years of academic stress and toil. I would also like to thank my friends Brittney Leeanne Williams, Andi Haynes, Amanda Prorak, Sacheeta Bathija, Ania Psiurska, Hiwoté Tamrat, Betty Dagistan, Indira Panjwani, and Sonia Dalal for their support in too many ways to count.

I would also like to thank the wonderful scholars, professors, and fellow students in my life, some I have met at conferences, others at schools and institutions such as Judson and University of Illinois at Chicago. You have helped expand my thinking, help me dig deep for excellence, and showed me various ways of thinking, being and doing. I would especially like to thank Joy Valentine, Angela Fortune, Shawndra Allen, Tamara Moten, Joseph Rumenapp, and Emily Machado. You all have helped me get my research and scholarship to where it is now.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....IX

LIST OF FIGURES.....X

CHAPTER PAGE

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....1

Introduction.....1
Statement of Purpose 3
Research Question.....5

Identity: Textual lineages and Dialogic Literacy Experiences (DLEs).....8
Locating Myself as a Researcher.....10
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....13

Review Process.....13
Dialogism.....14
Studies: The Progression of Dialogic Literacy Experiences.....19
Dialogic Teaching and Dialogic Talk.....22
Dialogic Reading 24
Historical Examination of the Roles of Text.....25
Research on Boys and Literacy.....27
Dialogic Literacy Experiences: Inside and Outside of Schools.....30
Theoretical Framework 30
Positioning Theory.....30
Summary.....34
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS.....36

Introduction and Overview.....36
Case Study Design 37
The Elementary Boys, Recruitment and Research Setting.....38
Research Setting 38
Researcher's Role.....40
The Elementary Boys 41
Recruitment Process 42
Jason 43
Robert.....44
Lamar.....44
Shaun.....44
Omar.....45
Maxwell.....45

Dante.....46
Dialogic Literacy Experiences (DLEs).....46
Guided Dialogic Literacy Experiences: Dialogic Talk and Instruction.....47
Utterances.....48
Intersubjectivity.....48
Authentic Questions.....48
Text Selection.....50
Data Collection and Analysis.....58
Data Collection.....58
Within and Cross Case Study Data Analysis.....61
Coding Process.....63
Issues of Trustworthiness.....69

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....71

Introduction.....71
Findings Supporting the Research Question.....71
Discussion of the Emerging Themes.....74
Affective and Intellectual Engagement 75
Intellectual Engagement: New Concepts and Words.....76
Affective Engagement.....80
DLEs Facilitated Meaningful Experiences with Text.....85
Consciousness-Raising and Global Perspective.....92
Communal Learning.....98
Sustained Literacy Practices.....104
Chapter Summary.....108

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....112
Overview.....112
Connections to Literature.....114
The Roles of Thought-Provoking Text.....114
Analysis of Findings.....115
Balancing Intellectual and Affective Dimensions of Texts during DLEs.....115
Meaningful DLEs: The Potential of Collective Sharing.....122
The Catalyst for Raising Consciousness.....125
Nuances to Communal Learning.....128
Beyond the Texts.....132
Implications.....134
How to Mediate Texts that are Powerful and Conscious-raising for Black Boys 134
How to Engage Black Boys in the Elementary Grades with a Wide Range of Texts Across the Academic Disciplines.....136
Thoughts Regarding Identity and Literacy.....136
Limitations.....137
Future Research.....139
Conclusion.....140

REFERENCES.....143

APPENDICES.....159

Key to Abbreviations.....XI

LIST OF TABLES

Table I: Two Functions of Discourse: Monologic and Dialogic……...16

Table II: Boys Recruited for Study……...….42

Table III: Activities of the Dialogic Literacy Experiences……..……..48

Table IV: Text Selection and Rationale…….53

Table V: Data Collection Table…….59

Table VI: Data Collection for Each Elementary Boy……60

Table VII: Data Coding Table……..…….63

Table IX: A Priori Codes from Video Transcriptions……...…….….……..70

Table X: Definitions of Themes……73

Table XI: Themes that Emerged from Boys' Data Sources…….....74

Table XII: Survey results: What Aspect of DLE Helped the Boys Understand the Text the Most…….……..……..….....88

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Theoretical and Methodological Conceptualisation of Research Study…..….33

Figure 2: The Research Setting…….…….40

Figure 3: Text Selection Boys Chose From……...56

Figure 4: A Snapshot of First and Second Round of Coding in Progress……..65

Figure 5: Response Log Entry Authentic Questions, New Words & Concepts Learnt.....77

Figure 6: Response Log Entry: Incidental Vocab and Incidental Knowledge Gained From DLE …….……78

Figure 7: Response Log Entry: Incidental Vocab and Incidental Knowledge Gained From Reading.....78

Figure 8: Response Log Entry: Emotive Response and Personally Relating to Text…...81

Figure 9: Response Log: Empathy for Characters and Emotive Response to Text…...…81

Figure 10: Response Log: Empathy for Characters and Emotive Response to Text…….82

Figure 11: Response Log: Empathy for Characters After Understanding a Concept Club…….……...82

Figure 12: Still from Video Recording: Emotive Response to Text Through Action...…84

Figure 13: Response Log: DLE Discussion Being Helpful …….…..…...86

Figure 14: Response Log: DLE Discussion/Questions Being Helpful…….…….88

Figure 15: Survey Results on the Impact of Text on Boys……93

Figure 16: Response Log Entry: Response to Global and Cultural Issues in Text……96

Figure 17: Response Log: Consciousness Being Raised……...96

Figure 18: Response log: Interest in Continuing Literacy Practices Outside of Literacy Club ……...….….105

Figure 19: Response Log: Student Expressing a Desire to Learn More……..…106

Figure 20: Response log showing deep emotive response to text that sparked conversation…….…....117

Figure 21: Response log showing a correlation between words learnt and willingness to engage with text…….…….….118

Figure 22: Front of Response Log……..…….124

Figure 23: Back of Response Log…….….…….124

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

Dialogic Literacy Experience (DLE)

Dialogic Literacy Experiences (DLEs)

Summer Academic Program (SAP)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The young Frederick Douglass read the dialogues and political essays in the *Columbian Orator* (1797) at age 12 that set him on his life trajectory. The master-slave dialogue he encountered helped him articulate why slavery was wrong. The words he read and the ideas he gathered gave him the power and ability to share his own story. In recounting his reading of the *Columbian Orator*, he wrote, "The moral which I gained from the dialogue was the power of truth over the conscience of even a slaveholder" (Douglass, 1845, p. 50). His autobiographical account, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,* 1845, shows the manifestation of the far-reaching effect of those dialogues. In his narrative, he speaks of how white slave owners perpetuated slavery by keeping their slaves ignorant. He explains the strategies of white slave owners and how they purposefully kept their slaves' date of birth and paternity from them. This especially robbed children of their sense of identity. They deliberately kept the enslaved illiterate to silence them from telling their stories, but also so the enslaved did not question the morality of slave owners.

Douglass (1845) writes honestly and matter of factly, exposing the horrors of slavery to persuade people to put an end to it and for justice. He was hoping his text would bring about an honest discussion that would hold slave owners accountable for their actions. In much the same way Douglass was impacted by the *Columbian Orators,* it is important that elementary-aged Black boys have similar impacting and powerful experience Douglass had with the *Columbian Orator to* build relationships their relationships with texts.

The impact of texts on Black males can be found in biographical and autobiographical accounts throughout US history. Black writers have spoken about the power and role of texts in their lives, texts that shifted their life trajectory, liberated them, and restored their human dignity (Cleaver, 1968; Upchurch, 1996; Yousafzai, 2013). Late author, educator and activist Carl Upchurch (1996) recounts how texts changed his life; Shakespeare, especially, introduced Upchurch to the beauty and precision of words and language—he grew to respect him. Upchurch quite nearly had a disdain for intellect, but the book of sonnets

> "didn't just change [his] opinion - it quite literally changed [his] mind. I discovered the magic of learning, the thrill of going from not knowing to knowing. By struggling to understand Shakespeare, I came to see that ideas have a beauty all of their own, beyond even the beauty of the words that frame them. The words too fascinated me. I couldn't just run over the ones I didn't know, ignoring them; I had to look them up, learn to live with them" (Upchurch, 1996, p. 83).

Sonnet 29 was his favourite as he felt like it read about him and his experiences; as though Shakespeare "just sat down and looked into my heart" (Upchurch, 1996, p. 83). From that moment forth, his reading lists grew immensely and he would often have discussions with people about the text and even read it aloud in his cell block.

He moved onto African American writers of the 1920s, the Harlem Renaissance, and then some contemporary Black authors. James Baldwin's *Another Country* (year) impacted him because it spoke the truth about the African American experience. He read *The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass* and was mesmerised but W.E.B Du Bois', *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), citing it as "one of the most significant, comprehensive, and scholarly chronicles of the African American culture - who we were and what we were saying" (Upchurch, 1996, p.85).

Langston Hughes, a prolific writer demonstrated the power of texts and the role it can play in one's life. For over 40 years, he wrote prodigiously in "poetry, fiction, autobiography, journalism, drama, essay, translation and works for children" (Mullane, 1993, p.499). He made a major contribution to the Harlem Renaissance. His grandmother used to tell him stories, stories that stuck with him. After she died, he recalls that "books began to happen to me" (as cited in Mullane, 1993, p. 499). He often wrote about the power of literature in his life and how it could affect people universally.

What these accounts have in common is that these authors, as well as others, had powerful experiences with texts, and this often inspired them to have discussions about the text, or it sparked important conversations (Fisher, 2008). Texts can have power in and of themselves, but dialoging about the texts seemed an important component—historically—in regard to amplifying the power and effect of it.

Statement of Purpose

Texts have the power to liberate, to build agendas, and to change one's way of thinking, being and living (Tatum, 2014). Thought-provoking texts coupled with dialogue can bring about sustained change, lead to moments of enlightenment, realisation, or a paradigm shift (Fisher, 2008; Tatum, 2009). However, I am concerned that many young Black boys, are not experiencing the power of texts in schools that they will attribute to shaping who they become because so much attention has been given to closing the reading achievement gap and research-based strategy instruction. Tatum (2009) refers to this phenomenon as "severing textual lineages" or "turning down the volume of texts" (p. 50) to the detriment of Black boys and their overall academic and personal development.

Essentially, the extant research literature provides insufficient guidance for nurturing Black boys' relationships with texts and the centrality of texts in their lives and identity development (Tatum, 2014). This can explain the growing number of studies focused on Black boys' disengagement with texts and associated reading achievement outcomes (Anderson & Sadler, 2009; Kirkland & Jackson, 2009, 2013; Tatum, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2015; Tatum & Muhammad, 2012). Reading researchers have also examined boys' disengagement with text. They have offered different pedagogical approaches, text selection suggestion, and instructional practices to increase black boys engagement with texts. Researchers have argued that black boys need culturally relevant or culturally sustaining pedagogy and instruction (Ladson-Billings 1995; Paris, 2012). Other researchers have called for selecting enabling texts and the need for boys to have exposure to texts that cover multiple identities in order for them to access the text (Moje & Luke, 2009; Tatum, 2006, 2009). Some scholars posit that the instructor's positioning towards text and students needs to be addressed as this can affect students' learning (Harré & Davies, 1999). Others still, mention the importance of critical literacy as an instructional approach, which calls for the critical analysis of text and its underlying meaning (Freire & Macedo, 2005). There is a strong suggestion in the research that a sole focus on instruction is not sufficient for African American boys' literacy development forward (Anderson & Sadler, 2009; Tatum & Muhammad, 2012). As Tatum (2000) stated, "The problem of how to increase literacy achievement of African Americans is embedded in social, cultural, economic, and historical dynamics" (p. 53). Therefore, this study is also nestled in the call to increase boys' engagement with texts.

Black boys in elementary schools need literacy experiences that can foster meaningful relationships with texts as these are some of their most formative years, a critical developmental period of life (Wood & Jocius, 2013). Mediating texts that are meaningful to Black boys can provide them with more knowledge and understanding of how their world works and agency to know what they want to do with the information they acquire. Having meaningful relationships with texts can also help them navigate complex terrains that can lead to feelings of race-based or class-based oppression in school and society. Moving a generation of Black boys to a higher level of consciousness through text mediation and having them experience the power texts can have on their lives can help them embrace unbridled realities and shape their life trajectories.

Research Question

For this study, I examined fourth-and fifth-grade Black boys' dialogic experiences with texts. I designed dialogic literacy experiences (DLEs or DLE henceforth) to foster elementary Black boys' relationships with print texts. I grounded DLE in a sociohistorical approach (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) when it comes to the text selection, and it draws from tenets of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1986), and positioning theory to nurture Black boys' relationship and the potential impact of texts on their lives. The study was designed to examine how dialogic literacy experiences shape 4th-and 5th-grade Black boys' relationships with text?

Mediating texts through dialogic literacy experience may provide a better understanding of how texts can shape readers as well as how instruction can cater to a person's identity. Moje & Luke (2009) argued that texts can be used to enact identities in

social settings or to construct self-understanding and therefore there is an inherent relationship between literacy and identity.

Significance of the Study:

This study is significant for a number of primary reasons as teachers and researchers are still trying to figure out:

1. How to mediate texts that are powerful and consciousness-raising for Black boys
2. How to engage Black boys in the elementary grades with a wide range of texts across the academic disciplines.

Effective text mediations should provide Black boys with knowledge of how their world works, strengthen their identities, and help them understand the benefits of the knowledge across the social and natural sciences. I want Black boys to have meaningful literacy exchanges with texts that lead to disciplinary ways of thinking and have them experience the interdisciplinary nature of literacy (Tatum, 2014).

It is important to note that there is a relationship between literate identities, textual lineages (Tatum, 2006), and dialogic literacy experiences feed each other in a recursive process. If one has a well-developed textual lineage, they are more likely and feel able to engage with texts, which build their literate identity. This is a cyclical process, as the more depth there is to your textual lineage, through the dialogic interactions with text, the more you are able to access those learned and lived experience and relationship with text, and therefore the more nuanced the role of text will be in your life; which manifests itself in your literate identity, but levels of consciousness, ability to have agency, power, liberation and humanity.

It is also critical to note the importance of texts, as well as a wide range of texts within those disciplines because the goal historically, and currently of education for Black people has been social mobility and personal development to improve their lives and environments. This is especially true when there are still inequities within a school system that continuously fails Black boys. Black boys in elementary years need the best texts we can put in front of them.

There is strong historical precedence for this study. My study endeavours to foster a space whereby dialogic literacy experiences intentionally to potentially help Black boys build relationships with variegated text. This is especially salient considering Black boys live in a society and are embroiled in system that continuously silences, fails and pathologises them (Aggarwal, 2015; Dumas 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2015). Thus, early roles of text were about uplift and emancipation, (Holt, 1990) and the power equation came through Stokely Carmichael and James Cone; It was about encouraging Black people to take action in their lives (Tatum, 2009). Texts in present day, however, have moved away from roles of text in the 60s and seem to be about raising consciousness or Black folk and building agendas in a society that is not for them (Coates, 2015; Tatum, 2014). Even still, Black boys haven't been exposed to these types of texts in schools that would allow for texts to play these roles in their lives, or potentially have this kind of academic and personal effect (Kirkland, 2013; Tatum, 2009). I say that there is still a need for these types of texts and the roles they could play now, specifically maximising and navigating their impact through dialogic literacy experiences (Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991; Nystrand, 1993; Wells, 1999, 2001, 2007; Wells & Arauz, 2006; Whitehurst, 1992).

If there are many Black authors and writers – historically and currently - who say that text was of great importance and influence in their lives (Douglass, 1950; Du Bois, 1903; Upchurch, 1996) and sense of self, then why isn't more emphasis placed on building this relationship with text that could potentially forever change a Black boys' life? Historically, texts show that relationships with text are forged and exponentially grown through dialogic literacy experiences (Mullane, 1993), then it makes sense that these experiences should be fostered in a classroom with texts that will do all the above, or at least enable Black boys to access these empowering, consciousness-raising, identity-building benefits of texts.

Given the history of the US, and African/Caribbean countries that were colonised, it is necessary and essential for Black people to locate themselves in society (Davies & Harré, 1990), and one powerful way of doing this in a school setting is using text (Tatum, 2006, 2013). One must wonder what the effects are of not having your experiential reservoirs (Rosenblatt, 1978, 1994, 2005) and lived experiences honoured or valued, but rather often eschewed or misrepresented in within society and academic institutions (Aggarwal, 2015; Lipman, 2015; White, 2015). If this is the case, then why not remedy the situation of affirming Black students' identities that have been overshadowed by the hegemonic, by creating a space for them to dialogically process texts in order to foster a relationship with text that can powerfully impact their lives?

Identity: Textual lineages and Dialogic Literacy Experiences (DLEs)

When looking at the role of texts in Black boys' lives, it's important to look at their history of reading and as readers, too; this is in order to gauge characteristics of texts that have had an impact or held some significance for them, as well as the reasons

why. Looking at one's textual lineage comprises of looking back and beyond oneself to discover what historically influenced their choices—some influences are a lot more latent than others. We are, however, unaware of what these choices are because there is very little literature on it.

Textual lineages comprise of more than just books, but also life experiences, identity and tells one's story (Tatum & Gue, 2012). I define this notion as one's reading and writing history, and story, showing how these acts have impacted, shaped and developed who you are through these lived experiences and stories. It also considers the affective domain, also. Textual lineages should also increase or speak to the motivation behind one wanting to read and write—these texts have shaped and continue to shape them in a way that should cause them to want to be lifelong readers and learners. Having a textual lineage should potentially propel you to want to think, act and do differently. Having a textual lineage should also enable and encourage you in the process of being able to have dialogic literacy experiences (DLE) with text, that are recursive and transformation in thought, action and being.

Looking at it from this identity angle, understanding and knowing what Black boys have read and enjoy reading, or had a dialogic literacy experience with, will help me to know what relationships were built with texts in Black boys' lives, and why. It is important to know what to mediate for Black boys, and that in their selecting of these texts, an arsenal of textual lineages can be built. This can create a continuous source of textual lineages the boys can draw from, and they will have the ultimate say in the roles these texts have in their lives.

Historically, elementary curricula have negated texts that speak to Black boys' textual lineages, including texts they have read that have has some purport in regard to shaping their identities (Tatum, 2006). A study by Tatum (2006) asked 120 Black middle and high school boys to construct their textual lineages through visual representation; on average, students were only able to identify two texts that had meaning or significance in their lives. Texts held significance due to personal connections, empathy, and identity shaping. Students complained that texts in school did not speak to them and their multiple identities, and they had no interest in reading in school. Students bring multiple identities to a text (Tatum, 2006) and when these identities are also enacted, a more holistic and lived experience of the text is gained.

Locating Myself as a Researcher

As a Black British woman living in the US I have come to realise that I occupy many spaces—some I understand, and some I am still discovering and learning to adapt to. I am essentially a Black immigrant in this space, and this was the case in the UK, too. This has always made me consider my Blackness and what it means to me, to others, and in different spaces. I thought about whether I had a voice or not, and whether my voice held different weight in these different countries, regions, platforms and places. As an English teacher in the UK (Dover, Kent) in a predominantly white school, my Blackness was always brought up. The students were not necessarily concerned with my being of Ghanaian descent, but more that I was Black born in London and now teaching in Dover. This always positioned me towards them in a certain way—the cool Black teacher with a London accent. When I got to the US, the same thing occurred—they were not concerned about my being Ghanaian, but that I was a Black British person with a British accent. I

quickly realised that my being a Black immigrant would always affect my work, my teaching and me as a researcher. That I had to be cognisant of my positioning towards students, as well as how I positioned them towards each other and myself based on how I was seeing them react towards me. Teaching in predominantly African American schools in the US, I had noticed that the students often related what they were learning back to my background and where I was from. Many questioned my ethnicity because of my accent. They were all curious and my very person and identity sparked myriad questions. It was often a point of conversation with many teachable moments. I quickly began to embrace that I was a Black woman from England occupying a Black immigrant identity in a different country, which seemed to serve as a catalyst for dialogue and actually helped students better contextualise some texts, and make global and local connections. This was especially apparent when working on a project led by Alfred Tatum that involved exponentially growing elementary Black boys' reading levels using a multidimensional reading model. I found that because of my cultural background I naturally gravitated towards texts that were global or involved my immigrant identity, which continued to expand the classroom dialogue and inquisitiveness of the boys. I saw that we were having deep dialogic interactions, and these dialogic discussions quickly became a focal part of this project in a way I had not anticipated. I saw that these discussions invited the boys into the texts more, and they were learning to understand their multiple identities through the dialogic discussions and my positioning, and therefore instruction as a Black British woman. The texts and discussions around the texts were clearly impacting them. I realised my practice and identity could not be separated.

In a way I had always known that but in the US context, teaching Black boys who still saw me as different in my Blackness, this was further amplified.

Given my personal background and lived experiences in the US especially, I believed there is a significance in studying and researching the roles of texts in Black boys' lives. Alfred Tatum speaks of the roles of text in Black boys' lives, and how we need to know what they are, but at this point, his work is incomplete. Tatum and other researchers do not provide a clear path on how to nurture third, fourth and fifth grade Black boys' relationships with text—only that there needs to happen because of the benefits of these relationships. Thus, I believe that the roles of text in Black boys' lives can be nurtured through dialogic literacy experiences in-and-out of the classroom. I want to examine what it is exactly about dialogue that nurtures relationships with texts. Therefore, I planned this study to capture dialogue that mirrors or extends the roles conversations have played historically. I understand that I will have to be cognisant of my positioning during this study because of my cultural identity, and be aware of how this may affect the study, especially if/when the boys' cultural identities also surface during discussions or readings of the text.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Review Process

In this literature review, I discuss dialogic literacy experiences, giving attention to dialogic interactions in elementary classrooms and ELA classrooms, and dialogic experiences of Black boys across the African diaspora as evidenced through historical texts, literacy research, studies, national conversations in historical and contemporary literature. This literature review is comprised on three bodies of literature: 1. Historical examination of roles of text. 2. Boys and literacy and 3. Dialogic literacy experiences. For this review, I included the following:

1. Research on the roles of text in Black boys' lives, their literacy and published literature during the 19th century to present day.
2. Research and studies on dialogism that emerged in the early 1990s

I reviewed dialogism from a conceptual, theoretical, and instructional perspective. However, in this review, I am going to discuss how dialogism is fostered and plays out in elementary and ELA classrooms.

Most research and studies on dialogism emerged in the early 1990s (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006). This created a parameter for the studies I included in this literature review—1995 to 2017.

I reviewed text sources, archival text, and empirical studies conducted within the past twenty-two years because this was the emergence of studies focusing on dialogism. I also looked at bibliographies of texts that I found relevant to my study, as well as key researchers in the dialogic/dialogism movement within classrooms.

Given the fact that my research incorporates both dialogism and the roles of text in Black people's lives, I also reviewed literacy research on the roles of text in Black boys' lives, specifically. I reviewed several published pieces of literature during the 19th century to present day, where authors, writers, activists and educators speak of their experiences with texts, and the roles text have played in their lives. These writings about the roles of text were found from a review of historical writings of primary source documents; namely autobiographies. I also reviewed eight comprehensive anthologies and prominent biographical accounts spanning a time frame of 300–400 years of writings by Black authors across the diaspora.

Dialogism

Dialogism is social in nature (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). It involves communication with other works, oneself, and others. It also seeks to interact with other works and voices, to make meaning, inform, or alter it (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). For this study I specifically looked at open lines of communication between participant, their ability to reciprocate, attain intersubjectivity and ask authentic questions, as well as build on each other's thoughts and ideas.

Dialogic research is primarily concerned with the discursive, social nature of language (White, 2009). Dialogism is not a simple, straightforward thing; nor is it a concept that is easily agreed upon (Linell, 2003). "Dialogism" is a name for a bundle, or combination, of theoretical and epistemological assumptions about human action, communication and cognition…. an epistemological framework for sociocultural (human) phenomena: semiosis, cognition, communication, discourse, and consciousness" (Linell, 2003, p. 2, 4).

More broadly, dialogism goes beyond the scope of 'conversation' and speaking; it can also be written and making meaning can involve signs and symbols - be it cultural, historical, or otherwise. Mikhail Bakhtin, the original founder of "dialogic" literary theory (1981) construes this dialogic process in reference to other texts, works and literature; dialogue can recast literature in past and present works because to Bakhtin (1981, 1986) all language and thoughts are dialogic in nature. This is the type of dialogism I want Black boys to have access to and interact within the classroom.

Alexander (2005) demonstrated that dialogic talk is communal, whereby students and teachers jointly address the learning tasks; it is reciprocal, in the sense that both students and teachers listen to one another, consider alternate views and reach a point of intersubjectivity; it is supportive—there are no "wrong" answers (this would be more monologic type of instruction); it is cumulative as students and teachers build on each other's (as well as their own) thinking and thoughts to reach coherent lines of thought; it is also purposeful in that the teacher is making an exerted effort in planning and moving the classroom discourse towards a particular educational goal. Whereas, a conversation and discussion are more the exchange of words and ideas between two people or a group. It is not necessarily set up intentionally to build on thoughts, it involves words only (in most cases), whereas dialogism goes beyond words, using signs, symbols, texts, etc. Conversation and discussion do not necessarily have to have any elements of intersubjectivity, or an iterative process that requires you to re-think thoughts one had, correcting them, refining them or affirming them. It also does not require you to take on an alternate view-point. Meaning or sense-making may be required, but it does not

necessarily glean its meaning from context, or have context inform its meaning, as we have with dialogic exchanges.

What sometimes seems to be overlooked is Bakhtin's emphasis on intersubjectivity and how it is continuously aimed for in dialogue; It is when both parties are to reciprocate by switching roles, and as Wells and Meijía-Arauz (2006) say "each proposing a topic that the other treats as the current focus of joint attention and as the basis for a relevantly related contribution of his or her own" (p. 7). Bakhtin (1986) noted that utterances is a connection of communication that is either responded to, or reacted to, furthering the contribution to the preceding utterances. Thereby, "expresses [his] the speaker's attitude toward others' utterances and not just his attitude toward the object of his utterance" (p. 92). This is applicable to reading or listening to one's utterance, as it is actively responsive. Thus, Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) notion of dialogue seems greatly significant for responsivity and "interanimation of voices."—meaning to mutually inspire or build on each other's knowledge. Agreement, as well as disagreement would occur, and that was fine, because this could only be achieved if the listener was actively listening, and understanding, as well as preparing to respond to the utterances of the speaker.

Lotman (1988) suggested two types of functions of text or discourse, (utterances, based on Bakhtin's 1986 usage), that could be easily applied to dialogues that happen in the classroom - monologic, and dialogic (see Table 1). Monologic has the aim "to convey meanings adequately" (p. 34) and is important in passing on cultural meanings "thus preserving continuity and stability of beliefs and values within a culture" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 7). Unfortunately, this approach makes the text authoritative and

closed off to questioning or different perspectives or viewpoints. Although intersubjectivity is assumed, it is not necessarily attained or guaranteed because this transmissionary model of communication leaves no room for error - misunderstandings or misinterpretations by the one who is receiving this information.

Table 1: Two Functions of Discourse: Monologic and Dialogic

	Monologic	Dialogic
Bakhtin (1981, 1986)	Utterance as 'authoritative' (meaning is fixed)	Utterance as 'internally persuasive' (meaning is negotiable)
Lotman (1988)	Text as transmission or 'monologic' device (function: creates common memory for group)	Text as 'thinking device' (function: generates new meanings)
Tomasello (1999)	Cultural practices function as social transmission (ratchet effect, so cultural learning is maintained)	Cultural practices function to support creative invention

Note. O'Connor and Michaels (2007, p. 276).

Lotman and Bakhtin believed the dialogic function of text and discourse to be more important, however, they emphasized the understanding of the text/utterance, as this meant that a person began to respond from the perspective of the receiver. When the alternate perspectives come together in dialogue with one another, Lotman says, "generates new meanings" (Lotman, 1988, pp. 36–37).

> In this respect, a text ceases to be a passive link in conveying some constant information between input (sender) and output (receiver). Whereas in the first case a difference between the message at the input and that at the output of an information circuit can occur only as a result of a defect in the communication channel, and is to be attributed to the technical imperfections of this system, in the second case such a difference is the very essence of the text's function as "a thinking device. (Lotman, 1988, pp. 36–37)

Therefore, dialogue and dialogism are essentially the negotiation of perspectives, all whilst trying to reach a point of intersubjectivity, but having room to be innovative and authentic. The new meanings born out of innovation may not line up with the previous monologic function and/or view, but it also opens up new perspectives and questions that may not have ever been considered - but should be. Either way, "the value of adopting the dialogic function is that it is inclusive of alternative perspectives and the interanimation of voices and leads to a deeper understanding of the topic by all concerned, whether or not the result is consensus and perfect intersubjectivity" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 8).

Studies and surveys show (Galton, Simon et al., 1980; Goodlad, 1984; Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991) that the mode of learning in classrooms is primarily through teachers demonstrating or letting students know what they should be learning, or what they should already know. But this is not how people learn outside of the classroom (Resnick, 1987), so why should we expect that of them in the classroom? "As research in a variety of disciplines has shown coming to know involves greater active participation by learners in which they construct and progressively improve their understanding through exploratory transactions with the cultural world around them." (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p.1)**.** If this is the case, how we have been teaching in classrooms does not foster the most optimal learning through dialogic experiences.

There is an abundance of monologic interaction children have inside and outside of the classroom. Indeed, in their communities they are taught acceptable ways of acting, thinking, valuing and communicating their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. All of this informs their sense of being a community member and therefore serves an important

purpose. In school, too, they sometimes need to learn from the 'expert' and therefore monologic instruction has a place in the classroom (Wells, 1998). Unfortunately, the student often is not able to share alternative thoughts, or ideas that need to be communicated, clarified, or talked through in a more symmetric dialogue, and therefore, monologic instruction is not sufficient, as already discussed. In the Bristol Study of Language at Home and at School study (Wells, 1986), it was discovered that in Western societies at least, reciprocal roles of speaker and listener were taking place in households, where parties involved sought to reach a point of intersubjectivity. Ironically, this is what is missing in classrooms; teachers are instructing in monologic ways but are having dialogic discussions in their own households (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006). Students in this study stopped asking real questions of any substance, and teachers rarely explained their thoughts and opinions. From these findings, one must ask how can dialogic experiences be encouraged and maintained in a classroom setting where both teacher and student are accustomed to monologic instruction?

Studies: The Progression of Dialogic Literacy Experiences

Early days of how literacy experiences in the classroom was through Initiation-response-evaluation (IRE), (Mehan, 1979); this was where the whole class was involved and a three-part structured exchange would ensue. The teacher asked a question, then they selected a student to answer, and then they assessed the student's response (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006). This was heavily criticised for not being culturally sensitive to those children who have not experienced this type of interaction (Heath, 1983; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). It also did not allow the student to discuss their thoughts and ideas or reflect and make remarks on the ideas and sharing of others (Wood, 1992). Barnes (1976)

then suggested that we treat sites of talk as exploration, not evaluation, which led to studies that have suggested classroom interactions should be more dialogic in nature (Gibbons, 2002; Nystrand, 1997; Wells, 1999). Especially as it is very rare for the whole classroom to be the centre of an authentic, dialogic discussion, where a sincere interaction and reciprocation of ideas is occurring between teacher and students, or amongst the students (Nystrand, et al., 2001).

In 1991, researchers found in almost a decade of action research, that classrooms can be sites of dialogic literacy experiences and interactions. Or, "*can* be places in which knowledge is dialogically co-constructed" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p.2).

Wells and Chang-Wells (1991) led a study that did not focus solely on dialogue, but more so on the activity that would inspire the dialogue. Thus, dialogue was not the activity in and of itself, but taken from Vygotsky's model, they treated discourse as the mediational tool (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006). This is also like Lave and Wenger's (1991) argument that learning is an intrinsic part of community practice and participation—learning is not an individual activity done in isolation. This argument informed my conceptualisation of DLEs.

The researchers then proceeded to ask: "what sort of approach to the curriculum would dialogue most naturally arise?" Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 9 &10). They focused on inquiry, and therefore looked to Dewey (1938) who believed that education had both social and personal issues and significance. This had been effective in their previous studies and observations, whereby students engaged more in class if they were given choice on the curricular topic they investigated and the inquiries they would carry out (Wells & Chang-Wells, 1992).

Students' utterances contributed to the "co-construction of meaning" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 11). They also broadened the definition of the third move in 'triadic dialogue' to incorporate the various ways a teacher could follow-up with a student's response to a teacher's question (Lemke, 1990; Wells, 1993). This was significant in my study because I had to follow up with the students in a way that was also dialogic, to encourage more conversation and building on previous thoughts and utterances to expand their learning. Therefore, co-constructing meaning with each other and amongst themselves through discourse.

A period of discourse was determined as a "long stretch of talk in which the topic and the participant structure continued essentially unchanged" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 11). There were shorter sequences of talk when instruction was teacher-led, however, with more evaluative responses rather than dialogue whereby the student was asking questions and expressing alternative views. There was not much difference between arts and sciences content areas when it came to dialogic inquiry exhibited. Students can be engaged in dialogue around issues emerging from the curriculum, and have these discussions be fruitful, engage the learner, and stretch their thinking (Nassaji & Wells, 2000; Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006).

This study points to the importance of fostering experiences whereby students are allowed alternative thoughts and viewpoints. It also raises the need to be careful in fostering these experiences. It is important to understand what it means to have a truly dialogic classroom practice and space and allowing it to emerge and take shape, freeing participants to grow. Dialogic experiences are especially important for those who have been oppressed in and outside of the classrooms to be given space to have their

alternative viewpoints, express them, and allow the thoughts and views of others to continue to shape and refine their thoughts - without being told it is “wrong,” or that they need to think a certain way. They are essentially co-authoring with their peers, reaching conclusions and building agendas.

Dialogic Teaching and Dialogic Talk

There are a plethora of authors and researchers who have an interest in the types of talk that occurs in the classroom setting and their educational functions (Alexander, 2001, 2008; Lemke, 1988, 1990; Nystrand et al., 1997, Nystrand et al., 2001; Wells, 1993, 1999, 2009).

Different authors use different terms for dialogic teaching: dialogic inquiry, dialogic pedagogy, or dialogic instruction. Dialogic teaching uses the framework of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986), in that the teacher is to use talk most effectively for carrying out instruction - for the learning benefits of the students. It involves ongoing talk between the student and teacher, with open-ended questions (essentially, authentic questions and utterances). Dialogic teaching incorporates student’s work, communication and student’s language to endorse activity, enrich their thinking and enhance their overall understanding (Alexander, 2008). The most pertinent characteristic of dialogic teaching is using communication which stretches the higher cognitive functions in students (Sedova, et al., 2014). Other pertinent factors of dialogic teaching include: engaging students, enabling them to be autonomous, and thus using that autonomy to influence the goings-on in the classroom to a certain degree (Sedova et al., 2014).

There is a concept called ‘Dialogic Stance’ under the umbrella of dialogic teaching, which essentially means that a teacher can be dialogic and use dialogic talk in

their classroom so effectively, that even when it appears that they are being monologic in their instruction (Boyd & Makarian, 2011), their overarching dialogic stance still makes room for fruitful dialogic talk in the classroom. A dialogic stance, therefore, permeates the 'talk' to such an extent "it is not just how we say it, but also how we are predisposed to receive it" (Boyd & Makarian, 2011, p. 516). Sociohistorical patterns of talk suggest that a dialogic stance can open up discourse space and requires students to elaborate - even if their utterances do not (Boyd & Makarian, 2011). This, in turn, allows the dialogic teacher more opportunities to negotiate the talk, understanding the students' language and knowledge that his/her students value, as a more informed 'knowledgeable other' (Boyd & Makarian, 2011).

In another study, various dialogic teaching patterns were examined and discerned in early school years (Muhonen et al., 2016). It focused on how teachers manage to scaffold children's engagement through the use of dialogic teaching, which gave them a sense of shared understanding. The teacher scaffolded using teacher-initiated dialogues, which was distinguished by a sense of needing to influence and maintain movement in interactions. When the child initiated dialogue, however, the teacher's scaffolding adjusted and they listened and inquired instead. The teacher's role therefore, was more of a facilitator of dialogue than instructor (Muhonen et al., 2016). One thing to keep in mind with this study is the authenticity aspect of dialogism. Does dialogic teaching allow for the interanimated voices of both teachers and students? (Wertsch, 1991). Does it allow for authentic questions from both teacher and student? I believe an element of performance (for the teacher) would be present in the classroom, because students will want to please the teacher. Also, when the teacher lets the student talk, the teacher will

repeat their response, then another student is permitted to speak. But the second response is usually incompatible or irrelevant to the first questions, meaning that communication can lack uptake. This is problematic, as this will lead the conversation back to the starting point, with little depth, development, and coherence.

Despite this, the results in the study are useful in helping me further understand how to foster a dialogic literacy experience in my study. Although these studies do not mention race of students, nor do they involve texts from across disciplines, they show the power of dialogism in the classroom setting, and how dialogism can be utilised in order to gain students active participation. I do not want dialogism to rest solely on the teacher or their instruction, nor the student and their reading, but an overall, holistic dialogic classroom (reader/reader, reader/teacher, and reader/text dialogic interactions) – to address a gap in extant literature.

Dialogic Reading

According to Whitehurst (1992), dialogic reading is effective because "Children who have been read to dialogically are substantially ahead of children who have been read to traditionally on tests of language development" (Whitehurst, 1992, p. 1). And this ranges from different settings and geographic locations. Although I am not doing my study for the purpose of testing, it seems that there are multiple advantages to dialogism. Dialogic reading is the adult and child discussing a book. The adult is now the audience who listens and asks questions (Whitehurst, 1992). This research suggests that children learn best from books when they are diligently engaged. The reading technique that dialogic reading employs is PEER sequence, which includes five prompts: completion prompts, recall prompts, open-ended prompts, wh-prompts (what, who, why, where), and

distancing prompts (Whitehurst, 1992). Distancing prompts and completion prompts are limited to preschoolers, but also does not address the learning environment, or the teacher's instruction in conjunction to the child being a dialogic reader.

Historical Examination of the Roles of Texts

For this historical examination of the role of texts, I leaned more towards published literature during the 19th century to present day; I found copious Black male and female authors and writers across the African diaspora who spoke of the effect texts, literature, reading and writing had on their lives. An example that struck me deeply is Eldridge Cleaver, "one of the most influential personal histories of the 1960s" (Mullane, 1993, p.670), wrote the best-selling *Soul On Ice* (1968) which speaks of one man's journey from "political odyssey from streethood to Black culturalist, Muslim, and political activist," (Mullane, 1993, p.670). Cleaver was in and out of prison for juvenile offences from 1954, and while in prison, Cleaver read to "save his himself" (Mullane, 1993, p. 670). He found through his writing and reading many a revelation, including spiritual awakening, a new appreciation of Black women and realising that the old Eldridge no longer existed.

An example of a nationally influential text that played a role in Black peoples' lives collectively, is David Walker's "Appeal," written in 1830. It is a pivotal text that provides a call to Black people. He meant it to be used as a "powerful apparatus that might be deployed in various ways by Black Americans to further their civil rights" (McHenry, 2002, p. 36). 'Appeal' was not just a "petition against slavery", (Turner, 1993, p. 10) but it was a call to action. It was also a text with "factual density and richly constructed argument for freedom" (Turner, 1993, p. 10).

Walker viewed his text so important that all Black people should read it for their enlightenment, but also that those who could read, would read it to those who could not. We need to find texts that incite that same sustaining call, liberation, and power that Walker's text did, and continues to do. I propose that the text was probably so powerful in the moments where Black people read to other Black people, had conversation around the text, and interacted with it dialogically. The conversation around the text is what activated the power and realised potential and reality, for many.

An historical analysis suggests that there was dialogue around a wide range of texts that included political documents, and religious texts which often led to social and cultural transformation such as The Atlantic Compromise, the abolition period, The Civil Rights movement, antebellum, post antebellum, reconstruction, and the Jim Crow era.

More specifically, authors and writers historically and in even present-day contemporary works have played and continue to play a salient role in the lives of Black people by creating a national dialogue, and/or being a catalyst to different types of liberation. Texts such as: Langston Hughes' *I too*, 1925, Maya Angelou's *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, 1970, *The Declaration of Independence*, 1776, *Emancipation Proclamation,* 1863*, The Souls of Black Folk* by W.E.B Du Bois, 1903, *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, 1952, *Animal Farm, by George Orwell, 1945, Letters from the Birmingham Jail*, by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963, Countee Cullen's *Yet Do I Marvel,* 1925, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, 1992, Ta Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me*, 2015, and Plessy vs. Ferguson, 1896, are examples of liberating texts. Some of these texts have been so thought-provoking and sparked national discussion that it became part of school curricula.

The 4th of July, and *Proclamation of Independence* incited a national dialogue as to the true meaning behind the event. It was not a day of freedom for Black people as they were still enslaved -- only white citizens of America had freedom from the British. Black people were still enslaved by the colonists. On the day after Independence Day in 1852, Frederick Douglass administered an acerbic speech saying: "This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn.... Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak to-day?" (Douglass, 1852, July 5th). National conversation ensued from this scathing address; dialogue and conversation throughout history is what gives texts more power that leads to societal change or personal transformation.

Research on Boys and Literacy

For Black boys, literacy development plays a significant role in how they view themselves, as well as how others view them (Moje & Luke, 2009; Lewis et al., 2007; Luke, 2009). The following studies explore Black boys' relationships and interactions with text.

Kirkland's (2013) book, *A Search Past Silence: The Literacy of Young Black men*, covers the case studies of six Black boys and their literacy experiences in the classroom, their vaults of knowledge, identities, their voices—which are often silenced—and room to be heard. Kirkland explores the idea of what literacy means to Black males and how it is counter-cultural to what the schooling system would have one believe. The educational establishment is geared towards the privileged and often immediately sees Black students as struggling readers and writers with no solution to address this crisis. Kirkland believes that if teachers and the establishment would reposition themselves to Black students, helping them feel empowered, instead of pitied, then the literacy they create and

demonstrate outside of the classroom might translate into the classroom. Black boys' literacy tends to be typified by fluidity and dynamism. It would be ideal for the classroom to be a space where different types of literacy is recognised and 'counts' so that it is not just about scores (Kirkland, 2013). As Black boys tend not to look at literacy scores but look to literacy as a voice and means of making sense of the world around them—we need to accommodate the type of literacy Kirkland is speaking of. This could be fostered, and they could be given space for this by using dialogic literacy experiences (DLEs).

Tatum (2014) shares his finding of a study he administered to Black boys in school. The goals of the paper were two-fold: "1) to provide a general understanding of the roles of texts among African American boys, and 2) to discuss the significance of re-orienting the African American male adolescents toward meaningful literacy exchanges with texts in schools where they spend a large proportion of their academic lives", (Tatum 2014, p. 36). Tatum found that there were enabling texts and disabling texts. Enabling texts would cause the student to want to act, to move to seek change, as described above. Whereas disabling texts substantiates a student's belief that they are 'struggling reader', not taking into account their local contexts and their need to self-defined as adolescents (Tatum, 2014). Meaningful texts are needed, but do not necessarily solve the issue of poor instruction; DLEs in tandem with texts that can be enabling have the ability to provide meaningful literacy experiences. Enabling characteristics move the students away from solely a socioemotional response, to an expansion of disciplinary knowledge that can shape a student's pursuits.

Tatum and Gue's (2012) study reconstructed a communal approach in a summer institute intended to engage 12 adolescent boys between the ages of 12–17 using reading

and writing texts. Focus on student engagement with texts that were used as models were also observed. Students were asked questions regarding how they thought their writing had changed and the impact the institute had on them. Many students said they felt smarter, or more powerful; they realised they had a voice and that it matters. Many were honest in their writings which depicted very sad home life situations and experiences. But their writing was a way to self-soothe and gain a better sense of self "I can already know what I'm able to do", (Tatum & Gue, 2013, p. 132).

Overall, most of their writing tackled issues of ethnic and racial identity, violence, and injustice. Students essentially found power in the platform provided to them through this summer institute. I think it is important to ask the students how they are experiencing the dialogic literacy experience, as this allows them to engage with the process itself, making them cognisant of what, how, and why they are experiencing what they are. Providing a communal space in conjunction with specific texts, like this study, can also help with students' engagement.

Some of studies show that Black boys' literate identities or literacy practices are often misunderstood. Some studies show Black boys writing rap lyrics, or getting tattoos as their literacy practice but it recognised in the classroom. As a literacy act, even though it is an expression of their literate identity (Kirkland, 2009, 2013; Kirkland & Jackson, 2009). They are then penalised or described as not being engaged (Kirkland, 2013). There are ways to build those relationships with text and literacy whilst giving them room to be their authentic selves. Studies consisting of Black boys and literacy such as Kirkland (2009, 2013) or Tatum and Gue (2012), for example, either have room for DLEs, or have

elements of them within the study, which shows me the value and pertinence of dialogic literacy experiences.

Dialogic Literacy Experiences: Inside and Outside of Schools

Rosenblatt (1938) argued for the importance of the meaning that readers take solely from texts (Rosenblatt (1938). Later on in her research, however, Rosenblatt (1994) emphasised the importance of the social dimension of readers' response. From an instructional lens, something needs to take place where interaction and experience can contribute to this meaningful exchange with text and learning (Bakhtin, 1992; Gee, 1989; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Historically, men and women were in literacy groups and collaboratives (Muhammad, 2012) to discuss each other's works, as well as other authors; it seemed that more meaning happened within community. Dialogue can and has taken place in multiple contexts and settings and has been successful; but my site of dialogue is the classroom. Research shows that "in a dialogic setting participants will spontaneously react to each other's ideas, adding detail to given reasons, qualifying general statements, or finding flaws in each other's arguments" (Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2012, p. 221). These are all important and valuable ways of engaging with text and each other, and one can see how this could nurture one's role with texts.

Theoretical Framework

I draw on dialogism (Bakhtin, 1986) and positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré)& van Langenhove, 1999) as theoretical frameworks for this study. These frameworks are appropriate for examining how dialogic literacy experiences shaped boys' relationships with texts. Bakhtin offers that dialogism is social in nature. It involves communication with other works, oneself, and others. Dialogism also seeks to interact

with other works and voices, to make meaning, inform, or alter it. Dialogism was chosen as a framework because I wanted to examine communication moves or patterns between the boys, their exchanges with one another, their intersubjectivity, how they asked, or how they responded to each other's thoughts and ideas. A dialogic framework complemented by positioning theory was useful for analysing the dialogic learning experiences.

Positioning Theory

Davies & Harré (1990) define positioning as:

> the process of ongoing construction of the self through talk, particularly through 'the discursive construction of personal stories that make a person's actions intelligible and relatively determinate as social acts and within which the members of conversations have specific locations. (p. 183)

Positioning theory salient here because identities are not only constructed in and through "activity and movement in and across spaces" (Moje et al., 2009, p. 430), but also "in the ways people are cast in or called into particular positions in interaction, time, and spaces, and how they take up, or resist those positions" (Moje et al., 2009, p. 430). Students (Black and otherwise) could benefit from understanding their position to text and their academic selves, the world and their peers, in order to understand their multiple identities better and optimally engage with text (Harré & Davis, 1990; Wortham, 2006).

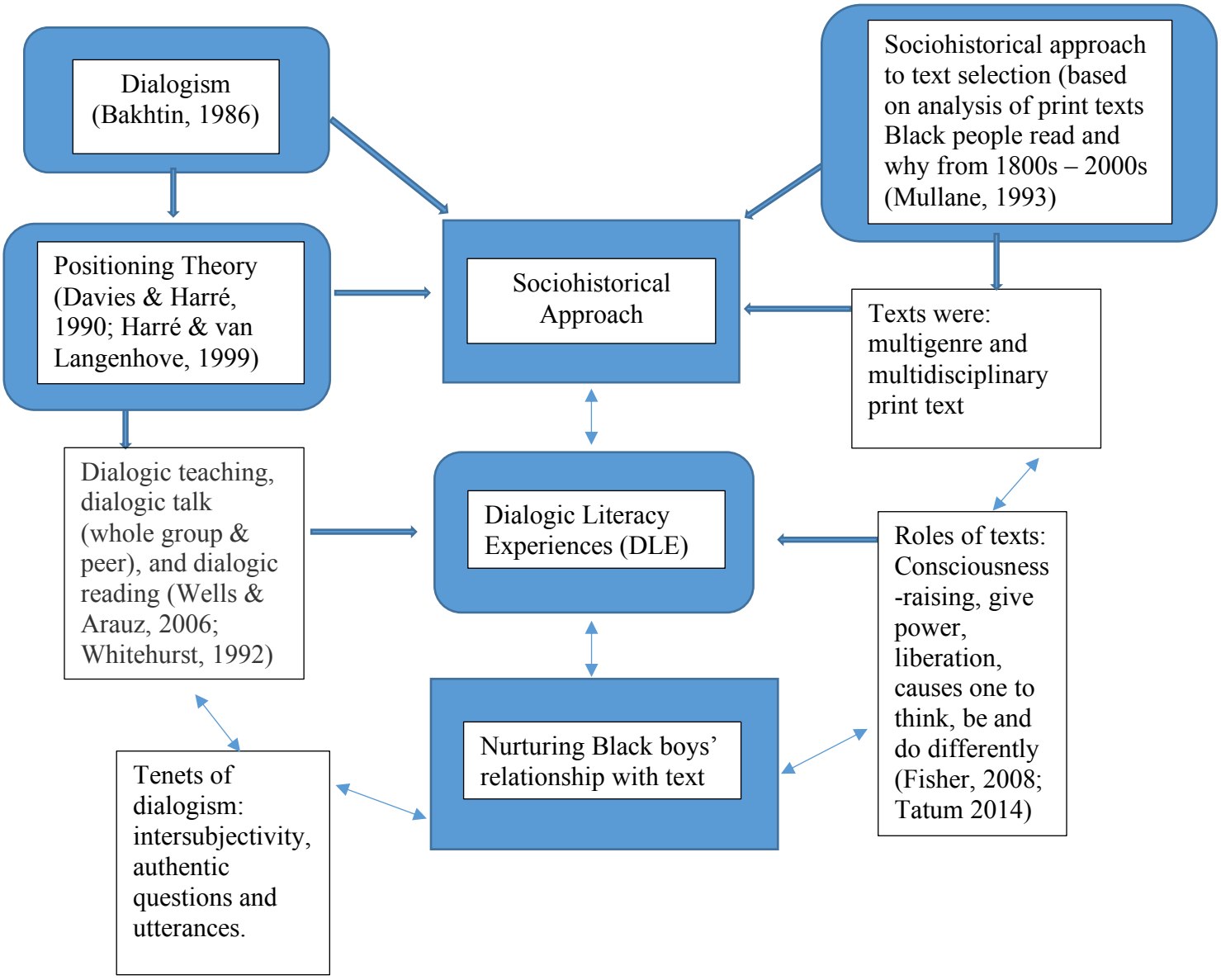
Davies & Harré say,

> Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story lines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned. (1990, p. 46)

One can see how one's positioning towards text, the world or self, can be deeply impactful. These are all important factors in how I was cognisant of the positioning of the boys and how I made them aware of their positioning to the text.

Gee found that "Texts and various ways of reading them do not flow full-blown out of the individual soul (or biology); they are social and historical inventions of various groups of people. One always learns to interpret texts of a certain type in certain ways" (Gee 2014, p. 48). The traditional view of literacy is conceptualised as more in the head/individualistic ability than society (Gee 2014, p.42). This is despite the fact that the individual acquired it in a societal context. Positioning theory with dialogism, theoretically, seems like a brilliant pedagogical move towards nurturing Black boys' relationship with text. Therefore, I used discourse analysis to see how identity unfolds. Identity, in this sense, would be as a learner, or reader, or literacy learner. This is because text, literacy, identity and one's positioning both towards themselves and others as literate beings, and towards text, are all intertwined.

Figure 1. Theoretical and Methodological Conceptualisation of Research Study



Note. The sociohistorical approach refers to texts selection, whereas dialogism and positioning theory is how I set up and analysed the study. Through the marrying of the two theories, and the sociohistorical grounding in selecting texts, I created a theoretical and pedagogical framework coined, Dialogic Literacy Experiences as a pedagogical and theoretical framework.

'Relationships with text' for this study is defined as having a bond and commitment to read any type of texts (genre or form) and a commitment to text that will

benefit the child. The benefits could include identity development, language, agenda building, compassion, empathy, making global and local connections, self-image/self-worth, empowerment, academic and personal growth, self-discovery, or just helping them understand the world more. The options are plentiful. I don't want it to be something fleeting, but a life-long, established connection to text and reading; or a love, admiration or willingness to wrestle with it and for it. For them to see the necessity of what and how texts affect or have the potential to affect their lives. From my own experience, I know the relationship can be immediate, but I also know this is not the case for everyone.

Summary

Research supports that dialogic literacy experiences have had a significant effect and relevance inside and outside of classrooms (Alexander, 2005; Linell, 2009; Muhoney et al., 2016; Sedova et al., 2014. Present every day experiences and policies are shaped by dialogue -- whether verbally or textually. Therefore, I want to examine the impact dialogic literacy experiences have on building and fostering Black boys' relationships with text to increase understanding of the roles of texts in their lives. There have also been very successful communal spaces for learning, and book club models (Raphael & McMahon, 1994) that are similar to my study.

While multiple bodies of literature provide guidance for examining Black Boys' relationship with texts, there is little to no research that has examined integrating these separate literatures. This study aims to incorporate findings across the literatures to create an instructional framework that aims to nurture Black boys' relationships with text.

Therefore my research question for this study is: **how do dialogic literacy experiences shape 4th and 5th grade Black boys' relationships with text?**

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

*"Fostering the development of students' abilities to construct and communicate meaning represents a critical goal of education" (*Gavelek & Bresnahan, 2009, p.1).

Introduction and Overview

This study was designed to examine how dialogic literacy experiences shaped fourth- and fifth-grade Black boys' relationships with texts. The boys were recruited from a six-week university Summer Academic Program (SAP henceforth) from July 2018 through August 2018. The boys were then pulled out during their lunch break to participate in these dialogic literacy experiences for five weeks. The boys and I referred to this aspect of the summer program as the 'Dialogic Literacy Club.' The boys met for 1-hour sessions on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday or a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday depending on the SAP's scheduling.

The students and I read texts together orally during the dialogic literacy experiences. I then asked the boys to write down two or three questions based on the readings. I initiated dialogic talk by asking them to share their questions or thoughts, as well as asking them authentic questions about what they were discussing with each other and myself. This was designed to move students toward reciprocity and intersubjectivity (Bakhtin, 1986; Wells, 1992). I participated in the dialogic discussions by guiding the boys through a dialogic literacy experience. I monitored their reading, talking, writing by and my own instruction by video recording, to ensure it was dialogic in nature, through the use of analytic memos and video recordings.

Case Study Design

I employed a qualitative case study design for this study. The aim of this study was to ascertain how. Only certain boys were able to participate in this specific study where we read texts that were selected from a particular criteria. The participants were

Black boys in fourth- and fifth-grade who self-identified as 'good readers" all recruited from the same SAP at an urban university.

The case study methodology was best suited for understanding of each individual's experience in the DLEs because I was able to listen to their points of views, experiences and ideas. An analysis of case study data afforded me the opportunity to identify themes and patterns happening with the individual boys and the group (within and cross case analysis). It also enhanced transferability, as it is important to see if research can be transferred to other contexts and settings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This was significant for describing multiple aspects of the DLEs and how the boys' relationships with the texts were shaped. I was able to take an up-close and in-depth view of the DLEs and factors contributing the boys' dialogue as it related to contextual conditions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

As a literacy researcher, I remain true to a philosophy that sees value in methodological pluralism but with a more in-depth comprehension of the significance of situational uniqueness in each educational research problem and the need to align research questions with paradigms and methods that are most suited to inform the research aims. It is also important to note that methods are not isolated instruments or tasks one must perform, but are connected to research questions, which are shaped by one's philosophical worldviews embedded with epistemological assumptions. Each approach or plan of a proposal to conduct research includes the intersection of worldviews, research study design, and specific methods for collecting and analysing data which translates the approach into practice (Creswell, 2009, 2013; Maxwell, 2009). While literacy research consists of quantitative and qualitative methods which are

important characteristics to the field, both have the potential to impede or promote solutions to social problems. Good research also seeks to provide change through the above instruments. This can be instructionally, pedagogically, curricular, or policy in education. This was my intention in this case study to examine how dialogic experiences shape Black boys' relationships with texts.

The Elementary Boys, Recruitment and Research Setting

Research Setting

This five-week study was conducted at a SAP offered at a public urban research university in a large urban city. There were university students present for their summer classes, as well as other students from 2nd–12th grade for the SAP. I met and picked the boys up from the cafeteria toward the end of their lunch break. 2nd–6th grade of this SAP had their lunch at the same time, so it was busy and sometimes difficult to locate the boys. Once I located them, I would have them line up, then we would ascend three flights of stairs to the classroom where the study took place.

The building was maze-like, with concrete steps and walls, and sporadic pieces of art and attempts at décor. The room was set out as a small lecture-style classroom on the third floor of a cold, dingy building. The boys liked the room, but I wanted it to be less lecture-style and more integrative, or one big table where we would all face each other so I would not be seen as just teacher or instructor, but also a participator. This was the only room SAP said was available for the times I needed it for the DLEs. They also did not want the boys crossing the road to other classrooms and other buildings belonging to the university

The room had a projector at the front next to the podium and the classroom computer where I stood. There are three rows of seats and to get to them, you must climb steps as they go upwards as you reach the back of the class. There is a divide in the middle of the class that gives space for people to walk up the steps and find their seats. There are five seats on either side of each row, so 10 seats in total per row. Thirty seats fill the small room. The boys filled the first two rows of seats, with three boys on the right side of the second to last row, and two boys on the left side of the same row; then one boy on the right side of the first row, and one boys on the left side of the first row. The seats, where the boys sat were facing me, as well as the projector and whiteboard. The chairs had their own mini desks for boys to write on. The chairs themselves could not be moved, however. The space was small, but not cramped, giving an intimate classroom feel.

The boys were sat in these separate chairs which were set for individual working conditions. They were sat far enough away from each other so that they could not see what each person to side or front of them was writing, but close enough to have a personal conversation with the person to the side of them. Because their chairs could not move, they had to face the front of the class, meaning that they could only see the back of the person sitting in front of them—unless that person turned around to directly face them. It was difficult for me to join them in this seating plan because it would mean my back would be facing the majority of them as I read to them.

Figure 2. The Research Setting

Researcher's Role

My role was "researcher-participant-listener-advocate" (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2014). The DLEs were set out so I would read to the boys and ask them questions or explain terms they may not have heard of before. But then I would turn it over to them to make comments or ask each other questions, and listen to their answers, concerns, and engagement with the text. When I did not know answers to their questions, I fielded it to them, as I was participant, too. I spoke to the boys often, and very rarely finished a reading without asking them questions to see if they understood what was happening. I only sat with them once because of how the room was set up; I stood up front of the classroom, but often leaning forward or standing casually to make the space feel more like a club than a classroom lesson. I walked around when the boys were writing and

asked them questions about what they had written. We had good dialogue where what they said often made me think and I would convey that to them.

I had to be cognisant of my role as facilitator and how I positioned myself towards the students and texts. I did not want to come across as the expert because I wanted them to have the freedom to explore their thoughts and ideas without feeling like I was trying to correct them or steer them a certain way. My role sometimes shifted; I had to be aware of what was needed for each experience. I found myself oscillating between coach, encourager, curious learner, challenger, listener, advocate and story-teller. I made sure I reverted back to asking the boys to share their thoughts, as well as dialoging with them if I felt that I was encroaching on expert and staying there too long.

The Elementary Boys

I recruited seven nine- and ten-year old African American boys for the study through purposeful selection (Creswell, 2002; Light et. al,. 1990). The participant number was deliberately small to ensure intimate DLEs that will allow time for all students to participate, ask questions, and discuss their writings within the allotted time frame for each study. The boys were preparing to enter into 4th and 5th grade, and had already completed the academic year. The criteria for participation were:

1. Participant described himself as "good reader" or parents and/or teacher describe student as "good reader"
2. Six to eight 9-10 years old (going into 4th-and 5th-grade)
3. African American or Black immigrant descent

I used the "good reader" criteria because developmentally, they could get frustrated by the texts and level of comprehension needed for a meaningful dialogic literacy experience. The African American or Black immigrant is to ensure I am inclusive of multiple Black identities and people; My intent was to have a variety of identities and people, but this is by no means representative of all African Americans or Black Immigrants. I recruited six African American boys, and one first generation Black immigrant (seven total).

Recruitment Process

I worked with the director of the SAP to recruit boys who were eligible for the study based on the desired criteria. I contacted the parents of all eligible boys via email initially.

If the parents were interested, they emailed me back; if they had any questions, or required more information, I called them to discuss the study further. Otherwise, I emailed them back with the specifics of the study. During the call or within email exchanges, ascertained again if their child fit the desired criteria. I also needed verbal permission to ask screening questions, so I used introductory language to gain verbal permission. Once this information was ascertained, I sent them the assent and consent forms. I met the parents of the boys eligible for the study at the university where the study was to take place, and provided them and their child with an orientation of the study. All seven students were in one group, and participated in the same DLEs.

Table 2: Boys Recruited for Study

Participant Pseudonym	**Age**	**Grade**	**# of DLEs attended**
Jason Kant	9	4th	12/12

Robert Smith	10	5th	11/12
Lamar Tyson	9	4th	12/12
Shaun Godfrey	9	4th	12/12
Omar Seely	9	4th	12/12
Maxwell Alexander	9	4th	9/12
Dante Ford	10	5th	9/12
TOTAL	7		

Note. Each boy was assigned a unique pseudonym and shall be referred to by said pseudonyms from hence forth.

I will provide a brief profile of each elementary boy, focusing on how they appeared to be experiencing the DLEs. It shows their multiple identities they came into the study with and how this may have had an effect on how they navigated the experience. It also illustrates what perspectives and ideas each participant brought to the group that made the experience rich and varied. Even though I discussed positioning at the beginning of the study, it was clear that each participant naturally fell into a specific role within the study, even if they were all purveyors and receivers of knowledge from one another.

Jason (4th Grade). During the course of this project, Jason was consistently excited to be learning and reading. He was the only participant who did not mind missing lunch or activities to participate in the DLEs. He always wanted to read the book at home because he was naturally inquisitive and was deeply invested in the stories. He also said very profound things as he was trying to connect with the texts and process of DLE. He was a leader without meaning to be and often caused the class to think deeper with his

questioning and probing. He loved asking questions and linking what we learned to other comparable situations.

Robert (5th Grade). Initially, it was hard to gauge Robert's level of interest and ability as his stutter prevented him from sharing. But during the study, his confidence increased dramatically, especially when he realised he had information from a different perspective to share due to his mixed heritage (his father was half African American and half Japanese). I also was very encouraging and affirming every time he shared, and he grew to love sharing many details about his brother and family dynamics with the class, and me before or after the DLE. I believe this built trust and allowed him to open up more during Dialogic Literacy Club. He had very unique points of view in the ways he saw people and the world.

Lamar (4th Grade). Lamar would have very strong reactions to social justice topics raised in the texts. I often had to ask him why reacted viscerally. Lamar's recall was incredible throughout this process. He could remember almost every detail of what had happened in the text – even from the previous week's DLE. His recall meant he always had a good grasp on what we were talking about, but he tended to have more comments and observations than questions. He often brought his mother into the discussion and it was clear that she had influenced a lot of his thinking—especially when it came to racial and gender equality. He was a staunch supporter of women.

Shaun (4th Grade). Although born and raised in the US, Shaun's parents were born and raised in Nigeria. He is first-generation Nigerian-American. He has visited Nigeria many times as his father still lives there. He spoke a lot about his culture, and the stories his mother told him about their family, country and how it related to other

countries and cultures. He spoke about things happening globally and how it also related to what we were reading. He enjoyed being the purveyor of information, but also listened intently to other people's points of view. He often made powerful points that were deep and beyond his years, often referencing his mother and her opinions as something that shaped his own.

Omar (4th Grade). Omar very rarely held the book we were reading, but instead, loved to listen to me read aloud. He was always so riveted and emotionally invested in the text, but he was also really hard to get on board for the DLEs on days he just did not feel like it. He also was a class leader but he led through humour, and putting himself in the shoes of the character to say how he would have responded or handled the situation. He had many questions and thoughts and often corrected people's grammar or line of questioning. He was quite particular about how things should be 'done' in each DLE, and sometimes put others down if he felt their comments or questions were unwarranted. He probably had the most questions amongst the boys; he just had such a thirst to know everything. If something wasn't adding up or making sense, he was not afraid to ask clarifying questions. It was almost impulsive as he was intensely curious.

Maxwell (4th Grade). Although he was quiet, I know he had a lot of thoughts, which he confirmed whenever he would share. He would be stirred to share only when he deeply disagreed or agreed with someone, or he thought someone was disrupting his, or another participant's learning. He was very mature for his years, and revealed through his writing that he understood everything happening in the text, but just felt more comfortable sharing it in writing than verbally. He was more of an observer, taking in the moments. He sometimes got impatient with Omar's joking, or Jason and Omar's chatter.

His father completed a PhD at an urban university, so he understood the research process pretty well and wanted to enjoy the Literacy Club as he seemed to have a really good grasp on why it was happening.

Dante (5th Grade). He joined after the first two DLEs as his father really wanted him to be a part of the study. He did not struggle catching up with the class and would complete the writing and question section of the Response Log before I asked him. He was able to quickly synthesise information and convey that in writing. He said he enjoyed reading but only for informational purposes—particularly to improve his soccer strategies. He was disciplined and got on with his work like clockwork. He was friendly and joined in with the classroom banter, but knew when to work, too. He rarely pushed back on other people's thoughts and ideas, but either listened or agreed . He did have many questions, but would only ask them when I facilitated that part of the DLE. He took pride in his work, however, often handing it to me first.

Dialogic Literacy Experiences (DLEs)

Each DLE (12 in total) consisted of the following elements:

Guided Dialogic Literacy Experiences: Reading. The dialogic literacy experiences consisted of reading, group discussions, and writing. We read texts together using an adapted PEER approach (Whitehurst, 1992). The PEER sequence consisted of:

- Prompting students to say something about the book
- Evaluating the response
- Expanding the response by rephrasing their words and adding information to it, and,

- Repeating the prompt to ensure that the student had learned from the added information

Students read texts each lesson. I gave them some prompts that are typically utilised in dialogic reading (PEER sequence): recall prompts, wh-prompts (what, who, why, where), and distancing prompts (Whitehurst, 1992). I wrote these on the whiteboard for each DLE and asked them what they were each time.

- Recall prompts were questions about what happened in the text. These prompts helped students to understand what happened in the text (story plot and sequence of events), and were used at the beginning and/during the reading of the text.
- Wh- prompt usually began with what, where, when, why, and how questions. Wh-questions taught students new vocabulary and helped them to engage with the text on multiple levels.
- Distancing prompts were used to ask students to relate their experiences outside of the text to the words or pictures in the text.

Guided Dialogic Literacy Experiences: Dialogic Talk and Instruction. Dialogue is spontaneous. The teacher can never know how students will react to their input. Thus, there were no prescribed questions for the students. I asked authentic questions, which encouraged reciprocation and experience what the students are experiencing. Whilst thinking of teaching dialogically and facilitating dialogic talk, it was important for me to

teach the students some of the tenets of dialogism and dialogic talk. I focused on three specifically in the class:

Utterances. Is a connection in a perennial series of communication that is either responded to, or reacted to, furthering the contribution to previous utterances. I asked the students to be cognisant of this, trying to respond to each another and build on each other's comments, thoughts and discussion. This often worked well, and if it didn't happen, I reminded them to respond to their classmate's question, idea or thought. Disagreement and agreement happened, which was fine, because it indicated that the listener was actively listening, and understanding, as well as preparing to respond to the utterances of the speaker.

Intersubjectivity. I told each student to pose a question to each other; "each proposing a topic that the other treats as the current focus of joint attention and as the basis for a relevantly related contribution of his or her own" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 7). All of this was couched within a dialogic teaching frame. I used communication and student's language to endorse activity, enrich their thinking and enhance their overall understanding (Alexander, 2008).

I used dialogic teaching in communication in order to stretch the higher cognitive functions in the students (Sedova, et al., 2014). I used dialogic teaching to engage the students, enabling them to be autonomous and confident learners.

Authentic Questions. A dialogue cannot be prescribed - this would be disingenuous. A teacher doesn't know how their students will respond, thus it was important to know that with authentic questioning, there should and would not be a prescribed or expected answer; the questions I asked (and encouraged the students to ask

verbally or write down), were open to interpretation and did not necessarily have a 'right or wrong' answer. I carried out what is described above (dialogic talk, instruction and reading) which I believed helped to foster an overall, holistic dialogic literacy experience. I used the schedule below:

Table 3: Activities of the Dialogic Literacy Experience Two-to-Three Times a Week

1:30-1:35 – Introduction	Warm up/reminder of what we are doing/text selection.
1:35-1:55 – Whole class reading together as a class.	I read aloud and students followed. I engaged students with the PEER sequence reading.
1:55-2:00 – Students wrote initial thoughts and questions about text	**Student writing** – student were asked to write what they thought about the text, and why. They were also asked to write 2-3 questions they had about the text (2-3 so it generates rich discussion, and really gets them thinking deeply about the text). This was their dialogic response within themselves and the text directly. This was to help them provide authentic questions that everyone else could partake in answering. Sometimes they wrote questions whilst I read to them because the questions were coming to them and I did not want to stifle it. At times, we stopped to discuss the text, and they would ask questions then, but I directed to write it on their response log so we could save it for dialogic discussion, and so it wouldn't interrupt the reading too much. Authentic questions: there should not have been a prescribed or expected answer; the questions were open interpretation and did not have a 'right or wrong' answer (e.g., if a student said what they were thinking a text is about, I asked why they thought that, and asked what the other students thought, so they could reach intersubjectivity, but also build on each other's thoughts).
2:00-2:20 – Whole Group dialogic exchange	**Whole Group dialogic discussion** structure – Intersubjectivity: Each student posed a question to each other; "each proposing a topic that the other treats as the current focus of joint attention and as the basis for a relevantly related contribution of his or her own" (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006, p. 7). Utterances: is a connection in a series of communication that was either responded to, or reacted to, which furthered the contribution to the previous utterance(s).

	Authentic questions: there should not have been a prescribed or expected answer; the questions were open interpretation and did not have a 'right or wrong' answer (e.g., if a student said what they were thinking a text is about, I asked why they thought that, and asked what the other students thought, so they could reach intersubjectivity, but also build on each other's thoughts).Whole group dialogic discussion occurs based on students' writings and questions.
2:20-2:30 – Response/Writing	**Student writing response** – student were asked to write one response on the text on what they have learnt, what they thought of it and why. They will also be asked to write a response about the DLE—any questions they still have, any thoughts that changed during the discussion, if they found the process helpful, if so, why. If not, why.

Text Selection

The types of texts were selected using a sociohistorical perspective that black boys have a storied history with texts in the social sciences and natural sciences (e.g., law, sociology, poetry, literature) and scientific texts (e.g., biology, medicine) (Douglass, 1950; Tatum, 2009). I wanted the boys to be able to discuss any texts put in front of them. Based on this sociohistorical orientation, the students got a choice of 10 books I selected for them, and had to choose five out of these 10 texts (5-weeks, so five texts); I gave them choices in order to give them some autonomy. Texts were a wide range of genres within fiction and nonfiction: expository texts, informational texts, interviews, news reports, autobiographies, biographies, novels, poetry, novellas, and fiction, (all print text). Students were to select these five texts of sociology and scientific disciplines, across a 5-week span. The selected texts were by authors across the globe, including the African diaspora, and local authors, exposing them to texts on a global and local level. Also, to have access to different world-view points to increase their knowledge and

understanding of the world. I had to ask myself "why these texts for these Black boys, at this time in life?" Based on my experiences teaching Black boys in grades 3–5 for two years prior to this study, I selected excerpts that ranged from 300–500 words. I did not want the students to become frustrated, but I wanted them to have enough text to frame the dialogue.

The criteria for selecting excerpts included: (1) choosing texts that have been specifically written for elementary to early middle school years, (2) choosing texts from conference lists that had come highly approved and (3) choosing texts that would appeal to at least two of their multiple identities (gender, cultural, community, academic and personal). I used Fry's readability to analyse text selection.

In Table 4 below, there is a selection of text I gave the students to read, and the bolded ones are the texts they selected based on the blurb I read to them. Initially, the plan was to read three- to -four excerpts per week from one book, as I mentioned above. I had one excerpt for the orientation session prepared but it was from *The Boy Who Loved Math* (see Appendix 13); I selected it to briefly model the structure of the DLEs, as we would not have had time for a full session. If it had also been the text they had selected (it was not), we would have just continued to read more excerpts from it. I had not pre-selected and finalised the other excerpts, however, as I wanted to see (1) which five texts they would choose, and (2) where the DLEs would take us in conversation, ideas and thoughts. The latter was important because based on the previous sessions and readings, there could be more suitable excerpts that could further expand our conversation or build on themes and concepts that had been established. Once they had voted on their five texts, we had approximately 10 minutes left of the orientation session, and each boy

unanimously wanted to read *Child Soldier: When Boys and Girls are Used in War*, by Michael Chikwanine, with the little time we had left.

But upon starting *Child Soldier,* they were engrossed and requested to read the entire book instead of excerpts. They requested this be the case for all five books they selected. Therefore, I purchased the books for the boys. I thought it was important for them to have the books in their hands if we were going this route; I also knew that there was a chance that we would not cover all of the five texts.

We attempted to cover one book per week, and were successful for the most part. The chapter book they chose was dense, so we only covered a third of it. They had to come to a general consensus amongst themselves based on the brief blurb I read to them about each text. It is important to note that this was decided because many elementary school children do not get to select their own texts (Ollman, 1993) in the classroom, so it was an intentional effort not to be as prescriptive in my instructional approach. I wanted to give them choice—even if it was from a selection of texts I had chosen; this still provided them with an opportunity to select a text that was of interest to them, and therefore possibly increase reading engagement (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999).

The texts were selected with multiple identities in mind (community, gender, cultural, personal and academic, (Tatum & Gue, 2012), was appropriate age-level, consciousness-raising as well as had the potential to spark their curiosity about their local and global surroundings.

Regarding the multiple identities, I think it's incredibly important—given the history of text selection in US classrooms—to choose texts that actually cater to the identities of the students reading them, as an access point into the text (Florio-Ruane,

2001). Many studies illustrate the salience of using texts that cater to multiple identities of students of colour really helps with engagement, motivation and achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009; Moje et al., 2008; Skerret & Bomer, 2011; Tatum & Gue, 2012). I therefore, chose texts that appealed to at least two of their identities, so they had more than just one way of entering the text. I also chose texts that I aimed to be enabling for them, even though I did not know if it would be enabling until after they read it. The term "An enabling text is one that moves beyond a sole cognitive focus—such as skill and strategy development—to include a social, cultural, political, spiritual, or economic focus." (Tatum, 2006, p. 3). An example of an enabling text is taken from Boys College. It was to do with the brain and déjà vu. This text gave a deeper meaning to something that most of them had experienced (déjà vu is reported to start at the age of eight) but did not understand how or why it happened. They had a better understanding of themselves and how their brain works. The text also gave the multiple reasons why it happened, but also gave them an agenda—how to stop it from happening, or to know what to do when it happened. These must-read enabling types of texts are characterised in the following way: "They are intellectually exciting for both students and teachers, they serve as a roadmap and provide apprenticeship, they challenge students cognitively, and they help students apply literacy skills and strategies independently" (Tatum, 2006, p. 3).

Below are the 10 texts that I had chosen for this study, which fit the text selection criteria I outlined above. As mentioned, the boys got to choose five texts from this selection.

Table 4: Text Selection and Rationale

Title of Text	Genre	Reasons for selecting text
The Participant Who Loved Math – The Improbable Life of Paul Erdos by Deborah Heligman	Science/math children's non-fiction literature	Engages gender, personal and academic identities. Shows how math can and is used daily. But also shows another narrative about boys and math, hence potentially engaging their personal and academic identity.
Malala's Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai	**Sociology/history**	**Engages personal, academic and community identities. Malala is speaking for those who have no voice, or the marginalised in society. Students get to understand the importance of education as a basic human right.**
Black Pioneers of Science and Invention by Louis Haber	Science/biography/history	Engages personal, academic, cultural and gender identities. Students get to understand and know about things they use on the daily was invented by a Black person. This is identity affirming, and inspiring. Should cause them to want to be, do, think differently.
Inside Out and Back Again by Thannha Lai	Juvenile fiction/Poetry Sociology/history	Engages personal, academic, and cultural identities. The protagonist's experiences in the classroom mirror some Black boys – where their cultural background and language is seen as a deficit instead of an attribute.
Child Soldier: When Boys and Girls are Used in War - Michel Chikwanine & Jessica Dee Humphreys	**Autobiography/biography/sociology/history**	**Engages gender, personal and academic identities. This text brings the global to local, but helps students to see things outside of their own lives – involving children their own age. It is a powerful, shocking text that causes a visceral reaction amongst students. It also helping students to understand their own rights, and think about how they should be treated (Sociology).**

Gifts from the Enemy – by Trudy Ludwig	Autobiographic/biographical historical/picture book	Engages gender and personal identities. It speaks of a true account of a holocaust survivor's experiences in prison. The book covers themes of social justice and how small acts of kindness can be powerful and affect change – even in the most trying situations.
Young, Gifted and Black – by Jamie Wilson	**Sociology/history/science**	**Engages personal, academic, cultural and gender identities. Students get to see people who look like them as heroes, represented in the past and present day. It is inspiring and they should feel empowered to discover what they too can achieve.**
We are Like the Clouds – by Jorge Argueta	Poetry/history/sociology	Engages personal, academic and gender identities. The boys will get to understand what it means to be a refugee and how/why it happens. It involves children, so they should be able to relate and empathise and have powerful questions about it. They will understand that there are different ways people do not feel like they belong.
Schomburg: The Man Who Built A Library – by Carole Boston Weatherford	**History/biography**	**Engages personal, academic, cultural and gender identities. Students will see that there are books written by Black people and that there are/were brilliant Black writers. They will also learn what happened with literature during Harlem Renaissance.**
House of Robots: Robots Go Wild! - By James Patterson and Chris Grabenstein	**Science/fiction**	**Engages personal, academic and gender identities. The book involves themes of problem solving and competition. They will get to engage with how problem solving and academia can be applied in many different ways.**

Note. In total, there are six social texts and four scientific texts.

Figure 3. Text Selection Options

The students chose the following texts: *Malala's Magic Pencil*, and *Child Soldier: When Boys and Girls are Used in War!*, *Schomburg: The Man Who Build A Library, House of Robots: Robots Go Wild, Young, Gifted and Black*. The selected texts varied in genre and disciplines as they consisted of science, sociology and history, and were chapter books, autobiographies, biographies and graphic novels. There was an African Puerto Rican author, a Pakistani author, an African American author, a White American author, and a Nigerian author. The three books we managed to cover were the first three in the list above, and we only got through a quarter of *House of Robots: Robots Go Wild!* because it was a dense chapter book that sparked a lot of discussion and humorous discourse. The authors of these books were varied and of Nigerian, Afro-Puerto Rican, Pakistani, White American and African American descent.

Initially I had chosen a speech Malala Yousafzai had given at the US summit, but upon realising the boys wanted to get through whole books, I decided on *Malala's Magic Pencil* instead.

The boys chose the texts based on the bibliographies I edited and read to them, as well as showed them in my PowerPoint presentation for the orientation. The books were also displayed at the front of the class for them to see. The boys said they chose *Child Soldier* because it looked "juicy", like it would be a very fascinating read. They also liked the fact that it was an autobiography, and the writer, Michael, was still alive. They chose *Malala's Magic Pencil* because they were intrigued about it being set in Pakistan and why she would need a magic pencil to make everyone happy. Some of the boys had heard of her being shot by the Taliban, so they wanted to see what this story was about. The boys chose *Young, Gifted and Black* because they wanted to hear the stories of inspiring Black people from the past- and-present. They said they were aware of some stories, but wanted access to more. They chose *House of Robots* because it was about robots and a boy who was in school, like they were. They were also intrigued by the word 'invention' in the blurb and were excited about what the robot was like. They selected *Schomburg's Library* purely because of the first line of the blurb "Where is our historian to give us our side?" They had immediate questions about that line and what it meant for Black people to have their side of the story told in history; they questioned who told our story if it was not Black people as the first line insinuated.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

Collecting documents (researcher analytic memos and student writing artefacts). I gave each student a response log which consisted of them writing down any questions they had, any new words they learnt, whether they got smarter about anything during the DLE, as well as their thoughts on the texts and DLE. They had the same response log printed out to complete each time that we met and I collected it after each DLE. Having their personal thoughts on paper provided rich, thick data (Denzin, 2001) about their ongoing dialogic process between themselves and the text. Their artefacts also helped me refine what factors of the dialogic literacy experience (DLE) was most useful for each student and enabled me to incorporate the things they found the most useful more.

Regarding my analytic memos, I used it as an opportunity to write about the following:

- my study's research questions
- any emergent categories, themes or concepts
- any problems with the study
- the final report for the study (Saldaňa, 2009, p. 140, as cited in Saldaňa, 2011; Saldaňa, 2011, p.102)

I wrote in my personal notebook immediately after each DLE.

Collecting video recordings. I recorded each DLE from beginning to end and uploaded the recording onto my laptop. I placed the video recorder in the corner of the

room so I could see each boy clearly. The video recordings revealed how the process of DLE was affecting the boys and what about it was meaningful, and in what ways.

Collecting interviews and surveys. I audio recorded students' pre- and post-interviews. The questions were semi-structured, each boy had the questions in front of them so they could also look at it. I wrote notes as they answered the questions. I also transcribed each of the interviews. Each boy had the survey to complete anonymously on paper. I explained to them what each statement meant, and they filled out the rest. They placed it face-down on my desk once they had completed it.

Pre- and post-interviews were helpful in indicating what they thought about their relationship with texts prior to the study, and their relationship with texts after being in a DLE. It was an important factor in telling me whether they found the DLE meaningful or not, and why/how.

Table 5: Data Collection Table

Data collection	**Types of data**	**Amount/ Frequency**	**Analysis**
Participant observation	Analytic memos/video transcriptions of DLEs	12 1-hr lessons	Utterances, intersubjectivity, authentic questions, enabling text, and consciousness-raising (analytic memos *and* video) Discourse analysis
Student artefacts	Written (see Appendix 6)	12 per participant for a total of 5-weeks (20 DLEs)	Discourse analysis

Semi-structured interviews	Written with questions already set (see Appendix 4 & 5)	One pre (5 minutes per participant) One post (5 minutes per participant)	Discourse analysis
Surveys	Written with questions already set (see Appendix 7)	One post-study (10 minutes)	Likert scale
Dialogic conversations/dialogic talk	Video transcriptions of DLEs	Two-to-three times per week/lesson (20minutes per lesson)	Utterances, intersubjectivity, authentic questions, enabling text, and consciousness-raising

Table 6: Data Collection for Each Elementary Boy

Boys	**Pre-interview**	**Post-interview**	**Survey**	**Response logs (written artefacts)**	**Video recordings**
Maxwell	1	1	1	9	9
Shaun	1	1	1	12	12
Jason	1	1	1	12	12
Lamar	1	1	1	11	12
Omar	1	1	1	12	12
Dante	1	1	1	10	10
Robert	1	1	1	11	11

Note. Four out of seven students did not miss any DLEs and therefore all data collection for them was full and complete. 76 written artefacts, seven surveys, 12 video recordings, seven pre-interviews, seven post-interviews, and 12 analytic memos (not included in table).

Within and Cross Case Study Data Analysis

Coding for Utterances, Enabling Qualities, Consciousness-raising, Authentic Questions and intersubjectivity. I coded for tenets of dialogism that I believed were important to this study: utterances, intersubjectivity and authentic questions (also known or referred to as dialogic talk) within the video recordings of the dialogic discussions that took place in each DLE. I also coded for enabling qualities of text that lead to conversations that caused students to be, think or do differently, which worked in conjunction with consciousness-raising. I wanted to see how the text and conversation were raising their consciousness and helping them to think critically beyond themselves. I wanted to know how dialogism built or fosters a relationship with text? By coding the videos and dialogic discussion, I was able to distinguish themes, patterns, similarities and differences in what characteristics of the DLE were useful and what each student's personal experiences were with text and dialogic discussions before and after the study. These analytic measures I took helped my study by possibly revealing how DLE makes Black boys feel, and therefore showed an aspect of how the DLE was meaningful to them, and how they read held any type of significance for them through the use of DLE.

Discourse analysis. I employed Wortham and Reyes' (2015) discourse analysis for the analytic memos, semi-structured interviews, and student artefacts for any emergent codes that were discovered. This was apt because this DA builds on the work of Bakhtin, (1981) on "voicing", and how it can be used as a tool for social change through language use; it also looks at identity and positioning. I also used DA to look at the way sentences and utterances combined to make texts and conversations (discourse), and how those interactions went beyond the speech event (Wortham & Reyes, 2015). It seems

social action beyond the speech event is revealed as constructed via speech—whether the boys are conscious of this or not. I did employ this DA critically however, because their notion of speech events closely aligns with Norman Fairclough's (2013) notion of *ideology,* which is a tenet of critical discourse analysis.

I analysed the data using a three-part approach that Wortham and Reyes (2015) speak of; firstly, I mapped narrated events, then I selected indexicals which pointed out relevant aspects of the context that gave me understanding of the speech event/context (referring to DLEs). I also contextualised the boys' utterances, then I configured the indexicals, sorting through which was the most plausible in terms of showing signs of social action taking place in the narrative event(s). I also identified the positioning of boys and the social action of narrating events meaning that I analysed how characters and boys inferred interactional and evaluative positions, which then helped me infer what types of social actions were being taken up by the boys during the DLEs.

Finally, I analysed before and after the study choice of words and how language was employed or generated (in interviews) to see if there are any changes in their identities, power relations or dynamics, and knowledge. I wanted to see if the boys' identity shifted over time through the speech events (DLEs).

Survey method. I employed a Likert scale survey in order to capture the general effectiveness of the DLE, or the Dialogic Literacy Club, which is how I framed it during recruitment. I used a survey in this study to triangulate the data. I wanted to see how the students viewed themselves in relation to the text, what relationship they felt they had with text, and if through DLE that relationship changed at all? Was it the text or the discussion or the whole experience that made a difference?

Table 7: Data Coding Table

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Intersubjectivity	Authentic questions	Consciousness-raising	Utterances	Enabling texts (Tatum, 2012)
Do students reach a point of agreement or disagreement? Do they take turns to be in each other's position? (To be the listener, then the talker?)	How do the students respond to or engage with authentic questions from the teacher? And other students? Are they asking authentic questions or do they respond to authentic questions?	Does their discussion include self, society and universe?	Are they building on each other's discussion, or referring to it? Are they reciprocating?	Does the text lead to discussion that enables them to think, be, or do differently?
"I think women should be super heroes!" (Jason) "No, I think there's a reason why most um…super heroes are men. It's better" (Omar)	"Why did white people write stuff like that about us?" (Maxwell)	"Some people are ghetto and stuff but I think it's because they didn't have a chance to do it a different way" (Shaun)	"I want to read it so badly!" (Jason) "I love this book" (Omar) "I want to know what happens!" (Lamar)	"What if Barack Obama wasn't the only black president? There were other Black ones…who..who passed as white?" (Shaun)

Note. I coded for the above a priori codes because they are pertinent tenets to the dialogic literacy experience according to the extant literature, and how Bakhtin (1986) delineated his theory of Dialogism. Even though Enabling texts (Tatum, 2012) and consciousness-raising are not tenets of dialogism, I wanted to explore and analyse them due to the types of the text selection I made and their effectiveness.

Coding Process

I employed an inductive coding approach (Saldaňa, 2013) with student artefacts, semi-structured interviews, analytic memos and the survey, as I wanted to note any codes that could emerge from the data that related to my research question. When I first

collected the data, I sorted them into their specific data sets. I then read through each of the data and made notes where and when I felt was necessary so I could make sense of the data as a whole. I then looked for themes and patterns that were prevalent in the data. Saldaňa (2013) describes themes as "*a phrase or sentence* that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means" (emphasis in the original, p.139), which is the definition I am using. This was an iterative process of seeing how the themes fit across all the data, and allowing it to shape and reshape my thinking and ideas around what it all meant.

In my coding of data I took into consideration key codes that were predetermined categories on an a priori basis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016), as well as codes that were emergent. I was coding for these specific tenets of dialogism (a priori) from data collected in the video recordings and analytic memos of each DLE: (1) utterances, (2) authentic questions, (3) enabling texts, (4) consciousness-raising, and (5) intersubjectivity; this was all related to discussion taking place. For example, was the conversation consciousness-raising? Were there enabling qualities of text that led to meaningful discussion? (see Table 7).

I continued to note emergent codes throughout the process, and used Wortham and Reyes' (2015) discourse analysis to help me code the pre-interviews, post-interviews, student artefacts, and my analytic memos.

I could have coded the a priori codes in the other data collected, but considering they were specifically to do with dialogic talk/dialogism, I decided that these codes would be best captured in the video transcriptions of the boys' discussion section, and my analytic memos where I was making note of the discussions taking place

I created an excel spreadsheet that had the horizontal axis as the following headings: dialogic codes, document type, number of times I used the codes, number of documents I used the codes, and textual evidence. On the vertical axis, I wrote: utterances, authentic questions, intersubjectivity, consciousness-raising, and enabling text. I then wrote 'open codes' further below for any emergent codes that would occur from the data (see Figure 4). This resulted in 74 open codes across all the data collection sources, so 79 including the a priori codes.

Figure 4. A Snapshot of First and Second Round of Coding in Progress

Dialogic Codes	Document Type	Number of times I used the codes	The
Utterances	analytic memo, video	analytic memo: 2 video: 97	
Authentic questions	pre-interview, post-interview response log, analytic memo, video	pre-interview: 2, post-interview: 4 response logs: 16 analytic memo: 8 video: 89	
intersubjectivity	pre-interview analytic memo, video	pre-interview: 1 analytic memo: 1 video: 50	
consciousness raising	post-interview, response log analytic memo, video	post-interview: 6 response logs: 12 analytic memo: 6 video: 63	
enabling qualities	post-interview response log analytic memo, video	post-interview: 1 response log: 1 analytic memo: 1 video: 10	
Open Codes			
dialogic talk	pre-interview, post interview, response log analytic memo	pre-interview: 2 post-interview 6, response logs: 2 analytic memo: 2	
personal identity	Pre-interview, post-interview, response log, analytic memo	pre-interview: 9 post-interview: 7, response log: 4, analytic memo: 1	
cultural identity	response log analytic memo,	response log: 1, analytic memo: 1	
academic identity	Pre-interview post-interview, analytic memo	pre-interview: 17, post interview: 3, analytic memo: 1	
gender identity	analytic memo	analytic memo: 1	
literate identity	post-interview response log analytic memo	post-interview: 1 response log: 1 analytic memo: 1	
Reader Identity	Pre-interview, post-interview response log, analytic memo	pre-interview: 31 post-interview: 6 response log: 1, analytic memo: 6	
Agency/autonomy	pre-interview anayltic memo	pre-interview: 5 analytic memo: 1	
Relationship with text/reading	Pre-interview	Pre-interview: 5	
Circumstantial enjoyment of reading	Pre-interview	Pre-interview: 1	
Learner identity	Pre-interview post-interview, response log analytic memo	Pre-interview: 23 post interview: 1, response log: 2 analytic memo: 2	
Sustaining literacy acts	Pre-interview, post-interview, response log	Pre-interview: 3 post-interview: 1 response log: 3	
Value/belief System	pre-interview	Pre-interview: 1	
efferent reading	Pre-interview	Pre-interview: 1	
genre of books	pre-interview, post-interview	Pre-interview: 4 post-interview: 2	
communal literacy /learning	Pre-interview, post-interview	Pre-interview: 4 post-interview: 5	
book selection	Pre-interview	Pre-interview: 1	
dle facilitating learning	Pre-interview	Pre-interview: 1	
learner as literacy citizen	Pre-interview	Pre-interview: 2	

Note. Each colour represents a theme I saw emerging, but some were recategorised within the categorisation table (Appendix 10), and shifted and sorted after that again. 'The number of documents I used the code,' and 'Textual Evidence' are not pictured in this coding spreadsheet snapshot; neither are all 79 codes and colour schemes. Green = Dialogic Literacy Experiences; Blue = Affective engagement; Orange = Intellectual engagement; Salmon = Literate Identity; Beige = Consciousness-raising/Global perspectives; and yellow = Communal learning

Upon careful review of the codes, I realised that some were duplicates, just worded differently, so I collapsed, sometimes giving them an overall new code that was more fitting. I then eradicated any codes that came from only one or two data sets, OR were only coded a maximum of seven times. I found this number to be too small in comparison to the other codes, and not really the focus of my study. I was surprised to find that 'enabling text' was not necessary to include as there were different codes that captured the boys' engagement with the text, and why this was so. It also did not feature in any of the data entry points, bar the video transcription, and this was only seven instances across 12 DLEs (12-hrs total) of the study. This was insignificant in comparison to it's a priori counterparts, whose numbers were all 50 and above.

At this point, it was clear that categories were needed to sort through the remainder of codes (36 were removed, so 43 remained), also known as the 'winnowing process' (Creswell, 2012). I created a data summary sheet so it would be easy to compile all the information. On the horizontal axis it consisted of: code, descriptor, category and textual evidence; whilst on the vertical axis it consisted of each of the categories I had selected. I selected five categories that answered my research question, or related to it in some way. I then selected descriptors for each category based on my own educated guess, as well as what I reviewed in literature (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). I knew that the category names or the descriptors could change, but it was used as a tool to help me assign those 43 codes to.

Assigning codes to each category was difficult, as the codes oftentimes overlapped, in which case, I allowed them to sit in two different categories until it made sense to remove them from one, or keep them in two. Once I had collated the codes from

my excel sheet and assigned them to specific categories, I found that two categories needed subcategories because they were talking about two different aspects of the DLEs, or two different types of engagement (see Appendix 10). I then sorted and categorised quotations taken from all data collection sources, and also assigned these to each category. Again, some overlapped, and some I put in a 'miscellaneous' file as I could not see where it would fit. But it was important to remain flexible throughout this coding process and be comfortable with the notion that some categories, quotations or codes may change, be moved or deleted all together (see Appendix 10).

Table 8: Data Source Codes and Themes

Themes	Artefacts (response logs)	Interviews (pre and post)	Survey	Analytic memos	Total
Affective and Intellectual engagement	Affective: 18 Intellectual: 56	Pre (Aff): 9 Post (Aff):12 Pre (Int): 71 Post (Int): 12 (104)	Affective: 6 Intellectual : 0	Affective: 11 Intellectual: 21	Affective: 56 Intellectual: 160 (216)
DLEs facilitating meaningful experiences	8	Pre: 6 Post: 32 (38)	21	25	92
Consciousness - raising/Global Perspectives	22	Pre: 0 Post: 6	7	6	41
Communal learning	1	Pre: 9 Post: 11 (20)	n/a	2	23
Sustaining literacy acts	3	Pre: 3 Post: 1 (4)	14	0	21
Total	108	168	48	65	393

From this table, it is clear which data source the themes and codes emerged from. With the survey, I coded for each theme by the nature of the statement they responded to. If 6 out of 7, or 7 out of 7 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' then I included that in my coding and theming process. The statements that I included were:

'I read a text that':

1. *I want to read again on my own* **(coded and themed as sustained literacy practice)**
2. *Made me want to do something for someone else* **(coded as agency and agenda building – not included in final categorisation of themes)**
3. *I continued to think about after I finished it* **(coded and themed as sustained literacy practice)**
4. *I felt a connection with* **(coded and themed as Affective engagement)**
5. *Opened my mind* **(coded and themed as consciousness-raising/global perspectives)**

As well as the latter portion of the survey where it stated:

'What helped me understand the text the most':

6. *The whole group discussion helped me* (**coded and themed as Impact of DLE)**
7. *The teacher's questions helped me* (**coded and themed as Impact of DLE)**
8. *The writing response helped me* (**coded and themed as Impact of DLE)**

With the video recordings, considering I was solely coding for the a priori codes (utterances, authentic questions, intersubjectivity, and consciousness-raising), I did not include the results in this table. Instead, I placed the codes into themes I had already categorised. I noted that particular authentic questions asked fell under certain themes of:

‘Affective and Intellectual engagement,’ and ‘Impact of DLE’. For example, at times the participant would ask a question pertaining to the wellness of the character, which was a personal or emotive connection to the text. Even though it fell under that larger umbrella of ‘Authentic questions,’ I still coded it as both ‘Affective engagement’ and ‘Authentic questions.’ In fact, authentic questions was the only a priori code that fit into multiple themes depending on the nature of the question asked. The other two a priori codes (intersubjectivity and utterances) fit into the theme of ‘Impact of DLE,’ whereas the last code ‘consciousness-raising’ became a theme/category in and of itself. Enabling text was eradicated/collapsed as a code, as I mentioned earlier.

Table 9: A priori Codes from Video Transcriptions

	Utterances	Intersubjectivity	Authentic Questions	Consciousness-raising	Total
Video Transcription	97	50	89	63	299

The table illustrates that the video transcription showed numerous instances whereby DLE was taking place. Therefore, it also illustrated the impact of DLE since utterances and intersubjectivity fall under dialogic talk, which I themed as ‘Impact of DLE’. As I mentioned above, consciousness-raising became a theme in and of itself because I also saw instances of it within other data sources.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In order to uphold credibility in my research, I employed peer-debriefing to increase the accuracy of my account of the DLEs (Bloomburg & Volpe, 2016). I had a fellow research colleague examine my analytic memos and ask me to look at my data in different ways. She also spoke to the primary theme of my findings before I articulated

what I believed it was to her; this was in regard to the Affective and Intellectual theme specifically. She reviewed and coded four of the boys' post-interviews based on my codes and definitions. She also had the same conclusion I did for one of my themes, only I had called it 'Head and Heart Connection,' and she had called it 'Affective and Intellectual engagement.' I decided to use the latter as more academic language use of what I was seeing.

In regard to interviews, I re-read their answer to them or repeated it verbally to make sure I had captured what they wanted to say. But I wanted to be careful not to put words in their mouths as I was cognisant that my role as researcher-observer could still impact what they wanted to say or convey. To that end, I triangulated multiple data sources to ensure the validity of my results.

I also conducted member-checks on the boys to help increase the validity of the study. I did this in the pre- and post-interviews by writing down their responses under each interview question (whilst also audio recording their interview), and then asking them to read my notes immediately after the interview was complete, to see if it lined up with what they were trying to convey. If it did not, I asked open, clarifying questions such as "ok, so what did you mean?" I also repeated their answer back to them during the interview to ensure I had accurately captured what they were saying.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the primary findings to the question, **how do dialogic literacy experiences shape 4th and 5th grade Black boys' relationships with text?** The results are based on 14 in-depth interviews, 76 student artefacts, 12 analytic memo entries, seven post-study surveys and 12 video transcriptions. The data collection came from multiple data entry points of the seven boys' responses to the DLEs (which consisted of PEER reading, authentic questions, dialogic talk/discussions, and student written response (response log) to the text and discussions), over a span of 5 weeks, and 12 1-hour DLEs. Two DLEs were reserved for interviews and surveys, in which no instruction and video transcription took place.

Findings Supporting the Research Question

The dialogic literacy experience (DLE) was a theoretical and pedagogical framework I created that was shaped conceptually by marrying characteristics of texts that Black authors, writers and activists across the diaspora read that they said changed their lives or saved their lives with characteristics of dialogism (i.e., dialogic talk, dialogic reading and dialogic instruction). I found it important to create a space for Black elementary boys to be able to ask questions and express themselves, whilst reading texts that could be enabling (Tatum, 2012) and consciousness-raising in order to nurture their relationship with text. Positioning theory plays a role here as it takes into account a boys' identity and how identity impacts how they position themselves towards the text, each other, the society, the world, and the discussions. I reminded the boys of their positioning throughout the study so that they were present and cognisant in the DLE process.

This present study was a study to see what would emerge in this particular data, using the DLE framework. What I see in the data are the themes noted below that emerged based on using DLE framework. Throughout this section, I am not making any causal connections, but rather focus on identifying how the boys made meaning through DLE framework. Therefore, I am not claiming that DLE is the only way to nurture Black boys' relationships with text. I am, however, illustrating how the boys' relationship with text was nurtured through DLE, by looking at the themes that emerged from the data. What I am offering here in this study are findings based on this framework with this data. I am confident of these findings and themes based on the data that I have, and the framework that I used.

Five primary themes emerged from this study concerning my research question and are defined in the table below including:

1. ***Affective*** and ***Intellectual*** engagement with texts
2. DLEs facilitated meaningful experiences with texts
3. Consciousness-raising and global perspectives
4. Communal learning
5. Sustained literacy practices

Table 10: Definitions of Themes

Theme	**Definition**
Affective and Intellectual Engagement	A combination of concentration, interest, and enjoyment of text being increased when affective, (personal or emotional) as well as an intellectual, (academic and cognitive) identities or domains were deepened. Affective is essentially personal identity or emotional connections to the text, often caused by relating on a personal level. Intellectual is mental or academic stimulation, where the boys feel they are learning something academically valuable, and deeply committed to problem-solving and exploration.

Meaningful DLEs	How the different aspects of the DLEs affected the boys' relationship with text. This includes the PEER reading sequences, authentic questions, dialogic talk (utterances and intersubjectivity), and writing. It's how all these elements within the dialogic literacy experience helped shape the boys' relationship with text.
Consciousness-raising/Global perspective	How the texts caused the boys to think about their self in relation to the world and the society in which they live. It was also how the books made them think about other people's situations across the globe and internationally, and oftentimes relating it to their own lives.
Communal Learning	How learning with other boys enhanced their own learning, or helped them become accountable to their and each other's learning process.
Sustaining Literacy Practices	Any literacy act that the boys have indicated that they will do or want to do once the study is over, or outside of school. It is the inspiration to continue their literacy learning on an individual level because of the study and texts

Table 11: Themes that Emerged from Boys' Data Sources

Themes	**Dante**	**Omar**	**Robert**	**Jason**	**Shaun**	**Lamar**	**Maxwell**
Affective and Intellectual engagement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Meaningful DLEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Consciousness-raising/Global Perspectives	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Communal Learning	**No**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	**No**
Sustaining Literacy Acts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note. I ascertained whether the boys' data sources fell into any of these themes by using the codes I had assigned to each theme (see Appendix 10) and cross-referenced that with the codes that emerged from the boys' data sources. Five out of seven boys had codes (from one or more of their data sources) that illustrate that all themes applied to them.

Discussion of the Emerging Themes

Throughout this research study I wanted the boys' voices to be heard and for them to know that it is important to have their voices heard and listened to. In an attempt to have multiple boys' perspectives heard and displayed, an array of quotations taken from their pre- and post-interview transcripts and video transcripts are used, as well as questions, commentary or thoughts they wrote down in their response logs. The survey, although filled out anonymously to assist with boys' authentic responses, are also included to capture the overall whole-group response to contextualise their experience with DLEs. Data was triangulated across multiple data sources. Before I present these findings, it's important to contextualise where the boys began. When they did their pre-interviews, many boys commented that they wanted to be part of the DLEs to improve their reading and/or grades (even after describing themselves as "good readers"), or that "I just needed to get my education up" (Lamar).
(Lamar). Or to tell others at school what they learned, or to make their teachers proud "I want to impress my teacher with the words that she never even knew" (Omar). Some even said they read texts that could help them with strategy—such as gaining strategies for playing sports, "sometimes might get my strategies from…umm whenever I do sports"
(Dante).

Most boys preferred comic books over other genres, while two boys said they also liked chapter books because "Um, when I read chapter books, since they have no pictures, I tried to like imagine it, what happened" (Shaun), and "I mostly read chapter books because they're long instead of shorter books" (Jason). One liked fiction or fantasy books as "I just like to let my imagination run wild" (Maxwell). While many of them

acknowledged that their relationship with texts needed some improvement "I just want to read more often" (Robert). Some said that they had a relationship with because reading "helps me want to read books more…. It helps me learn new words and get smarter...." (Omar); but he thought that "reading every day" would advance his reading even more.

What was clear amongst these findings was that each boys' academic, personal, literate and reading identity was prevalent in their responses or their engagement with the DLEs and text. So, while these findings show the primary themes that emerged from the data, the findings would not be what they are without the strong grounding of these boys' multiple identities shining through.

Affective and Intellectual Engagement

The boys' relationships with texts were nurtured by deepening their affective and intellectual engagement with texts. This meta-themed finding (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016) had two themes that I combined in order to adequately capture this finding, or what I saw happening in the data.

One of the primary findings of this study is that the boys' relationship with text were nurtured and deepened when they had intellectual and affective interactions or engagement with the text (see Table 10). This finding is significant due to the number of boys who reported how felt and what they thought in respect to the texts and the DLE as a whole.

They were highly impacted if their intellectual and affective domains or identities were engaged. I refer to these also as the engagement of the head and heart because of the academic or personal connection to the text.

Intellectual Engagement: New Concepts and Words

6 out of 7 of the boys commented that they were in the club to improve their reading and/or grades (even after describing themselves as "good readers"), but also found that they learned new words, "I learned new words like contraption and hyperbolic" (Maxwell). Not only that, but they learned new terms that were big and important concepts to grasp. During our discussion of *Malala's Pencil*, the topic of gender equality transpired because we were talking about how some cultures do not allow girls to go to school. The following conversation ensued:

Omar: You're not supposed to go to school as a girl? [shocked]

Jason: But …. girls are the ones who make people! [baffled]

Omar: But the first person in the world was a man!

I then taught them the term 'gender equality' to take the discussion to another level. We talked for a few moments about gender rights in different countries.

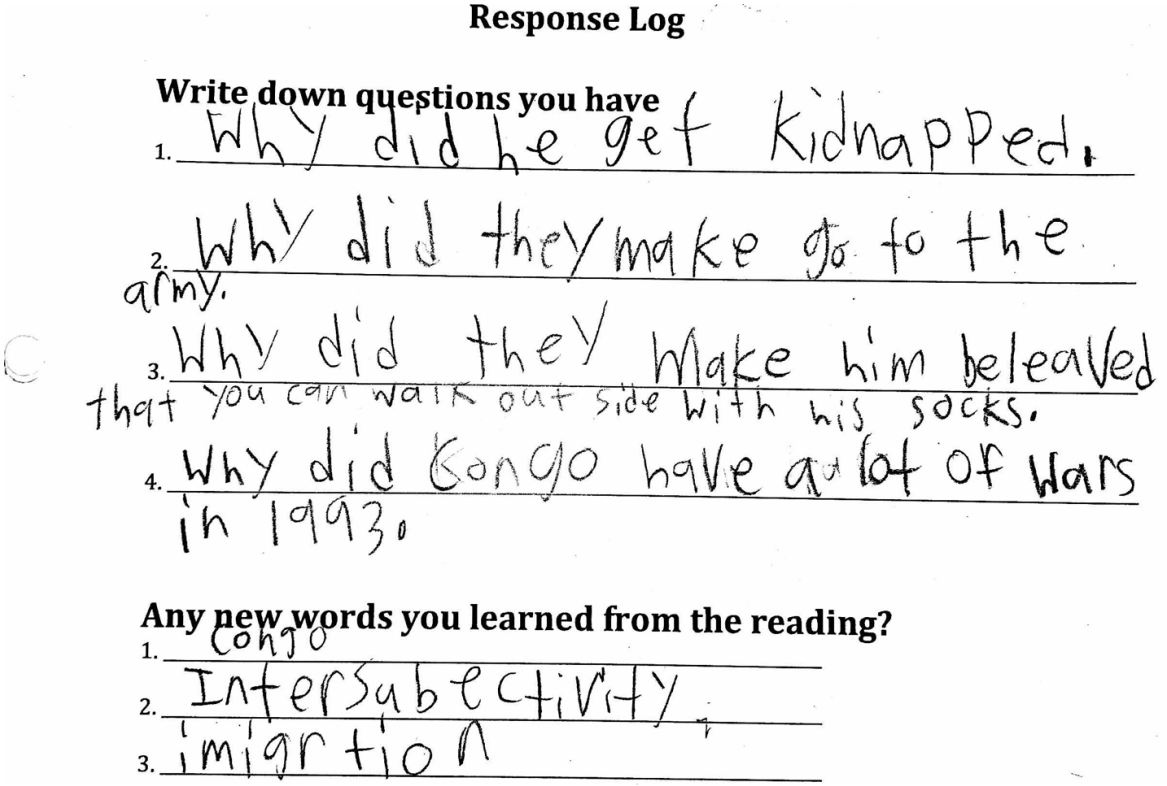
Robert: What does gender equality mean again?

Maxwell: When women and men want equal rights.

This illustrates there's multiple ways that affective and intellectual engagement was deepened. It can also be deepened through the use of questions and answers. By 'deepened' I mean their investment in the text increased through the topics being addressed, questioned and discussed; they learned more about how these topics or issues affected the characters, they were more emotionally invested, and as they wanted to understand these concepts to contextualise it within the story and their own lives. Even though I read the text aloud for most of the DLEs, the boys were following along in their own copies of the book.

All boys reported learning incidental vocabulary and informational knowledge about countries, moments in history or historic figures (incidental knowledge not gained directly from text, but through discussion and questions). The response log was set up so they could have a space to write down their authentic questions, but also any new words that they learnt. All boys wrote down at least one new word learned per DLE, or even mentioned it in their writing response.

Figure 5. Authentic Questions, New Words and Concepts Learnt



Response Log

Write down questions you have

1. Why did he get Kidnapped.
2. Why did they make go to the army.
3. Why did they Make him beleaved that you can walk out side with his socks.
4. Why did Congo have a lot of Wars in 1993.

Any new words you learned from the reading?

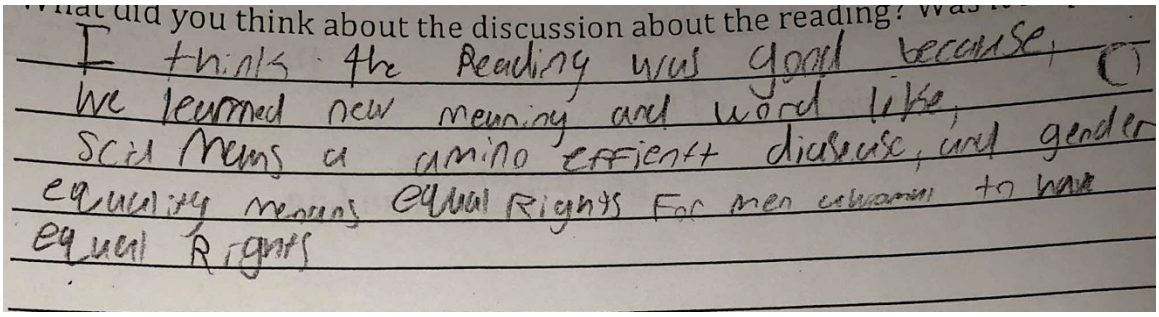
1. Congo
2. Intersubectivity.
3. imigrtion

Questions: Why did he get kidnapped
Why did they make go to the army.
Why did they make him beleaved that you can walk outside with his socks,
Why did Congo have a lot of wars in 1993

Words learnt: Congo, Intersubjectivity, Migration. (Omar)

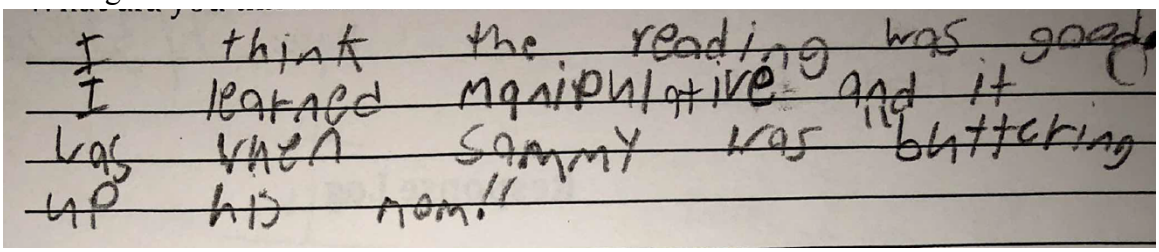
Learning new words and asking questions about text can occur without using DLE, but the questions came from the text, and new words and concepts were learned because of the text, then dialogically discussed and applied to other contexts to reinforce learning. The boys related to and applied the words and concepts to their own lives, and often stated their opinion around it. DLE allowed them to explore the new words, questions and concepts beyond its definition through discussing the terms dialogically.

Figure 6. Response Log Entry: Incidental Vocab and Incidental Knowledge Gained From DLE



"I think the Reading was good because we learned new meaning and word like SCID means a amino [de]fficient disease, and gender equality means equal rights For men women to have equal rights" (Jason).

Figure 7. Response Log Entry: Incidental Vocab and Incidental Knowledge Gained From Reading



"I think the reading was good. I learned manipulative and it was when Sammy was "buttering up his mom"" (Shaun).

Video Transcription

Mellissa: So the war in Congo resulted in…in Genocide. Did anyone write this word down? What does this word mean? Genocide? It's when we wipe out a whole people. Anyone give me an example of this?

[Murmuring]

Mellissa: Anyone heard of Hitler?

Lamar: Who the heck is that?

Mellissa: He killed so many so many people. Especially Jews. It means literally killing off a group of people.

Lamar: Murderers!!

Shaun: Back then, a lot of Jews had to hide and seek places to pray, because if somebody saw them, they would have got killed. And slaves, they were Jewish…well, most of them were Black…but some Jewish people were slaves…and um…they got their heads cut off…they're not allowed to pray.

Jason: So, the new word is Geeno-cide?

Mellissa: Genocide.

Shaun: They kidnapped Jews.

Lamar: What did the Jews ever did to them? I would have slapped all those white people.

Jason: They were JEWS.

Mellissa: Yeh. Just because they were Jews.

Jason: Who killed the…who killed the Jews?

Mellissa: Hitler.

Omar: Was he white?

Mellissa: Yeh. So, similar things happened with Black people.

Omar: Why do they think of us as that?

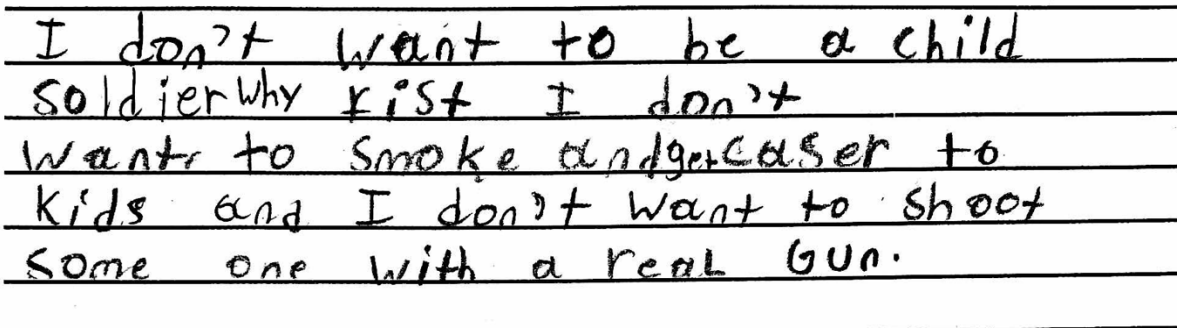
Lamar: Yeh.

Figures 7, 8, and the video transcription are examples of how new words learned, prompted by the text, which led to boys learning about different, new concepts and expounding on what they were learning and contextualisng what they were reading. Lamar and Omar used questioning to further understand the concept of genocide. Using Wortham and Reye's (2015) DA, and noted that whenever harm or injustice was mentioned, Lamar often used aggressive retaliatory words such as "slapped" and "murderers" for example; whereas Omar used questioning of concepts and new ideas he had learned to understand the why's of human action. Essentially, intellectual engagement was mostly comprised by learning new vocabulary knowledge, concepts and a commitment to inquiry. It also shows how the tenets of dialogism were in effect, where they were building on each other's thoughts and ideas (utterances) and reaching points of intersubjectivity, and therefore their intellectual engagement also occurred through tenets of dialogism.

Affective Engagement

The boys felt they could now read different types of texts (genres) - ones they never thought they could before. The boys also felt connected with texts on a personal level and also related it to their own personal lives and identities, "I liked Child Soldier the most 'cause it showed that even if I'm small I can do anything…" (Shaun). Lamar had a particularly emotive response to Child Soldier text, too, and put himself in their shoes:

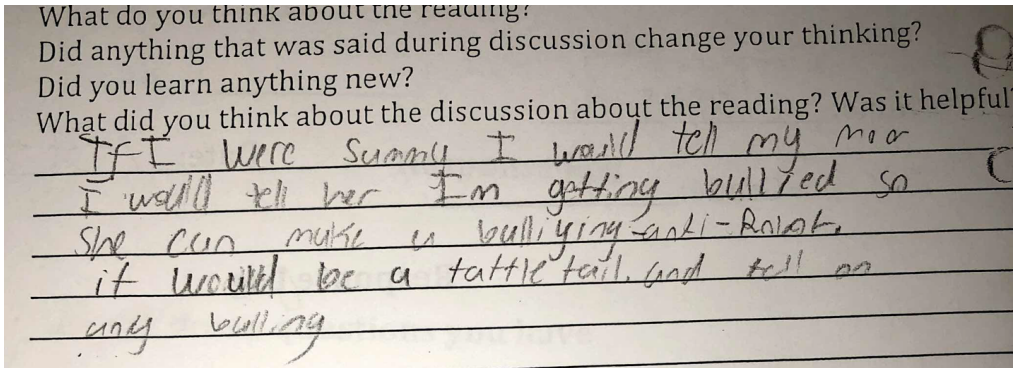
Figure 8. Response Log Entry: Emotive Response and Personally Relating to Text


I don't want to be a child
soldierWhy fist I don't
want to smoke andgetcaser to
kids and I don't want to shoot
some one with a real Gun.

"I don't want to be a child soldier…why[?] fist I don't wante to some and get caser to kids and I don't want to shoot some one with a real gun" (Lamar).

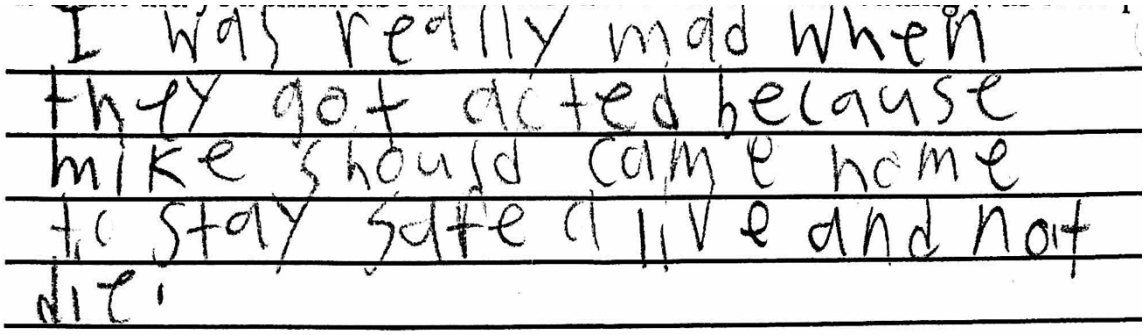
Lamar was not the only one with an emotive response to the texts, as many said they read books they could relate to, or evoked many emotions in them: "The books made me feel sad and happy at the same time …. some of them were really emotional" (Jason). Omar was anticipating how the book would unravel, "It's a good story so far, but right in the middle, *it happens*!" [excited]*;* he may have understood something big was about to unveil itself and he was excited to find out about it. He was emotionally invested in what was to happen in the text, and when the book ended, the emotions or affective engagement did not end there:

Figure *9.* Response Log: Empathy for Characters and Emotive Response to Text


What do you think about the reading?
Did anything that was said during discussion change your thinking?
Did you learn anything new?
What did you think about the discussion about the reading? Was it helpful
If I were Sammy I would tell my mom
I would tell her Im getting bullied so
She can make a bullying anti-Robot.
it would be a tattle tail and tell on
any bulling

"If I were Sammy I would tell my mom I would tell her Im getting bullied so she can make a bullying anti-Robot. It would be a tattle tail and tell on any bulling" (Jason).

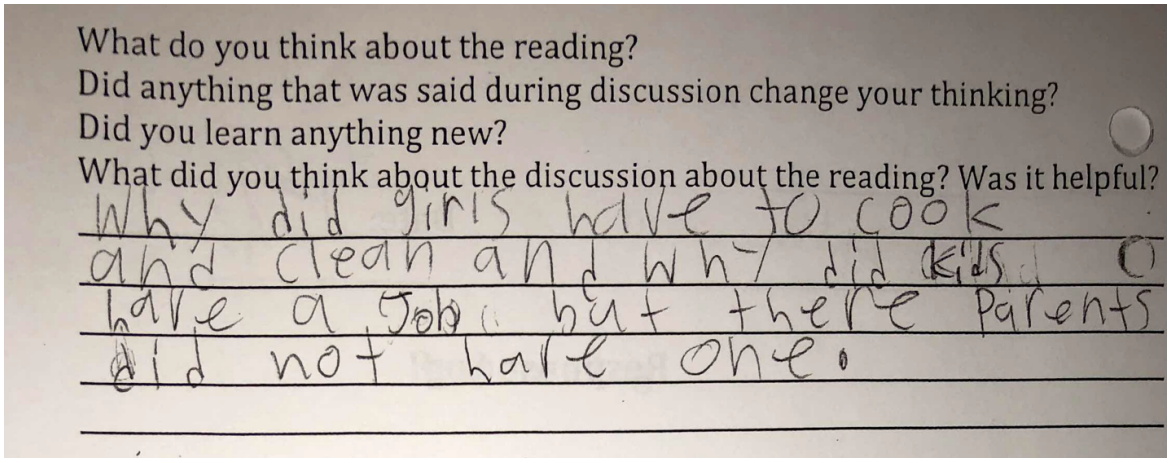
Figure 10. Response Log: Empathy for Characters and Emotive Response to Text


I was really mad when
they got acted because
mike should came home
to stay safe alive and not
die.

"I was really mad when they got acted because mike should come home to stay safe alive and not die" (Omar).

Other emotive responses were due to now understanding concepts and applying it to the text. So, the intellectual influenced the emotional engagement due to understanding what gender equality was, and therefore seeing that it was absent from the passage they were reading.

Figure 11. Response Log: Empathy for Characters After Understanding a Concept


What do you think about the reading?
Did anything that was said during discussion change your thinking?
Did you learn anything new?
What did you think about the discussion about the reading? Was it helpful?
Why did girls have to cook
and clean and why did kids
have a Job but there Parents
did not have one.

"Why did girls have to cook and clean and why did kids have a job but there parents did not have one" (Omar).

Omar shows that in addition to affective engagement being deepened after receiving Intellectual information to contextualise the text, Affective engagement, like Intellectual engagement, can also be deepened through questioning.

All of the boys had a sheer love of the book that kept them engaged:

Video Transcription

Jason:	What are we reading today?
Mellissa	The same book – Child Soldier.
Jason:	I want to read it SO badly!
Omar:	I LOVE this book!

Some loved this book because they wanted to understand the characters' life:

Post-interview: Maxwell

Mellissa:	I noticed that you started to open up a lot more at the end. After we had our interview, you started to actually share your thoughts, so thank you for that. Which text did you like the most and why?
Maxwell:	I liked the Child Soldier.
Mellissa:	Why?
Maxwell:	Because I can't really imagine people being used, so I wanted to know what that's like.

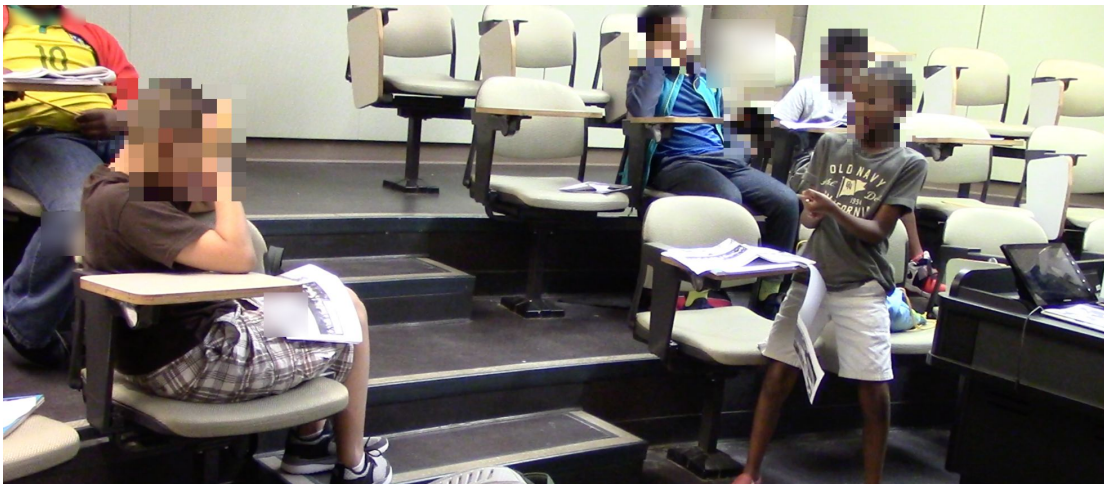
Other boys indicated that a specific book was their favourite because of the personal or emotive aspect to it, also:

Post-interview: Lamar

Mellissa:	Which text did you like the most and why?
Lamar:	I like Child Soldiers because it's a biography and I get to see how the person's life had and what experience did it.

In fact, Lamar was so emotionally engrossed in the texts that he would often act out the scenes being read (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Still from Video Recording: Emotive Response to Text Through Action



The class was talking about how the boys in the *Child Soldier* were being trained to practice on each other so they could shoot people when they went on raids. We spoke about how they were being forced to take drugs so they could go through with the deed. Lamar got up and started to act out the scene, saying "I can't believe they were made to do this? Little kids?"

Post-interview: Jason

Mellissa:	And what text did you like the most, and why?
Jason:	What do you mean?
Mellissa:	What book did you like the most?
Jason:	Child Soldier.
Mellissa:	Why?
Jason:	Because it was about a kid who could, who survived a whole war, and how he's still alive.

Post-interview: Robert

Mellissa:	Which text did you like the most and why?

Robert: The text I liked the ... Wait. What do you mean by "text"?

Mellissa: The book.

Robert: Oh. The book that I liked the most is Child Soldier.

Mellissa: Okay. Why?

Robert: Because it actually is more pictures and so we can understand like how, so we can like see what he's like going through. Instead of just like talking what he's going through.

Even though this last exchange between Robert and I spoke of pictures in the book, it still was in relation to seeing what the character was going through, and therefore, that emotive, and personal connection to the text. The boys' cited an emotional or personal connection when speaking of why a book was their favourite book. The emotive aspects were solidified and explored specifically through DLE because the DLEs gave the boys time to discuss their thoughts and feelings around the text, with each other.

Post-interview: Robert

Mellissa: Okay. Which discussion was most meaningful to you and why?

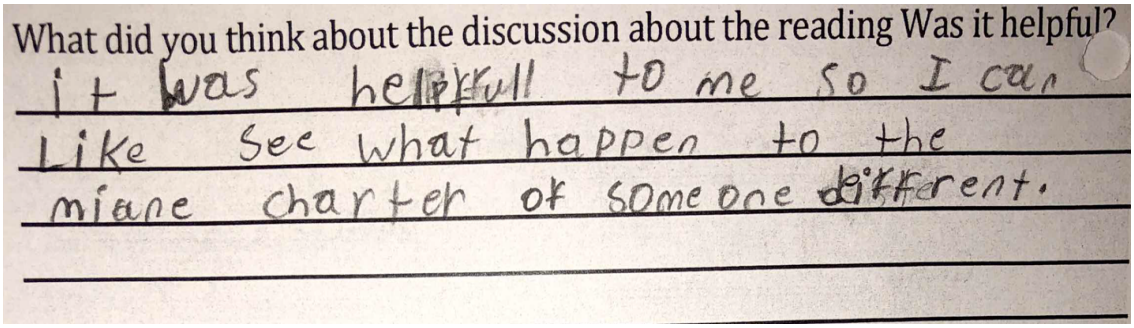
Robert: The one where we were talking about when Child Soldier ... Michael, he had to kill his friend his Kevin and it was really sad.

DLEs Facilitated Meaningful Experiences with Text

DLEs facilitated meaningful experiences and exchanges with text. The DLEs encompassed dialogism (Bakhtin, 1986) through instances of dialogic talk (authentic questions, utterances and intersubjectivity), dialogic reading, and dialogic instruction. I framed dialogic talk as 'discussion' when I interviewed the boys.

It was evident that all aspects of DLE put together are useful for the boys engaging with text. It is all interrelated and seems to yield a very meaningful experience with text when the boys are read to, being asked questions by the facilitator to prompt learning and understanding, are able to ask questions, answer each other's questions, and reinforce that learning through a writing response.

Figure 13. Response Log: DLE Discussion Being Helpful


What did you think about the discussion about the reading Was it helpful?
it was helpfull to me so I can
Like see what happen to the
miane charter of someone different.

"It was helpful to me so I can Like see what happen to the miane charter of someone different" (Lamar).

Post-interview: Jason

Mellissa: How did the discussions help you become smarter about books in the world?

Jason: It got me smarter because the questions were did you learn any new words, did you have questions, and what, and it talked about it if you had any more questions.

Post-interview: Robert

Mellissa: Which parts of the dialogic literacy experiences did you enjoy the most?

Robert: The part that you got to like talk to other people instead of just writing it down and bringing it to the teacher.

Mellissa: Oh. So that's what you do in school usually-

Robert: Yes.

Mellissa: ... just write it down and then give it to your teacher instead of discussing?

Robert: We don't really discuss it that much but sometimes.

Mellissa: Okay. How did discussions help you become smarter about the book and the world?

Robert: It helps me understand how the lives of the people who were in the books.

In the post-interview with Robert, he states that part of how discussion made him smarter about the book and world was learning about the lives of the people in the book. He also says that this is not something that happens in his classroom currently (discussion about text), and how that was his most favourite part of the DLEs. This shows that this is a direct link to DLEs, as he is saying an intrinsic part of it (dialogic talk) made him smarter about the book and the world – an experience that he does not really have in his classroom.

When surveyed, all boys (7 out of 7) either agreed or strongly agreed that (1) the whole group discussion helped them, (2) the teacher's questions helped them, and (3) the writing response helped them (Table 12).

Table 12: Survey results: What Aspect of DLE Helped the Boys Understand the Text the Most

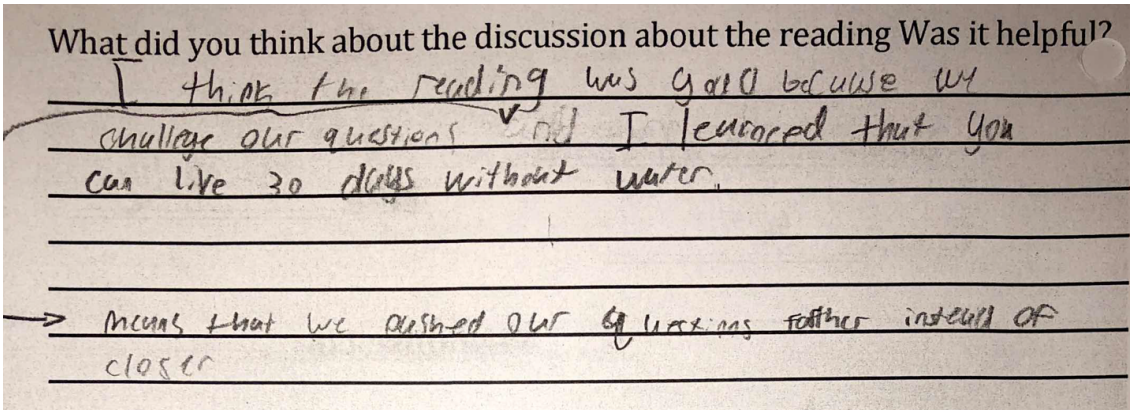
What helped me understand the text the most…	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**	**I don't know**
The whole group			1	6	

discussion helped me					
The teachers questions helped me			2	5	
The writing response helped me			4	3	

All boys either agreed or strongly agreed with all aspects of DLE being helpful in them understanding the text. With the writing, a lot of it was dialogic in nature as they asked authentic questions as part of it, as well as followed prompts that elicited dialogic responses. Dialogic talk scored the highest in respect to the boys believing that it helped them to understand the texts the most (Table 12).

Questions prompted thinking, which made the boys want to ask more questions, engaging with the text more deeply.

Figure 14. Response Log: DLE Discussion/Questions Being Helpful


What did you think about the discussion about the reading Was it helpful?
I think the reading was good because we challenge our questions and I learned that you can live 30 days without water.
means that we pushed our questions farther instead of closer

"I think the reading was good because our questions I learned that you can live 30 days without water. Means that we pushed our question farther instead of closer" (Jason).

Discussion also helped them "get my thoughts out" or "sometimes people said something bold and I never thought of that. It made me think about it" (Shaun), and

therefore they felt smarter about the text and what was happening in the world because "It really gave me a different perspective about what happens in people's other lives" (Maxwell). It "helps me understand how the lives of the people who were in the books" (Lamar).

All of the boys also shared that the whole DLE experience changed their relationship with text. These changes in their relationship with text that included reading more and reading harder texts (and how they perceived themselves as readers) include many aspects of the DLE, but dialogic discussions, questions, and the text choice were very influential factors in this change.

> It's changed because usually I don't like to read but now since I'm here I've been reading these books, like three now. (Dante)
>
> It changed what I like to read more, but I like to read more, and read more harder chapter books like Goosebumps and ... (Robert)
>
> Now I'm able to read full chapter books unlike the one I read. (Shaun)
>
> Yes. It's changed because I read more books to relate to, to prepare, and have other books that I've read and like, read the [inaudible] of them. (Jason)
>
> It changed by when I first didn't love, when I didn't like reading. But when I came to literacy club, I thought I like reading now. Sometimes if I bored I read. (Lamar)
>
> It's changed because I loved reading, but now I have a different way of understanding the book now. (Omar)
>
> I remember I used to have trouble with seeing the writing because it was just go on one line from another. That confused me. It's been five weeks I've been reading, and I'm getting used to it. (Maxwell)

Feedback from the boys speaks directly to how the DLEs have shaped the boys' relationship with text; through the DLEs, the boys like to read more, have more of a love of reading, different ways of understanding or gaining meaning from books, and different

reasons for reading a book. Through different aspects of their dialogic literacy experiences (dialogic reading, dialogic talk (discussions/authentic questions), dialogic instruction), their positioning towards text and how they see themselves as readers, has changed, or is changing. Using DA (Wortham & Reyes, 2015) to look at some of language they use in the above responses shows more of an open and growing relationship with texts. “I’m getting used to it”, “different way of understanding the book now”, “now I’m able to”, “I like to read more”; they are also positive phrases, sharing their storylines (accounts) of DLE, and how their identities are being evoked, molded and expanded within this storyline (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Slocum-Bradley, 2010).

All boys indicated that they found DLE helpful or meaningful academically, or personally.

Post-interview: Lamar

Mellissa:	Tell me what you think about Dialogic Literacy Club.
Lamar:	I think the Dialogic Literacy Club is good. I get to express how I feel and read about different texts that I never learn until I'm at the school.

Post-interview: Jason

Mellissa:	Okay, tell me what you think about Dialogic Literacy Club.
Jason:	It's good.
Mellissa:	Why?

Jason: Because I get to test out my reading skills and show people how good I can read

Post-interview: Shaun

Mellissa: So tell me what you think about the dialogic literacy club sessions.

Shaun: I think it's very interesting and fun.

Mellissa: Why?

Shaun: Because you get to have discussions with other people and show what they're thinking about and you make jokes.

Post-interview: Robert

Mellissa: Tell me what you think about Dialogic Literacy Club.

Robert: It's a good club.

Mellissa: Why?

Robert: Because you get to interact with other people and exchange other people's words

Post-interview: Omar

Mellissa: So. What did you think about the Dialogic Literacy Club.

Omar: I really loved talking through stuff and hearing other people's ideas..coz it…it made me think, and sometimes have more questions.

Mellissa: Oh, really?

Omar: Yeh, it was fun to talk and share stuff. I learned a lot.

The dialogic discussions part of the DLE seemed to be a key piece in the boys making meaning of the text, and therefore feeling like they were learning from it, and each other.

Post-interview: Lamar

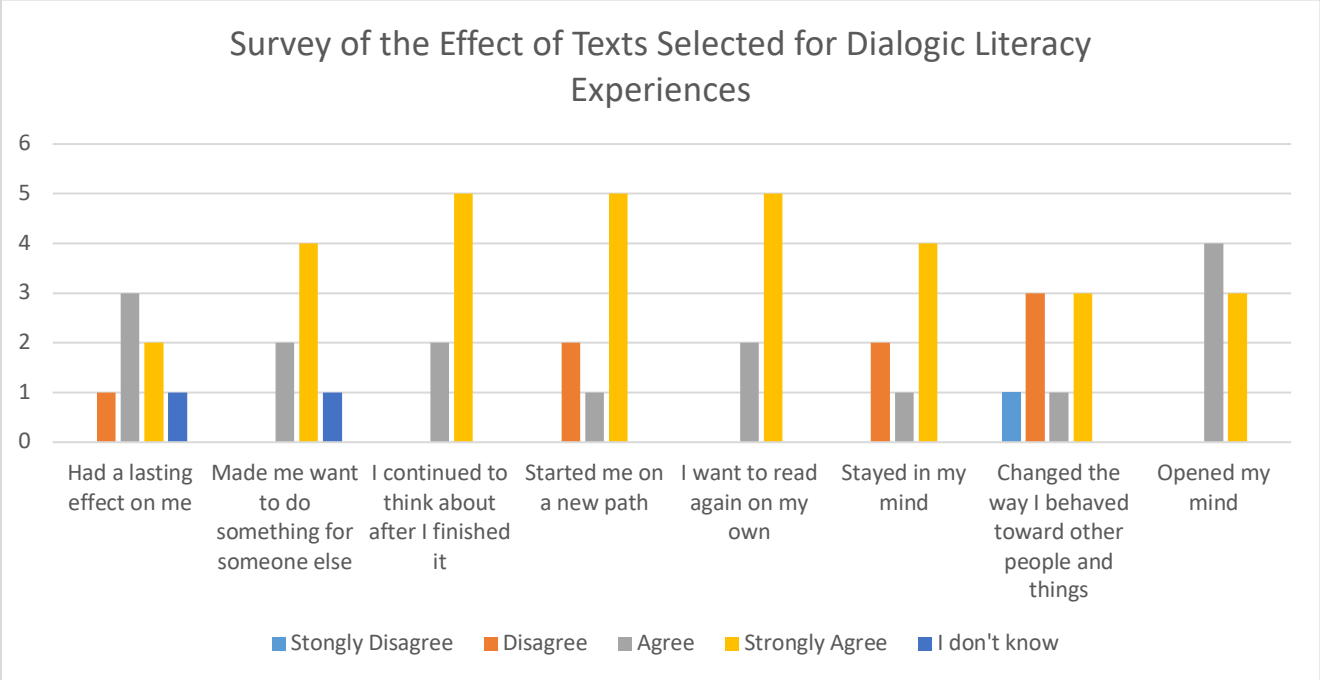
Mellissa:	Did the conversation help or change what you thought?
Lamar:	Yes.
Mellissa:	In what way?
Lamar:	In what way when I first didn't read about it first, and then when I read it, it made me ... It changed.
Mellissa:	Okay. Then which discussion was most meaningful to you and why?
Lamar:	It was most I think ... All of them was most meaningful to me so I can understand it well, and just know about it.

Consciousness-Raising and Global Perspective

This finding is essentially about how consciousness was raised or realised, and how the boys said they had meaningful DLEs that broadened their global and local perspectives. Meaning, DLE opened their eyes to their self, the society and the world. This was reflected in the survey, the boys' response logs, and video transcriptions. I am using these data sources to give glimpses of when consciousness-raising or global discussions took place and how it was facilitated.

All boys indicated on the survey that the text 'opened my mind'; they either agreed (four boys), or strongly agreed (three boys).

Figure 15. Survey Results on the Impact of Text on Boys



The survey was a reflection of what was happening during the DLE where global, local and critical conversations were taking place. The boys began to think on societal and global levels, and experienced consciousness-raising moments when relating to the text (see Figure 16 & 17). The effect the text had on the boys was due to the DLEs. The fact that they were able to discuss the texts dialogically, and have me read to them dialogically, as well talk to each other about the texts dialogically, all added to how meaningful their exchanges or experiences with the texts were. One way the experience was meaningful was by how it raised their consciousness and expanded their global perspectives.

Video Transcription: Conversation About Congo From Child Soldiers

Mellissa: Where is Congo?

Shaun: Is it near Nigeria?

Mellissa: It's in central Africa. It's quite a large country actually.

Maxwell:	Africa is a tribe.
Mellissa:	Africa has 54 countries and each country has tribes.
Lamar:	The king...he wanted to…
Mellissa:	Which king?
Shaun:	The king of ermmm...Belgium. He stole..erm..
Mellissa:	The king of Belgium did what?
Shaun:	Stole their diamonds
Maxwell:	Their diamonds and resources
Jason:	And it was the richest country in Africa at the time??
Mellissa:	Yes, one of them.
Lamar:	I wanna ask why…
Mellissa:	Why?
Omar:	Yeh. Why did they get all that stuff?
Mellissa:	Ok, so Lamar and Omar's question is why did the king of Belgium come to Congo and steal all their resources. Anyone?
Omar:	Because he wants to be really rich?
Shaun:	He wanted what they had.
Omar:	Couldn't he have just asked?
Mellissa:	This is what we see repeated in history — people go to people's countries and just take their resources.
Omar:	Couldn't they just ask and share?
Lamar:	Yeah!
Mellissa:	If people don't ask or share, what do you think they want

	then? Total?
Shaun:	Power.
Maxwell:	Control.
Lamar:	Well, forget them!!

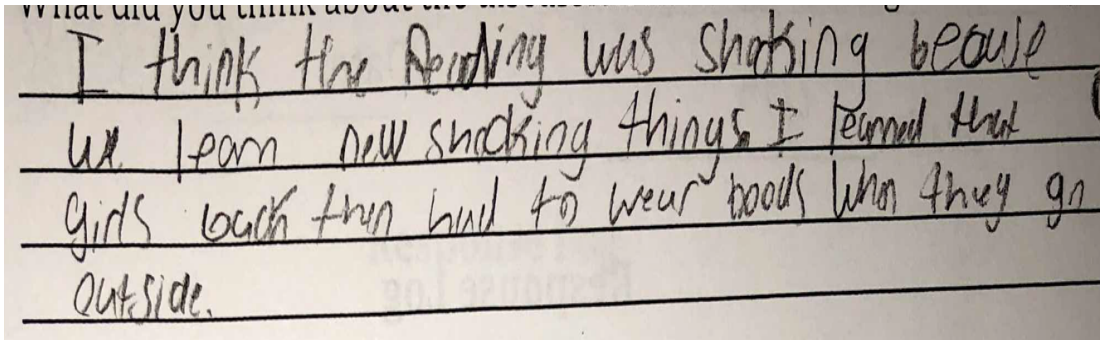
The boys were engaging in dialogic talk by asking authentic questions, building on each other's utterance, often with statements or questions, and reaching points of intersubjectivity—a direct function of DLE. They figured that sharing would have been a better option for Congo than the colonisation they went through. DA showed that the words and phrases they were using such as, "couldn't they just ask and share?" or "forget them!" were trying to come to a solution on a situation that had already occurred. And Lamar repositioned himself in the storyline (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Slocum-Bradley, 2010), or narrative of people taking from Black people by saying "forget them!" Then the concept of power and control was discussed and how Black people have been positioned globally and in local society over the years.

The DLEs (especially the questioning and discussion/dialogic talk) either enabled the boys to be more conscious and share these consciousness-raising thoughts, or helped them clarify thoughts they already had or suspected but possibly did not know how to articulate. For example, when discussing *Schomburg's Library*, the text evoked the question whether Black people would be better off with the economy changing or society changing, and Shaun's response was: "Black people can't work in certain places…so…ummm, it should society [that needs to change] because we need better places to work…if we can work, then we can make money". And in trying to figure out why Arturo Schomburg, the main character of this biography, was trying to collect

artefacts and literature on Black people and Black history, Shaun also said, “Sometimes white people back then, they were racist…and they wrote stories about people that were bad and not true, so the man [Arturo] was trying to figure out….ummmm…” (Shaun).

The boys learned about different cultures and different countries through the multiple texts they read, and noted their reactions to the new information they were consuming:

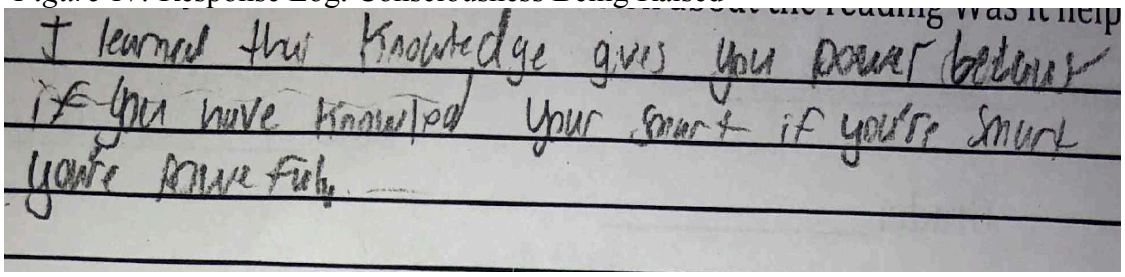
Figure 16. Response Log Entry: Response to Global and Cultural Issues in Text


I think the Reading was shocking beause we learn new shocking things. I learned that girls back then had to wear hoods when they go outside.

"I think the Reading was shocking because we learn new shocking things. I learned that girls back then had to wear hoods when they go outside” (Jason).

This writing was in response to the reading *Malala’s Magic Pencil*, where they read and learned about Muslim culture and how in places like Pakistan, the women and girls had to wear hijabs as part of their religious beliefs. This information obviously had a strong impact on some of the boys.

Figure 17. Response Log. Consciousness Being Raised


I learned that Knowledge gives you power because if you have knowledge your smart if you're smart you're powerful.

"I learned that knowledge gives you power because if you have knowled your smart if you're smart you're poweful" (Jason).

Jason gleaned from the text and conversations we were having in class a powerful truth (at least to him it was). He was starting to see the connection between the self and the world we live in.

In one DLE, we were reading House of Robots, where the idea of gender equality and female heroes came up because one of the female characters was complaining about the lack of female superheroes. This sparked an immediate reaction, which I wrote in my analytic memo:

> The gender equality discussion revealed a lot of biases in class that were surprising. One participant clearly thought women should be heroes; one thought he would sound 'like a girl' by celebrating female superheroes; whilst another said that there were more male superheroes for a reason. And that he preferred them. Riveting. One participant was unashamed to celebrate women in general and said his mother raised him that way. (Mellissa's analytic memo, July 30th 2018)

Even though we did not reach a conclusion, different points of view were heard, and different reasoning for those views were given. Questions were asked to stretch their thinking and rethink their thinking (by me and the boys themselves) on an issue that has social, emotional and global reach and impact. It was a deep discussion that caused them to continue reading the book possibly with this new conversation in mind informing their reading and thinking. Global and consciousness-raising text and discussion helped deepen and nurture their connection to the text. Therefore conversations and the texts helped the boys think more globally and raised their consciousness (see Figure 15, 16 & 17).

Communal Learning

As the DLEs progressed, the boys formed a sense of comradery; they looked forward to communal aspect of the DLEs. They became literary citizens by holding each other accountable. When the boys joined the DLEs they said they looked forward to sharing their thoughts and hearing other people's thoughts. This relates to many research studies, and literature in the field that speaks of the effective of a communal-style of learning – particularly within African American communities (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Gadsden, 1993).

Below are a few conversations I had with boys about their thoughts on communal learning prior to the study:

Pre-interview: Omar

Mellissa	And how do you feel about discussions with other students?
Omar:	Really good because I get to explain ideas and thoughts.
Mellissa	Explain your ideas and thoughts.... And why is that good for you?
Omar:	So they can understand what I'm saying.

Pre-interview: Robert

Mellissa	Ahhh .. ok, I see. How do you feel about having discussions with other students?
Robert:	Uhhh. I like it is as I like it because it because it, it just, it just like helps, helps me. It just helps me like, get to know, get to know. I mean like go, go, go, to like visit other people's, other people's thoughts.

Mellissa	Ok. So do you think it will help you understand more?
Robert:	Yes.

Pre-interview: Shaun

Mellissa	Mhhmmm. Is that when you first found out that you're going to be talking about your thoughts and the book, what did you think?
Shaun:	I thought that that was a good idea
Mellissa	or really why?
Shaun:	Well, because sometimes people need to know what people are thinking and if they don't, they don't, they don't really know things because some people don't know what's happening. So you have to explain it more.

Maxwell was not sold on the idea of communal learning or sharing his thoughts:

Pre-interview: Maxwell

Mellissa	How do you feel about… about having discussions with other students?
Maxwell:	So I really like to keep some of my thoughts to myself.
Mellissa	Okay. Why is that?
Maxwell:	Because it's not because I'm nervous or anything. It's just…for some reason I just tell myself, yeh, I am just gonna keep this to myself. I will just put it somewhere else for later.
Mellissa	Okay. But do you actually put it down somewhere for later?
Maxwell:	Yeah

Mellissa	Where?
Maxwell:	I mean well I put it… it's like I put it somewhere else in my thoughts and then I just remember it later.

Still, the boys began to express the desire for each other to learn from the text and from the DLE itself, "You guys are just asking questions but I'm writing questions…you need to write your questions" (Jason). They became somewhat of Literary Citizens. Meaning, through the DLEs, the boys showed increasing support of one another, and wanted each other to succeed individually and as a group; essentially, to finish their work and do it well.

At one point, Omar had not opened his book to the page we were reading and was taking a little longer to settle down that the others, so Jason told him to put his bag away, open his book and catch up with the others. Omar complied, especially when others started to chime in with "we are waiting on you". This happened with different boys on multiple occasions. They became a community of readers who wanted to further each other's reading, learning, and writing, and make the most of the DLEs. Using positioning theory (Davies, 2008; Davies & Harré, 1990; Mcvee et al., 2011) it seems they have recast themselves in the narrative as expert as well as learner. They started to understand that they were not just participating, but they were shaping the dialogic discussions. That the experience was not just happening to them, but they were active participants in the process of experiencing dialogism. The DLEs were giving them agency in building their own relationships with text individually, and together.

Video Transcription: Dialogic Talk and Communal Learning

Jason [to Maxwell]:	Why are you so quiet today?

Maxwell:	I just don't feel like talking so much.
Jason:	I love these sessions and talking about these books.
Omar:	You don't like talking?
Maxwell:	I don't mind. I'm just tired today.
Shaun:	But…it's it's lunch time!
[Laughter]	
Omar:	Yeh. Come on. What questions you have?
Lamar:	I have questions!
Omar:	Ok. Good. See, Maxwell! We're all having a discussion here!
Dante [Laughing]:	Yeh! Join us, man.

Positioning theory would assert that their identities were being constructed in and through the DLEs (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999), and over time, they were taking up and/or resisting positions. They were more than learners in a DLE, they were also literary citizens, exploring their multiple identities.

Video Transcription: Writing and Communal Learning

Dante:	I've finished writing.
Mellissa:	Already? Excellent.
Dante:	[Nods]
Jason:	I'm almost finished too.
Omar:	Ok, I need to get writing. How did you finish it so quick?
[Looking at Dante's sheet]	

	Oh, you didn't write any questions on the first page! He didn't write questions. You need those to help. To help…talk about what he learned…about the …about the book.
Dante:	I did write a question.
Mellissa:	He used the question to write his response.

Even though I mention writing, which is not dialogism, the writing was inspired by a tenet of dialogism for Dante in this instance– authentic questions. Omar understood that DLE aided their success in understanding the text when he said "He didn't write questions. You need those to help. To help…talk about what he learned…about the…about the book."

The boys showed a type of ownership of their learning and their part in the DLEs. Therefore, when things were not following the usual structure, or they felt that one was not doing their best, they called them out **"**You didn't write anything down! Your page is blank!" (Omar).

The boys felt free to express themselves not only when it came to text, but how the other made them feel, Jason confronted Omar during one DLE: "Why do you like to criticize everyone and what they say?"

All boys expressed the fact that they were grateful to hear other people's thoughts and ideas as "I got to learn different stuff from other people instead of myself" (Shaun). They recognised the value of having other people's input and its effect on their learning, "It was good hearing…hearing other people; their ideas. Thoughts and stuff. It helped me learn stuff I didn't think about or even know. It helped me learn a lot. I enjoyed it; it was good" (Dante).

Post-interview responses that further support the finding of communal learning:

Post-interview: Jason

Mellissa	Really? Okay. And then, what was it like working with other males in the Dialogic Literacy Club?
Jason:	Good.
Mellissa	Why?
Jason:	Because I've got other people to talk to or to read about and to answer their questions, and to ask them some of my questions.

Post-interview: Lamar

Mellissa	….. What was it like working with the other boys in Dialogic Literacy Club?
Lamar:	It was good. I get to see how to express and what questions that I can answer or they can answer for my questions.

Post-interview: Maxwell

Mellissa	Okay. What was it like working with other males in Dialogic Literacy Club?
Maxwell:	It was nice. We got to share our thoughts, which I normally don't do.

Although there were moments where the boys' discussion was sometimes a distraction to other learners as it was off-topic or too much 'joking around':

Post-interview: Dante

Mellissa	If you could change anything about the sessions, what would you change?
Dante:	Well I would change, if we get to stay here longer then the boys would stop talking.
Mellissa	If you could change anything else about the dialogue or conversation what would you change?
Dante:	Them stop talking to each other sometimes.

Post-interview: Robert

Mellissa	If you could change anything about the sessions, what would you change?
Robert:	I would change the part where we're everyone jokes around.

Ultimately, being able to freely express oneself and know they would be heard or that they could learn from others is what they expressed as helpful or important to them from their interviews. This was cultivated from the DLEs as it gave space for everyone to speak, value each other's thoughts and ideas, which in turn, helped build the camaraderie amongst the boys. DLE called for the boys to be present (asking questions, listening to each other, responding to each other, listening to the text being read out in order to have questions about it, etc.,), which in effect enabled them to pick up the role of being a literary citizen, and spurring each other on.

Sustained Literacy Practices

All seven boys indicated that the study prompted them to want to have sustained literacy practices. In Figure 15, All of the boys expressed that after the study, they wanted

to read on their own, which means the study had the potential to have sustaining literacy practices. All of the boys also continued to think about the text after we finished reading it, which could be a reason why the boys want to read text on their own: because the engagement with texts from the study was sustained and impacted them deeply as readers and learners.

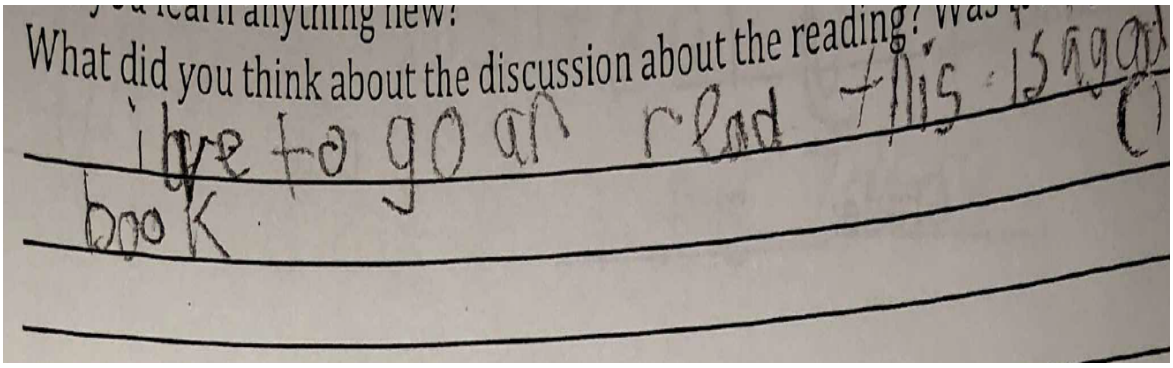
Below are some examples of boys indicating that they want to continue the learning and reading process, which was inspired by the DLE.

Post-interview: Robert

Mellissa	Okay, cool. How did the books make you feel?
Robert:	It made me want to read more.

The books selected and read created a desire in boys to continue reading:

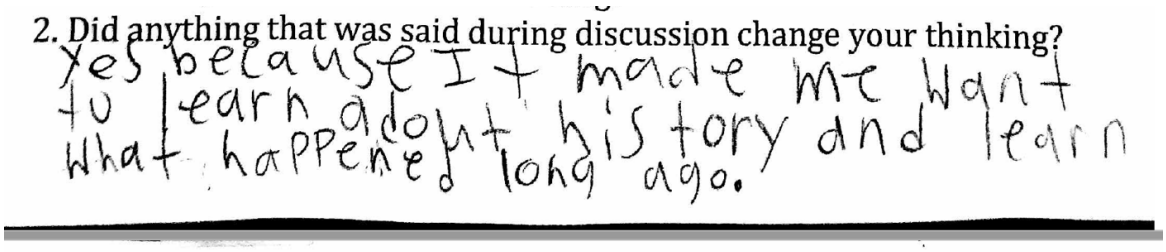
Figure 18. Response log: Interest in Continuing Literacy Practices Outside of Literacy Club



"I have to go an read this is a good book" (Robert).

Even though they are saying the book made them want to read more, it was through the dialogic reading and discussion that made reading the text a meaningful experience. Here, the discussion and impacted the student to want to learn more:

Figure 19. Response Log: Student Expressing a Desire to Learn More


2. Did anything that was said during discussion change your thinking?
Yes because It made me want to learn adoht history and learn what happened long ago.

"Yes because it made me want to learn more and about history and what happened long ago" (Omar).

This response was regarding how war started in the Democratic Republic of Congo, from the book *Child Solider.* When asked if anything that was said during the discussion change your thinking, Omar said: "Yes because It made me want to learn about history and learn what happened long ago". He also noted that: "Congo was a rich contry and this guy would try to steal all there gold and dimonds and make them dig up the leftover dimonds and with no food or water". He was talking about the King of Belgium who committed genocide against the people of the Democratic of Congo. This little piece of information piqued his interest and made him declare that he wanted to learn more about history. This has the potential for a sustained literacy practice.

Jason confessed that he had already read pages of the *Child Soldier* on his own because he needed to find out what had happened.

Video Transcription

Jason:	Soooooo…I may have read ahead a little.
Mellissa [Smiles]:	A little? Really? I saw where you were!

Jason:	It was just soooo good! I couldn't put it down! I had to find out what was happening after what we talked about last time.
Omar:	You wrong! You should have waited to talk about it with us!
Shaun:	I'd actually like that other book we didn't choose to read.
Mellissa:	Which one?
Shaun:	The one with the Enemy.
Mellissa:	Oh, *A Gift From the Enemy.*
Shaun:	Yeh! That one.
Mellissa:	Sure! Remind me to bring it for tomorrow.
Jason:	Can I have the poetry one then?
Mellissa [Laughing]:	Ok, I can do that, too.
[Crosstalk]	
Jason [Holding Child Soldier]:	Thanks! I love this book!

Here is an exchange between the boys and I showing that Jason had been reading the book outside of the DLE. Throughout the DLEs, Lamar, Robert and Shaun said they had taken a peek at the books we were reading, too, but wanted to discuss the texts with the class. This not only speaks to the quality of the books chosen, but essentially that DLE caused the boys to grow in their literacy or reading practices by being autonomous.

Shaun said of the chapter book we read that, "Now I'm able to read full chapter books like the one I read. ….**The text made me feel brave".** I employed Wortham and Reye's (2015) DA to unpack the word "brave", as it stuck out as a social action beyond

the speech act. It was tethered to being able to read texts that he did not before as a direct result of DLE. He did not mention that school had ever caused him to feel brave, but that being able to read full chapter books now, when he did/could not before, made him feel brave. Even though he is saying the text made him feel brave, it was the fact that we were able to read it, digest it, discuss it, and really engage with it dialogically that took away the intimidation factor; this is something that Dante also expressed – that the questions and discussion helped him understand the book. This came as a result of the DLEs.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the five key findings discovered from this study**.** The findings were organised by themes. Data from individual pre and post-interviews, analytic memos, video transcripts, student artefacts (response logs), and a survey showed how the boys' relationship with text was shaped and nurtured through the dialogic literacy experiences – or Dialogic Literacy Club. It also showed their own perception of how their relationship with text had been shaped, too.

Considering this is a qualitative research design, substantial samples of quotations from the boys were utilised; there was only one instance where my own words were used (analytic memo), and three instances where a survey was included, but this was filled out by the boys, so the findings was based on what they thought/believed. Even still, instances where either analytic memo or survey was used was supplemented with direct quotations from interviews and the boys' artefacts (screen shots of their documents for added authenticity). I aimed to build confidence of my readers by using the boys' own words and artefacts, in order to accurately and authentically represent the people and situation that was studied.

One of the primary findings of the study was that the boys' relationships with texts were nurtured by deepening their *Affective* and *Intellectual* engagement with texts. This finding emerged from the post-interviews and video transcriptions whereby the boys kept on talking about how they felt or what they had learned that happened to be of an intellectual nature. The boys did not explicitly express that their relationship with text was deepened by affective and intellectual engagement with text, but it was clear that those two aspects were (a) affected the most during the DLEs, (b) was an iterative process of them engaging with the text intellectually and affectively.

Another primary finding was how meaningful it was to be able to talk through texts, which deepened the boys understanding of the text, their relationship with text, and their learning of self. This finding emanated from post-interviews, video transcriptions and results from a survey they filled out anonymously. Many stated that they learned so much from other boys, and that it was nice not to have to always come up with answers themselves. All of the boys found the writing, teacher questions, and whole group discussion helped them engage with the text better. Most said it was great to be able to express themselves and think about what others said. The DLEs (discussion and text) ultimately helped the boys feel bold about trying to read texts they had never read, by themselves. All boys claimed that their relationship with text had changed and grown through the discussion, questioning and readings that the DLE process provided them with.

The third finding was that the communal learning aspect of the DLEs helped the boys to grow as learners by holding each other accountable, having dialogic conversations, and building on each other's thoughts and ideas (utterances). I used pre

and post-interviews to better understand the boys' views on sharing their thoughts with others. Most were excited about entering into other people's thinking and being able to discuss their thoughts with each other, as well as offer their understanding of things, but some were less enthused because they preferred to process internally. Even still, the boys quickly formed a sense of camaraderie, and through that, they were able to hold each other accountable when it came to their own learning. They also called each other out to make sure they were doing the work. Some thought that there was too much joking and talking in some DLEs, but overall they enjoyed working with each other because it increased their understanding of the text and themselves as readers and learners.

The fourth finding was that all seven boys said that the study opened their mind and that they felt that they learned many new things about the world through the text and discussions. This result was found mostly in the survey. This was translated as the study building their global perspective and raised their consciousness. Other evidence used was the boys' artefacts and one analytic memo. Boys engaged in conversations about information from text that was consciousness-raising and brought in a global scope. 6 out of 7 boys were shocked to find out things beyond their local setting, but they appreciated it because it made them want to know and learn more about the world. It seemed to shift their thinking about their self in relation to society and the world.

The fifth finding was that all seven boys indicated that the study prompted them to want to have sustained literacy practices in-and-outside of school. All seven boys also kept on thinking about a text that they read in the study, which points to a possible sustained literacy practice. Some boys were inspired by the text and discussion to find out

more information beyond the DLEs, whilst others were inspired by the texts and just felt compelled to read more.

Essentially, the DLEs piqued the boys' interest and desire to continue shaping their relationship with text. In order to see what could happen with an analysis that uses a different theoretical framework to produce these results, however, a study would need to be conducted with a control group that does not use DLE

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

In this study, I examined how dialogic literacy experiences shaped fourth and fifth-grade grade Black boys' relationship with texts. I presumed that the boys' relationships with texts could be shaped and nurtured using DLEs as a pedagogical tool in classrooms or other teaching spaces. I wanted the study to grow the boys academically and personally, with an increase of their knowledge of the world and self. I wanted their love of reading to have a new fire lit under it so that they would commit to becoming lifelong readers—and therefore, lifelong learners.

At the outset of the study, dialogism, text selection, the roles of text in Black boys' lives, and positioning were used to create a conceptual framework known as dialogic literacy experiences (DLEs) that guided this study in pursuit of answering this research question:

How do dialogic literacy experiences shape elementary aged Black boys' relationships with text?

It is important to observe here that although I discovered many findings, I used my conceptual framework and my research question to ground me, enabling me to focus on the most primary findings. While my study and conceptual framework address the research question and provides ways DLEs shape Black boys' relationships with text, I do believe there are other questions that need to be asked as a follow-up. Although I enjoyed implementing my framework and it yielded important results, I acknowledge that there are other frameworks that can be used to address the nurturing of Black boys' relationships with texts.

During the study's data analysis phase, several themes did not fit with my research question. They were: (1) how literate identity was shaped through the process, (2) how the genre of the book sometimes affected their engagement with the text, and (3) how humour in class discourse was sometimes used to discuss text. With regards to the literate identity, I did not have enough evidence to support this theme, such as a measuring tool to see how their literate identities were shaped through the process. Although I found the humorous discourse an interesting finding—especially based on research about Black boys and classroom discourse—I found that this only occurred with the chapter book, *House of Robots* and no other text. Since the research question was not about *how does genre of books shape Black boys' relationship with text* or *classroom discourse*?, *Or does classroom discourse affect Black boys' relationship with text?,* I decided that it was not needed for this specific question. Genre was the hard one to decide about because it spoke somewhat to the success of the text selection. Some texts the boys really engaged with or learned a lot from such as *Child Soldier* and *House of Robots*, but then some struggled with *Malala's Magic Pencil* or *Schomburg's Library*. Although the boys learned many things in both texts, *Malala's Magic Pencil* was too easy it seems. When I heard Omar's complaints that "this book is way too easy!" and Jason's criticisms "have you seen these short pages? We can finish this book in ten minutes."

The discussion in the rest of the chapter takes into consideration the literature on dialogism in classrooms, Black boys and their literacy practices, positioning theory, and the roles of text in Black people's lives. The implications of these findings serve to augment our understanding of how and why Black elementary boys' relationship with

text was nurtured using DLE. The chapter concludes with limitations and opportunities for future research.

Connections to Literature

My initial thoughts coming into this study was that if there were certain types of texts that were read historically by Black people that affected them deeply, or was meaningful to them, then why not use these types of texts for our young Black boys in the classroom? Why not find out what the characteristics were of these texts and use it in our text mediation? Why am I concerned about this? Because Black writers, activists, and authors have spoken about the life-changing role texts have played in their lives, yes, but why haven't our young Black men been exposed to the same power of texts that can shape them as readers and people?

The Roles of Thought-Provoking Texts

Literature shows that reading text in conjunction with processing it dialogically, often with other people, reinforced learning, and a love and understanding of text. It seemed that thought-provoking texts coupled with dialogue had a history of bringing about sustained change and lead to historic moments of enlightenment, self-actualization and paradigm shifts (Fisher, 2008; Tatum, 2009; Upchurch, 1996). When I say thought-provoking texts, I mean texts that make you think deeply on topics, society, the world, yourself; texts that make you want to change, improve, learn something new, or understand something more deeply.

Also, as Wells (1986) discovered in study, in Western societies, there was a reciprocal role of speaker and listener, both trying to reach a point of intersubjectivity. If

this is naturally how people learn outside of the classroom (in 'real' life) then why isn't this modeled within the classroom?

A theory that I used to support my framework was positioning theory (Harré & Davies, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove; Mcvee et al., 2011). I wanted the boys to position themselves (and be positioned) as readers, learners, and scholars who were all on a path of growth and learning. The positioning aspect was important in how I approached the pedagogical and theoretical framework (DLE), because it spoke to the part of them that could continue to grow in the classroom -- their academic, personal, and literate identities. Being positioned a certain way towards text could have a negative effect on one's transactional abilities, or being able to have meaningful exchange with text, and most importantly, having the ability to foster one's literate identity. Initially I wanted to include identity theory in my theoretical framing of the study, but I realised through discourse analysis positioning theory, I could see how their identity rolled out, or was impacted by the study (see Figure 4 and Table 8).

Analysis of Findings

There were five primary findings from my study that I gleaned through a careful iterative coding process. (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As I provide my analysis of the findings, I am aware that they are subject to interpretation, and that there are other possible interpretations possible for these findings. The findings are as follows:

1. ***Affective*** and ***Intellectual*** engagement with texts
2. DLEs facilitated meaningful experiences with texts
3. Consciousness-raising and global perspectives
4. Communal learning
5. Sustained literacy practices

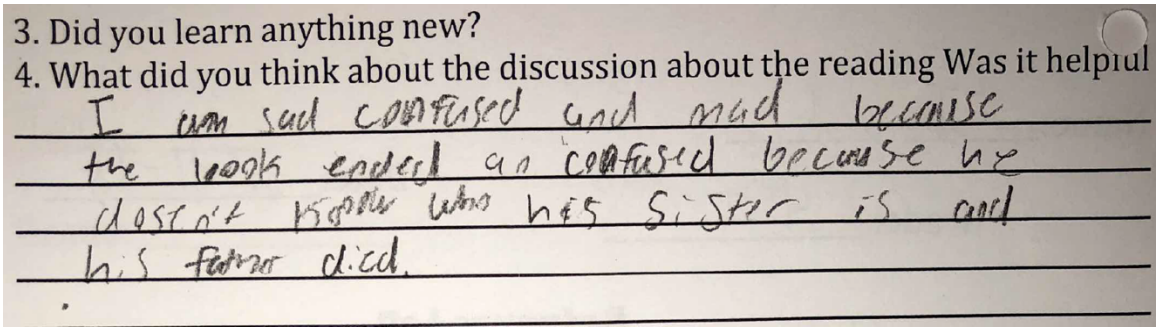
Balancing Intellectual and Affective Dimensions of Texts during DLEs

As I began the study, I could not gauge how genre and text difficulty would impact DLEs. I observed differences in the boys as they discussed intellectual aspects of the texts versus affective aspects of the texts. For example, *Schomburg's Library,* I believe, was too informational for some of the boys and therefore they were not fully engaged. There were a lot of lofty ideas in there that we had to unpack which slowed down the reading process. The moments they were really engaged with the text was when the personal aspect of Schomburg's life was being discussed in depth. Shaun even managed to link it to other historical events by saying "What if Schomburg was on stage when Martin Luther King was assassinated!?" Shaun asked this question because we found out in the book that Schomburg had met Martin Luther King a few times and ran in the same circles. This was his way of maintaining engagement with the text—using a well-known historical event and figure, and combining that with the biographied life of Schomburg, to make him and the story more riveting and accessible.

I found that the boys responded best to text that had a combination of both affective and intellectual engagement *together*. So, even though deepening their affective and intellectual engagement with texts indicates that their relationship with text deepened, it seems that conversely, the deepening of these domains through the use of discussion enabled them to then deepen their relationship with text. Basically, it is an iterative process that feeds into each other: the more they are engaged affectively and intellectually, the more their relationships with texts deepen; or the more their relationship with text deepen, the more they're engaged with the text affectively and intellectually.

Looking through the DLEs, I found that the times they were deeply engaged with the text was when they were first hooked personally on an emotive level, then conversation around what had just occurred took place and gave room to learn more academic and intellectual things.

Figure 20. Response log showing deep emotive response to text that sparked conversation

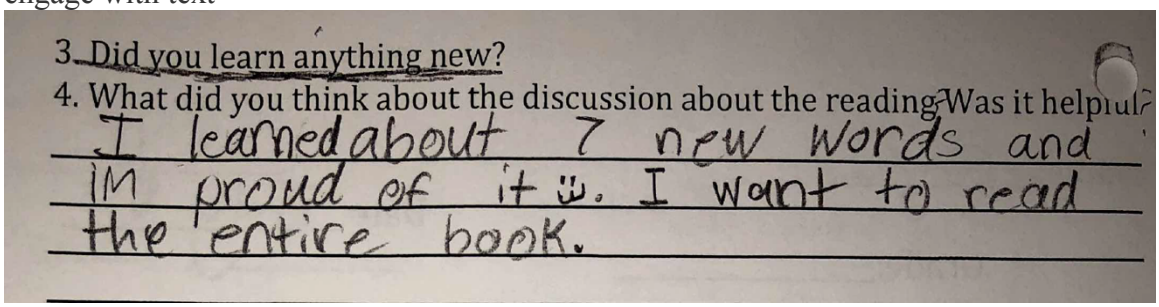

3. Did you learn anything new?
4. What did you think about the discussion about the reading Was it helpful
I am sad confused and mad because the book ended an confused because he doesn't know who his sister is and his father died.

"I am sad confused and mad because the book ended an confused because he doesn't know who his sister is and his father died" (Jason)

Jason was deeply emotionally invested in this story – all boys were (see Table 11). The boys wanted things to go well for the main character, and this may have (subconsciously or consciously) been because the character was a young boy – just like them. But many found solace in the fact that the author of this autobiography was still alive. I think the text empowered them, which is supported by what Shaun said earlier--that even though he's small, he can do anything.

I also found that the learning of new words and concepts aided in understanding the emotional gravity of specific scenarios in the text that may not have been so poignant or had as much of an impact had they not learned what the word was. This was compounded by the fact that in the response log, the boys often commented on how many new words they learnt (see Figure 21).

Figure 21. Response log showing a correlation between words learnt and willingness to engage with text


3. Did you learn anything new?
4. What did you think about the discussion about the reading? Was it helpful?
I learned about 7 new words and im proud of it ☺. I want to read the entire book.

"I learned about 7 new words and im proud of it ☺. I want to read the entire book" (Maxwell)

It seemed that learning new words was almost synonymous with how well the DLE went at times. Probably because it indicated that with those new words, they learned new concepts and information from the text itself, again, deepening their intellectual engagement with text and therefore shaping their relationship with text.

Theoretically, this seems to be a head and heart reciprocity or connection – that in order to fully engage with text, the head (intellectual/academic) and heart (emotion/affective) must both be engaged, or have something to engage it. This way, one gets optimal engagement or experience with text. Although not all my text selections (at least, the five from the ten that the boys chose) were ideal as mentioned above, but the ones that were effective elicited a strong and positive response that showed head and heart were both engaged.

The affective and intellectual codes by far had the most frequency than other codes; each boy seemed to value having an emotional or intellectual connection with the texts. They also seemed to look for the same thing (whether consciously or subconsciously) because one book Lamar said he did not connect with was *Malala's Magic Pencil*, as he said it had little interest to him. I found this strange seeing as we had spoken about gender equality within this text and how he was an advocate for women

because his mother taught him to be. He was very passionate about this aspect of the text. So, I knew the disconnect with this was not because of gender, or personal connection, but perhaps the disconnect was the complaint most of the boys had: it was too easy.

Dante, however, did not like *Schomburg's Library* because he was frustrated with Schomburg's lifestyle.

Mellissa:	What was your gut feeling about it? What was it that was like not pleasant for you?
Dante:	He reads a lot of books then he didn't ... Because he stayed up all night reading books to find the history about black people and then he'd go to sleep

This taught me that there are different levels of affective connection to the text: you are either drawn in by the character, or repelled by them. The former makes you want to engage with the text, and the latter pushes you away. This could inform DLEs by engaging in those tough discussions of why they do not feel drawn to specific characters. What is it about them or their lives that does not appeal to them? This is authentic questioning being used to reposition the reader toward the text and characters.

Also, I had many opportunities to gauge their engagement of the text by simply asking them how they felt about it. I was surprised when I realized three boys did not enjoy it, however, because they had many questions about the text. I mistook this as interest, when in retrospect, the DLE allowed them to ask questions to grapple with the text, but asking questions in and of itself does not indicate interest in the story, but can also be a grappling to make meaning. Most of the questions were about historical facts addressed, and his life: why did he have three wives, why didn't he just get rid of the

library to save his marriage, and why did he want to come to America, etc. They were trying to make sense of him and his life so they could further engage with the text. Had I caught onto this earlier, I would have repositioned them toward the text by asking them to apply it to their lives, or the life of someone in their family, or simply asked them what they would have done in Schomburg's position. Or I would have chosen a text that was more personally and affectively engaging (either affective and intellectual attributes being equal, or more personal than intellectual as an entry point) to maintain their levels of engagement. This would be in conjunction with the usual DLE format.

Jason liked *Schomburg's Library* the least because he couldn't access the text:

Mellissa:	And which text/book did you like the least, and why?
Jason:	The textbook that I liked the least was The Man Who Built the Library.
Mellissa:	Schomburg's Library.
Jason:	Yes. The reason was because I didn't really get it. I couldn't really understand it.

Jason's data sets revealed that he really liked to be emotionally connected to the texts. And in fact, what he discusses about the impact of the texts are how emotional they are; how happy or sad they made him. I suspect that this text was difficult for him to enter into because it was very informational with a lot of difficult sentence structure and did not provide Jason many ways of connecting with it emotionally. This might mean that DLEs will have to be a place where emotional connection with text is prioritized. It could also mean that with these types of informational texts, using excerpts could be beneficial; or that extra supports need to be built into DLE when confronting difficult

words and sentences. It could also suggest that while DLEs provide a way to nurture one's relationship with text, it may need an intentional way of enabling one to enter *into* the text, or access the text, especially if there is an imbalance of affective and intellectual attributes in the texts.

Robert also did not connect with *Schomburg's Library* and said that he simply did not "find it interesting." Therefore, three boys did not fully connect with this book, and I believe it was because for them, either the affective, or intellectual engagement was absent. I do believe that while the boys became smarter from reading this text, they just did not necessarily enjoy it or were engaged throughout. The contribution of my study was that affective and intellectual engagement was deepened during the DLEs, which strengthened the boys' relationship with text. This begs the question can one's relationship with text be deepened using DLE even if they do not enjoy the text? Does one need to enjoy and be fully engaged with a text on an affective level to nurture their relationship with text? And what is the difference between learning and getting smarter with text, and building a relationship with text?

Lamar often acted out what we were reading if it truly resonated with him – I did not stop him. He was using it as a way to process the information he had just received, which was often of an emotive, heart-wrenching nature. Once he would act it out (like shooting a gun, or passing out as Michael in the *Child Soldier* did) he would have more questions about the text. It was not something I expected to occur in the DLEs, but I welcomed it as it meant that he felt free enough to process in his own way, and to be authentically himself.

Meaningful DLEs: The Potential of Collective Sharing

This is another primary finding because it is based on the very structure and conceptual framework of DLE. The impact of being able to talk through texts as well as engage with enabling text, deepened the boys understanding of the text, their relationship with text, and self. This finding is essentially talking about the effectiveness of the dialogic literacy experiences as a whole. The DLE had several components: the dialogic talk (utterances, intersubjectivity and authentic questions), dialogic instruction and dialogic reading, and the text selection and writing. I will not address all these components here, but rather, give a broad overview of the boys' reactions, preferences and experiences of these sections.

The DLE was successful mostly because the boys felt they could ask questions and have it answered. The questions were profound, as Jason agrees "I think the reading was good because we made our questions go higher we didn't leave out questions". I believed this prompted the boys to step up and really think about the questions in relation to text, and respond. It seemed important to them to provide that for the fellow classmate.

The discussions truly helped, however, because if one person did not know the answer, another boy would and would be eager to share it. Through this collective sharing, we often got into some deep discussions and discovered truths about things in our lives, history, society or world. Sometimes the discussions were concrete, and other times, abstract. Everyone seemed to feel like they had something of value to offer because the nature of DLE was that everyone had to share an authentic question and help each other answer questions. I honestly think this caused a lot of the boys to realise that

they did have something to offer, and this built their confidence as readers as well as their relationship with text.

The survey response showed that every single boy either agreed or strongly agreed that the whole group discussion helped them understand the text, the teacher's (my) questions helped them, and the writing response helped them. Despite the writing response and questions helping them, all boys said that they would have preferred to have longer reading times and discussions. This does not surprise me as the survey also revealed that boys felt that group discussion helped them the most. I believe this is because dialogic interactions do not happen in the classroom (Wells & Mejía-Arauz, 2006), but also because Black boys' literacy practices tend not to be understood, and therefore they are silenced in the classrooms (Kirkland, 2013). So, finally being able to discuss things openly must have been a new experience – one that they enjoyed, as Dante shared in response to me asking him which part of DLE he enjoyed the most: "the questions and discussion…..Because we get to actually talk about the questions and we get to discuss the questions. Yeah, and then usually in school we don't really get to do that. We just get through it." This has made me rethink my conceptual framework because writing (on the back of the response log) is not necessarily a part of dialogism, I just incorporated it because I felt it would be a great way to reinforce their learning by getting their thoughts down and a way to ascertain how they felt about their DLEs. They did not write as much as I thought they would, however, and part of it is because conveying thoughts on paper is hard in general. I also think the switch from free-flowing, intense, fun, or riveting discussion to writing was too much of a contrast. I think it was important to have the sections for writing their questions and the new words they learnt,

but the longer response at the back needs to be revisited (see Figure 22) because it did not produce a substantial amount of writing.

Figure 22. Front of Response Log

Response Log

Write down questions you have

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Any new words you learned from the reading?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Figure 23. Back of Response Log

What do you think about the reading?
Did anything that was said during discussion change your thinking?
Did you learn anything new?
What did you think about the discussion about the reading? Was it helpful?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

I had the boys complete the 'questions' and 'new words' section, and would just ask one or two revised questions instead of the four questions there as the boys sometimes

answered “yes” or “no” without expanding on their thoughts. I believe they are good questions but are not directly connected to the structure and tenets of dialogism or the DLEs.

One thing that happened repeatedly was the boys felt the need to “re-write” their storyline within history by using phrases such as “I would have”, “that’s not right”, or “why would they do that?” (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Wortham & Reyes, 2015). It was fascinating to witness the positions they took when discussing certain issues; some wanted revenge or vengeance, or equality whilst others just wanted to be understood. Again, I believe this to be a difference in personalities and therefore unique responses to DLE, but I believe the difference truly enriched the conversations. These questions and phrases needed to occur so they could reconcile themselves with the events in the text and process it in a way that was meaningful to them. In those instances, I opened up the discussion further and asked them why they thought that, or said what they said, and asked others to contribute as well. I did this so they felt valued and would revisit what they said and locate what made them say that. I wanted them to have dialogic interactions with themselves, too, so that they could carry that experience with them, hopefully spurring them to want to continue investing in their relationships with texts even outside of the classroom.

The boys enjoyed all aspects of DLE as it helped them to understand the text better through the questioning and discussions, but the texts also provided those questions and discussions in the first place.

The Catalyst for Raising Consciousness

This finding revealed that all seven participants had consciousness-raising experiences, or their global perspective expanded. Each participant had codes in either their response logs, post-interviews or video recordings that show they all experienced thinking about the self, society and the world through dialogic discussions, the texts, and questioning.

They also felt that they read a text that opened their mind, meaning that caused them to think of something, or think in a way that they had not thought of before (see Table 12). This, in effect, nurtured their relationship with text. It also means that what they learned was new to them, which includes culture, country, concepts, etc.

I believe this was largely to do the texts that were selected; in fact, five out of seven of the boys either agreed or strongly agreed in the survey that they read a text that stayed on their mind. I selected texts that had Afro-Puerto Rican, African American, White American, Pakistani and Nigerian authors—all of which had content, issues and topics related to the author's home country. This was deliberate so that the catalyst to have consciousness-raising conversations and interactions would already be within the text. The boys were more than able to have these conversations, but maybe had not been presented with opportunities to do so, and so frequently, too. I knew the DLEs would incorporate discussion that could potentially be global-reaching, and consciousness-raising, but I wanted the texts themselves to consist of these elements intrinsically to operate as a catalyst for transformational conversations, and therefore, potentially, actions. For example, when talking about Schomburg's search for Black literature and artefacts in *Schomburg's Library,* Omar asked "why did they not write about black people History but they wrote about white people"; a passage in this book had Omar

thinking about systems of power in the world, which may not have been a thought previously visited until captured in the text. Our conversations may have naturally gotten us there, eventually, but having a concrete example in the text made it possible to bring the local setting to the global seamlessly.

Shaun liked to share anecdotal stories relating to the text we were reading. He had a lot of global knowledge, most of which he prefaced his sentence with "my mom told me". His mother was born and raised in Nigeria, but Shaun was born in the US. Still, this impacted and expanded his learning and understanding of the world, which he shared freely with others in the class. This helped facilitate discussion, or just gave some of us more from a different vantage to think about. The other boys had wonderful contributions and reactions to the text that showed conscious or keen awareness of the contrast between their lives and the lives of those in the text (linking global to local). I think the mental energy it takes to think consciously, or have consciousness evoked in you means that you must be making a personal investment with the text and having an experience that is 'opening' your mind. All these things point to how the boys' relationship with text deepened as their consciousness and global perspectives deepened.

I was surprised by the nature of some conversations because I did not know how aware they were of some of the things that had happened historically, nor did I think they would want to discuss them because some of the topics were intense. It felt like they were ready for some of the discussions we had because their questions sounded like they had been thinking on that topic long before the study. For example, in *Schomburg's Library,* they discussed the fact that Schomburg got married three times and did not seem

impressed by this. This made them question his faithfulness and morality and caused cognitive dissonance because this character was meant to be doing something good but had gotten married so many times. They wanted to know what happened to each wife in order to understand Schomburg's decisions. Martin Luther King was also in the story briefly, and they began to compare the two and how MLK only had one wife. But Maxwell mentioned there was speculation about his fidelity.

Video Transcription

Omar:	He cheated?! But I thought he was meant to be good!
Maxwell:	But there probably was a good reason for it.
Shaun:	We don't know what happened to his wife.
Maxwell:	Also. We don't know the bigger picture. And it was a different time, too.

The boys were discussing what many would call an adult matter, but critically, essentially trying to understand and contextualise human intentions. I doubt this type of thinking would have occurred had they simply read the book without any dialogic discussion. They were accessing reasoning and consciousness that they may not have known was available to them, therefore further shaping their identities.

Nuances to Communal Learning

This finding speaks to an important factor about learning: for it to be optimal, it is best not to do it alone; it is a social and communal activity (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Gadsden, 1993). It shows that the communal learning space helped the boys to hold each other accountable for each other's learning, especially through dialogic conversation and

building on each other's thoughts and ideas. They became literacy citizens, and together they cared about their reading practice, as well as the meaning they were making from the text. But because it happened in a communal setting, I believe their shared literary citizenship will be carried with them in different spaces outside of the classroom setting. This could be because culturally, studies and history has shown that African Americans tend to thrive in communal learning settings (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Gadsden, 1993; Heath, 1983; Muhammad, 2012)

If they were able to hold each other accountable, they will be able to hold their own selves accountable in different spaces now that the study is over. I started to notice that conversations about the text started to occur without me initiating it or even needing to be a part of it. They shifted from solely directing the question to me, to bringing the question to us all. They started to use phrases like "I agree with" "or to add to what he said", which showed that utterances and intersubjectivity were taking place. They were addressing each other in their discussions around text, which all of them said did not occur in the school setting, but that they would appreciate occurring.

The boys also truly exhibited a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), whether they were aware of it or not. They cared about the readings, their work, their time to share their thoughts and questions. The boys exhibited a type of familiarity and comradery as is illustrated below:

Post-interview 1

Shaun:	Because you get to have discussions with other people and show what they're thinking about and you make jokes.

Mellissa	Yeah. I liked to give you guys room to joke as well as part of the whole discussion. So what was it like working with other boys in dialogic literacy club?
Shaun:	It was good. They're really full of humor.
Mellissa	Because they're really full of ...
Shaun:	Humor.
Mellissa	Okay. Do you think it grew friendships?
Shaun:	Yes.

As is shown in my response to Shaun, I make room for the boys to express their literate identities – even if it doesn't look like they're engaged. But the jokes had everything to do with their text – they were just expressing their engagement with it differently. Yes, I redirected the conversation a couple of times, but I did it by addressing the joke they just shared. Had I decided to stifle those interactions I may have stopped their learning. I had to decide what was important, controlling the discussion, or allowing them to explore and express their literate identities. I believe this also contributed to the friendly, open, jovial atmosphere, which aided them in their learning and engagement with text. Shaun himself said (in the exchange above) that he thought the humour contributed to the friendships. I also intentionally made this decision based on what literature says about Black boys and classroom discourse, or how their literacy practices are not seen as 'real' literacy (Kirkland, 2009, 2013).

Other aspects of communal learning where the boys held each other accountable by telling each other to fill out their response log, telling others not to skip ahead when reading, "he's skipping ahead again! You need to wait for us! Why can't you wait?!" (Omar); or trying to help answer each other's questions. They were not just saying

information to impress each other, but they genuinely wanted to help provide an answer to increase their classmate's learning: "I get to see how to express and what questions that I can answer, or they can answer for my questions" (Lamar). I believe not only did no one want to be left behind in their learning, but they didn't want to leave anyone else behind. The communal spirit gave the boys a kind of impetus to really work hard and engage with the text and the experience so that their relationships with text could be further shaped and refined. It also gave them a sense of competition as the DLEs progressed. They either wanted to ask the most authentic question, or help answer someone else's query, or write their response down faster than the others. I noted that it wasn't about impressing me per se but being a guide and help to their classmate whilst pushing them to do more.

However, there were two boys who did not find some aspects of this communal learning helpful: Dante and Maxwell. Dante explained that there was too much joking around, and Maxwell stated that he liked to keep his thoughts to himself. All the boys were different, and that inevitably meant personalities came into play which may have impacted how they responded to DLE. Maxwell was more introverted than the other boys, and he seemed to prefer working independently. He was also absent the most out of the other boys, so perhaps he did not get to build the same type of relationship as the others did to fully appreciate the communal experience. But still, he could just prefer being an introverted learner who takes things in and processes them internally, so the DLEs may have required of him a lot more talking, and sharing of thoughts than he would have preferred.

Dante often joined in with the camaraderie and joking; I think people know how best they learn, and perhaps he felt that even though he enjoyed the joking, he could have gotten more out of some DLEs. He liked to get on with his work, often finishing his writing first, so the joking could have been a distraction to him. The joking mostly occurred when we were reading *House of Robots*, which happened to be the last book we read together.

For the other boys, however, learning occurred during the joking, and they were having some conversations that showed a depth of knowledge and understanding of the characters and dynamics between the characters. This just taught me that there are nuances to communal learning, and that I had some learners who thrived with certain aspects of it, whilst others did not appreciate it as much.

Beyond the Texts

All of the boys said in the survey that they want to read again on their own (see Figure 15). This meant that the study prompted them to want to have sustained literacy practices beyond the study. This could be an indication that their reader or literate identity was further shaped during this study, especially as there were codes that indicated autonomy and agency regarding their experiences during the study.

This was highly encouraging as it really does mean that the DLE shaped their relationship with text -- by making them want to read on their own. The boys acknowledged at the beginning of the study that they read outside of school, but most said it was because they were bored, or to get their grades up. When speaking to the boys, it felt that an excitement and urgency to read had been sparked in them. They seemed to now relish the idea of choosing a book to read—to want to have agency with their

literacy practices and grow as a reader. I believe the desire to read on their own came from the fact that they now have confidence as readers, having had that shared experience to express themselves and have some autonomy with the book choices. One of the boys explicitly states that the study helped his reading when I asked how he felt about his DLEs:

Dante:	I think it was fun and entertaining, but it was also helpful for my reading.
Mellissa	In what way?
Dante:	In like when I read, to understand the questions and stuff because usually when I read, I really don't understand the questions.

Shaun said that he now felt brave to read chapter books on his own. Being brave caused him to be think and do differently -- as direct result of DLE. It empowered him and repositioned him and his literate identity or reader identity. All boys self-identified as good readers, but it would seem that reading different texts than what one usually gravitates to, for some, is a brave commitment to make. The boys felt that they could make that commitment, however, as the DLEs provided them not only with the tools to *want* to read, but also a *way* to read that they enjoyed and became smarter using. Different types of books require different types of reading and engagement, which is why in this study I used multiple genres and disciplines so the boys could have DLEs with all types of texts in order to build a robust relationship with text and reading.

The study seemed to have positioned the boys towards the texts that perhaps helps them want to become lifelong readers or engaged readers. Hopefully, the boys will be able to use the study as a springboard into their own flourishing reading lives and be able

to use the skills they gained from the DLEs to further sustain and grow their literacy practices.

Implications

There is a tremendous amount of research that supports the need for an instructional or pedagogical practice for Black boys and their reading, or in this instance, to nurture their relationship with text. My aim was not to get them to read, but to desire to continue reading and be equipped with skills to know how to do that.

Even though this study is for elementary aged boys, if the practitioner used my guide on how I selected text, they should be able to select an age-appropriate text for their students. My framework includes PEER reading sequence, which is similar to read-aloud, which literature shows should still be happening even in adolescence and beyond (Layne, 2015); this apparently builds long-term endurance for reading (Trelease, 2006) which inevitably would help with building one's relationship with text.

1. How to mediate texts that are powerful and conscious-raising for Black boys to disrupt the ongoing narrative that they are not interested in reading,
2. How to engage Black boys in the elementary grades with a wide range of texts across the academic disciplines.

I will use the above considering this is what is lacking in the literature and what teachers are trying to find out.

How to Mediate Texts that are Powerful and Consciousness-raising for Black Boys

Many Black boys have not had the right text put in front of them or had an instructional approach that optimises their engagement with text. Or, they have been

labelled as non-readers and are struggling to eschew those labels – especially when with labels comes how you're positioned in the classroom, society, and the world.

Teachers, practitioners, etc., would have to be committed to putting the best text in front of our Black boys. Not low-level high interest texts, but texts that can be enabling (Tatum, 2012) that Black boys historically and currently have a powerful relationship with social (e.g., law, sociology, poetry, literature) and scientific texts (e.g., biology, medicine) (Douglass, 1950; Tatum, 2009; Upchurch, 1996). Practitioners should select texts that have different settings, cultures, or themes and concepts that are not discussed regularly. Select a text that caters to at least one of their multiple identities--cultural, community, personal, academic and gender (Tatum, 2012)--so they have multiple ways of accessing the text. It sounds simple but read reviews. Choose a wide range of these types of texts then allow the student to make his choice. This way he is exercising agency and is already invested in his own learning and literacy growth. It also means that there's a higher chance that he will be interested in a text that he selected himself.

Selecting texts that ensure they have a higher level of consciousness and can recognise and respond to systemic and institutionalised oppression, reject stereotypes and feeling of being boxed-in or feeling helpless in their situation will help prepare them to challenge social norms and labels that have been placed upon them. Moving a generation of young boys to a higher level of consciousness, global awareness, and meaningful exchanges with text through proper, intentional text mediation, backed with the understanding of the power of the roles texts, can help our boys not just read, but act on what they have read. It would help them be, think, and do differently.

How to Engage Black Boys in the Elementary Grades with a Wide Range of Texts Across the Academic Disciplines

My study consisted of incorporating texts from multiple disciplines (sociology, history, autobiography and biography), and the boys were highly engaged in most of them. As my first primary finding illustrated, the key to this was selecting texts that would engage them affectively and academically then facilitating conversation that enables them to deepen that engagement. Practitioners would have to familiarise themselves with dialogism, especially dialogic talk, dialogic teaching/instruction, and dialogic reading to ensure they are fostering a truly dialogic space. They would also have to be aware of their positioning towards the text and their students, to give them room to express themselves without the fear of being penalised. Granted that the text selection is enabling, deepening their affective and intellectual engagement should not be difficult as long as you're facilitating conversations that continue to deepen their affective and intellectual domains. Perhaps have some questions already lined up that you know will elicit such responses, as a way to model how they can also ask questions. Make sure both are in the text or that there's room to have both affective and intellectual discussions, as it seemed that deepening the two together within a DLE, particularly, gleaned optimal results in terms of meaningful exchange with text and engagement.

Thoughts Regarding Identity and Literacy

Regarding positioning theory, the conversations we had during DLEs illustrated that Black boys may not be critical of positions they are cast in or of the activity of others if not given the opportunity to reconcile their identity with social factors they face and experience. This is something teachers will have to be aware of. If language creating worlds is real (Freire, 1985; Freire & Macedo, 2005), then we are creating worlds in

classrooms and schools which exacerbate this issue of identity, silencing minority voices, (van Langenhove & Harré 1999; Wortham, 2006), and plundering excellent opportunities for meaningful literacy experiences. Thus, students should be taught to be cognisant of and challenge pre-existing storylines based on their background, race, or any other social factor that inhibits their literacy experiences and identity (Davies & Harré 1990; Harré & van Lagenhove, 1999; Mcvee et al., 2011). Students should also be encouraged to critically analyse their personal, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds as it speaks to their reality, and become aware of any limitations that may exist in their lives because of it. Once aware, they can make an educated effort to transform their situation (Freire 1970; Ladson-billings, 1998).

There needs to be a meaningful literacy exchange between reader and text as this not only has the potential to shape students' identity, but also provide them with opportunities to contribute to matters larger than themselves (Tatum, 2014). When we speak of literacy experiences impacting identity development, we are speaking of how text and a relationship with text can be used to shape readers and how instruction can cater to a person's identity. This will help the boys position themselves today and into their imagined futures, and therefore, future successes. Even with meaningful and encompassing literacy experiences being integrated into the curriculum and instruction, students need tools to critically engage with these experiences and glean meaning while also paying attention to the specific 'positioning' of the texts/ literacies, and their academic and personal selves and identities.

Limitations

This research was conducted in order to find out how DLE nurtures Black elementary boys' relationships with text. Using a case study design made it possible to explore and identify deeply how exactly one's relationship with text is shaped through DLEs. Despite the fact that the group was deliberately small to ensure that all were able to contribute to the discussion and no voices were lost amongst the masses, it is still a small number that is not necessarily generalisable. I also worked with self-described good readers in an all-male setting. Examining the DLE in a whole class setting or may warrant the need to make some adjustments.

The time I had with the boys was brief; I conducted this study for five weeks, two-to-three 1-hour DLEs a week. However, I did manage to collect a lot of data from multiple data sources. Although I now have the data and an understanding of what could happen when using DLEs, it would be fruitful to replicate this study within the next 6 months to see if these results emerged because of this framework or something else. This present study was a study to see what would emerge in this particular data using the DLE framework; testing it to see if it would emerge under other circumstances would be the next step. In addition to this being a shorter study, I did not use multiple coders or a control group as it was not an experimental study. Because this was not an experiment or correlational study, I cannot say what I would have done differently that could have yielded different results. What I do know based on the data, however, is DLE does nurture Black boys' relationships with texts.

Finally, some questions in my survey and interviews may have benefitted from having some words tweaked to aid with comprehension. I noticed that I would read the original question and sometimes they would ask me what I mean, so I had to verbally

change the wording to make it easier to understand; words like “text” need to be changed to “book” for example. I initially had an issue with the response logs, but after the first DLE, I changed it because I wanted them to get the most out of the writing experience as well.

Future Research

A longitudinal study in the future would be ideal. This would ensure reading multiple texts and gauging the impact of them on the boys. Also, I assume it would give boys more time to acclimatise to the DLE structure, enabling them to acquire the skills learnt there to create sustaining literacy acts. Even though my study showed signs of this happening, a longer study could solidify this more. A study could also be conducted solely with Black immigrant students who are bilingual or multilingual, as this could help further understand how dialogism can help nurture Black boys’ relationships with text. Based on how Shaun was processing the DLEs and tapping into his cultural identity, it would be interesting to see what type of results this study would yield. This resonates with me a it is also central to my identity and positioning as a Black immigrant woman. There’s a space of having a certain culture you grow up with as a person of a specific race, but then there is also that gap of having your own racial identity and culture, but also an immigrant culture. Culrutral identity is also very nuanced. Would questioning, dialogic talk or how the Black immigrant students relate to the text in a DLE setting change due to specific cultural or intergenerational reading practices? Would their way of relating to the text or each other change if they translanguage during the DLEs? This study could potentially yield some salient results regarding dialogism, language, and reading.

Despite my study answering and providing many answers to very important questions, it also instigated many questions that would have to be reserved for future research. With my first finding about deepening their affective and intellectual engagement nurturing their relationship with text, a study is needed that has a tool of measurement for (1) if the boys are aware that they are drawn to text and (2) what occurs first – the Intellectual or Affective engagement? And does this have any impact on how one's relationship with text is nurtured?

I changed my process of administering texts in the study from using excerpts to using whole books, but it would be interesting to know and research what the effects would be if only excerpts from multiple texts were read in each DLE. Would this provide more access to texts, and would more texts covered mean hastening of growth when it comes to nurturing one's relationship with text?

Finally, regarding my finding of sustained literacy acts, a study could be conducted to see if those who already have strong out-of-school literacy habits can also benefit from DLEs. Or do DLEs affect students who have out-of-school literacy practices the same way as those who do not? Or, how does the DLE impact students who do not describe themselves as good readers and their relationship with text? The latter was not a finding, but I would like to find out how the study could impact or affect different types of readers.

Conclusion

This has been quite the experience, for the boys and I both. I am excited that the findings revealed multiple ways boys were responsive to DLEs: 1) they began to access their intellectual and affective identity which deepened their engagement with text, 2) the

communal aspect of DLE was a source of support in them accessing the text, 3) consciousness of local and global issues were increased through engagement with text, 4) they showed a desire to continue their learning outside of school settings, and 5) being able to talk about text and ask questions (participate in DLE) facilitated their learning and enjoyment of the text. This study highlights that relationships with text can be nurtured, but a great deal of thought and intentionality needs to go behind the text selection as well as how we choose to engage students with text, and how we position them towards the text. We all need to be honest with ourselves and ask, "why this text for these boys, right now?" This is a question that has been asked of me and has shaped my thinking around my research. To have seven boys say that the study impacted them and caused them to be smarter, and changed their relationship with text, is powerful. I do not want to take that for granted.

I have done a lot of thinking, reflecting and learning in this critical work. It was important for me to see and understand what could happen, so I could then go out and do something substantial with that vital piece of information and knowledge. And as Jason's words earlier remind me "…. knowledge gives you power because if you have knowled your smart if you're smart you're poweful".

References

Adichie, C. N. (2009, October 7). *The danger of a single story*. Retrieved February 14, 2017 from http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language.

Aggarwal, U. (2015). School Choice: The Freedom to Choose, the Right to Exclude. In B. Picower & E. Mayorga (Eds.), *What's Race Got to Do with It?: How Current School Reform Policy Maintains Racial and Economic Inequality* (1st ed.). New York: Petr Lang.

Alexander, R. J. (2001). Border crossings: Towards a comparative pedagogy. *Comparative Education, 37*(4), 507-523.

Alexander, R. J. (2005). *Teaching through dialogue: The first year.* London: Barking and Dagenham. Council.

Alexander, R.J. (2008). *Towards Dialogic Teaching: rethinking classroom talk*. Cambridge: 4th edition, Dialogos.

Allen, B. A., & Boykin, A. W. (1992). African-American children and the educational process: Alleviating cultural discontinuity through prescriptive pedagogy. *School Psychology Review, 21*(4), 586-596.

Anderson, R. C., Hiebert, E. H., & Scott, J. A., & Wilkinson, I. A. G. (1985). *Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission on reading.* Washington, DC: US. Department of Education.

Angelou, M. (1970). *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings.* New York: Random House.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination.* Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin and London: University of

Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Eds. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Trans. Vern W. McGee. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Barnes, D. (1992) *From Communication to Curriculum*. London: Penguin.

Best, R.M., Floyd, R.G., & McNamara, D.S. (2004, April). Understanding the fourth grade slump: Comprehension difficulties as a function of reader aptitudes and text genre. Paper presented at the 85th Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA. Retrieved September 27, 2018 from https://www.semanticscholar.org.

Bingham, C. (1797). *The Columbian Orator.* Boston: J.H.A Frost.

Boyd, M. P., & Markarian, W. C. (2011). Dialogic teaching: Talk in service of a dialogic stance. *Language and Education, 25*(6), 515-534.

Brozo, W. G. (2005). Avoiding the" fourth-grade slump". *Thinking Classroom, 6*(4), 48.

Burbules, N. C. (1993). *Dialogue in teaching: Theory and practice*. Teachers College Press.

Cazden, C. (1988). Social interaction as a scaffold: The power and limits of a metaphor. In M. Lightfoot, & M. Martin (Eds.). *The word for teaching is learning: Essays for James Button* (pp. 3-13). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cleaver, E. (1968). *Soul on ice*. New York: Dell.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative* (pp. 146-166). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). Editorial: Mapping the Field of Mixed Methods Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, *3*(2), 95–108.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* Educational research.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Sage publications.

Coates, T. N. (2015). *Between the world and me*. Text publishing.

Cone, J. H. (1970). *A Black theology of liberation.* Orbis Books.

Cullen, C. (1925). *Yet Do I Marvel*. Soulscript: A Collection of Classic African American Literature.

Davies, B. (2001). Literacy and literate subjects in a health and physical education class: A poststructuralist analysis. *Linguistics and education, 11*(4), 333-352.

Davies, B. (2008). Life in Kings Cross. In A. Y. Jackson, & L. A. Mazzei (Eds.). *Voice in qualitative inquiry: Challenging conventional, interpretive, and critical conceptions in qualitative research.* Routledge.

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the theory of social behaviour, 20*(1), 43-63.

Delpit, L. (2003). Educators as" seed people" growing a new future. *Educational Researcher, 32*(7), 14-21.

Denzin, N. K. (2001). Interpretive interactionism (Vol. 16). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1938). *The theory of inquiry.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Wiston.

Douglass, F. (1845). *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass: An American Slave Written by Himself*. Boston: Anti-Slavery Office.

Douglass, F. (1852/1972). The meaning of July Fourth for the Negro. In P. S. Foner (Ed.), The voice of Black America: Major speeches by Negroes in the United

States, 1979–1991. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Douglass, F. (1950). *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass: Early years, 1817 1849* (Vol.1). International Publishers.

DuBois, W. E. B. (1903). *The Souls of Black Folk.* Chicago: AC McClurg.

Ellison, R. W. (1952). *Invisible Man*. New York: Random House.

Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. Routledge.

Fisher, M. T. (2008). *Black literate lives: Historical and contemporary perspectives*. Routledge.

Florio--Ruane, S. (2001). *Teacher education and the cultural imagination: Autobiography, conversation, and narrative.* Mahwah, NJ, Erlbaum.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (2005). *Literacy: Reading the word and the world*. Routledge.

Gadsden, V. L. (1993). Literacy, education and identity among African-Americans: The Communal Nature of Learning. *Urban Education, 27*(4), 352-369.

Galton, M. J., & Simon, B. (Eds.). (1980*). Progress and performance in the primary classroom*. Routledge.

Gavelek, J., & Bresnahan, P. (2009). Ways of meaning making: Sociocultural perspectives on reading comprehension. In S.E. Israel, & G.G. Duffy (Eds.). *Handbook of research on reading comprehension*, (1st ed., pp. 140-176). Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (1994). First language acquisition as a guide for theories of learning and pedagogy. *Linguistics and Education, 6*(4), 331-354.

Gee, J. P. (1989). What is literacy. *Journal of Education 171*(1), 18-25.

Gee, J. (2000). Identity as an Analytic Lens for Research in Education. *Review of Research in Education, 25*, 99-125. Retrieved December 11, 2018 from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1167322.

Gibbons, P. (2002). *Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning: Teaching second language learners in the mainstream classroom.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Goodlad, J. I. (1984). *A place called school. Prospects for the future*. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

Guthrie, J. T. & Anderson, E. (1999). Engagement in reading: Processes of motivated strategic, knowledgeable, social readers. In J. T. Guthrie, & D. E. Alvermnann (Eds.). *Engaged Reading*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. cambridge university Press.

Holland, D., & Leander, K. (2004). Ethnographic studies of positioning and subjectivity: An introduction. *Ethos, 32*(2), 127-139.

Holt, T. (1990). "Knowledge is power": The black struggle for literacy. In A. A. Lunsford, H. Molgen, & J. Slevin (Eds.). *The right to literacy* (pp.91-102). New York: The Modern Language Association of America.

Hughes, L. (1958). *The Langston Hughes Reader*. New York: G. Braziller.

Jefferson, T. (1952). *The declaration of independence*. Encyclopedia Britannica.

Kendon, A. (2004). *Gesture: Visible action as utterance.* Cambridge University Press.

King Jr, M. L. (1963). Letter from Birmingham Jail. *The Negro Is Your Brother, 212 (2*), 78 – 88.

Kinloch, V. & Pedro, T. (2014). The space between listening and storying: *foundations*

for projects in humanization. In Paris, D., & Winn, M. *Humanizing research* (pp. 21-42). London: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Kirkland, D. E., & Jackson, A. (2009). "We real cool": Toward a theory of black masculine literacies. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(3), 278-297.

Kirkland, D. E. (2013). *A search past silence: The literacy of young Black men*. Teachers College Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American educational research journal, 32*(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education? *International journal of qualitative studies in education, 11*(1), 7-24.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dream keepers: Successful teachers of African American children.* John Wiley & Sons.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge university press.

Layne, S. L. (2015). *In defense of read-aloud: Sustaining best practice*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Lemke, J. (1988). Genres, semantics, and classroom education. *Linguistics and education, 1*(1), 81-99.

Lewis, C., Encisco, P., & Moje, E. B. (Eds.). (2007). *Reframing sociocultural research on literacy: Identity, agency, and power.* New York: Routledge.

Linell, P. (2003). Dialogical tensions: on Rommetveitian themes of minds, meanings, monologues, and languages. *Mind, culture, and activity, 10*(3), 219-229.

Linell, P. (2009). *Rethinking language, mind, and world dialogically: Interactional and contextual theories of human sense-making*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Lipman, P. (2013). *The new political economy of urban education: Neoliberalism, race, and the right to the city*. Taylor & Francis.

Lipman, P. School Closings: The Nexus Of White Supremacy, State Abandonment, And Accumulation By Dispossession. In B. Picower, & E. Mayorga (Eds.), *What's Race Got To Do With It?: How Current School Reform Policy Maintains Racial And Economic Inequality* (1st ed.). New York: Petr Lang.

Lotman, Y. M. (1988). Text within a text. *Soviet psychology, 26*(3), 32-51.

Marcon, R. A. (1995). Fourth-grade slump: The cause and cure. *Principal*, *74*(5), 16-17.

McCarthey, S. J. (2001). Identity construction in elementary readers and writers. *Reading research quarterly, 36*(2), 122-151.

McCarthey, S. J., & Moje, E. B. (2002). Identity matters. *Reading research quarterly, 37*(2), 228-238.

McHenry, E. (2002). *Forgotten readers: Recovering the lost history of African American Literary societies*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

McVee, M. B., Brock, C. H., & Glazier, J. A. (Eds.). (2011). *Sociocultural positioning in literacy*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Mercer, N. & Dawes, L. (2008). The value of exploratory talk. In N. Mercer & S. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Exploring talk in school: Inspired by the work of Douglas Barnes* (pp. 55-72). London: SAGE Publications Ltd

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed). Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage.

Moje, E. B., & Luke, A. (2009). Literacy and identity: Examining the metaphors in history and contemporary research. *Reading Research Quarterly, 44*(4), 415-437.

Morrison, T. (1992). *Beloved*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Muhammad, G. (2012). The Literacy Development and Practices within African America Literary Societies. *Black History Bulletin, 75*(1), 6-13.

Muhonen, H., Rasku-Puttonen, H., Pakarinen, E., Poikkeus, A. M., & Lerkkanen, M. K. (2016). *Scaffolding through dialogic teaching in early school classrooms*. Teaching and teacher education, 55, 143-154.

Mullane, D. (Ed.). (1993). *Crossing the danger water: three hundred years of African American writing*. Anchor.Nassaji, H., & Wells, G. (2000). *What's the use of triadic dialogue? An investigation of teacher student interaction.* Applied Linguistics, 21(3), 333-363.

Munsch, R. N., Martchenko, M., & Dann, S. (1980). *The paper bag princess*. Toronto: Annick Press.

Nassaji, H., & Wells, G. (2000). What's the use of 'triadic dialogue'?: An investigation of teacher-student interaction. *Applied linguistics, 21*(3), 376-406.

Norris, S. (2004). *Analyzing multimodal interaction: A methodological framework*. Routledge.

Nystrand, M. (1992). Social interactionism versus social constructionism: Bakhtin, Rommetveit, and the semiotics of written texts. In A. H. Wold (Ed.), *The dialogical alternative: Towards a theory of language and mind* (pp. 157-173). Oslo, Norway: Scandinavian University Press.

Nystrand, M. (1997). *Opening dialogue: Understanding the dynamics of language and learning in the English classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nystrand, M., & Gamoran, A. (1991). *Instructional discourse, student engagement, and literature achievement*. Research in the Teaching of English, 261-290.

Nystrand, M., Gamoran, A., & Carbonaro, W. (2001). *On the ecology of classroom instruction.* In Writing as a learning tool (pp. 57-81). Springer Netherlands.

Nystrand, M., Wu, L. L., Gamoran, A., Zeiser, S., & Long, D. A. (2003). Questions in time: Investigating the structure and dynamics of unfolding classroom discourse. *Discourse processes, 35*(2), 135-198.

O'Connor, C., & Michaels, S. (2007). When is dialogue 'dialogic'*? Human Development, 50*(5), 275-285.

Ollman, H. (1993). Choosing literature wisely: Students speak out. *Journal of Reading, 36*(8), 648-653.

Orwell, G. (1945). *Animal farm*. Secker and Warburg, London, UK.

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher, 41*(3), 93-97.

Ferguson, P. V. (1896). 163 US 537 (1896). Jurisdiction: United States of America, Supreme Court Date of Decision, 18.

Proclamation, E. January 1, 1863; Presidential Proclamations, 1791-1991; Record Group 11. General Records of the United States Government.

Raphael, T. E., & McMahon, S. I. (1994). Book club: An alternative framework for reading instruction. *The reading teacher*, *48*(2), 102-116.

Resnick, L. B. (1987). The 1987 presidential address learning in school and out.

Educational researcher, 16(9), 13-54.

Reznitskaya, A., & Wilkinson, I. (2015). Professional development in dialogic teaching: Helping teachers promote argument literacy in their classrooms. In D. Scott, & E. Hargreaves (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of learning* (219-232). London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.

Richard, J., Singer, J. D., Willett, J. B., & Light, R. J. (2009). *By design: Planning research on higher education*. Harvard University Press.

Rommetveit, R. (1992). Outlines of a dialogically based social-cognitive approach to human cognition and communication. In A. H. Wold (Ed.), *The dialogical alternative: Towards a theory of language and mind,* (19-44). Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.

Rommetveit, R. (1998). Intersubjective attunement and linguistically mediated meaning in discourse. In S. Båten (Ed.), *Intersubjective communication and emotion in early ontogeny,* (354-371). New York : Cambridge University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem.* Southern Illinois University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1982). The literary transaction: Evocation and response. *Theory into practice*, *21*(4), 268-277.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1994). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes or reading* (pp. 1057-1092). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (2005). *Making meaning with texts: Selected essays*. Heinemann Educational Books.

Saldaňa, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* SAGE

Publications Ltd.

Saldaňa, J. (2011). *Fundamentals of qualitative research*. OUP US.

Saldaňa, J. (2013). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sanacore, J., & Palumbo, A. (2008). Understanding the fourth-grade slump: Our point of view. *In The Educational Forum 73*(1), 67-74. Taylor & Francis Group.

Sedova, K., Salamounova, Z., & Svaricek, R. (2014). Troubles with dialogic teaching. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 3*(4), 274-285.

Shernoff, D., Csikszentmihalyi, M., Schneider, B., & Shernoff, E.S. (2003). Student engagement in high school classrooms from the perspective of flow theory. *School Psychology Quarterly, 18*(2), 158-176.

Skerrett, A., & Bomer, R. (2011). Borderzones in adolescents' literacy practices: Connecting out-of-school literacies to the reading curriculum. *Urban Education, 46*(6), 1256-1279.

Slocum-Bradley, N. (2010). The Positioning Diamond: A trans-disciplinary framework for discourse analysis. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, *40*(1), 79-107.

Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stake, R. E. (1996). *Case Studies method in educational research*. *Complementary Methods for research in education,(2nd ed.).* Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association

Stockard, J. (2010). Promoting reading achievement and countering the "fourth-grade slump": The impact of Direct Instruction on reading achievement in fifth

grade. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 15*(3), 218-240.

Tatum, A. W. (2000). Breaking down barriers that disenfranchise African American adolescent readers in low-level tracks. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 44*(1), 52-64.

Tatum, A. W. (2006). Engaging African American males in reading. *Educational Leadership, 63*(5), 44.

Tatum, A. W. (2008). Toward a more anatomically complete model of literacy instruction: A focus on African American male adolescents and texts. *Harvard Educational Review, 78*(1), 155-180.

Tatum, A. W. (2009). Reading and resilience. *Reading into Practice, 1*(1), 1-9.

Tatum, A. W. (2012). Enabling Texts: Texts That Matter. *Edge.* Retrieved February 14, 2017 from www.missionliteracy.com.

Tatum, A. W. (2014). Orienting African American Male Adolescents toward Meaningful Literacy Exchanges with Texts. *Journal of Education, 194*(1).

Tatum, A., & Gue, V. (2012). The sociocultural benefits of writing for African American adolescent males. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 28*(2), 123-142.

Tatum, A. W., & Muhammad, G. E. (2012). African American Males and Literacy Development in Contexts That are Characteristically Urban. *Urban Education*, *47*(2), 434–463.

Tatum, A. W., & Haddix, M. (2013). *Fearless voices: Engaging a new generation of African American adolescent male writers*. Scholastic Teaching Resources.

Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1991). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge University Press.

Trelease, J. (2006). *The Read-Aloud Handbook.* New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Upchurch, C. (1996). *Convicted in the womb: One man's journey from prisoner to peacemaker*. Bantam.

van Langenhove, L., & Harré, R. (1999). Introducing Positioning Theory. In R. T. Harré, & L. van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory. Moral contexts of intentional action* (pp. 14-31). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). Thought and language. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Walker, D. (1830). Walker's Appeal, in Four Articles; Together with a Preamble, to the Coloured Citizens of the World (Boston, 1830).

Watson, J. B. (1913). Psychology as the behaviorist views it. *Psychological review, 20*(2), 158.

Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers: Children learning language and using language to learn.* Heinemann Educational Books Inc.

Wells, G. (1993). Reevaluating the IRF sequence: A proposal for the articulation of theories of activity and discourse for the analysis of teaching and learning in the classroom. *Linguistics and education, 5*(1), 1-37.

Wells, G. (1998). Some questions about direct instruction: Why? To whom? How? And When? *Language Arts, 76*(1), 27-35

Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogic inquiry: Towards a socio-cultural practice and theory of education.* Cambridge University Press.

Wells, G. (Ed.). (2001). *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*

(Vol. 16). Teachers College Press.

Wells, G. (2007). Semiotic mediation, dialogue and the construction of knowledge. *Human Development, 50*(5), 244-274.

Wells, G. (2009). Dialogic inquiry as collaborative action research. In S. Noffke & B. Somekh (Eds.), *The Sage handbook* of *educational action research,* (1st ed., pp. 50-61).

Wells, G., & Arauz, R. M. (2006). Dialogue in the classroom. *The journal of the learning sciences, 15*(3), 379-428.

Wells, G., & Chang-Wells, G. L. (1992). *Constructing knowledge together: Classrooms as centers of inquiry and literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Wertsch,J.V. (1991): *Voices of the mind. A sociocultural approach to mediated action*. – Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

White, E. J. (2009). A Bakhtinian homecoming: Operationalizing dialogism in the context of an early childhood education centre in Wellington, New Zealand. *Journal of Early Childhood Research, 7*(3), 299-323.

White, T. Charter Schools: Demystifying Whiteness in a Market of "No Excuses" Corporate-Styled Charter Schools. In B. Picower & E. Mayorga (Eds.), *What's Race Got To Do With It?: How Current School Reform Policy Maintains Racial And Economic Inequality* (1st ed.). New York: Petr Lang.

Whitehurst, G. J. (1992). *Dialogic reading: An effective way to read to preschoolers. Reading Rockets*. Retrieved February 14, 2017 from http://www. readingrockets. org/article/dialogic-reading effective-way-read preschoolers.

Whitehurst, G. J., Arnold, D. S., Epstein, J. N., Angell, A. L., Smith, M., & Fischel, J. E.

(1994). A picture book reading intervention in day care and home for children from low-income families. *Developmental psychology, 30*(5), 679.

Wood, D. (1992). Teaching talk. In K. Norman (Ed.), *Thinking voices: The work of the National Oracy Project* (pp. 203-214). London: Hodder and Stoughton for the National Curriculum Council.

Wood, S., & Jocius, R. (2013). Combating "I hate this stupid book!": Black males and critical literacy. *The Reading Teacher, 66*(8), 661-669.

Wortham, S. (2006). Learning identity: The joint emergence of social identification and academic learning. Cambridge University Press.

Yousafzai, M. (2013). *I am Malala: The girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban*. Hachette UK.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Methods and Findings Overview

Question	Data Collected to Answer the Question	How Analysis of Data Answered the Question	Findings Summary
1. How do dialogic literacy experiences shape 4th and 5th grade Black boys' relationships with text?	**Interview Transcripts**: The researcher asked boys to speak on their experiences as readers, to get a better understanding of their textual lineages and relationships with text/reading. **Observational Field Notes**: The researcher observed how discussion took place, and how the boys responded to each other and the texts (excerpts). **Analytic Memos:** The researcher wrote down ways to improve instruction, making it more dialogic in nature, and giving the boys more autonomy. Constantly re-evaluated her positioning towards the boys and the text. **Video Recording:** The researcher observed boys' reactions to the texts, writing, discussions about the texts and their experiences. **Survey:** The researcher asked the boys what their experience was in the Literacy Club; in what ways was the DLE and texts helpful.	The researcher **coded** interview transcripts, field notes, and student artefacts for language that indicated boys accessing texts with their multiple identities, evidence of dialogic interaction, agenda building and consciousness-raising, taking place. The researcher then **identified themes** across codes and grouped codes into categories. Finally, the researcher iteratively compared codes within themes, and themes with other themes to further refine and generate compelling themes. The resulting themes addressed the research question and how the DLEs helped them engage with the text. It also addressed how the process could potentially be sustained outside of the Literacy Club and beyond,	Boys used dialogic experience in the following ways: 1. Boys' relationships with texts were nurtured by deepening their ***Affective*** and ***Intellectual*** engagement with texts. 2. DLEs facilitated meaningful experiences and exchanges with text 3. The communal learning space helped the participants to hold each other accountable 4. All seven boys indicated that consciousness was raised, and global perspectives expanded 5. All seven boys indicated that the study prompted them to want to have sustained literacy practices in-and-outside of school.

APPENDIX 2: Consent Forms Signed by Parent/Guardian

University of Illinois at Chicago
Research Information and Consent for Participation in Social Behavioral Research
Black Boys and Texts: A Study of Dialogic Literacy Experiences

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study. Researchers are required to provide a consent form such as this one to tell you about the research, to explain that taking part is voluntary, to describe the risks and benefits of your child's participation, and to help you to make an informed decision. You should feel free to ask the researchers any questions you may have.

Principal Investigator Name and Title: Mellissa Gyimah
Department and Institution: Department of Education at UIC
Address and Contact Information: 1040 W Harrison St., L268 EPASW
Chicago, IL, 60607, m/c 147
Email: mgyima2@uic.edu
Mobile: 312 202 2457

Why am I being asked?

Your child is being asked to be a subject in a research study about using discussion in a classroom setting to build black boys' relationships with books/texts. The study includes only boys – 8 in total. If you agree to your child being in this study he will need to meet with a few other boys at a UIC classroom, for dialogic literacy experience club (DLE Club). Each meeting will last 1-hr, four sessions a week, for 5-weeks total (20 sessions). He will have a meeting before the club begins for me to introduce myself, and for you as parents to understand what we will be doing during the DLE Club. Your child will get the chance to read different sections of books, write down questions they have about them, discuss those questions with other boys, and write down what their thoughts are about what he reads or any of the discussions they had. This will be video recorded. They will also be interviewed twice to talk about their relationships with books before and after the 5-week DLE Club. They will also answer a short survey about the club experience.

Approximately 8 subjects will be involved in this research at UIC.

Your child has been asked to participate in the research because they fit my eligibility criteria. Your child is either African American or a Black immigrant, they are in 4th grade (9-10 years of age), they describe themselves as a "good reader", or you describe them as a "good reader." These are my criteria for being a part of my study.

Your child's participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to let your child participate will not affect your current or future dealings with the University of Illinois at Chicago. If you decide your child can participate, you are free to withdraw your child from the study at any time without affecting that relationship. You

and your child's decision to participate will not affect or impact your status with the school.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this study is to find out how do dialogic literacy experiences shape Black boys' relationships with text? A dialogic literacy experience is taking different methods of discussion, that affects instruction and how we will read together, and using that to give space to the boys to share their thoughts on the texts.

What procedures are involved?

This research will be performed at a classroom in UIC.
Your child will need to be at UIC for the study, for 20 sessions, for four sessions a week. The study will last a total of 5-weeks. Each of those visits will take about 1hr each.

If you agree to allow your son to participate in this research, he would be asked to do the following things:

1. Participate in 20 Dialogic Literacy Experience sessions. Each session will last for one hour, four sessions a week, for 5 weeks.

2. Participate in two videotaped interviews that involves me discussing the aspects of the reading model, changes noticed in his reading behavior, and his views on the reading materials used during Dialogic Literacy Club. Your son will be interviewed individually.

2. Participate in 20 videotaped sessions led by myself. Your son will be asked to read excerpts from 5 different texts and engage in group discussions with other boys. Your son will be asked to write down questions and responses to the text and other boys during the instruction and allow his answers to be looked at the end of each session.

   You have the right to decline your son being videotaped for the study (sessions and interviews). If you decline, your son will still be able to participate in the Dialogic Literacy Experience study. I will not record him in the group or individually, or the video recordings will be modified so his face is blurred or not identifiable. For interviews your son will have options of either being audio-recorded or have what he says written down . Please indicate your decision below:

   ☐ Yes, I agree for my son being videotaped for the study (includes sessions AND interviews).

☐ No, I do NOT agree to my son being videotaped for the study (includes sessions AND interviews).

3. Complete a 5-minute survey of the instructional practices used during Literacy Experiences Club.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

To the best of our knowledge, the things your child will be doing have no more risk of harm than your child would experience in everyday life. A risk of this research is a loss of privacy (revealing to others that your child is taking part in this study) or confidentiality (revealing information about you to others to whom you have not given permission to see this information). However, every effort will be made to ensure that this does not take place.

Are there benefits to taking part in the research?

You or your child may directly benefit, but no benefits are guaranteed. Your child's engagement or relationship with text may be strengthened. You may find it easier to select texts for your child to read.

What other options are there?

Your child has the option to not participate in this study.

What about privacy and confidentiality?

The people who will know that your child is a research subject are members of the research team. And other participants will also know who participated. Otherwise information about your child will only be disclosed to others with your written permission, or if necessary to protect your child's rights or welfare (for example, when the UIC Office for the Protection of Research Subjects monitors the research or consent process) or if required by law.

UIC OPRS and the State of Illinois auditors may monitor information related to the research.

A possible risk of the research is that your child's participation in the research or information about your child might become known to individuals outside the research. But all data and related records shall be coded and stored, in order to prevent access by unauthorized personnel. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your child's identity.

Identifying information/videotapes will be destroyed as soon as data is collected and analyzed.

Although we ask everyone in the group to respect everyone's privacy and confidentiality, and not to identify anyone in the group or repeat what is said during the group discussion, please remember that other participants in the group may accidentally disclose what was said. Other children and parents will know who participated.

What are the costs for participating in this research?

There are no costs to your child for participating in this research.

Will I be reimbursed for any of my expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

Your child will not be offered payment for being in this study.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

If you decide to let your child participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue your child's participation at any time. Your child has the right to leave a study at any time without penalty. This will not affect or impact their status with the school.

The Researchers also have the right to stop your participation in this study without your consent if: They believe it is in your best interest. Or if it is affecting your ability to keep up with school work and your day-to-day activities.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

Contact the researchers Mellissa Gyimah at 312 202 2457 or email address: mgyima2@uic.edu. Or you can contact Dean Alfred Tatum, faculty sponsor on: 312 996 5412, or atatum1@uic.edu.

What are my rights as a research subject?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or if you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, including questions, concerns, complaints, or to offer input, you may call the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at 312-996-1711 or 1-866-789-6215 (toll-free) or e-mail OPRS at uicirb@uic.edu.

Remember:
Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not your child will participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide your child should to participate, you or he are free to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Parent/Legal Guardian

I have read (or someone has read to me) the above information. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree for my child to participate in this research. I will be given a copy of this signed and dated form.

_____ _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

_____
Printed Name

_____ _____

Child's Name

_____ _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date (must be same as subject's)

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

APPENDIX 3: Assent Form Signed by Participant

University of Illinois at Chicago

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Black Boys and Texts: A Study of Dialogic Literacy Experiences

My name is Mellissa Gyimah. I am asking you to take part in a research study because I am trying to learn more about how group discussion and asking questions can be used (reading and discussing texts in a particular way) to help you build your relationship with reading and texts. If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following things:

3. Participate in 20 Dialogic Literacy Experience sessions. Each session will last for one hour, four sessions a week, for 5 weeks.

4. Participate in two videotaped interviews that involves me discussing the aspects of the reading model, changes noticed in your reading behavior, and your views on the reading materials used during Dialogic Literacy Club. You will be interviewed individually.

3. Participate in 20 videotaped sessions led by myself. You will be asked to read excerpts from 5 different texts and engage in group discussions with other boys. You will be asked to write down questions and responses to the text and other boys during the instruction and allow your answers to be looked at the end of each session.

   You have the right to decline being videotaped for the study (sessions and interviews). If you decline, you will still be able to participate in the Dialogic Literacy Experience study. I will not record you in the group or individually, or the video recordings will be modified so your face is blurred or not identifiable. For interviews you will have options of either being audio-recorded, or the researcher can write what you say. Please indicate your decision below:

   ☐ Yes, I agree to being videotaped for the study (includes sessions AND interviews).

   ☐ No, I do NOT agree to being videotaped for the study (includes sessions AND interviews).

4. Complete a 5-minute survey of the instructional practices used during Literacy Experiences Club.

5. Risk is minimal. There might be a risk of your privacy as other participants are participating in the study, as well as other people may find out you participated in the study. There is also a risk of confidentiality as accidental exposure of identifiable data may occur. But I will do my very best to make sure this does not happen.

6. There will be no direct benefits to participating in this study, but there may be indirect experiences such as the following: As a Black participant, you may not often see yourself or other people of color in books or texts you read, the books you will read will have diverse characters from many different backgrounds. It may help you be more confident in your identity as a Black participant and your experiences relating to that. You will also learn a lot about the world, so it could help you be more aware of what is happening in the world and how it relates to you. It may also help you engage with reading and books more.

7. Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate. I will also ask your parents to give their permission for you to take part in this study. But even if your parents say "yes" you can still decide not to do this.

8. If you don't want to be in this study, you don't have to participate. Remember, being in this study is up to you and no one will be upset if you don't want to participate or even if you change your mind later and want to stop.

9. You can ask any questions that you have about the study. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, you can call me 312-202-2457 or ask me next time.

10. Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in this study. You and your parents will be given a copy of this form after you have signed it.

_____ _____
Name of Subject Date

_____ _____ _____
Signature Age Grade in School

APPENDIX 4: Semi-structured interviews

Pre-interview

Dialogic Literacy Experiences
Summer 2018
Pre-Interview

1. What types of books do you read outside of school?
2. How would you describe your relationship with text?
3. What does reading do for you?
4. How do you think you can enjoy reading more?
5. How do you feel about discussions with other students?
6. What are you expecting from this experience?
7. What do you think will happen in this Literacy club? Do you have any expectations?
8. What would you like to gain from this Dialogic Literacy club?

APPENDIX 5*:* Post-study interview

Dialogic Literacy Experiences
Summer 2018
Post-study Interview

1. Tell me what you think about Dialogic Literacy Experiences?
2. What was it like working with the other boys?
3. Which text did you like the most and why?
4. Which text did you like the least and Why?
5. Which parts of the Dialogic Literacy Experiences did you enjoy the most?
6. How did discussions help you become smarter about text and the world?
7. How has your relationship with texts changed in these last 5 weeks?
8. How did the texts make you feel?
9. If you could change anything about the Dialogic Literacy Experiences what would you change?
10. If you could change anything about the dialogue/conversation what would you change?

APPENDIX 6: Response Log

Name:_____

Date:_____

Grade:_____

Response Log

Write down questions you have

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Any new words you learned from the reading?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Writing: Use the back of the paper to write:

What do you think about the reading?
Did anything that was said during discussion change your thinking?
Did you learn anything new?
What did you think about the discussion about the reading? Was it helpful?

APPENDIX 7: Post-study Survey

Dialogic Literacy Experience Survey

This survey is adopted from Alfred Tatum's 2016/2017 Multidimensional reading model project implemented in Chicago's public schools.

Thinking about the instruction you received during Dialogic Literacy Experiences, please check the section that shows how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

I read a text that…	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1. Had a **lasting** effect on me 2. Made me want to do something for someone **else** 3. I **continued** to think about after I finished it 4. Started me on a new **path** 5. I **want to read again** on my own 6. **Stayed** in my mind 7. I felt a **connection** with 8. Changed the way I **behaved** toward other people and things 10. **Opened** my mind *What helped me understand the text the most…*				

11. The whole group discussion **helped** me 12. The teacher's questions **helped** me 13. The writing response helped me.				

APPENDIX 8: Example Contact Summary Form to enable researcher to capture interpretations directly following data collection activities.

CONTACT SUMMARY FORM FOR OBSERVATIONS/INTERVIEWS

Participants:	Site:
Contact type:	Contact Date:
	Today's Date:
	Written by:

SUMMARY

1. **Describe the setting.**

2. **What were the main issues or themes that struck you in this contact?**

3. **Summarize the information you got (or failed to get) on each of the target questions you had for this contact.**

Question Information

4. **Anything else that struck you as salient, interesting, illuminating or important in this contact?**

5. **What new (or remaining) target questions do you have in considering the next contact with this site?**

APPENDIX 9: Study Flyer for Recruitment

Recruitment Flyer

Want to be a part of this group?

Please contact Mellissa Gyimah on: mgyima2@uic.edu to let me know of your interest. I look forward to seeing you!

Dialogic Literacy Experience after School Reading and Writing club!

Are you a 4th grade African American or Black immigrant boy? If you are, you can be a part of my study and research! The study involves reading different texts, discussing them, and writing about them. You can be a part of a club where you have the opportunity to build your relationship with texts!

Dear Parent(s),

My name is Mellissa Gyimah and I am a research student at UIC. I am recruiting Black boys in 4th grade who describe themselves as a "good reader", or who you, as their parent, describe as a "good reader". The study is to strengthen Black boys' engagement with text using a framework I have developed called Dialogic Literacy Experience (DLE). My study involves reading excerpts from different texts by culturally diverse authors, facilitating a discussion around these texts, and discussing any thoughts or questions about them. Your child will also write down his thoughts and questions on the texts and discussions. This is a 5-week study that will consist of four sessions a week. Sessions will take place this summer in a UIC classroom, and will be called 'Dialogic Literacy Club.' Each session/interaction will be videotaped and will be one hour long, for 20 sessions in total in the space of the 5-weeks. There will be eight boys in this study. If you are interested in your son being a part of this study, please email me at: mgyima2@uic.edu, or call me on: 312-202-2457.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Mellissa Gyimah
Doctoral Student, Literacy
Language and Culture
Research Assistant, Early Literacy Impact Project
UIC Reading Clinic
Office: L268 EPASW
University of Illinois Chicago
1040 W Harrison Street
College of Education
M/C 147

APPROVED
DATE: 06/08/2018
UIC UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Recruitment Flyer, version 3, 6/12/18, pg. 1

APPENDIX 10: Initial Categorisation Process

Category	Code	Document it came from	Number of times code was used	Textual Evidence
Affective engagement *Personal or emotive response or relating to the text*	• Personal identity • Gender Identity • Cultural identity • Personally, relating to text • Personal investment • Emotive response to text Sub category • Affective impact of text			1. *"The books made me feel sad and happy at the same time….some of them were really emotional". – post interview* 2. *"I liked Child Soldier the most 'cause it showed that even if you're little or small you can do anything." – post interview* 3. *It's a good story so far, but right in the middle, it happens" – video transcription* 4. *"I want to read it so badly!" – video* 5. "I'm mad!" – video 6. " I love this book" – video 7. I hate them! – video 8. Im confused and mad – video 9. You're not supposed to go to school as a girl? – video 10. "girls are the ones who make people!" 11. But the first person in the world was a man" video
Intellectual engagement *Academic learning and intellectual knowledge about the self*	• Academic identity • Literate Identity • Text recall • Reader identity • Learner identity • Comprehension • Incidental vocab learned	Interview, response logs participant observation (analytic memo)		1. *"I learned new words like contraption and hyperbolic."- post interview* 2. *"I remember I used to have trouble with seeing the writing*

and world gained	• Incidental knowledge gained • Literacy practice • Reader preference • Global perspective • Consciousness-raising (a priori)			*because it was just go on one line from another. That confused me. It's been five weeks I've been reading, and I'm getting used to it." - post interview* 3. *"some people are ghetto and stuff but I think it's because they didn't have a chance to do it a different way"-- video* 4. *Black people can't work in certain places…so…ummm, it should society [that needs to change] because we need better places to work…if we can work, then we can make money – video* 5. "*What did gender equality mean?"* video
Impact of DLE *The impact of being able to talk through texts and engage with enabling text*	• DLE helping with meaning-making/making meaning of DLE • Growing as a reader/learner • Engaged with DLE/Text • DLE facilitating learning • Opportunity to express one's self • Authentic questions making boys smarter • Dialogic talk • Class discourse prompting questions • Text selection prompting questions Sub categories • Text: • Reader engaging with or accessing text • Text selection prompting questions			1. "*Now I'm able to read full chapter books like the one I read. ….**The text made me feel brave." – Post interview*** 2. "*I got to learn different stuff from other people instead of myself." – post interview* 3. *"I think the Dialogic Literacy Club is good. I get to express how I feel and read about different texts that I never learn until I'm at the school." – post interview* 4. *"I want to read it so badly!" – video* 5. "I love this book" – video 6. "I want to know!"- video

	• Engaged with DLE/text …… • Dialogic talk (including authentic qs, utterances, intersubjectivity): Dialogic talk • Class discourse • Authentic questions making boys smarter • Opportunity to express oneself • Engaged with DLE/text			7. What if Barack Obama wasn't the only black president? – video 8. *Black people can't work in certain places…so…ummm, it should society [that needs to change] because we need better places to work…if we can work, then we can make money – video* 9. How is she still alive after being shot in the head?? – video 10. What did gender equality mean? video 11. "*get my thoughts out*" or *"sometimes people said something bold and I never thought of that. It made me think about it" post interview* 12. "*Because we get to actually talk about the questions and we get to discuss the questions. Yeah, and then usually in school we don't really get to do that. We just get through it."- post interview*
Communal Learning *Holding each other accountable for each person's learning through conversing and building on each other's*	• Learner as **literary citizen** • Relationship with others in Literacy Club • Opportunity to express one's self??? • Sustaining literacy acts??			1. "*I got to learn different stuff from other people instead of myself." – post interview* 2. *Why do you like to criticize everyone and what they say? – video* 3. *You didn't write anything down! Your page is blank! – video* 4. "You guys are just asking questions

thoughts and ideas				but I'm writing questions…you need to write your questions" – video 5. *sometimes people said something bold and I never thought of that. It made me think about it – post interview*
~~Literate Identity~~ ~~*How learner positions themselves towards text or how they access text*~~	• ~~Positioning and repositioning~~ • ~~Agency/autonomy~~ • ~~Book genre preference~~ • ~~Relationship with text/reading~~ • ~~Not accessing text~~ • ~~lack of comprehension of text~~ • ~~Accessing text/engaged in learning~~			~~1. This book is way too easy – video~~ ~~2. Have you seen these short pages? We can finish this book in 10mins!" – video~~

APPENDIX 11: Definition of Terms

Dialogism. Dialogism is social in nature (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). It involves communication with other works, oneself, and others. It also seeks to interact with other works and voices, to make meaning, inform, or alter it (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). In this dissertation, I will specifically be looking at open lines of communication between participant, the ability to reciprocate, have intersubjectivity and ask authentic questions, as well as build on each other's thoughts and ideas.

Dialogic Literacy Experience (DLE). A phrase I coined for my conceptual framework (see Figure 1), where I take sociohistorical aspects of text that Black people read and marry it with aspects of dialogism to create an overall dialogic experience. This involves the instructor reading to the students, the students asking questions, and answering each other's questions, then writing down their thoughts about the text and discussion.

Elementary age. In this case, I am looking specifically at ages 9-10, that is, 4th and 5th grade.

Engagement. In this dissertation, when I refer to engaged or engagement, I define it an as a combination of concentration, interest, and enjoyment, as (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, & Shernoff, 2003). Ways to observe engagement is seeing or experiencing on-task behavior, focus without distraction, and consistent participation in a process (DLE in this case) without a desire to rush to just finish the task for the sake of finishing it.

Text. Black males have had a powerful relationship with social (e.g., law, sociology, poetry, literature) and scientific texts (e.g., biology, medicine) (Douglass, 1950; Tatum, 2009; Upchurch, 1996). So, when talking about my study and the 'text' therein, my definition of text would include all print texts across the disciplines I just outlined, as well as genres. It is text written by authors of different races, ethnicities and gender. When speaking of text outside the context of my study, this also includes all print texts from all disciplines and genres. It is text written by authors of different races, ethnicities and gender.

Meaningful. When speaking of 'meaningful' it is within the context of having a meaningful literacy exchange with text. Therefore, I define this term using Tatum's (2014) coined phrase 'meaningful literacy exchange' (MLE) to mean "reading or encountering print texts that initiate or shape decisions significant to one's well-being" (p. 36).

Identity. I am definition identity through the lens of positioning theory. Positioning theory believes identities are not only produced in and through activity and movement, but also in and across spaces, places, and time; and in the ways people are cast in or called into particular positions in interaction, time, and spaces, and how they take up, or resist those positions. (Davies, 2008; Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Slocum-Bradley, 2010). Identity, in this sense, would include learner, reader, personal, cultural, community, gender and academic (Tatum 2012).

APPENDIX 12: Data Collection for Each Elementary Boy

Collection Date	Collection Type	Participants	All Collected
7/2/2018	Student Written Artefacts (1)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert and Maxwell (6)	Yes
7/2/2018	Video Recording of DLE (1)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert and Maxwell (6)	Yes
7/3/2018	Pre-Interview (2)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert and Maxwell (6)	Yes
7/3/2018	Student Written Artefacts (2)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert and Maxwell (6)	Yes
7/3/2018	Video Recording of DLE (2)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert and Maxwell (6)	Yes
7/9/2018	Student Written Artefacts (3)	Shaun, Omar, Lamar, Robert and Jason (5)	Yes
7/9/2018	Video Recording of DLE (3)	Shaun, Omar, Lamar, Robert and Jason (5)	Yes
7/11/2018	Student Written Artefacts (4)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/11/2018	Video Recording of DLE (4)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/11/2018	Pre-Interview	Dante (joined study on this day) (1)	Yes
7/16/2018	Video Recording of DLE (5)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, and Dante (6)	Yes
7/16/2018	Student Written Artefacts (5)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, and Dante (6)	Yes
7/18/2018	Video Recording of DLE (6)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/18/2018	Student Written Artefacts (6)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/19/2018	Student Written Artefacts (7)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/19/2018	Video Recording of DLE (7)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/23/2018	Video Recording of DLE (8)	Lamar, Jason, Shaun and Omar (4)	Yes
7/23/2018	Student Written Artefacts (8)	Lamar, Jason, Shaun and Omar (4)	No (Lamar lost artefact before collection)
7/25/2018	Video Recording of DLE (9)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/25/2018	Student Written Artefacts (9)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes

7/26/2018	Video Recording of DLE (10)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, and Dante (6)	Yes
7/26/2018	Student Written Artefacts (10)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, and Dante (6)	Yes
7/30/2018	Video Recording of DLE (11)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/30/2018	Student Written Artefacts (11)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/31/2018	Video Recording of DLE (12)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
7/31/2018	Student Written Artefacts (12)	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
8/1/2018	Survey	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes
8/1/2018	Post-Study Interview	Shaun, Lamar, Omar, Jason, Robert, Maxwell and Dante (7)	Yes

APPENDIX 13: Text Excerpt from *The Boy Who Loved Math*

There was once a boy who loved math. He grew up to be one of the greatest mathematicians who ever lived. And it all started with a big problem… Paul Erdös lived in Budapest, Hungary, with his mama. Mama loved Paul to infinity. Paul loved Mama to infinity, too! She didn't want anything bad to happen to Paul. So, she left him with the one person she knew would take very good care of him. She left him with....Fräulein!

Fräulein had too many rules. That was the problem. Paul hater rules. He hated to be told when to sit still, when to eat, when to go to sleep. What could Paul do? He couldn't exactly solve the problem. But Paul knew that when the summer came, Mama would be home with him all day. 100% of the time. So he taught himself to count—really high. Then he figured out how many days it would be until summer vacation. It made him feel much better to know the number.
So Paul kept counting.....
And thinking about numbers. One day, when he was four years old, Paul asked a visitor when her birthday was. She told him.

What year were you born? he asked.
She told him.

What time?
She told him.

Paid thought for a moment. The he told her how many seconds she had been alive.

Paul liked that trick. He did it often.

Paul played with numbers. He added them together and subtracted them. One day he substructure a bigger number from a smaller number.

The number was less than zero.
How could a number be less than zero?

Mama told him numbers below zero are called negative numbers. Paul thought that was so cool!

Now he knew for sure he wanted to be a mathematician when he grew up. He first he had to tackle another big problem...
SCHOOL! Mama sent him to school, of course, when it was time. But Paul and school were not a good match. Paul could not sit still for long. So he got up and ran around the classroom. But that was against the rules.

Oh, how Paul hated rules. How could he solve this problem?

Word count: 365

VITA

NAME: Mellissa Gyimah-Concepcion

EDUCATION

Ph.D. **Literacy, Language and Culture (2019)**
UIC, Chicago, IL
Dissertation title: *Black Boys and Texts: A Study of Dialogic Literacy Experiences*

M.A.W.P **Writing and Publishing (2013)**

DePaul University, Chicago, IL

QTS Teaching License. **Teacher of English (2010)**

Canterbury Christchurch University, UK

BA (Hons). (2009) **English with American Literature and Creative Writing**

University of Kent, Canterbury, UK

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, Curriculum & Instruction (Co-teaching with Faculty) College of Education University of Illinois, Chicago, Chicago, IL
CI 525 & 526: Reading Specialist Certification **Fall 2016-Spring 2017**

Adjunct Professor, Literacy Research (Adjunct, Teaching Faculty) College of Education, Judson University, Elgin, IL
LIT 705: Survey of History and Seminal Studies in Literacy **June 2018-Present**

Researcher & Literacy Scholar, Black Male Early Literacy Impact Project College of Education University of Illinois, Chicago, Chicago, IL **Aug 2015-Aug 2018**

English and P.E Teacher (QTS Certified) **July 2009-2011** *Dover Christchurch Academy, Dover, UK*

ACADEMIC HONOURS & AWARDS

- University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Education*, LLC Graduate Travel Award.* **2016 & 2018**
- Installed as member of Phi Beta Delta Society; nominated for academic excellence at DePaul University. **2012 – Present**
- Golden Key recipient for Academic Excellence. **2015 – Present**
- Recipient of Alex Kirstein Foreign Student Scholarship. **2012**
- Recipient of English Department Partial Tuition Scholarship. 2**012- 2013**
- Recipient of Kolnick Academic Enhancement Fund. **2013**

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Literacy Research Association (LRA), member since **2014.**
- American Educational Research Association (AERA), member since **2016**.
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), member since **2017**.
- Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), member since **2017**.
- Mid-Western Educational Research Association (MWERA), member since **2018.**
- International Conference on Urban Education (ICUE), member since **2018.**

PUBLICATIONS

JOURNALS

Gyimah, M. (2013). Turkey and Stuffing. DePaul Threshold Literary Magazine.

Gyimah, M., & Allen, S. (2016). Critical Historical Identity: Countering the Crisis of Disenfranchisement in the Literacy Curriculum. *Black History Bulletin*, *79*(2), 6 11.

Gyimah, M., & Rose, E. (Forthcoming, 2019). Neoliberal Education Reform as Black Capitalism. *Black History Bulletin,* **Volume 82, No. 1.**

Gyimah, M., & Fortune, A. (Forthcoming, 2019). Black Males and Texts: A Study of Dialogic Literacy Experiences. JAAL Column.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Pagano, A., & **Gyimah, M.** (2017). Contemporary Issues in Supply Chain Management and Logistics. *Supply and Operations Management Collection.* Business Expert Press.