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Critical Conversations: A Social Justice-Driven Professional Learning Community

Felicia Baiden
Georgia State University

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The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chairperson, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

_____
Caroline C. Sullivan, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____
Rhina Fernandes Williams, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Yali Zhao, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Date

_____
Gertrude M. Tinker Sachs, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Department of Middle and Secondary Education

_____
Paul A. Alberto, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education and Human Development

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FELICIA BAIDEN

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Felicia Baiden
Middle and Secondary Education
College of Education and Human Development
Georgia State University

The director of this dissertation is:

Caroline C. Sullivan, Ph.D.
Department of Middle and Secondary Education
College of Education and Human Development
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303

CURRICULUM VITAE

Felicia Baiden

ADDRESS: 3285 River Run Trail
Decatur, GA 30034

EDUCATION:

Doctor of Education	2019	Georgia State University Atlanta, Georgia Curriculum and Instruction Early Childhood Education
Master's Degree	2012	Georgia State University Atlanta, Georgia Reading Language and Literacy
Bachelor's Degree	2008	Georgia State University Atlanta, Georgia Early Childhood Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2016-present	Instructor Coordinator of New Student Advising and Retention Mercer University Atlanta Georgia
2014-2016	ESOL Teacher Cary Reynolds Elementary School Doraville, Georgia
2013-2014	Fourth Grade Teacher Humphries Elementary School Atlanta, Georgia
2008-2013	Teacher Cary Reynolds Elementary School Doraville, Georgia

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

Meyers, L.E., Bostic, Q., Baiden, F. (2018, October). *Exploring Themes of Social Justice within the NCSS Notables*. Georgia Council for the Social Studies, Athens, Georgia.

Meyers, L.E., Baiden, F., Hartnett, C. (2016, November). *Lights! Camera! Advocacy! Teachers and Young Learners Co-Create Stories that Matter.* National Council of Teachers of English Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.

Meyers, L.E., Baiden, F. (2016, November). *Advocating through Art: K-12 Students and Teachers Utilize Tiles for Social Justice to Prompt Change.* National Council of Teachers of English Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.

Baiden, F., Hartnett, C. (2016, October). *Picture Not So Perfect: Using Picture Books as Opportunities to Challenge Injustices.* Georgia Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference, Athens, Georgia.

Meyers, L.E., Baiden, F. (2015, October). *Tiles for Social Justice.* National Association for Multicultural Education Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Meyers, L.M., Baiden, F. (2015, September). *Supporting English Language Learners.* Georgia Public Library Service webinar, Atlanta, Georgia.

Meyers, L.M., Baiden, F., Cleveland, C., Douglas, A., Guzman, R., Williams, B. (2015, March). *Tiles for Social Justice: A Professional Development Workshop that Develops Change Agents through Children's Literature & Art.* National Association for Professional Development Schools Conference, Atlanta, Georgia.

Baiden, F. (2016, June). Educating for Critical Democratic Literacy: Integrating Social Studies and Literacy in the Elementary Classroom (Book Review). *The Social Studies 107(5),* 179-180.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

2012-present	International Literacy Association
2015-present	National Association for Multicultural Education
2016-present	National Council of Teachers of English
2016-present	National Council for the Social Studies
2016-present	Georgia Council for the Social Studies

CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS: A SOCIAL JUSTICE-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

by

FELICIA BAIDEN

Under the Direction of Dr. Caroline C. Sullivan

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the phenomenon of a social justice-driven professional learning community. This study included 17 P-12 educators across several school districts and educational entities in a large southeastern city. The majority of the educators worked at schools with a predominant composition of students of color and students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch. Through both oral and written discussions, teachers responded to questions, prompts, and protocols as they examined teaching for social justice and equity. Data collection methods included: audio recordings of professional learning sessions, participant written reflections, documents, interviews, and the researcher's journal and audio reflections. The significance of this study was to offer insight on how educators can be supported in developing instructional practices that engender a more just and democratic society. Departing from traditional teaching methods and approaches where the teacher is considered the expert and

holder of knowledge and has all “the answers” is crucial to the work of the social justice educator. This study was grounded in critical pedagogy as educators expanded their critical consciousness and examined power structures, privilege and oppression. The following research questions guided this study: How can a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC) influence P-12 educators? What understandings do educators develop about social justice and equity? What perceptions do educators cultivate about teaching for social justice and equity? What knowledge do educators construct about using multicultural children’s literature (MCL) to teach for social justice and equity? Findings from this study revealed that teaching for social justice and equity requires intentionality, multiple perspectives, and teaching strategies and resources.

INDEX WORDS: professional learning community, social justice, equity, critical conversations, teaching for social justice, critical literacy, multicultural children’s literature

CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS: A SOCIAL JUSTICE-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

by

Felicia Baiden

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

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in

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in

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Atlanta, GA
2019

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the amazing group of P-12 educators who I had the privilege of working alongside during this study. I remain inspired by their passion and willingness to build their capacity and move beyond their comfort zones in an effort to create learning spaces where students can develop the necessary tools to critique and shape a more equitable world.

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Last, but certainly not least, I thank my family for their love, support, and understanding. They have been extrememly supportive of me during this dissertation process, which has sometimes taken priority over me being able to spend time with them. I love each of you, and the best is surely yet to come.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2014, as a classroom teacher and a new doctoral student, I received an invitation to participate in the *Tiles for Social Justice Project* (Meyers, 2014). This professional learning experience offered teachers an opportunity to explore social justice issues presented in children's literature and to utilize critical and creative thinking to develop and share a message of social agency with others. I was immediately enthralled by such an opportunity. I was captivated by the idea that teachers would have the opportunity to participate in professional learning that emphasized teaching for social justice—a topic so meaningful and relevant, yet largely absent from typical professional learning opportunities (Sangster, Stone, & Anderson, 2013; Servage, 2008, 2009).

Participating in the *Tiles for Social Justice Project* further energized my passion for teaching for social justice. It also helped me conceptualize the characteristics of a valuable professional learning opportunity. This professional learning experience was voluntary and we, the participants, were encouraged to invite up to two colleagues; this fostered the feeling of community amongst us and allowed us to continue conversations afterwards. Additionally, this professional learning experience involved teachers co-constructing knowledge as we all worked together to collectively define social justice and name specific social justice issues relevant to us. Racism, sexism, classism, xenophobia, and bullying, amongst others, were brought to the forefront of our discussion.

To enhance our understanding of how we might spark discussions about social justice issues with our students, we read children's literature and identified social justice topics that emerged within the stories. For example, we read *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Mellon* (Lovell, 2001), the story of a little girl who approached her physical features and abilities with confidence and

tenacity despite being bullied at her new school. Bullying was the initial, obvious social justice topic presented in the book; however, questioning standards of beauty within a culture or subculture became germane to our discussion as well. We also read "My Name is Jorge" from *My Name is Jorge: On Both Sides of the River Poems in English and Spanish* (Medina, 1999). "My Name is Jorge" is about a Mexican immigrant boy in an American school who is consistently referred to by his teacher and classmates as "George". This particular text hit close to home for me because, at that time, I was teaching at a school that served a predominantly international population, most of whom spoke English as a second or third language. Further, our discussion within the professional learning community surrounding "My Name is Jorge" prompted conversations about discovering, valuing, and affirming students' identities and cultures.

In addition to children's literature, there was an abundance of professional literature, an assortment of art materials, and other resources available to help us all think, rethink, examine, question, create, and continue to construct what teaching for social justice means. These resources also helped us envision how teaching for social justice can look in our own classrooms. Multiple perspectives were not only valued, but highly encouraged, as we shared our experiences, thoughts, and views regarding social justice issues relevant to our own teaching contexts. We also grappled with how we might use children's literature as a springboard for engaging children in thinking critically and creatively about social justice. My experience as a participant in the *Tiles for Social Justice Project* left me feeling empowered, knowledgeable, and even more passionate about teaching for social justice. Most importantly, I walked away from that experience with an increased sense of social agency, not only for integrating social justice pedagogy in my own teaching, but also for keeping the project in motion by sharing it with other colleagues.

Researcher's Position

Being both female and African-American, I am a part of two marginalized groups. My personal experiences of oppression and marginalization due to my gender and race have inspired my research interest in social justice education. Collins and Bilge (2016) affirmed, "Intersectionality is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in the people, and in human experiences" (p. 1). That complexity entails how various aspects of one's identity intersect and factor into how one sees and understands the world and her or his place in it.

In addition to my physical identity, my childhood experiences have influenced my passion for social justice education. I spent the first half of my childhood living in a working-class community located in the inner-city. The community was very vibrant with exciting community engagement events such as talent shows and block parties that connected families and neighbors and produced some beautiful memories. In addition, the community where I lived was home to several up and coming hip hop artists who performed regularly at the local mall.

Although the community where I lived was very lively and filled with entertainment, it faced some real challenges as it was infiltrated with drugs and crime. For example, on multiple occasions, I remember being outside playing kickball and stumbling over a plastic bag of crack cocaine. I also recall playing outside with friends and having to run inside the house to escape gunfire. Many people in my community were disturbed by the violence and crime and took steps to bring awareness to these issues and to bring about change.

Alongside other community members, my mother, sisters, and I participated in a Stop the Violence protest. That was the only time that I can recall as a child being positioned to speak out against social injustice. I attended inner-city schools where I encountered some caring teachers who were attuned to the social and emotional needs of children, particularly children who come from underserved and under-resourced communities. I had teachers who taught me to be proud

of my African-American heritage. Reflecting on the academic instruction that I received in school; however, there were minimal opportunities for me to make connections between classroom learning and the issues that I observed or encountered in the community where I lived. More specifically, I do not recall opportunities to interrogate inequality and view the world through a lens of social justice and equity. According to Salazar and Rios (2016), "Social justice provides a critical lens for questions on diversity, equity, inclusion/access, power, privilege, inequality, and the stratification of individuals based on social identity" (p. 5). Moreover, living within a working-class community that often went without the resources and access to social mobility, social justice issues such as drug abuse, violence, and crime became prevalent. Not having opportunities as a child to critically examine social injustice, I take particular interest in teaching for social justice and equity.

As a child, my mother always underscored the importance of education, which translated into me putting a great deal of effort into my studies. Although I did well throughout my K-12 education and managed to achieve the grades I needed to advance to greater heights, I found myself troubled by the way in which schooling was enacted. As I progressed through middle school and high school, I remember feeling a disconnect between what and how I learned at school and what was relevant to the real-world. For example, I remember studying history in order to pass tests in middle school and in high school. In addition, I remember being required to read and write about particular texts that I had difficulty comprehending and struggled to make any kind of personal connection to, such as *Beowulf* (Crawford, 1996) and *Macbeth* (Shakespeare, Farjeon, & Craig, 1992). Lewison, Leland, and Harste (2008) suggested curriculum is made more interesting and relevant to students when it connects to their lives outside of school. Accordingly, teachers must facilitate learning experiences where students can make connections

and feel compelled and intrinsically motivated to apply classroom knowledge within their communities and beyond.

In addition to my own schooling experiences, my experiences as an elementary school teacher has also driven my desire to teach for social justice and equity. All nine years of my K-5 teaching experiences have been working with students from low-income families and students of color. Those experiences have only fueled my passion for teaching for social justice and equity. Within my teaching, I have made deliberate efforts to create learning opportunities that connect community experiences to school learning. As a professional educator, I understand students' lack of academic success can stem from being disengaged from a curriculum that has little to no personal interest or relevance to them and the communities in which they live (Gay, 2010). Failing to support students with relevant learning opportunities could have larger consequences on them, their families, their communities, and the larger society. For example, when students become disengaged from the curriculum, particularly students of color, they are often labeled as having "behavior issues". Students of color with "behavior issues" are suspended at strikingly higher rates than White students (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Meiners, 2010). This matter is further complicated as these students are being cycled into jails and prisons, also referred to as the school-to-prison pipeline (Alexander, 2012) . Thus, teaching for social justice and equity has dire consequences that extend well-beyond classroom walls.

Many schools purportedly prepare students to be active and contributing members in a democratic society. How is this so, if students do not consistently have multiple opportunities to critically examine and discuss the world in which they live, challenge inequality, and use their positions to impact a better reality not only for themselves but for others around them? In order

to accomplish this, teachers need opportunities for transformative professional learning that supports them in understanding and incorporating social justice education (Kohli, Picower, Martinez, & Ortiz, 2015; Sangster et al., 2013; Servage, 2008).

In my current role as a teacher educator, I have a significant responsibility in supporting both pre-service and in-service teachers in developing and advancing their knowledge about how to create more equitable learning opportunities for all students. Having taught courses such as Children's Literature Across the Curriculum, Foundations of Education, Preparing the Early Childhood Environment, and Classroom Management, social justice was and remains at the center of my teaching and the learning experiences that I foster for pre-service teachers. As a teacher educator, I am committed to supporting other educators in making sure all students, especially students from marginalized groups, have the necessary tools to examine and problematize inequality and then serve as social change agents to improve social conditions for themselves and those around them.

Statement of the Problem

In the United States of America, there are some deep-seated divisions related to race, class, and gender. These issues emanated and have persisted since European colonization of America. Deeply entrenched racist ideologies have permeated policies and practices in schools, institutions, and various social arenas for hundreds of years. In recent years, for example, the 2016 presidential election in the United States of America highlighted racism, bigotry, misogyny, xenophobia, antisemitism and an increased level of outright hate towards many historically marginalized groups of people (Au, 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Sondel, Baggett, & Dunn, 2018). The 2016 election cycle stoked fear, anxiety, and absolute horror amongst many Americans across the country, particularly marginalized students—namely immigrants and their families. They were taunted, ridiculed, and bullied by individuals and groups both on and off school

grounds. Countless stories were reported of immigrant students being taunted about being sent back to "their country" (Costello, 2016; Sondel et al., 2018). Further, hate crimes stemming from racial/ethnic bias, religious bias, and sexual orientation bias were strikingly high in 2016. Within the last three months of 2016, hate crimes had increased by 25% (Cohen, 2017). Such social upheaval and unrest have only reaffirmed the school's responsibility in explicitly addressing social justice and equity not only within the school curriculum, but also within the very structures that shape the nature of schools (Ayers, 2011; Banks & Banks, 1995; Kincheloe, 2008). More pointedly, exploring social justice and equity means students having opportunities to critically examine structures of power, privilege, access, opportunities, and becoming empowered for social agency.

Hegemonic Curriculum

In order to further understand the significance of teaching for social justice and equity within the classroom, it is important to view the traditional school curriculum through a lens of criticality. That is, examining curriculum and pedagogy with an eye towards equity and considering what people, topics or events are given priority, marginalized, or are left out of the curriculum altogether.

Historically, education in the United States has been Eurocentric—privileging the knowledge, values, beliefs and traditions of White middle-class people, while subordinating the cultures, histories, and lived experiences of other ethnic minority populations (Banks, 2012; Gay, 2010; Tatum, 2008). This hegemonic curriculum has further been characterized by a positioning of the teacher as the knower who disseminates information, presumed as truth, for students to memorize and regurgitate on a later date. Freire (1970/2012) referred to this act of depositing knowledge into students as the "banking concept of education" (p. 77), a model that embodies

oppression. This type of authoritarian instruction does not afford students opportunities to develop a critical consciousness or the necessary tools to transform school knowledge for the betterment of their lives and the larger society. Giroux (2013) referred to this type of teaching as repressive pedagogy, one in which teachers employ technical skills and strategies in the classroom rather than educating for empowerment and social justice. The ability to view the world through a lens of criticality is important for all students, especially students from marginalized and historically oppressed groups.

Moreover, many educators are often passive to the underlying racist ideologies infiltrated throughout the traditional United States (U.S.) school curriculum as they teach content deemed objective and neutral (Banks, 2015; Cochran-Smith, Barnatt, Lahann, Shakman, & Terrell, 2009; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1998). To that end, school is then considered a space where politics do not exist. However, educators are always making political decisions, whether intentionally or unintentionally (Kincheloe, 2008). Teachers make political decisions daily regarding what to teach, how to teach it, what to say and what not to say, whose stories are told and whose stories go untold. Thus, teachers ultimately determine the *hidden curriculum* students learn (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Wolk, 2003). Glatthorn (1999/2008) described the hidden curriculum as "the unintended curriculum—what students learn from the school's culture and climate and related policies and practices" (p. 29). Further, placing school within the context of the broader society and acknowledging their inherent relationship, educators are uniquely positioned to critically question and examine assumptions of school and the social control engrained throughout curriculum and pedagogy (Eisner, 2003; Giroux, 1988). Thus, knowing teaching is a political act and schools are socio-culturally situated, school should be a space where teachers and students alike challenge inequity and work toward social justice.

Marginalized students, specifically students of color and students from low-income families, are often perceived by policy makers and educators as knowledge-deficient and experience-deprived individuals. This is especially true when they do not conform to particular social and behavioral expectations due to some, or a majority's, low performance on standardized measures of academic success in comparison to White students. As a result, a high concentration of students of color are disproportionately placed in special education, while others are suspended or expelled from school at strikingly frequent rates (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Meiners, 2007). Given such an alarming and glaring reality, more attention must be given to how to bridge the gap between the education and schooling experiences students receive at school and the cultural resources they bring into the classroom.

Social Justice Education

More often than not, there lies a cultural incongruence between what students from marginalized cultural groups, particularly students of color and students from low-income families, experience or know at home and what counts as knowledge at school (Banks, 2015). Contrarily, students from White, middle-class families are more likely to attend schools where their cultures, values, and beliefs are aligned to the teacher and larger school community (Banks, 2015; Giroux, 1994; Irvine, 1999). Thus, enacting social justice pedagogy in classrooms could create more equitable learning opportunities and outcomes for students, particularly those who have experienced marginalization both inside and outside of schools and classrooms. In addressing the need for equity in education and in the larger society, practitioners must know what it means to teach for social justice; they must be able to envision what it could look like in their classrooms; they must also have support as they enact social justice pedagogy in their classrooms with their students.

Scholars have offered conceptualizations of social justice education as applicable to P-12 classrooms and postsecondary institutions. Cochran-Smith et al. (2009) articulated how social justice education has been conceived, particularly in the field of teacher education. The authors noted some teacher preparation programs approach social justice education by affirming students' and teachers' identities, preparing teacher candidates to enact "culturally appropriate curriculum and pedagogy" (p. 626), and supporting the social stability of all learners. In addition, other teacher education programs focus on preparing students as social change agents who challenge "the social, economic, and institutional structures that maintain unearned privilege and disadvantage for particular racial, cultural, language, socioeconomic, and gender groups" (p. 626). For some educators, then, social justice education is emphasized through enacting a curriculum that recognizes and values the cultural knowledge and backgrounds of students from diverse backgrounds. Still other social justice educators tend to focus more on policies and procedures, specifically calling into question ways in which marginalized groups are being disadvantaged and oppressed in classrooms, schools, school systems, and within the larger society.

Based on her research in multicultural classrooms in the United States, Sleeter (2013) identified four strands that undergird teaching for social justice: 1) Making intentional efforts to recognize students' cultures and then using their cultures as the foundation for learning; 2) Teaching the content of the curriculum by using multiple examples from various cultural groups; 3) Engaging students in structured discourse surrounding social justice issues; and 4) Preparing students to collaboratively take action against social injustices. Sleeter's strands of teaching for social justice have been actualized in education through culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010), culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), multicultural education (Banks, 1994), and critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2008), amongst others. While key distinctions can be

made between these various approaches to teaching for social justice, they all share a unifying goal, which is to address inequities that exist within education and the larger world.

Multicultural Children's Literature

A part of addressing inequities within education, and ultimately the larger world, calls for educators to consider the instructional materials they are using in their classrooms to support students in understanding and critically examining social injustices experienced by marginalized groups of people. To that end, multicultural children's literature can frame the social realities of marginalized cultural groups as they feature the narratives of many people whose stories often go untold. They provide a context for critical conversations and opportunities for students to make connections between issues presented in texts to issues of inequalities in the real-world. Ching (2005) asserted, "Multicultural children's literature shares multicultural education's purposes and raises related debates regarding intersections of power, race, and culture" (p. 129). Several scholars have offered definitions of what constitutes multicultural children's literature. Some have posited multicultural children's literature should only focus on people of color (Bishop, 1994; Harris, 1992). Others have argued multicultural children's literature should be inclusive of people of color along with other groups who have experienced marginalization (Tunnell, Jacobs, Young, & Bryan, 2016). Among the cultural groups that have experienced oppression, like people of color, are people with disabilities and people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Ally, Asexual, or Pansexual (LGBTTQQIAAP).

A more expansive definition of multicultural literature, then, also encompasses stories of people of minority religious groups, people with disabilities, and people who have identified as LGBTTQQIAAP as well as people of color. Based on that definition, *When Kayla Was Kyle*

(Fabrikant, 2013), a story about a transgender girl who is teased at school—represents a prominent example of a multicultural book within the above described parameters. While the presence of multicultural children's literature on classroom bookshelves has been an issue (Brinson, 2012; McKinney, 1997), the problem is further exacerbated by the lack of books featuring people from the "LQBTQ" community (Crawley, 2017; Crisp et al., 2016). Further, a more expansive definition and understanding of what constitutes multicultural children's literature could support a wider production and use of books that feature people who identify as LGBTTQQIAAP.

In addition to expanding the definition of multicultural children's literature to include more than just people marginalized by their race or ethnicity, some argue literature featuring animals as protagonists can be considered multicultural, particularly those books that address social injustices (Shannon, 1994). The storyline can be a symbolic representation of a social justice issue faced by humans. For example, *Click, Clack, Moo Cows that Type* (Cronin, 2016) tells the story of a group of farm animals who go on strike because of poor working conditions. Thus, although animals are given human-like characteristics, that story represents inequality that workers experience and actions they sometimes take, such as going on strike, for better working conditions. To that end, Ching (2005) encourages educators to select multicultural books that explicitly address issues of power and equity rather than simply offering cultural awareness. Multicultural literature that addresses power and equity has also been referred to as culturally specific books (Brinson, 2012), social issues books (Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002), and critical texts (Lewison et al., 2008; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016). Further, multicultural books that overtly address issues of social justice and equity can provide an invaluable resource for teachers and students to critically examine social justice issues presented in texts such as racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, immigration, and xenophobia.

Research Questions

Since first participating in *Tiles for Social Justice* in 2014, I have become deeply invested in my own development as a social justice educator. This personal investment has been prompted largely by my childhood experiences and also by my experiences as a professional educator. Education that truly matters—that of teachers and students—empowers each one of us to be personally accountable for shaping a world that is more just and equitable for all of its inhabitants. Teachers can become empowered as social change agents through social justice-driven professional learning where they have the space to critically inquire into their own practices and thoughtfully examine how they can foster equity and social justice in their classrooms. In doing so, they challenge their instructional practices and prepare their students to engage in social action that supports more equitable outcomes for marginalized and oppressed groups of people. In order to fulfill such a significant charge in becoming a social justice educator, more social justice-driven professional learning is needed. Such professional learning provides resources and collegial support as educators develop and expand their knowledge and understanding of teaching for social justice and equity. Therefore, the following research questions guided this study:

- How can a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC) influence P-12 educators?
    - What understandings do educators develop about social justice and equity?
    - What perceptions do educators cultivate about teaching for social justice and equity?
    - What knowledge do educators construct about using multicultural children's literature (MCL) to teach for social justice and equity?

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC). Throughout their two-day professional learning experience, P-12 educators explored and discussed teaching for social justice and equity. Educators explored and discussed what teaching for social justice means for both teachers and students in accordance with Sleeter's (2013) framework. Sleeter's framework included the following four key components: explicitly recognizing and working with students' cultures as a basis for learning; teaching key concepts in the curriculum through content and examples drawn from more than one cultural group; involving students in structured dialoguing across their differences about social justice issues; and, preparing young people to act collaboratively on social justice issues. They also examined multicultural children's literature and engaged in critical conversations surrounding how particular texts can be used to teach for social justice and equity. The overall goal of this professional learning community (PLC) was to provide a supportive space for open dialogue and critical reflection as P-12 educators explored teaching for social justice and equity. Studying P-12 educators who participated in a social justice-driven PLC was important in determining how their thinking about social justice and equity were influenced by PLC activities. Further, the understandings educators developed have implications for their instructional practices and could inform future professional learning opportunities for educators.

Significance of the Study

Researching a professional learning community (PLC) as teachers explore teaching for social justice, particularly through multicultural children's literature could provide a model for other P-12 educators across school districts and educational spaces to consider when teaching for social justice and equity. Burke and Collier (2017) suggested that while many in-service teachers

may have some familiarity with theories of social justice learned during their postsecondary education, they are still unsure of what the practical application of those theories may look like, particularly within their teaching contexts. In addition, a PLC can serve as a support group as educators are learning to teach for social justice and equity and considering what it could look like in their different educational spaces.

Studying the insights educators developed through their participation in a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC) was beneficial in ascertaining what educators deem as necessary in their approach to teaching for social justice and equity. Gorski (2016) recommended educators consider what makes something equitable or inequitable, assess existing inequities, and determine their personal and collective responsibilities in redressing those inequities. Accordingly, working within a PLC provided P-12 educators space and opportunities for critical analysis and reflection regarding social justice and equity not only in their teaching practices and in the larger world. Grappling with issues of social justice and equity, then, alongside other educators within a PLC, fostered a deeper level of understanding. Thus, on a broader scale, examining a social justice-driven PLC provided insight on how educators can be supported in developing instructional practices that engender a more just and democratic society. Equally important, investigating a social justice-driven PLC added breadth to the paucity of research that addresses transformative and emancipatory professional learning for educators (Kohli et al., 2015; Servage, 2008; Sleeter, 2011). Therefore, insights gleaned from this study could shape future professional learning opportunities for P-12 educators.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs critical pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2008) as a theoretical framework in exploring teaching for social justice and equity. Critical pedagogy focuses on the needs and interests of marginalized and oppressed individuals. Kincheloe asserted, “Critical pedagogy moves

students, workers, and citizens to question the hidden political assumptions and the colonial, racial, gender, and class biases of schooling and media education" (p. 34). Furthermore, critical pedagogy provides a lens to evaluate school structures such as the curriculum, particularly looking at how it privileges some students while oppressing others. Kincheloe (2008) identified the following characteristics essential to the practice of critical pedagogy; it must be: grounded on a social and educational vision of justice and equality; constructed on the belief that education is inherently political; and dedicated to the alleviation of human suffering.

Further, Kincheloe (2008) suggested school leaders must re-conceptualize their vision and purpose of school and such re-conceptualization must involve educators' critical thought about the qualities they would like for their graduates to possess. Kincheloe (2008) asked:

> Do we want socially regulated workers with the proper attitudes for their respective rung on the workplace ladder? Or do we want empowered, learned, highly skilled democratic citizens who have the confidence and the savvy to improve their own lives and to make their communities more vibrant places in which to live, work, and play. (p. 8)

In addition to re-conceptualizing the purpose of school, educators must also examine day-to-day school operations and practices, considering how dominant power structures work to privilege some students and cultural groups while marginalizing and oppressing others. Critical pedagogues, then, are concerned with the alleviation of human suffering. They seek to interrogate school culture and knowledge that serve to legitimize and recycle existing social hierarchies (Burbules & Berk, 1999). Thus, critical pedagogues work to develop their own critical consciousness and their students' critical consciousness as well. Giroux (2013) articulated, "Critical pedagogy is situated within a project that views education as central to creating students who are socially responsible and civically engaged citizens" (p. 356). More specifically, teachers develop

their students' knowledge and understanding of the suffering of others; thereby increasing their empathy, understanding, and willingness to take action in bringing about social change.

Critical pedagogy was an appropriate theoretical framework to support this study in part because the participants engaged in questioning social hierarchies and the unequal distribution of power. Then they reflected on how their new understandings about teaching for social justice and equity might shape their teaching and the curriculum materials and resources, particularly their selection of multicultural children's literature. Kincheloe (2008) affirmed, "Teachers must study the ways that a world that is unjust by design shapes the classroom and the relations between teachers and students" (p. 25). Such a critical examination will require teachers to question the curriculum, their instructional practices, and the tools they use. In addition to structural social injustices, critical pedagogues are also concerned with building the intellectual capacity to confront and challenge the status quo. In that regard, some participants in the study decided they would like to incorporate multicultural children's literature throughout their practices to help raise students' critical consciousness and develop their social agency, and also to foster a more equitable learning environment for all students.

Conceptual Framework

Critical literacy was used as a conceptual framework for this study. It provided an appropriate conceptual framework for this study because teaching for social justice and equity has been approached through critical literacy, particularly through the use of multicultural books as materials used to practice critical literacy. Many scholars have provided conceptualizations of critical literacy (Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002; Lewison et al., 2008; Luke, 2012; Wolk, 2003). Lewison et al., (2008) described critical literacy:

> Critical literacy practices encourage students to use language to question the everyday world, to interrogate the relationship between language and power, to analyze popular

> culture and media, to understand how power relationships are socially constructed, and to consider actions that can be taken to promote social justice. (p. 3)

Critical literacy serves as a lens to critically examine the world and how certain people are positioned and marginalized within it, how they are "othered". Seeing the world through a critical literacy lens is important to the work of the social justice educator as s/he questions assumptions and takes action for social justice and equity. Hence, it is not enough to recognize social injustices; actions must be taken to bring about change. To that end, Lewison et al. (2008) have identified four dimensions of critical literacy: disrupting the commonplace, considering multiple perspectives, focusing on the sociopolitical, and taking action to promote social justice. Disrupting the commonplace entails questioning assumptions and everyday practices. Questioning and problematizing the curriculum, for example, to determine which groups of people are underrepresented or not represented at all is an example of disrupting the commonplace. Seeking out those missing voices and examining various viewpoints simultaneously characterizes the second dimension of critical literacy—considering multiple perspectives. For instance, when discussing the topic of xenophobia, considering multiple perspectives means the viewpoints and experiences of immigrants from different countries are examined. The third dimension, focusing on the sociopolitical, is unpacking and examining systems and interrogating power imbalances within those systems. Examples of focusing on the sociopolitical would be to deconstruct a teaching practice, a school practice, or policy to determine if it is just for all students. Lastly, the fourth dimension of critical literacy is taking action to promote social justice. One example of taking action to promote social justice could be performing a skit to bring awareness to a social justice issue.

Each of the four dimensions of critical literacy can be applied in the classroom as educators seek to empower students with the tools to examine, critique and shape a better world. More

specifically, critical literacy can be used as a tool to examine a variety of texts, including children's literature, photographs, media and popular culture. In analyzing popular culture and media, children's literature that encompasses issues of social justice and equity has been used as a springboard to scaffold students in critically analyzing how individuals and groups are positioned in society and to consider how these positions affect them or interact with other contexts (Lewison et al., 2002; Wolk, 2004). More pointedly, since multicultural children's literature (Tunnell et al., 2016) features stories of marginalized groups, it becomes an invaluable resource for students to view social justice through a critical literacy lens. Critical literacy, then, attends to Sleeter's (2013) third and fourth strands of teaching for social justice: Students engaging in structured discourse surrounding issues of social justice and preparing to take collective action for social change. In order for educators to develop such capacities within their students, they must first possess these abilities themselves. Many teachers require support in their preparation to enact social justice pedagogy; therefore, social justice-oriented professional learning could be useful in facilitating their social justice practice.

Summary

In recent years, social justice issues such as racism, sexism, immigration, xenophobia, and homophobia have become intensified. Many students and their families are directly and negatively impacted by social justice and equity issues. This problem is further complicated when teachers do not have opportunities to delve into deep thinking and critical analysis about these social justice issues and the individuals, groups, and communities who are impacted. Simply excluding critical discussions in the classroom about these issues, or ignoring them altogether, in exchange for a "neutral" curriculum merely reproduces social inequality and forfeits opportunities for students to critique their world and become agents of social change. Developing such capabilities within students is not an easy task. Moreover, teachers who strive to teach for social

justice and equity benefit from concrete examples. Multicultural children's literature, for instance, can be used as an instructional tool for discussing social justice and equity issues, particularly through a critical literacy lens. Teachers require support as they prepare to navigate the often uncertain terrain of facilitating critical discourse with children around contentious issues. A professional learning community where there is structured dialogue, namely through the use of protocols, offers teachers opportunities to effectively reflect on teaching for social justice and equity and collaboratively explore resources, tools, and strategies that could be useful in their enactment of curriculum, pedagogy, multicultural children's literature, policy study, and social agency.

2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a review of the literature within the following areas: the history of professional development; professional learning communities; professional learning communities and teaching for social justice and equity; the need for multicultural children's literature; selecting multicultural children's literature; using multicultural children's literature; professional learning communities and teaching for social justice and equity through multicultural children's literature; and, using critical literacy as a lens.

The extant literature tells us that traditional professional development has been a top-down approach where educators are passive recipients of technical skills (Kohli et al., 2015; Sleeter, 2011). Within the past decade, professional learning communities have come to be regarded as a more efficient mechanism for supporting the professional growth and development of educators. Studies have indicated that key components such as trust, collaboration, and reflection are what make professional learning communities conducive to educators' professional growth and development (Cherrington & Thornton, 2015; Kelly & Cherkowski, 2015). Those key components are particularly useful when educators are learning to teach for social justice and equity. That is because discussing contentious issues and moving away from traditional ways of teaching could produce tension; thus, working within a professional learning community can provide support (Picower, 2011; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2015). Further, the literature reveals that educators need support with selecting and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity (Brinson, 2012; Iwai, 2013).

History of Professional Development

In order to ascertain why a professional learning community is not only suitable but necessary for social justice education, it is paramount to understand the history of professional development. Professional development in education has historically been linked to federal school

reform initiatives and provided a top-down approach to teacher learning (Lieberman & Miller, 2014; Long, 2014). For example, when the U.S. National Commission on Excellence in Education (1986) released *A Nation at Risk*, many feared U.S. students lacked economic and global competitiveness, particularly compared to Japan in the areas of math and science. In response to the curriculum recommendations entailed in the report, external experts were sent to schools to deliver workshops to enhance teachers' mathematics instructional practices.

Approximately 20 years later, another wave of professional development was mandated to support teachers in meeting the accountability requirements set forth by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Both the former and latter models of professional development took on a training approach with prescribed content and activities intently designed to instruct teachers how to help students pass standardized assessments. This form of professional development is consistent with the banking model of education described by Freire (1970/2012); external experts are the knowers and dispensers of knowledge and teachers are expected to memorize and apply this information in their classrooms. This type of professional learning has typically occurred in schools comprised of mostly ethnic minority students and students from low-income families (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Sleeter, 2011). A striking consequence of a top-down approach to professional learning is that teachers begin dispensing knowledge to their students in a similar fashion. This style of teaching often results in students being passive recipients of knowledge presumed as fixed and unbiased. Further, damage occurs when the pathways of questioning knowledge, developing inquiry, considering multiple perspectives, and challenging inequality go unestablished in the classroom.

Professional Learning Communities

Another major disadvantage of top-down professional learning is that teachers were not afforded opportunities to collaborate with each other to reflect on their practices and learn from

one another. Thus, in more recent years, *professional learning communities* (PLC) have gained national prominence as a means of enhancing teaching practice, student achievement, and school improvement as a whole (DuFour, 2004; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008). Educators, school leaders, and other stakeholders have used the term professional learning community to reference many types of collaborative groups such as a grade level, a school committee, a department, or a school district, amongst others (DuFour, 2004). Hence, in thinking about teaching for social justice and equity, and also using social justice as a lens to examine and interrogate institutional structures, it is key to distinguish the features of a professional learning community conducive to such critical work. Lieberman and Miller (2014) suggested three integral components lie at the heart of a professional learning community: reflective practice, communities of practice, and inquiry as a stance. Teachers can reflect on their practice within a PLC when they can trust others within the group and when the group normalizes problems of practice (Hargreaves, 2007; Little & Horn, 2007). Having a culture of trust, along with time for deep thinking, lend to the willingness of teachers to inquire further into their own practices and that of others within the PLC.

The work that occurs within a PLC should be sustaining and generative as to have a longstanding impact on teachers, students, the school community, and beyond (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2008; Wei, Darling-Hammond, Richardson & Orphanos, 2009). More pointedly, the work of an educator committed to social justice in education is an ongoing process, thus, the type of learning needed to facilitate this process must be sustainable. Social justice education is an ongoing process because, as indicated by Kumashiro (2015) and Banks and Banks (2010), oppression can play out differently in various contexts and with different marginalized groups of people. Kumashiro (2015) elaborated on the evolving nature of the anti-oppressive educator: “It is something we strive for and transitionally become in our practices but never fully are” (p. 15).

Thus, through varied experiences and continuous self-reflection, the social justice educator will fall somewhere along a continuum of progressive change. Accordingly, teachers need professional learning that is generative, chiefly in addressing such complex social issues plaguing local communities and the larger society.

How can school leaders, district officials, and all others who develop and facilitate professional learning for educators ensure that it is sustaining and generative? Hargreaves (2007) provided seven principles for generative professional learning. Among those principles is diversity. Diversity is honored in PLCs when multiple pedagogical approaches are acknowledged and valued. Honoring the knowledge of all participants within the PLC not only fosters community but also has the propensity to enhance teachers' professional identities. Affirming teachers' identities and honoring their voices are concepts aligned to social justice in education (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009). It is also important that educators consider how their identities inform their teaching practices and challenge their ideologies, biases, and assumptions. In turn, educators are better positioned to affirm and honor the identities and voices of their students, and they can support students in challenging their own biases and assumptions. A social justice-driven PLC, then, can serve as a model for emancipatory and equity-oriented instructional practices teachers can facilitate in their classrooms with their own students.

Critical friends groups. A Critical Friends Group (CFG) is a type of professional learning community in which a small group of twelve or less educators meet regularly, usually monthly, to engage in structured discourse about teaching and learning (Bambino, 2002; Dunne, Nave, & Lewis, 2000). Bambino (2002) explained, "The work is critical because it challenges educators to improve their teaching practice and to bring about the changes that schools need, but the pro-

cess is neither negative nor threatening" (p. 27). In the same regard, teachers who have participated in a CFG have reported feeling supported by their colleagues, and they have also expressed greater interest in continued professional development (Dunne et al., 2000). The type of support provided within a CFG allows all participants to critically and thoughtfully examine their practice through questioning and feedback from peers—all in a structured format. The structured discourse or protocol is the mainstay of a CFG, and it is what sets it apart from other types of professional learning.

Protocols. Protocols have been used as a means of structuring dialogue and exploration within a PLC, specifically within a CFG. Protocols are largely designed to elicit critical thinking and deliberation amongst participants within a specified amount of time. Each protocol typically includes a stated purpose, a time frame, and detailed instructions for how the conversation is to be carried out. In addition, there are usually questions to scaffold participants' critical thinking about their own practice and to support the facilitator in fostering a rich discussion of the topic. Easton (2009) provided a characterization of protocols:

> In general, protocols are processes that help groups achieve deep understanding through dialogue that may lead to effective decision making (although decision making and problem solving are not typically the end goals of protocols). Protocols allow groups to explore ideas deeply through student work, artifacts of educator practice, text relating to education, or problems and issues that surface during the day-to-day lives of educators. (p. 3)

Incorporating structured dialogue within a PLC maximizes the learning that takes place within the PLC. More specifically, structured dialogue can encourage diverse perspectives, critical reflection of practice, and deep thinking. In addition, protocols can help keep conversations

focused and assist educators in providing critical and constructive feedback to their peers (Venables, 2015). Curlette and Granville (2014) explained protocols are beneficial in helping to meet people's psychological needs of connecting to feel a sense of belonging, feeling capable of contributing, feeling significant, and having the courage necessary to obtain those feelings. A PLC that harnesses the cultivation of such feelings is needed to approach transformative learning, such as becoming a social justice educator.

National organizations, such as National School Reform Faculty (NSRF) (2019), offer protocols on a range of topics for educators to use within a PLC. The NSRF is an organization committed to the empowerment of educators "to create meaningful learning experiences for all, by collaborating effectively in reflective democratic communities that foster educational equity and social justice". In accordance to their mission, NSRF has protocols to help teachers examine their perceptions and assumptions about equity. Additionally, there is a protocol to help teachers critically examine the process of making a change in their instructional practices.

Another notable national organization that provides protocols for PLCs, specifically as it relates to discussing social justice and equity, is The School Reform Initiative (SRI) (2019) —an organization committed to building community by providing tools and resources to support collaborative and reflective practices. While the NSRF's focus is largely on cultivating and sustaining effective collaboration amongst teachers, the SRI takes it a step further as their emphasis remains on creating more equitable learning environments for all students. To that end, the SRI's protocols are used to engage teachers in deep thinking and reflection about how they can better promote equity within their teaching practices. For that reason, in investigating a social justice-driven PLC, I used SRI protocols.

Traditional professional development has consisted of a top-down approach where an external expert disseminates technical information to teachers (Kohli et al., 2015). In contrast, a professional learning community (PLC) is a collaborative group of teachers with a shared vision who meet to engage in critical dialogue to reflect on, interrogate, and enhance their teaching practices in order to increase student learning (DuFour, 2004; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006; Stoll, McMahon, & Thomas, 2007; Vance, Salvaterra, Michelsen, & Newhouse, 2016). Further, a growing body of research suggests key components of an effective professional learning community include: trust, collaboration, and reflection (S. Hord, 2007; Kelly & Cherkowski, 2015; Nehring & Fitzsimons, 2011). Those defining characteristics are what distinguish a PLC from traditional professional development. In addition, such central features are what separate a PLC from other day-to-day teacher meetings and group associations.

Trust. Effective PLCs require trust between all PLC members, including the facilitator. Teachers participating in a PLC must feel comfortable unveiling their teaching practices and taking risks in their thinking as they investigate their practice and explore new ideas. In their study of four PLCs comprised of early childhood educators, Cherrington and Thornton (2015) found the PLC group who was able to quickly establish trust saw more gains in their teaching practices. Similarly, Kelly and Cherkowski (2015) asserted, "Effective PLCs require a level of trust so that members can feel safe to lower their defenses to be able to take steps toward meaningful learning" (p. 18). In that regard, participants who experience inhibition with establishing trusting relationships with other PLC members tend to reduce their learning potential within the PLC.

In their investigation of the establishment of trust within 12 different PLC groups, Hallam, Smith, Hite, Hite, and Wilcox (2015) found some fifth and sixth grade teachers, who were a part of a PLC, would not incorporate ideas and or strategies offered by colleagues whom

they did not trust; these educators all worked at the same school. Another challenge to establishing trust within a PLC, specifically in a case where educators worked at the same school, Hallam et al. discovered, was when school principals micromanaged groups and constrained their autonomy. Thus, Hallam et al. recommended future research address the role of context in the development of trust amongst PLC members. Accordingly, for my research, it was beneficial to study educators who participated in a PLC located outside of their schools, which consisted of educators from different settings who served in various capacities.

Collaboration. Collaboration in a PLC involves teachers co-constructing knowledge as they critically inquire into their practice, gain new insights on teaching and learning, and provide ongoing support and feedback to each other about student learning and instructional practices. Kelly and Cherkowski (2015) discussed how teachers in their study realized many of the challenges they faced within their individual classrooms were actually shared challenges that could be addressed within the PLC. Kelly and Cherkowski (2015) also determined teachers appreciated the opportunity to co-construct knowledge with teachers from other schools. That appreciation, in turn, could lead to higher levels of learning within the professional learning community. According to King and Newmann (2000), "Teacher learning is most likely to occur when teachers collaborate with professional peers both within and outside of their schools" (p. 576). However, additional research was needed on PLCs consisting of educators from different schools. My study helped address that gap in the literature by researching a PLC that consisted of educators from various schools and educational settings.

Jones and Lee (2014) surveyed secondary teachers on their professional development preferences, and among the most highly-rated features were sharing of practice and collaboratively developing lessons. More specifically, teachers who gave collaborating with colleagues a

high rating commented that collaboration with colleagues helps them in determining practical instructional strategies. Similarly, Samuelson Wardrip, Gomez, and Gomez (2015) explained how collaboration with colleagues within work circles created opportunities for teachers to discuss instructional strategies, learning goals, and any anticipated challenges. Moreover, teachers in their study indicated two factors in particular that were instrumental in their collaborative efforts: focusing on a long-term instructional topic and having the support of a university faculty member as a participant observer, perhaps an uncommon feature of a PLC.

Reflection. Along with trust and collaboration, a PLC is most effective when participants have opportunities to reflect on their learning and progress throughout the PLC. Professional dialogue has the propensity to elicit deep reflection and critical thought among teachers (Danielson, 2016). Unfortunately, opportunities for teachers to reflect on teaching and learning with colleagues are not very plentiful. Kelly and Cherkowski (2015) discussed teachers' expressed frustrations about the limited opportunities they had to regularly reflect on teaching and learning with their colleagues. When teachers do not have opportunities to reflect on their teaching alongside their colleagues, their professional growth can be inhibited. Nicholson, Capitelli, Richert, Bauer, and Bonetti (2016) noted how collaboratively reflecting on teaching practices opened up a space for teachers to explore multiple perspectives, and it also provided opportunities for teachers to reflect on their roles as teacher leaders.

Social Justice-Driven Professional Learning Communities

There is a paucity of research studies that include in service teachers participating in social justice-driven professional learning communities (Kose & Lim, 2011). There have been studies of in-service teachers participating in graduate courses designed to support their knowledge and application of social justice pedagogies (Rogers, 2014). The overwhelming ma-

jority of research on preparing teachers to teach for social justice; however, has focused primarily on preservice teachers in teacher preparation courses designed to support their work with an increasingly diverse student population (Iwai, 2013; Lynn & Smith-Maddox, 2007; MacPherson, 2010; Price-Dennis & Souto-Manning, 2011; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016). Additionally, there have been studies, albeit a limited number, of university professors engaging in collaborative dialogue surrounding social justice and equity on a college level (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; Haynes, 2017). Thus, more research is needed on in-service teachers participating in social justice-driven professional learning communities.

Studies of P-12 pre-service and/or in-service teachers and studies of postsecondary educators working together to collaboratively define, critically examine, and apply social justice have implications on future professional learning communities designed for this complex and multifaceted endeavor. Thus, upon reviewing the literature on educators working collaboratively to broaden their knowledge and understanding of teaching for social justice, several themes emerged: sociocultural identity; developing a working definition of social justice-related terms; tension and discomfort; and the need for concrete examples of teaching for social justice and equity.

Sociocultural identity. In order for educators to begin thinking in transformative ways to create more socially just and equitable learning opportunities for all students, they must first begin with a personal examination of their own sociocultural identity (Agarwal, Epstein, Oppenheim, Oyler, & Sonu, 2010; Ball, 2009; Taylor, 2013) . This is important because a person's sociocultural identity influences an individual's values, assumptions, and beliefs about other people. From the standpoint of an educator, those values, assumptions, and beliefs are then

translated into the classroom through interactions with students and their families, through designing and enacting curriculum, through selecting classroom materials, and through teaching and classroom management practices.

In order to unpack one's sociocultural identity, attention must be given to the multiple dimensions of one's identity. A part of an extensive discussion of the role race plays in access and power, Tatum (2008) identified other specific aspects of one's sociocultural identity such as "socio-economic status, gender, age, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, mental and physical ability" which significantly impact the amount of access, power and privilege that a person has in society (p. 12). The more aspects of a person's sociocultural identity that can be matched to the dominant culture, the more privileged that person is. For example, a 50-year old middle-class, White Christian heterosexual male without any disabilities will typically be privileged in U.S. society. Conversely, a 50-year old working class African-American Muslim homosexual will likely experience oppression and marginalization in U.S. society.

Recognizing one's own privileges is the first step toward understanding the oppression of others and developing the capacity to work toward social justice. To that end, examining personal biases and assumptions was one of the main purposes of Cochran-Smith et al. (1999) self-study of social justice and equity within their teacher preparation program. Teacher educators in their study recounted personal stories of oppression and discrimination based on sociocultural aspects, such as national country of origin, race, and religious affiliation. Sharing personal stories provided a critical opportunity for faculty members to examine their own worldview and to understand that of others. The goal of those critical conversations was to provide a model for teacher educators to consider as they support pre-service teachers with interrogating their personal biases regarding diverse cultural groups. Like Cochran-Smith et al. (1999), Taylor (2013)

also studied educators who engaged in critical dialogue about their childhood experiences and identity. They noted how participants in their study placed a high value on having the time and space to deeply reflect on their identity; this experience not only allowed them to ascertain biases they had, but it offered them opportunities to grapple with multiple perspectives as other participants shared their personal stories.

Contrarily, if personal biases in relation to one's identity go unexplored and unproblematized, then educators who set out to teach for social justice may unintentionally omit what lies at the heart of teaching for social justice—developing students' critical consciousness and promoting social agency (Lewison et al., 2008). In their study of teachers' understanding and use of culturally relevant pedagogy, Young (2010) discussed missed opportunities for teachers to connect curriculum content to students' cultures and then use this connection as a springboard to developing their critical consciousness. During a history lesson, for example, a third-grade teacher and her Hispanic students discussed European colonization of North America. The teacher casually mentioned the first colony, St. Augustine, Florida, was colonized by Spain. Yet, the teacher emphasized the year 1620 and the arrival of the Mayflower. She also underscored how much she liked that date. According to Taylor, such a marginalization of one part of history and a magnification of another part could indicate a teacher's biases. Equally notable, students were not given the opportunity to further investigate and critically examine the actions of Spanish explorers who settled in Florida and the deculturation and enslavement they imposed upon the Native Americans who had already settled the region.

Tension and discomfort. In addition to the prominent theme of sociocultural identity noted in literature on teaching for social justice and equity, the consequential tension and discomfort were also significantly discussed. The journey of becoming an anti-oppressive educator is

wrought with tension, discomfort, and at times, a level of uncertainty (Agarwal et al., 2010; Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; Picower, 2011). Tension and discomfort within a PLC, particularly in relation to social justice discourse, have the propensity to lead to positive outcomes and professional growth. Wheatley (2002) affirmed, "As we work together to restore hope to the future, we need to include a new and strange ally-our willingness to be disturbed. Our willingness to have our beliefs and ideas challenged by what others think" (p. 269). Thus, delving into critical discourse surrounding personal experiences, beliefs, values, and assumptions can serve to broaden one's understanding of social justice and equity.

In a study of new teachers committed to teaching for social justice, Picower (2011) discussed how experiencing some tension and discomfort became a norm in a PLC of new teachers committed to teaching for social justice. Further, this type of cognitive dissonance was pertinent to the growth and development of the teachers individually and collectively as social justice educators. For instance, there was a discussion about access and opportunity in relation to social status that ensued between a White male teacher who grew up in a middle-class family and a Hatian-American female teacher who grew up in a working-class community. The White male teacher insisted his family's social capital—being White and middle-class— afforded him opportunities he did not earn through hard work. Contrarily, the Hatian-American female teacher's ideology was based largely in meritocracy. While she did acknowledge the oppression of people of color and women, she maintained individual persistence and hard work could still produce triumphant outcomes. Picower (2011) noted how this critical exchange of ideas and multiple perspectives illuminated the notion learning to teach for social justice does not mean always arriving at an agreement. Rather, it is highly significant to the personal and professional growth of PLC

members to understand multiple perspectives, respectfully challenge those perspectives, problematize their own growing and understandings, and allow room for some level of tension along the way.

Expecting tension within collaborative conversations and determining the role tension can play in becoming a transformative educator remain pertinent to progress and real change. According to Cochran-Smith et al. (1999), "Collaborative efforts to seek social justice in teaching and teacher education will always involve tensions and contradictions. Some of this tension is necessary for growth and change. Other tensions are worth trying to resolve" (p. 249). Tension and discomfort may emerge when sociocultural identities are examined, when privilege is confronted, and when oppression, both covert and overt, are brought to the forefront of critical discourse.

Tension and discomfort may also arise when teachers realize teaching for social justice and equity often demands a departure from traditional teaching (Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016; Wiltse, Johnston, & Yang, 2014). Traditionally, teachers have been positioned as the experts of knowledge and students have been considered the consumers of that knowledge. That type of exchange is consistent with oppression and a banking model of education (Freire, 1970/2012). On the other hand, when teaching for social justice, teachers also become students and students become teachers while working together, collaboratively, to critically examine, interrogate, and disrupt social injustices. For example, MacPherson (2010) discussed how an early childhood teacher of ethnically diverse students took a genuine interest in her students teaching her how to say words in their native languages. One student, for example, taught the teacher how to say hello in Tagalog. When the teacher said the word incorrectly, students corrected her with a smile. This critical intercultural incident, as MacPherson (2010) described it, opened up a space

where students could become experts in cultural knowledge. Additionally, it promoted the idea that multiple languages and cultures are valued in that classroom.

Working alongside students in the process of teaching for social justice deviates from the traditional role of a teacher. Thus, social justice educators must be willing to take on new professional identities as they grow in their understanding and application of teaching for social justice (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; MacPherson, 2010; Picower, 2011; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016). Taking on a new professional identity also involves examining the systems and structures that empower some groups of students while disempowering and oppressing other groups of students, particularly students from nonmainstream cultures. This type of critical pedagogy is a very complex and multifarious responsibility that might create tension and discomfort. It also requires a paradigm shift from teachers merely teaching content to working alongside their students to critically examine and problematize the content that they are teaching and their students are learning. Moreover, social justice education requires a great deal of courage and tenacity. It is not easy but necessary in influencing a more socially just and humane society.

Educators who are willing and able to answer the critical call to teach for social justice and equity must navigate educational spaces controlled by local, state, and or federal curriculum, instruction, and assessment mandates. A notable school structure consistently mentioned in the literature as a challenge to teaching for social justice is the pressure of having to teach standards and prepare students for standardized measures of academic success (Dover, 2015; Esposito & Swain, 2009; Spalding, Klecka, Lin, Odell, & Wang, 2010; Wiltse et al., 2014; Evelyn Young, 2010). Thus, working within a PLC could reduce the challenge and uncertainty educators may feel when navigating the journey of teaching for social justice amidst a culture of high-stakes

testing, accountability, and assessments. The PLC can provide a supportive space for teachers to discuss and address such challenges.

Developing a working definition of social justice. Educators working within a PLC committed to teaching for social justice may enter the professional learning space with various ways of defining social justice. Cochran-Smith et al. (1999) noted how teacher educators developed different understandings of social justice; however, individual understandings still contributed to the collective mission of establishing more socially just teacher preparation programs across departments. Guerrero, Shahnazarian, and Brown (2017) investigated teachers' and administrators' understandings of culture as an avenue for teaching in more socially just ways. The teachers in their study participated in a PLC focused on meeting the needs of underachieving students through culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogy. Participants in the study had to identify "marker students" in which to document their achievement during and after being taught through culturally relevant teaching methods. These students' marker status was determined by the following three criteria: the school district pre-identified them as being within an opportunity gap as identified by the school board; they were performing below academic standards; and they were disengaged from their learning (Guerrero et al., 2017). Guerrero et al. (2017) concluded participants had a singular and seemingly surface-level understanding of culture, which focused primarily on race and ethnicity. Thus, an implication of this particular finding was the need for professional learning that addressed definitions and conceptions of terms related to social justice and equity.

Another finding Guerrero et al. (2017) explained, in addition to narrowly defining culture, was identifying marker students can be counterintuitive to the goals of socially just teach-

ing. Identifying students as marker students is consistent with the deficit ideology that some educators tend to possess about students of color and students from low-income families (Irvine, 1999). The deficit ideology focuses on students' deficits or weaknesses instead of operating from their strengths. Additionally, educators operating from a deficit perspective tend to blame students and their families for their school failure rather than the institutional structures that set them up for failure. In turn, deficit ideology inhibits educators from engaging in the critical work of dismantling a culture of schooling operating within the parameters of systemic oppression.

The need for concrete examples. Along with the need for a deep understanding of social justice and equity, research has suggested both pre-service and in-service teachers require concrete examples of what teaching for social justice and equity could look like (Burke & Collier, 2017; Dover, 2013; Gay, 2013; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016; Siwatu, 2011). The ability to translate theory into practice is critical to the work of teaching and particularly for teaching for social justice and equity. Teachers and students have approached teaching for social justice in a variety of ways. Some educators have approached teaching for social justice through service-learning projects (Wade, 2007). Other educators have applied social justice pedagogy in their classrooms by supporting students in taking action against inequitable social arrangements at their school (Heffernan, Lewison, Tuyay, Yeager, & Green, 2005). Heffernan et al. (2005) described how third grade students, who had critically examined social issues such as segregation found in children's literature, decided to defy de facto gender-based lunchroom seating arrangements at their school. The support of the classroom teacher in building students' critical literacy skills through reading and writing texts that explicitly addressed issues of social justice prompted

the students to serve as social change agents in dismantling segregation at their school. Their social actions can serve as tangible examples for other educators in thinking about what children's social agency may look like.

Like Heffernan et al. (2005), many other teachers have enacted teaching for social justice by using children's literature and critical literacy focusing on social issues as a spring board to generate critical discourse surrounding oppression, power, equity, and social agency (DeNicolo & Franquiz, 2006; Fain, 2008; Labadie, Pole, & Rogers, 2013; Lewison et al., 2008; Osorio, 2018). Students in the Labadie et al. (2013) study critically examined social class differences as presented in children's literature. Students were able to relate to the characters in the books. For example, students discussed parents losing jobs and finding new jobs but still living under difficult financial circumstances. Similarly, Osorio (2018) discussed how students made strong connections to the characters presented in books on immigration. These books depicted the harsh realities of immigration, particularly those persons who are undocumented in the U.S. Students shared personal experiences of fear in having parents who were undocumented. The aforementioned studies about teachers teaching for social justice and equity using multicultural children's literature adds to the knowledge base of the usefulness of using children's literature to raise students' critical consciousness.

The Need for Multicultural Children's Literature

As schools become increasingly culturally, linguistically, racially, and ethnically diverse, there exists a greater need for multicultural children's literature to be included in school and classroom libraries; in addition, they need to become an integral part of curriculum and instruction (Davis, Brown, Liedel-Rice, & Soeder, 2005; Osorio, 2018). Although the make-up of the student population in the United States is becoming increasingly diverse, the demographic

makeup of the teaching profession has remained static—with 80% of teachers being White females (Education Week, 2017). Thus, given the reality that many students may look different from their teachers and come from a wide variety of cultures, multicultural children's literature can be used as a tool to help teachers better connect with their students (Osorio, 2018).

Books as mirrors. Books should be used as mirrors, meaning children should be able to see themselves in the books they read (Rudine Sims Bishop, 1990). Thus, multicultural children's books can provide opportunities for children to see people who look like them and people who may have similar lived experiences. All students need to see themselves in the books they read, but this is especially important for marginalized students whose stories often go untold. Traditionally speaking, the quantity and quality of stories containing people of color as protagonists have been very limited (Tunnell et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important for educators to intentionally seek out multicultural children's books that reflect a diversity of cultures.

Books as windows. In addition to children being able to see themselves or people with similar experiences as them in texts, books should also be opportunities for children to see out into the world beyond their own lived experiences (Bishop, 1990). Despite a common misconception that multicultural children's books are only valuable for students who are a part of a marginalized group, multicultural children's books can also be beneficial in supporting all students' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of people who may not look like them and who may have different experiences than they (Brinson, 2012). Multicultural books, then, become a window out into the world as children have opportunities to encounter people from different walks of life whom they may not necessarily encounter in their immediate surroundings or everyday life. Dudley-Marling (2003) explained:

> Literature written by and for people from marginalized groups can provide to students from more privileged backgrounds a sense of the lived experiences of people who suffer the effects of poverty and discrimination. Literature offers all students an opportunity to talk about the meaning of difference, to imagine how the world could be different, and to consider how to challenge practices that diminish the lives of our fellow citizens. (p. 306)

Therefore, when teachers use multicultural children's literature as an instructional tool, students gain access in developing a deeper understanding of the experiences of diverse cultural groups. This deeper understanding becomes a pathway for students to critically examine oppressive social conditions and determine what their role could be in dismantling social injustice.

Selecting Multicultural Children's Literature

Although multicultural children's literature is needed in today's classrooms, many teachers are not very knowledgeable of the variety of multicultural children's books that exist. In her survey of 113 early childhood educators' knowledge of multicultural children's books, Brinson (2012) found 61% of both pre-service and in-service teachers could only identify books featuring Anglo-American characters. Among the titles identified were *The Wednesday Surprise* (Bunting, 1989), a story about a little girl who surprises her dad for his birthday by teaching her grandmother how to read and *I Love You Stinky Face* (McCourt, 2004), a story of a mother's unconditional love for her son. Further, teachers in Brinson's (2012) study rarely identified multicultural books featuring protagonists from minority ethnic groups. Brinson articulated, "The majority of these early childhood educators were not able to identify any children's books featuring Asian-American characters, Latino-American characters, Native American characters, or multicultural characters" (p. 31). Thus, she concluded the results of her study warrant the need for professional development for both pre-service and in-service teachers on multicultural children's literature.

Similar to Brinson's (2012) findings of teachers' limited knowledge of multicultural children's books, Iwai (2013) found at the beginning of his Foundations of Literacy course, pre-service teachers had a narrow understanding of types of multicultural books, relegating them to merely books about different ethnic groups. As the course progressed, pre-service teachers expanded their thinking about multicultural children's books to include people who hold different beliefs and also people from diverse religious groups. Teachers' understanding of a wide range of multicultural books is important because a limited or broad knowledge base will be reflected in the kinds of books they include in their classroom libraries and classroom activities. Reading multicultural books in relation to a range of social justice issues such as racism, gender identity, poverty and homelessness, and religious beliefs, among others, can broaden teachers' understanding of the experiences of diverse groups of people (Davis et al., 2005). Therefore, professional learning for teachers should address various types of multicultural children's books where many different cultural groups are represented. These books should also span multiple genres, including, but not limited to, folklore, realistic fiction, historical fiction, and poetry (Brinson, 2012). Doing so could support educators in not only expanding their thinking about multicultural children's literature but also in discovering the various possibilities of using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity.

Cultural authenticity and quality in multicultural children's literature. Cultural authenticity refers to the extent to which literature honestly and accurately depicts a cultural group as determined by members of that group (Bista, 2012; Fox & Short, 2003; Tunnell et al., 2016). As suggested by Fox and Short (2003), assessing cultural authenticity is a complex matter and there has been considerable debate regarding who is considered to be an "insider" or an "outsider" in rela-

tion to telling the stories of a particular cultural group. A primary question has been, "Can an author who is not a part of a cultural group authentically write about that group from the perspectives of those within the group?"

Although the answer of who is allowed to author a story about a marginalized group is still being deliberated and will vary according to the scholar, scholars have offered useful criteria and resources to consider when selecting high quality multicultural children's literature. First and foremost, high quality multicultural children's literature is humanizing, and it presents positive images of a culture rather than depicting caricatures and perpetuating stereotypes (Rudine Sims Bishop, 2003; Iwai, 2015; Thomas, 2016; Tunnell et al., 2016). High quality multicultural children's literature also openly addresses issues of power and calls it into question (Ching, 2005). Iwai (2015) added that high quality multicultural children's literature utilizes authentic dialogue and challenges stereotypes and generalizations about a cultural group.

Social issues books. Multicultural books that explore social issues are pertinent to teaching for social justice. DeNicolo and Franquiz (2006) suggested, "Quality multicultural children's literature engages readers with critical encounters of social (in)justice through its selective use of language, plot, and characterizations" (p. 158). These types of books have been taken up within teacher education courses and also within teacher study groups (Lewison et al., 2002; Lewison et al., 2008; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016; Rogers, 2014). Lewison et al. (2008) identified the following criteria that can be used to determine whether or not a book can be deemed as a critical book to teach for social justice:

(1) They do not make differences invisible but rather explore how difference can actually make a difference.

(2) They enrich our understanding of history and life by giving voice to those who have traditionally been silenced or marginalized.

(3) They show how people can begin to take action on important social issues.

(4) They explore dominant systems of meaning that operate in our society to position individuals and groups.

(5) They help us to question why certain groups are positioned as others. (p. 65)

Each criteria alone moves beyond books that simply support an awareness, understanding, and celebration of diversity and into books that explicitly address social justice for marginalized people. Further, Lewison et al. (2008) suggested that when using books to teach for social justice, teachers should consider whether or not each book meets at least one of the above criteria. That criteria is important to the selection of multicultural children's books and supports educators in using books as tools for teaching for social justice and equity.

Using Multicultural Children's Literature

While selecting high quality multicultural children's literature that explores social issues is paramount to teaching for social justice, the books cannot do it alone; teachers must be very intentional with facilitating discussions and activities surrounding multicultural children's literature (Lewison et al., 2002; Osorio, 2018). More specifically, it is important that teachers facilitate activities and discussions that will raise their students' critical consciousness and develop their sense of social agency (Freire, 1970/2012; Lewison et al., 2008; Obenchain & Pennington, 2015). Working within a PLC can build teachers' capacities to use multicultural children's literature in tandem with instructional activities to raise students' critical consciousness and support their social agency.

PLCs and Teaching for Social Justice through Multicultural Children's Literature

There have been a limited number of studies examining teachers in a PLC learning how to teach for social justice using multicultural children's books. The majority of research on developing teachers' ability to teach for social justice through multicultural children's literature has been in undergraduate and graduate-level courses (Iwai, 2013; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016; Rogers, 2014). Other studies have examined how new teachers, who completed teacher preparation programs committed to social justice, have fared in their application of social justice pedagogy (Agarwal et al., 2010; Lazar, 2013; Philpott & Dagenais, 2012; Picower, 2011). An examination of studies involving educators learning to teach for social justice through multicultural children's literature was critical in determining how educators participating in future professional learning, specifically that of a PLC might be supported.

Using Critical Literacy as a Lens

Sangster et al. (2013) studied educators in a PLC learning to teach for social justice and equity. They described the overall success in their implementation of continuing professional development (CPD) on critical literacy, which invited educators to reflect on their practices using a critical lens. The study included a group of 23 educators from primary and secondary schools. Generally speaking, at the conclusion of the CPD, participants had a robust understanding of the tenets of critical literacy; however, Sangster et al. acknowledged more attention might be given to participants' reflections of and refinement of how they define critical literacy throughout the CPD process. Participants positively reflected on their ability to try out various strategies, and then reflected upon those strategies with their colleagues. Some teachers, for example, used children's books to discuss injustices while other teachers chose to use advertisements as prompts for discussing social justice and equity.

In Gove and Still's (2014) study, all of the teachers used picture books as a springboard for teaching critical literacy. Through a Teach Reflect Teach (TRT) approach, the elementary teachers in this study conducted action research in their implementation of using picture books to teach critical literacy. The focal participant, Jan, discussed how collaboration was critical in her learning to apply critical literacy approaches within the classroom, particularly in her ability to ask critical questions. Although Gove and Still's study offered insight into what could happen in a social justice-driven PLC, the focal participant concentrated on environmentalism as her social justice topic. That topic may not evoke the type of critical consciousness that discussing more contentious social justice issues such as racism, classism, ableism, and xenophobia might.

Similar to Gove and Still (2014), Lewison et al. (2002) also discussed the significance of collaboration and reflection as participants in their study attributed their growth to learning from their peers' implementation of critical literacy practices and discussing challenges with their peers. Unlike Gove and Still's (2014) study, all of the teachers in Lewison et al. (2002) study approached teaching for social justice through the use of social issues books. To that end, Lewison et al. (2002) used the following four tenets of critical literacy to examine how teachers within a PLC facilitated discussions with their students around social issues books: disrupting the commonplace, interrogating multiple viewpoints, focusing on sociopolitical issues, and taking action and promoting social justice. They found one participant, who was brand new to using social issues books to teach for social justice, demonstrated a transformation in practices in her selection of social justice books and also in the types of questions and activities she facilitated during book discussions with her students. In terms of interrogating multiple perspectives, the teacher's students did not move beyond a surface level of understanding, which consisted of students identifying the perspectives and emotions of various characters in a story.

Lewison et al. (2002) suggested deeper analysis could have consisted of the students explaining why characters may have reacted in a particular way. It was also noted that the class discussions did not lead to focusing on sociopolitical issues and taking action and promoting social justice. The omission of developing students' critical consciousness and social agency has implications for future professional learning and research. Future research could examine the types of conversations that emerge as teachers in a PLC explore the use of multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice. This is important because teachers' critical analysis of social justice issues presented within multicultural children's literature could influence the types of discussions that happen in their classrooms.

Like Lewison et al. (2002), Rogers (2014) also studied in-service teachers' implementation of critical literacy. There were two key distinctions between these two studies. While the teachers in Lewison et al. (2002) study were a part of a PLC, the participants in Roger's (2014) study were graduate students in a literacy course. Also, each of the teachers in Roger's study worked with an individual student in a literacy clinic who had been identified as a reader requiring additional support. The teachers approached teaching for social justice in various ways, including using books that explicitly addressed social justice issues. She concluded that while the teachers experienced some level of uncertainty throughout their journey, such uncertainty provided opportunities for discussion and professional growth.

Regardless of how an educator decides to approach social justice in education, it is a complex and often challenging task that will require a considerable amount of courage and support (Esposito & Swain, 2009; Fisher-Ari, Kavanagh, & Martin, 2017; Freire, 2005; Kumashiro, 2015). Servage (2008) advocated for transformative PLCs where teachers can receive the types

of support they need in unmasking, problematizing, and acting upon social justice issues within their classroom, school community, and beyond.

Working within a PLC, then, to explore teaching for social justice through the use of multicultural children's literature could offer teachers the opportunity and space to experience a type of transformative professional learning, which could support their ability to raise their students' critical consciousness and social agency.

Summary

In summation, research on professional learning communities indicates the significance of trust, collaboration, and reflection to teachers' professional growth. Further, it is suggested, in order for educators to become well-positioned to teach for social justice and equity, it is imperative for them to critically examine their own sociocultural identities. In addition, educators must be willing to experience some tension, discomfort, and uncertainty along their journey of learning to teach for social justice and equity. Departing from traditional teaching methods and approaches where the teacher is considered the expert and holder of knowledge and has all "the answers" is crucial to the work of the social justice educator. Using quality multicultural children's literature as a springboard for discussing issues of social justice could be a viable option for teachers and students. More research is needed as educators work within a PLC that specifically focuses on using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity.

Learning to teach for social justice and equity within a professional learning community, particularly one that uses protocols to structure conversations, could support educators in developing the trust, collaboration, and reflection needed to engage in critical reflection of their teaching practices. It could also support them with having discussions about contentious issues surrounding inequality such as racism, classism, sexism, linguicism, homophobia, and xenophobia, among others. Further, discussing contentious issues, confronting one's sociocultural identity

and perspective, and learning from the perspectives of others requires a professional learning community that is grounded on trust and mutual respect, collaboration, and reflection.

3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine a social justice-driven professional learning community. The aim of the research was to determine the understanding P-12 educators developed about social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. The following main research question and sub-questions guided this study: How can a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC) influence P-12 educators? What understandings do educators develop about social justice and equity? What perceptions do educators cultivate about teaching for social justice and equity? What knowledge do educators construct about using multicultural children's literature (MCL) to teach for social justice and equity?

Research Design

The research was approached through a qualitative case study. Qualitative research allows the researcher to gain a better understanding of the complexities of social phenomena as the researcher employs a "wide range of interpretive practices" to ascertain the meaning that people construct of their social experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 5). Those interpretive practices include, but are not limited to, data such as interviews, observations, audio-recordings, video-recordings, document analysis, field notes, and memos. Further, Wolcott (1994) suggested "participant observations, interviewing, and studying materials prepared by others" are the three main data collection methods qualitative researchers utilize (p. 10). In order to gain a deep understanding and keen insight into the phenomenon under investigation, the qualitative researcher must situate herself within the context of the social phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Thus, physically locating oneself at the research site and participating in the context allows the researcher to develop a rich understanding of the intricacies of the social experiences of participants.

Several scholars have offered descriptions of what qualitative case studies entail. Creswell (2013) explained, "Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system […] over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (p. 97). Both Creswell (2013) and Stake (2003) identified three different types of qualitative case studies: intrinsic, instrumental and collective. In an instrumental case study, there is a focal point issue explained through a single case (Stake, 1994). Another type of qualitative case study is a collective case study, which also focuses on a single issue; however, multiple cases are examined. Finally, within an intrinsic case study, the case itself is of interest and is aroused through intrinsic interest in a phenomenon.

This qualitative case study was most closely aligned to what Yin (2018) described as a case study. Yin (2018) defined a case study as "an empirical method that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p. 15). Yin suggested that the case be defined and bounded. Accordingly, the case in my study was a group of 17 P-12 educators who participated in a social justice driven professional learning community over a two-day period of time.

Focusing on the single case of a social justice-driven professional learning community afforded me, the researcher, the opportunity to discover how the discussions and activities of the PLC influenced the educators' thinking in three main areas: social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. I focused on the understandings and meanings the participants developed through their participation within the social justice-driven PLC. Rich, thick descriptions of the participants' thoughts and ideas throughout the social justice-driven PLC were used within the findings

to make their experiences and ways in which they came to understand their experiences more visible (Geertz, 2008). Table 1 provides the specific data sources and research questions.

Table 1
Research Questions and Corresponding Data Sources

Main Research Question	**Data Sources**
How can a social justice-driven professional learning community influence P-12 educators?	• Professional learning audio-recordings • Documents • Interviews • Researcher's audio-reflections • Researcher's journal
Sub-questions relating to the main research questions	**Data Sources**
1. What understandings do educators develop about social justice and equity?	• Professional learning audio-recordings • Identity Mapping • Written Reflection 1 • Written Reflection 2 • Group Charts • Professional Learning Feedback Forms • Interviews
2. What perceptions do educators cultivate about teaching for social justice and equity?	• Professional learning audio-recordings • Teaching for Social Justice & Equity Coffee Talk • Book Talk Planning Sheets • Professional Learning Feedback Forms • Interviews
3. What knowledge do educators construct about using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity?	• Professional learning audio-recordings • Group Charts • Written Reflection 1 • Written Reflection 2 • Multicultural Children's Literature Double-Entry Journals • Text Selection Sheets • Professional Learning Feedback Forms • Interviews

Context

Through a large federally-funded education grant, a university located in the southeastern part of the United States partnered with local school districts to offer professional development to educators. Each partner school district was considered a high-need district based on guidelines set forth by the federal government. According to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act, a

school district is considered high-need if at least one school in that district has "more than 34% of faculty who "do not have a major, minor or significant coursework in their main assignment field" (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). A school district may also be considered high-need if it "serves a school whose attrition rate among classroom teachers was 15 percent or more in the last three school years". After partnering with these six local school districts that were determined to be high-need school districts, the university randomly selected high poverty schools as partners on a variety of projects. That partnership included professional development offered by the university. The intent of the professional development provided was to help ensure high-need schools in surrounding communities are well-supplied with highly-skilled teachers. The purpose of the federal grant was to prepare and retain teachers; thus, funding was provided to school districts and schools to fulfill that purpose. For participating in a two-day professional learning offered through the grant during the summer of 2018, educators were paid a $100 stipend. They also received three multicultural children's books of their choice and professional resources.

In an effort to help support partner schools, the university had prepared teacher candidates who participated in a year-long teacher residency at those partner schools. In addition to preparing teacher candidates through coursework and a teacher residency, the university offered teacher candidates and other educators working within their partner schools, opportunities for professional development through their summer institute. *Social Justice & Children's Literature*, which I facilitated, was one professional learning option offered through the summer institute. The structure of this professional learning will be discussed at length in chapter four.

The second summer professional learning opportunity offered through the institute was *Create to Learn*, which was facilitated by my mentor and university faculty member, Dr. Laura

Meyers, at the same time and location that *Social Justice & Children's Literature* was being offered, but in a different room. Both professional learning options were initially offered to P-12 teacher residents, in-service teachers, administrators, instructional coaches, media specialists, paraprofessionals, and other educators who worked within one of the partner school districts. When space was available, the third session of these two professional learning opportunities was opened to any P-12 educator, including educators who served schools outside of the partner schools and school districts.

Participant Selection

A combination of purposeful sampling and criterion sampling were used to identify participants for this study. Researchers may use more than one sampling strategy within a study (Creswell, 2013). Purposeful sampling means individuals are selected "because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, p. 156, 2013). Moreover, Patton (2002) suggested purposeful sampling allows for "an in-depth understanding" and "information-rich cases for study in depth" (p. 46). The four school districts were selected through purposeful sampling. These school districts were purposefully selected because they had already been identified as high-need school districts, and these districts included schools with a high concentration of students of color and/or students from low-income families. Those key characteristics were pertinent to this study because both groups represent marginalized populations. Thus, it was especially important for their teachers to have the tools and resources to provide an education undergirded by social justice and equity.

As previously described, educators who worked at a partner school were given priority consideration for participation in the professional learning. However, once space became available, the opportunity was made available to other P-12 educators. Thus, along with purposeful sampling, criterion sampling, or sampling where participants met predetermined criteria, was

also used to select participants for this study. The predetermined criteria used for all participants was being a P-12 educator interested in participating in two days of professional learning focused

Figure 1. Facebook advertisement of professional learning

on teaching for social justice and equity. All educators who met those criteria were invited to participate in the study.

At the time the study was conducted, in summer 2018, School District A was comprised of approximately 71% of students of color and approximately 45% of all students within the district qualified for free or reduced lunch. School District B had 98% of students of color and 100% of all students qualified for free or reduced lunch. School District C had 84% of students

of color and approximately 76% of all students in the school district qualified for free or reduced lunch. Finally, School District D consisted of 89% of students of color and approximately 72% of all students qualified for free or reduced lunch (State Department of Education, 2018).

Recruitment and Informed Consent

There was a total of four professional learning opportunities planned for educators to participate in *Social Justice & Children's Literature* during the summer of 2018. Each opportunity was designed to offer two days of professional learning to each of the four school districts. The designated budget for this professional learning allowed for up to 10 educators from each of the four school districts to participate with a total of 80 people. Ultimately, three sessions of professional learning were offered as one school district canceled their session due to conflicts with other summer professional learning and programs being offered at the same time as the professional learning.

There was a total of nine educators who participated in the first two offerings of *Social Justice & Children's Literature*; therefore, funding was available to accommodate more than ten educators within the third session. To that end, my mentor and I decided to open the professional learning opportunity to any P-12 educator who wanted to participate even if they did not work in a partner school district. On June 25th, we shared a flyer on Facebook that advertised *Social Justice & Children's Literature* and *Create to Learn*. We asked educators to share the post on their Facebook pages and tag other P-12 educators who might be interested. Figure 1 shows a screenshot of a portion of the flyer shared along with a message updating everyone that both professional learning opportunities were full.

In addition to sharing the Facebook post, my mentor and I emailed colleagues and friends, requesting they share this professional learning flyer with other P-12 educators. As a result of us opening up this opportunity to any interested P-12 educator and sharing the flyer on

Facebook, the third session filled up within less than a week. I was able to accommodate 18 educators in the *Social Justice & Children's Literature* professional learning, although 17 educators actually attended. This group of 17 P-12 educators were from a variety of school districts. All but three of the educators worked within a partner school district. One educator worked within a nearby school district; however, her school district was not a part of the school-university partnership. Additionally, a few of the educators did not work within a school district. One participant was a preschool teacher and another participant was a museum educator.

The professional learning for the first group of educators was on June 11th-12th. The second group was from June 21st-22nd. The third group was on June 28th-29th. At the beginning of Day One of professional learning for each of the three groups, I explained the purpose of the research and reviewed the informed consent document. I provided time for the educators to read through the document and think about whether or not they were interested in participating in the research.

There were six educators in the first group and five signed the informed consent document to participate in the research. All five of the participants were elementary school educators. Four of those elementary school educators worked at the same school. Three of the educators self-identified as African-American. One educator self-identified as Hispanic. There was one educator who chose not to identify with a particular racial or ethnic group.

The second group of educators, the smallest group, consisted of three P-12 educators from the same school district. All three of these educators signed the informed consent document to participate in the research. One teacher taught elementary school, another teacher taught middle school, and the third taught high school. All three of these educators self-identified as African-American.

The third group consisted of 17 educators. All 17 educators signed the informed consent document to participate in the research. There was one pre-school teacher of children with autism. There was also a museum educator who worked with students in fifth through eighth grades. The other fifteen educators worked at schools located in nearby school districts. Those fifteen educators were from six different school districts and most of them worked at different schools. There were only two pairs of teachers who taught at the same school. There were nine elementary school teachers, two of whom were from the same school. There were five middle school teachers, including one teacher resident. There was one high school teacher and a media specialist, both of whom worked at the same school. Ten of the 17 P-12 educators self-identified as African-American and seven of the educators self-identified as White. There were 15 females, one male, and one person who self-identified as non-binary—meaning they do not assign themselves to a particular gender.

After collecting data from all three groups, for this dissertation, I analyzed and reported the data collected from one of the three groups. I selected the third group given its variety. I selected this group for a couple of reasons. The first reason was because this was my largest group; thus, I collected more data from this group than the first two groups combined. Another reason for selecting this group was that this group was the most diverse in terms of race, gender, school or teaching location, and teaching position. For example, this was the only group that included a pre-school teacher and a museum educator. This was also the only group that included first-year teachers and a teacher resident. Further, since I decided to focus on the third group of participants in terms of data analysis and reporting for this dissertation, the content of subsequent sections and chapters all pertain to this group of seventeen P-12 educators. Table 2 provides demographic data on each of the 17 P-12 educators. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of par

ticipants all names of individuals, schools, and school districts are pseudonyms.

Table 2

Social Justice & Children's Literature Participant Demographics

Teacher	**P-12 Segment**	**Position**	**Grade**	**Subject**	**Years of Experience**	**Gender**	**Race**
Sonya	Elementary	Teacher	5th	All	13	Female	African-American
Mona	Middle	Teacher	8th	Humanities	12	Female	White
Kristie	Middle	Teacher	5th-8th	WWII & Holocaust	.5	Female	White
Sabrina	Elementary	Teacher	4th	All	1	Female	African-American
Tameka	Elementary	Teacher	K	All	4	Female	African-American
Jocelyn	Pre-school	Teacher	Pre-school	All	.5	Female	White
Teacher	P-12 Segment	Position	Grade	Subject	Years of Experience	Gender	Race
Tiffany	Elementary	Teacher	3rd	All	0	Female	African-American
Mark	High	Teacher	9th-12th	Law & Criminal Justice	4	Male	African-American
Patricia	High	Media Specialist	9th-12th	All	7	Female	White
Deborah	Elementary	Teacher	4th	All	ND	Female	African-American
Shanelle	Middle	Teacher	6th	ELA	2	Female	African-American
Teacher	P-12 Segment	Position	Grade	Subject	Years of Experience	Gender	Race
Heather	Elementary	Teacher	1st	All	ND	Female	White
Antoinette	Elementary	Teacher	2nd	All	3	Female	African-American
Tara	Elementary	Teacher	5th	Social Studies	0	Non-binary	White
Zoya	Middle	Paraprofes-sional	7th	ND	ND	Female	African-American
Lisa	Middle	Teacher Resident	6th	ELA	0	Female	African-American
Melissa	Elementary	Teacher	kindergar-ten	All	6	Female	White

Note: ND=Not disclosed

Research Site

The research took place at a university located within a southeastern city in the United States of America. The participants and I met on a university campus in their school of education building. Our meetings took place in a conference room on the tenth floor of the building. We met on June 28th-29th from 9:00am to 3:00pm for the professional learning.

Researcher's Role

I designed the curriculum and facilitated the professional learning for this study. Prior to designing and implementing the professional learning for my study, I researched professional learning communities and teaching for social justice. Then I read research on both topics, separately and combined. I also sought the expertise of professors and colleagues who developed and facilitated professional learning for P-12 educators. Those conversations led to me structuring the professional learning using protocols, which will be discussed in more depth in chapter four. I was given advice to be very flexible in terms of time allotted for each activity and to provide as much choice as possible.

As facilitator and researcher of the professional learning, my role was participant observer. Creswell (2013) identified several ways in which a researcher participates in research: complete participant, participant as observer, nonparticipant/observer as participant, and complete observer. Of those four types, my role was most closely aligned to participant as observer. According to Creswell's (2013) description of a participant as observer, "The researcher is participating in the activity site at the site" (p. 166). In addition to leading the two-day workshop, I participated in all the community building activities in an effort to build rapport with the participants. I participated in other activities to model what the educators would be doing. I did not participate in the small group discussions. I circulated the room and listened to various groups. I participated in all of the large group discussions, particularly when small groups shared what

their groups discussed. I often elaborated on points that were made and encouraged others to chime in with their questions and comments.

Data Collection

I received approval to conduct this study from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) on June 11, 2018. Data collection began on the first day of the professional learning on June 28, 2018. On the first day of the professional learning, I explained the research and provided all educators with an informed consent document (see Appendix A). All seventeen educators agreed to participate in the research and signed the informed consent document. Data collection procedures were followed in accordance to the approved study and the guidelines and policies set forth by the participating institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Professional learning audio-recordings. Both days of professional learning were audio-recorded. Creswell (2014) suggested an advantage of using audio information is the opportunity to hear directly from participants. There were three recorders used during both days. The first recorder recorded all whole group discussions and group one's discussions. The second recorder was used to record all of group two's discussions. The third recorder was used for group three's discussions. All audio-recordings were transcribed by rev.com. There were two transcription options available. One option was verbatim transcription. The second option was transcription that did not include fillers such as uh or um. It also did not include any sentence restarts. Roulston (2010) suggested determining whether or not to include such utterances in the transcription should depend on what is to be accomplished by the analysis. Further, Roulston (2010) articulated, "For researchers interested in analyzing how talk is constructed, and how speakers formulate their descriptions, this information is critical for data analysis" (p. 107). Since the focus of my data analysis was not talk construction or discourse analysis, I opted not to include fillers or restarts in the transcriptions. Once I received each transcript, I reviewed it for accuracy. I played each audio-

Table 3
Social Justice-Driven PLC Documents

Document	Description
Group Charts	• Participants used chart paper to list their small group-generated Community Agreements. • In small groups, they used sticky notes on chart paper to jot down what social justice and equity mean to them. • As a whole group, the participants used chart paper to pose questions in relation to homelessness. • In small groups, they used chart paper to write considerations for selecting and using multicultural children's literature.
Teaching for Social Justice & Equity Coffee Talk (TSJCT)	• After reading professional literature on teaching for social justice and equity, participants used the left-hand side of a template to note insights. On the right-hand side of the template, they noted what they learned in their group discussion as each educator shared insights from the readings.
Multicultural Children's Literature Double- Entry Journal	• After reading about selecting and using multicultural children's literature and critical books, the participants used the left-hand side of a template to discuss what they learned. On the right-hand side of the template, they discussed their thoughts about what they learned.
Book Talk Planning Sheet	• Each participant used a lesson plan template to plan a lesson or unit focused on a social justice issue presented in a multicultural children's book.
Text Selection Sheet	• Each participant used this sheet to list multicultural children's literature that they wanted to order for their class. There was space at the bottom of the sheet for participants to include a rationale for selecting the books.
Professional Learning Feedback Form	• At the end of the second day of professional learning, participants completed this form to discuss what they learned and to evaluate their experiences.
Emails	• Participants emailed me demographic information. Some participants also emailed me additional feedback about their professional learning experiences. One participant emailed me about what has happened since her participation in the PLC.

recording while reading through each transcript, and I made revisions when I came across inaccurate words on the transcript.

Participant written reflections. Documents such as participant reflections or journals can be unobtrusive and the researcher can focus on the participants' words and language (Creswell, 2014). Accordingly, participants completed two written reflections over the course of both professional learning days. The participants were provided a sheet for each reflection that consisted of a combination of five questions and prompts pertaining to social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Written Reflection 1 (WR1) was provided toward the beginning of Day 1 of the professional learning, and it served as a tool to determine the educators' initial perceptions and understandings. Written Reflection 2 (WR2) was used to determine how the participants' knowledge and understandings were influenced since beginning the professional learning. WR2 was also used to determine how the participants were thinking about applying what they learned through their participation in the social justice-driven professional learning community to their classrooms.

Documents. Participant-produced documents can serve as useful data in understanding the meaning participants construct from social phenomena. Documents used in my study were beneficial in providing descriptive knowledge of the phenomenon. In addition to reflections, WR1 and WR2, participants completed other documents during the professional learning: group charts, teaching for social justice and equity coffee talk sheet, multicultural children's literature double-entry journal form, book talk planning sheet, text selection sheet, and a professional learning feedback form. Participants used these documents as templates for accomplishing the following tasks: when responding to questions or prompts; when planning how they would use a

multicultural children's book to teach for social justice and equity; when selecting which multicultural children's literature they wanted to use in their classrooms; and when providing feedback on their experiences within the professional learning. Table 3 provides a description of what each professional learning document entailed. Additional depth on each document is included in chapter four.

Along with documents collected during the professional learning, I used email before and after the professional learning days to obtain participant information. For example, each of the 17 P-12 educators emailed me before the professional learning and provided their teaching position and the school where they worked. After the professional learning ended, many of the participants emailed me additional demographic and background information, including their age, their highest degree completed, and the number of years they had been teaching. Some of the participants also indicated if they had any prior education on teaching for social justice and equity.

Interviews. Along with collecting data during the professional learning, I followed-up with individual participants afterwards to gain a deeper understanding of what they learned through the social justice-driven PLC and how they came to understand their experiences. Therefore, interviewing participants presented an invaluable opportunity to further explore their unique perspectives. Patton (2002) affirmed, "Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made more explicit" (p. 341). The interviews provided insight on how participation in the PLC influenced P-12 educators' knowledge and understanding about social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Further, the interviews provided an opportunity for participants to elaborate on how they planned to apply what they learned from working within the social justice-driven PLC. All 17 participants were

invited to participate in a one-hour follow-up interview. At the conclusion of Day 2 of the professional learning, I asked educators if they were interested in a follow-up interview to write their name, email address, and phone number on a sign-up sheet. The participants were given an option to participate in either an in-person interview or telephone interview. Seven of the 17 P-12 educators signed-up for a follow-up interview. A week and a half after the professional learning, I called all seven participants who signed up to be interviewed. I left a voice message if I could not reach the participant by phone. I also followed-up by email if I did not hear back from the participant within a week.

Ultimately, four participants were available for an interview and each of them preferred an in-person interview. I interviewed Sonya, Tameka, Tiffany, and Shanelle. Table 4 provides demographic data on each interview participant. Their years of teaching experience ranged from a brand-new teacher, who was recently hired as a third-grade teacher for the upcoming school year, to an experienced teacher, who had 13 years of teaching experience. Three of the interviewees were elementary school teachers and one was a middle school teacher. All four teachers were African-American.

Each participant decided on the date, time, and location for the interview. I utilized a semi-structured interview consisting of open-ended questions (Appendix B) and followed up with probes for additional information when needed (Roulston, 2010). I audio-recorded each interview and had each one transcribed by rev.com. I took written notes during each interview to assist me with probing for additional information and also to aid in data analysis (Patton, 2002; Roulston, 2010). At the conclusion of each interview, I asked the participant if she would be willing to participate in one last follow-up interview after the school year had started and she had

Table 4

Demographics of Interview Participants

Teacher	P-12 Segment	Position	Grade	Subject	Years of Experience	Gender	Race
Sonya	Elementary	Teacher	5th	All	13	Female	African-American
Tameka	Elementary	Teacher	K	All	4	Female	African-American
Tiffany	Elementary	Teacher	3rd	All	0	Female	African-American
Shanelle	Middle	Teacher	6th	ELA	2	Female	African-American

time to apply her what she learned during the professional learning. All four interviewees expressed interest in a second follow-up interview; however, Tameka was the only participant who responded to the text message I sent about scheduling the second interview. Thus, in November of 2018, I conducted a second semi-structured follow-up interview with Tameka (Appendix C).

Researcher's audio-reflections. At the conclusion of both professional learning days, I recorded an audio-reflection of the day. For each audio-reflection, I discussed what happened from the beginning of the day until the end. I also discussed information that could not be captured by the audio-recording. For example, I discussed what our meeting room looked like and what I noticed during small group discussions. I had both days of audio-reflections transcribed by rev.com.

Researcher's journal. As suggested by Roulston (2010), "The researcher journal is usually composed of a series of written entries that record the researcher's reflections, ideas, commentaries, and memos throughout the research process" (p. 121). As participants were orally discussing their responses to questions or prompts, I took notes of my impressions in my researcher's journal. During interviews and at the conclusion of the interviews, I took notes in my journal. I

noted my initial impressions of data as I was collecting it and after all data had been collected. I also used my researcher's journal to take notes during the data analysis process. Finally, I used my researcher's journal as a space to take notes when meeting with my advisor, committee members, or colleagues for their feedback on my data analysis process, my findings, and next steps in my writing process.

Data Analysis

In preparation for my data analysis, I added line numbers to all interview transcripts and professional learning transcripts. Next, I listened to each audio-recording while reviewing the corresponding transcript for accuracy. Roulston (2010) recommended researchers listen to audio-recordings, particularly when they have been transcribed by another person. As I listened to each recording, I changed any words transcribed incorrectly. I also replaced the name of each participant, school name, school district name, and any other identifiable information, with a pseudonym. In accordance with the IRB agreement, these codes were kept on a password-protected computer.

I analyzed the interview transcripts first, as (Saldaña, 2016) recommended beginner researchers start their data analysis process by working with a small data set. Thus, I read through each interview transcript and engaged in the first cycle of coding. For the first cycle of coding, I manually coded the data, using In Vivo codes—verbatim language used by participants—to summarize the data (Saldaña, 2016). I used In Vivo coding because I wanted to ensure I captured the participants' voices. Rather than line-by-line In Vivo codes, I used splitter In Vivo codes, meaning I used a single code to summarize several lines of data. While coding each interview, I used the highlighting tool on Microsoft Word to emphasize lines or even entire passages that were intriguing and/or further substantiated an In Vivo code. These highlighted lines and passages are often featured as quotes in chapter six.

After the first phase of coding all four interviews, I continued using In Vivo coding as I coded each professional learning transcript. As I read each transcript, there were a few instances when a word did not make sense in a particular sentence. In that case, I replayed the audio-recording to ascertain the word. Then I corrected the word before proceeding with data analysis. Just as I did with the interviews, I used the highlighting tool on Microsoft Word to underscore intriguing lines or passages throughout each professional learning transcript.

Once I completed the first phase of coding the interviews and professional learning transcriptions, I engaged in the second phase of coding. The second phase of coding included code mapping in which I placed all of the In Vivo codes into categories (Saldaña, 2016). I read through each In Vivo code and then assigned each code to one of the four dimensions of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2008), the conceptual framework used for my study. As set forth by Lewison et al. (2008), critical literacy consists of the following four dimensions: (1) disrupting the commonplace (2) considering multiple perspectives (3) focusing on sociopolitical issues (4) taking action and promoting social justice.

I assigned each dimension of critical literacy a different color. Disrupting the commonplace was pink; considering multiple viewpoints was blue; focusing on sociopolitical issues was orange; and, taking action and promoting social justice was green. I had sticky note flags for each of those colors. After reading each In Vivo code, I placed a sticky note flag beside the code based on the dimension of critical literacy that particular code addressed. There were instances where some of the codes were captured by more than one dimension of critical literacy. When that was the case, I assigned two different color flags to a code. Then after analyzing the entire transcript, I revisited the In Vivo codes with two different flags to examine more closely which

dimension was a better fit. Figure 2 provides an example of a coded professional learning transcript.

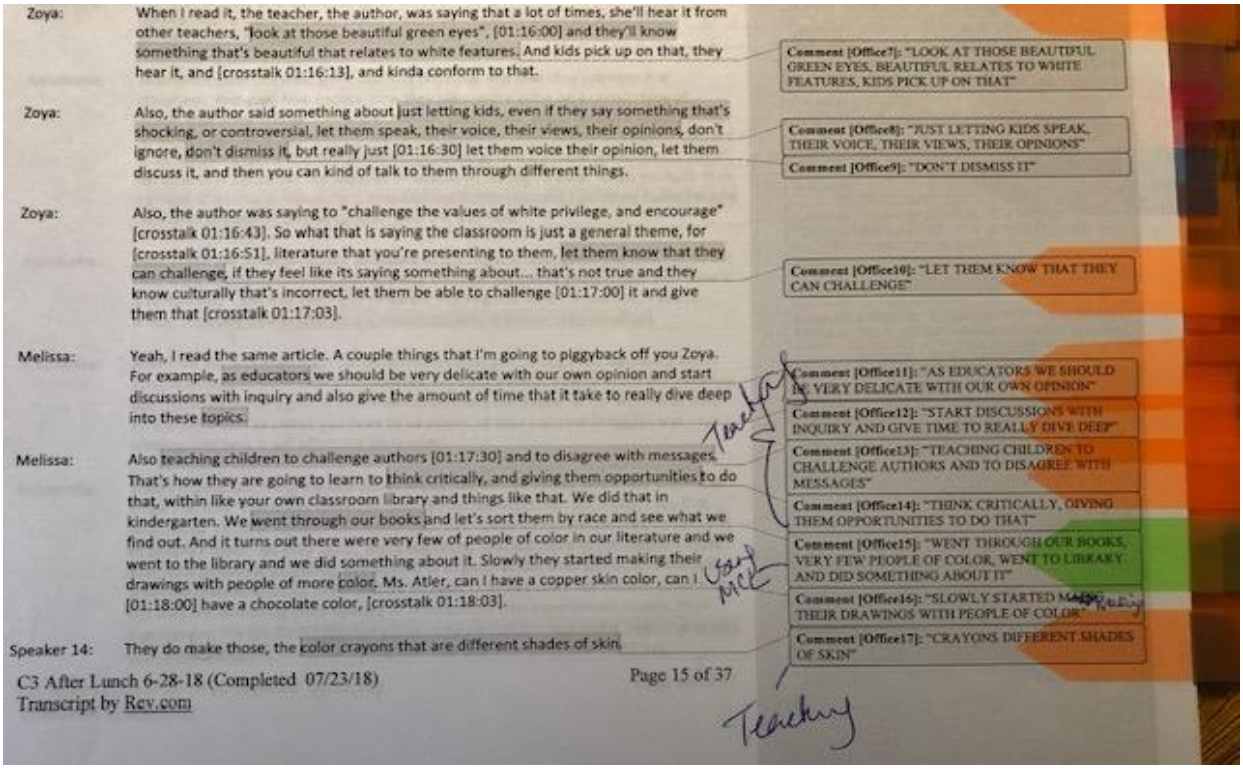


Figure 2. Sample of coded transcript

Following assigning each In Vivo code to a dimension of critical literacy, for the third phase of coding, I analyzed each code based on the constructs within my research questions. Those constructs are social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. I handwrote one of those constructs near each code. Then, I created an Excel spreadsheet to help me organize all of the codes. There were three different Excel pages, and each page had the same structure based on the four dimensions of critical literacy. Beside each code, I noted in parenthesis the data source where I obtained the code. The first spreadsheet was for all In Vivo codes focused on social justice and equity. The second page included In Vivo codes related to teaching for social justice and

equity. The third page was dedicated to all In Vivo codes regarding using multicultural children's literature to teaching for social justice and equity. Figure 3 is from the Teaching for Social Justice and Equity spreadsheet, and it provides a snapshot of some of the In Vivo codes that emerged from professional learning transcripts and interview transcripts.

Disrupting the Commonplace	Considering Multiple Perspectives	Focusing on the Sociopolitical	Taking Action to Promote Social Justice
methods very similar (I, S, p.1)	looking from different perspectives (I,S,p.6)	understand power (I,S,p.5)	create a better world (I, S, p. 2)
examine texts and photographs (I, S, p.2)	worldview rather than a city view (I,T,p.3)	need to have education going on not just discussion (I,T,p.5)	become leaders of the world (I,T,p.13)
tend to assume common understanding (I, S,p.3)	not as prevalent but still an issue they need to understand (I,T,p.3)	social justice is important, not eveybody's going to feel that (I,Tif,p.6)	soliloquy about somebody's perspective and how that could change (I,Tif,p.9)
being mindful (I, S, p. 4)	students need help seeing others' perspectives (I,T,p,8)	dealing with admin or parents (I,Tif,p.10)	poetry and music creative way to get students engaged about things that are important (I,Tif,p.9)
many opportunities to incorporate sj teaching (I, S, p. 4)	think about different perspectives (I,Tiff,p.9)	teachers tend to stay away because it can be controversial (I,Tif,p.11)	displayed in the school, social justice, final piece (an activity that combines art and literature) (I,Tif,p.10)
digging deeper (I, S,p.5)	kids are navigating various identities (C1a, p.29)	feel like you don't have enough power even in your own classroom (I,Sh,p.1)	write editorials in regards to themselves rooted in the issu (I,S,p.8)
choices we make tell children you are important or you're not (I,S,p.5)	everyone has a different perspective (C1b,p.8)	you can come up with an idea, you don't have to wait on someone to say yes it's okay (I,Sh,p.3)	kindergarten educator overwhelming this many issues (C1a,p.7)
strategic conversations (I,S,p.6)	hard to find different perspectives on various time periods (C1b, p.18)	brutality happening to people of color, want to bring that social justice idea into my classroom (I,Sh,p.7)	teaching them what it means to be an advocate (C1b,p.7)
definitely use the protocols (I,S,p.7)	objective is not to just prove them wrong (C1b, p.20)	position I'm in complicated, instead of DIR it's ABA, it's so problematic (C1a,p.18)	gotta teach people how to be sensitive and understand these things (C1b,p.23)
			we can make an influence by creating a platform for them to

Figure 3. Sample of In Vivo codes categorized within conceptual framework

After placing all codes on the spreadsheets, I analyzed the codes on each spreadsheet. I looked across critical literacy dimensions and focused on condensing the In Vivo codes into categories that reflected emerging themes within a particular construct—social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Next, after condensing the In Vivo codes from the spreadsheets, I analyzed all documents collected during both days of professional learning. I manually coded these documents by highlighting key words and phrases used by participants. Then, I used the key words and phrases from the participant documents to confirm the condensed set of codes from the Excel sheets. For example, documents revealed the following common key words educators used to describe what teaching for social justice and equity meant: "empower", "empowerment", "student voice", "challenge", and "question". These key words indicated that many of the P-12 educators believed teaching for social justice and equity required them to empower their students' voices and teach them to question their world and challenge inequality. Further, the above

stated key words confirmed the theme that a part of teaching for social justice and equity was student empowerment.

Data Security and Management

Data was collected at the site where the professional learning was held. Data was collected in the form of audio-recordings of both professional learning sessions, participant written reflections, and documents. In addition, I audio-recorded my reflection of each day of professional learning. Data was also collected after the professional learning within the form of interviews, my researcher's journal, and emails. Immediately following data collection, I saved all electronic data, including: professional learning audio-recordings, interview recordings, and my audio-reflections within a password-protected file in Dropbox. Then I deleted all files from the three audio-recording devices used for this study.

Data management is very important in conducting research, especially in qualitative research, as there is a significant amount of data usually collected from several sources (Miles et al., 2014). There are specific actions I took to manage data collection. I created an electronic folder for professional learning transcriptions, interview transcriptions, and scanned copies of documents. I also named each file according to the data type and the date in which it was collected. When creating a file name for each interview transcription, I included the participant's pseudonym.

Additionally, data from this study was saved on my firewall and password protected computer. I, the researcher, was the only person who had the password to the computer. All hardcopy documents and audio-recording devices were transported from the research site to my home office in large sealed envelopes. When not being analyzed, each document was stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office. The key code sheet used for this research was stored in a different

locked file cabinet in my home office. All data, electronic and hardcopies, will be destroyed on or around June 11, 2023.

Trustworthiness

In addition to data management and security, there were specific measures that I took to ensure the trustworthiness of this study. Addressing trustworthiness within this qualitative case study was significant to attending to the quality of the research. Moreover, I attended to the following standards of quality to support the trustworthiness of this study: 1) clear research questions with study design features aligned to those questions; 2) looked for parallels across data sources; 3) collected data from a range of participants 4) specified analytic constructs; 5) member checked 6) explicitly described my role as the researcher; 7) acknowledged my values, assumptions, and biases (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

My research questions, the main question and sub-questions, were clearly stated and corresponding data sources for each research question were identified (Table 1) and fully described (Table 2). Using multiple data collection methods in qualitative research is significant to the trustworthiness of the study and the triangulation of data (Creswell, 2014; Glesne, 2011). Multiple data sources such as audio-recordings of professional learning sessions and interviews, participant written reflections, documents, my audio-reflections, and notes from my researcher's journal were used in this research.

Along with multiple data sources, collecting data from a range of participants was significant to the trustworthiness of this study (Miles et al., 2014). Data for this study was collected from multiple participants, a total of 17 P-12 educators. There was variation within this group of educators including the school and/or school district where they taught, teaching position, the number of years of teaching experience, race, and gender (Table 2).

An additional layer of trustworthiness to this study was clearly delineating and explaining the analytic constructs used for data analysis (Miles et al., 2014). I used the four dimensions of critical literacy as my conceptual framework (Lewison et al., 2008) and provided a sample of coded data within that framework (Figure 3).

After coding the data and developing themes, I reached out to educators from the study to engage in member checking. Member checking is important to the trustworthiness of a qualitative research study as it gives participants the opportunity to review themes and/or findings for accuracy (Creswell, 2014). Accordingly, I invited all of the P-12 educators to participate in member checking. On the last day of the professional learning, I explained to participants I would be interested in their review of my findings. I emphasized, in reporting the data I wanted to be sure I had the story right; therefore, their feedback was very important to me. I passed around a sheet to sign-up for member checking. Eight participants expressed interest in member checking. Four of the eight participants who volunteered for member checking also participated in an initial interview and agreed to a follow-up interview. Of those four educators, Tameka was the only participant available for a second follow-up interview and member checking.

Tameka requested to meet for our follow-up interview while her school was on Thanksgiving break. We met for a follow-up interview the Monday prior to Thanksgiving. She and I met in her classroom. Following our interview, I provided Tameka an outline of my research findings and explained the data sources I used. Then I used the outline to elaborate on my findings. I asked Tameka to interrupt at any time to let me know if she thought something needed to be modified or added. She mentioned all of the findings we discussed were consistent with major topics of discussion within her small group. Tameka concluded she believed my findings were accurate.

Another measure of trustworthiness was explicitly identifying my role and position as the researcher. I acknowledged that I was a participant observer in this study who facilitated the professional learning. In addition to acknowledging my participant observer role in the research, it was important for me, as the researcher, to explicate who I am and what my cultural background entails. Creswell (2014) affirmed, "Good qualitative research contains comments by the researchers about how their interpretation of the findings is shaped by their background, such as their gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic origin" (p. 202). Within my researcher's statement, I stated my position in terms of my values, biases, and cultural background.

Finally, addressing trustworthiness in qualitative research also means providing a rich, thick description of the methodology and findings (Creswell, 2014; Geertz, 2008; Miles et al., 2014). I provided a vivid description of the research context. I also included a rich description of the participants in the study and, as presented in chapter five, a detailed account of their responses and interpretations of their experiences in the two-day social justice-driven professional learning community.

Ethical Considerations

Along with trustworthiness, researchers must examine the ethical issues that could arise from conducting research. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) asserted, "Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict" (p. 154). In considering ethics within the study described herein, I had to consider my relationship with participants. I had only met one participant, Sonya, prior to the professional learning. Four years prior to *Social Justice & Children's Literature,* Sonya and I participated in *Tiles for Social Justice* together. She and I barely had recollection of one another, other than remembering each other's faces. In considering I did not know the other participants, I entered the research site as an outsider. Further, it was imperative I built rapport and established trust with

and among the educators at the onset of the professional learning. There were several ways I sought to make that happen. At the beginning of the professional learning, I explained my teaching background and experiences, my positionality, and what has drawn my interest into teaching for social justice. Additionally, the participants and I participated in Getting to Know You activities each day of the professional learning. Another way I sought to establish and maintain trust among the participants was by having them create community agreements that they believed would help them be successful in working as a group. They wrote these agreements on chart paper and posted them on the wall. Lastly, in an effort to continue to build relationships, rapport, and trust, I encouraged all participants to eat lunch together. On both days of professional learning, the participants and I sat around a table to eat our lunches and spent some time chatting with one another.

In addition to establishing trust, I considered any power imbalances that could take shape between the participants and myself. More often than not, there seems to be a power imbalance within these relationships, in favor of the researcher (Glesne, 2011). This notion was particularly important for me to consider as I was also the facilitator of the professional learning sessions. I proactively addressed the possibility of a power imbalance by positioning myself as a learner at all times. Also, although there was a planned structure to each professional learning day, I was very flexible in terms of the time dedicated to each activity, and I provided choice in terms of how the educators would engage in the collaborative planning activity. I also encouraged participants to offer any suggestions they had along the way.

Additionally, in addressing the potential power imbalance between the participants and myself, I attended to reciprocity (Creswell, 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). To that end, Miles

and Huberman (1994) provide the following questions to assist a researcher in addressing reciprocity: 1) What will each party to the study gain from having taken part? 2) What do they have to invest in time, energy, or money? 3) Is the balance equitable? I first considered the benefits of the study to the researcher and participants. As the researcher, I benefitted by having research to write up for a dissertation and doctoral degree completion along with possible future publications. The study did not benefit the participants personally. The benefit to society, particularly the education community, is the information obtained could support education stakeholders in considering how educators can be supported in developing instructional practices that engender a more equitable society.

In addition to the benefits of this research, I considered the investments educators made for the study. Educators invested two days of their summer to participate in the professional learning sessions. Following the professional learning sessions, some educators invested up to sixty minutes of their time to participate in a follow-up interview. One of those educators invested an additional 60 minutes of her time for a follow-up interview and to participate in member checking. I took several actions to help ensure I was being sensitive to the participants' time. Participants had an hour lunch break during each professional learning meeting. Also, each meeting concluded at 3:00pm as advertised on the professional learning flyer. Likewise, I adhered to the 60-minute time allotment for each interview and member checking.

I continued to honor not only the participants' time but their willingness to participate in the study when scheduling and carrying out interviews. Each participant decided the date, time, and location for the follow-up interview. I also remained flexible and accommodated any participant who needed to change the time or location of her interview. Sonya, for example, initially wanted to be interviewed at her home. Once I arrived at her home, she stated she had a house full

of people and she would rather meet at a nearby coffee shop. She asked me to ride with her to the coffee shop and I obliged.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. The main limitation was that the professional learning only lasted two days. Consequently, there was not enough time for educators to explore all the available resources in the room. There was also insufficient time to discuss potential challenges that educators may encounter when teaching for social justice and equity, specifically as educators grappled with connecting teaching for social justice and equity with standards and obtaining stakeholder buy-in. Finally, there was no follow-up to determine if and/or how educators implemented what they learned from the social justice-driven professional learning community.

The first limitation was that the professional learning only lasted two days. Time was a real constraint on Day 2 of the professional learning when some participants needed additional time to look through the multicultural children's books on display along with the suggested booklist in their notebooks in order to make well-informed decisions about which books to order for their classrooms. Further, limited time also interfered with some participants' efforts to articulate a rationale for their book selections. In addition to the limited time to select multicultural children's books, P-12 educators also lacked enough time to select professional books to enhance their learning on teaching for social justice and equity beyond their two-day experience within the PLC. Included within the limited time to select multicultural children's books was an opportunity for the P-12 educators to select professional books to enhance their learning on teaching for social justice and equity beyond their two-day experience within the PLC. There were several professional books on display. Only one educator, Sonya, ordered a professional resource, and the book she ordered was not among the books that were displayed.

Another disadvantage of the brevity of the professional learning was we did not have an opportunity to discuss in-depth how P-12 educators could address potential challenges that a few educators shared. For example, a few educators posed questions about how they could teach for social justice and equity amidst mandated curriculum. Sabrina, for example, expressed frustration with required curriculum at her school, including the lack of time that is dedicated to teaching social studies. Two other educators inquired about how they could teach for social justice and equity and remain faithful to standards-based instruction. I encouraged the educators to look at the state's literacy standards to determine if discussions and reading response activities surrounding multicultural children's literature could be connected to those standards. Additionally, I informed the educators that the lesson plan examples in their notebooks each identified Common Core Standards in the margin of the plan and that those standards were closely aligned to state standards.

An additional issue that educators posed was how to get stakeholder buy-in, specifically from administrators and parents with diverse points of view about what should and should not be discussed in classrooms. We discussed the importance of being prepared to discuss the purpose behind instructional choices and materials; however, that part of our discussion lasted maybe five minutes, it was cut short due to time constraints. Not fully addressing that challenge and other potential obstacles to teaching for social justice and equity that a few educators mentioned could discourage them and inhibit their momentum to teach for social justice and equity. Thus, a third limitation, also connected to the compressed-nature of the professional learning, was P-12 educators only had two days to collaborate, share ideas, learn from others, and offer suggestions and resources. Educators teaching for social just and equity need a more extended amount of time to navigate the space of learning how to do so.

Although, overall, P-12 educators developed an increased understanding of social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity, it is unknown whether or not they actually applied what they learned in their classrooms and to what extent they did so, if at all. There was only one participant, Tameka, who agreed to and was available for a second follow-up interview. This second interview occurred once the school year had begun. She provided her perspective on how the professional learning had influenced her thinking and instructional practices. The missing voices in that interview, of course, were Tameka's kindergarten students. Lastly, because there was no classroom follow-up, it is unknown what type of support, if any, educators needed once they began, if they have begun, applying what they learned.

Summary

This chapter provided a description of the research context, participants, data collection methods, trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and limitations of my case study of a social justice-driven professional learning community. The study was conducted at a university in a large southeastern city in the United States of America with 17 P-12 educators from across school districts and educational entities. Most of the participants taught at high need schools with a predominant composition of students of color and students from low-income families. Data sources used for this study were audio-recordings of professional learning sessions and interviews, written reflections, documents, my researcher's audio-recordings, and my researcher's journal. My data analysis process and specific actions I took to maintain data security and management were also discussed in this chapter. Additionally, this chapter included how I triangulated data by using multiple data sources, peer debriefing, and member checking. Lastly, this chapter detailed how I addressed ethics in conducting my research.

4 OVERVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING STRUCTURE

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the phenomenon of a social justice-driven professional learning community. This chapter provides a chronological description of *Social Justice & Children's Literature*—a two-day professional learning session. The structure of the professional learning was developed by me, the researcher, with the support of my mentor. In the sections below, I provide a description of the professional setting where the session took place. Then I share the general format of how the professional learning was designed. Lastly, I provide a detailed account of activities that took place on Day 1 and Day 2.

Seventeen P-12 educators took part in a two-day professional learning community held at a local university located in a large urban city in the southeastern part of the United States of America. Educators could choose between two learning communities: *Create to Learn* or *Social Justice and Children's Literature*. Both of these professional learning options were offered three different times during the summer of 2018 and were held simultaneously in separate rooms within the same building. My mentor designed *Create to Learn*, professional learning that supported educators in an exploration of makerspaces and problem-based learning opportunities. I designed, with the support of my mentor, *Social Justice and Children's Literature*, professional learning focused on understanding social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Eighteen educators elected to participate in *Create to Learn* and 17 educators chose to participate in *Social Justice and Children's Literature*. Recall that this was the third offering of both professional learning sessions and had the highest and most diverse number of educators who participated. I was thrilled to have a large level of interest and eager to support educators in thinking about their practices.

Meeting Location

The professional learning community I led was held in a conference room on the top floor of a ten-story building. Six large windows rested on a long windowsill that stretched from the front to the back of the room and revealed several corporate businesses and facilities that carve out the architecture of this urban city. Inside the conference room, which is typically used for formal meetings such as faculty affairs, a spacious rectangular-shaped table with enough chairs to seat twenty people took up the majority of the space leaving a narrow walk-way around the perimeter. A buffet-like counter located at the front and another positioned in the back of the conference room served as bookends for the space. In lieu of art, a wooden wall cabinet encasing a small dry-erase board as well as a drop-down screen decorated the room. There were old photos of the university framed on the wall and clock.

The conference room had a very formal and business-like appearance. I felt such an environment could be an ideal space for professional conversations to take place. At the same time, I wanted the space to feel very inviting and engaging. With those ideas in mind, I modified the space accordingly. I placed a colorful *Social Justice & Children's Literature* notebook, which included professional readings, a booklist, and teaching strategies, in front of eighteen of the chairs. I arranged multicultural children's picture books, all in hardback form, from the beginning of the windowsill to the end of it with the front cover of each book facing the entrance into the room. I also placed a variety of multicultural children's books, both picture books and novels, along the back counter. There were multiple copies of some of the books in the room. If there were additional copies of a particular book, one copy was displayed in an upright position sitting on top of the extra copies. Figure 4 provides a photo of the conference room and shows where the children's books were located in the room and how they were positioned. Some of these

books were hardbacks and others were paperbacks. Table 5 provides selected examples of children's books that were present in the room.

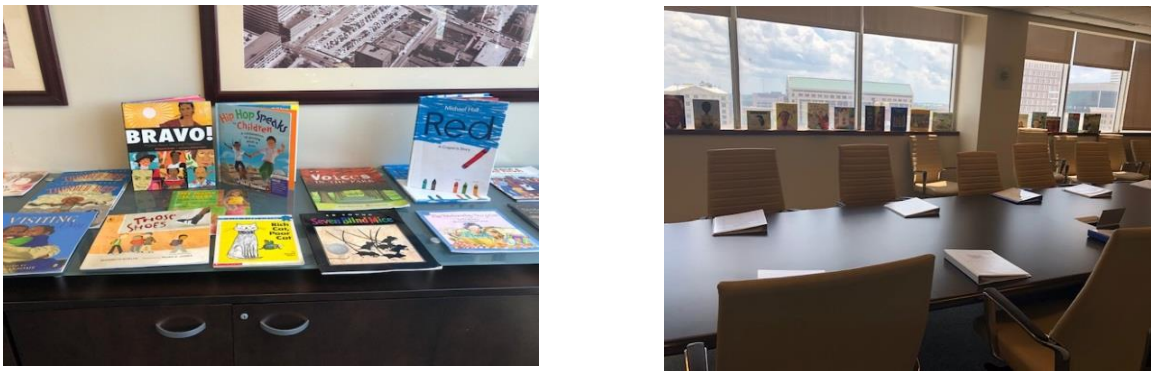


Figure 4. Room set up

Table 5

Children's Literature

Book	Rationale for Selecting Book
Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen	This book illuminates the social justice issues of homelessness and hunger. It also highlights the humanizing aspect of using affirming language to disrupt stereotypes and discrimination that people living in or below poverty often encounter in society.
The Other Side	This story demonstrates the courage of two young children of different races, one Black and one White, who were willing to pursue a friendship despite the segregated and racist social conditions within their community. This story highlights the notion that actions by individuals, even young children, can contribute to dismantling social barriers.
A is for Activist	This book draws awareness to numerous social justice issues and related concepts. This book opens up opportunities to grapple with vocabulary critical to understanding social justice and equity.
Those Shoes	This story draws attention to social class and the impact it can have on children trying to "fit in" with their peers. It also underscores the value in taking action to help someone in need.
One of a Kind, Like Me/Único Como Yo	This book illuminates defying socially-constructed identities associated with gender. It represents self-advocacy and having self-confidence in one's identity even when who you are is different than who the world expects you to be.
Seven Blind Mice	This book focuses on multiple perspectives. It provides a pivotal opportunity to consider how perspective is shaped by one's position. It also reaffirms the significance of individual perspectives contributing to a richer and broader understanding and worldview.

The front counter was not as long as the back counter, and it could not be seen when the screen was down, so I did not display any children's books there. Instead, I used it to showcase

professional books that supported P-12 educators in teaching for social justice and equity. Many of the professional readings found in the educators' *Social Justice & Children's Literature* notebooks came from the professional books on display. I pointed this out to the educators during the professional learning as I welcomed them to peruse through the books at their leisure. Table 5 provides examples of children's literature that was in the room. These particular books were read or discussed at some point during the professional learning.

Overall Format of Professional Learning: Social Justice & Children's Literature

I designed the professional learning with the intent for educators to have the time and space for critical reflection and discussion. Although schools are socio-politically complex spaces, rarely do educators have opportunities to participate is transformative professional learning, meaning professional learning that develops their critical consciousness (Kohli et al., 2015; Servage, 2008). Building one's critical consciousness involves self-reflection and thinking deeply about biases, ideologies, and assumptions. Transformative professional learning that encompasses critical consciousness development is important to the work of the social justice educator.

The professional learning took place over the course of two days. Both days of professional learning had the same general structure, which included Getting to Know You/Community Building activities, discussions about social justice and equity, a networking lunch, and a closing activity (see Appendix D). Many of the discussions on both days of the professional learning took place within small groups. The small group discussions were structured using protocols from School Reform Initiative (n.d.). As described in Chapter 2, protocols are particularly useful in keeping conversations focused on the topic at hand, helping to ensure speaking turns are equitable, and supporting everyone in feeling a sense of belonging and contribution to the group (Curlette & Granville, 2014; Venables, 2015). According to the School Reform Initiative,

"Thoughtful use of these protocols is an integral part of building resilient professional learning communities" (School Reform Initiative, n.d.). Thus, in an effort to help ensure that I facilitated the protocols thoughtfully, I made minor adaptations, when necessary, to meet the needs of each group. For example, sometimes a group needed a little more time to wrap up their discussion. In other instances, a participant within a group did not need the entire time allotted within the protocol for her or his speaking turn. I told the groups that was fine and what was most important was that each participant had an opportunity to share.

Whole group discussions ensued mainly when one representative from each group provided a recap to the large group of key points discussed within the small groups. There was also a whole group discussion on Day 2 when I modeled using *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* (DiSalvo, 1991) as a read aloud to springboard a discussion about social justice and equity. This story was about an inquisitive young boy who volunteered to serve at a soup kitchen alongside his uncle. I selected this text because the author intentionally demonstrated the significance of using humanizing language in interactions with people who may be homeless or hungry. Also, there was an implied message in the story that becoming a social change agent may require a person to step beyond his or her comfort zone. I believed this book presented a valuable example of a multicultural book and what Lewison et al. (2008) deemed a social issues book as it showed how certain groups of people can be positioned as other and how one can make a difference in not only challenging stereotypes but supporting oppressed people in a particular area of need. After reading *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* (DiSalvo, 1991), as a whole group, the educators and I discussed teaching strategies and resources.

The final whole group component of the professional learning took place during the closing activity of each day. Everyone stood around the table as we prepared to speak about the day

and its influence on us as individuals. Each person reflected on her/his learning, sharing pivotal insights, lingering thoughts and questions, and other considerable feedback related to her/his experiences throughout the day.

The specific subtopics and activities for each day were on slides and projected on the large screen in front of the room. As we began each activity, I continued using the large screen to project a slide that described that activity. The sections that follow provide a description of what each professional learning day entailed.

Day 1: Community Building and Teaching for Social Justice & Equity

As the educators entered the room, I welcomed them and asked them to sign in. I invited them to sit wherever they wanted to and then create a nametag to assist the other educators and I with learning their name. As we waited for more educators to arrive, I heard a few of the educators in the room chatting with each other by telling what school or school district they were from. I noticed other educators browsing some of the multicultural children's literature on display. We got started at about 9:20am, once all of the educators, except one, had arrived. The last educator arrived at about 9:40am.

I then welcomed the group once again and thanked them for their interest in the *Social Justice and Children's Literature* professional learning. I provided background knowledge on my teaching experiences. I discussed the purpose and the structure of the professional learning. Then I explained throughout the professional learning, I would be modeling activities they could do with their students. I emphasized the activities could be modified for any P-12 age group.

After discussing the purpose and format of the professional learning, I explained my research interest. All educators were invited to participate in the research and were given an informed consent document to read. All of them expressed interest in participating in the study and signed the informed consent document.

After turning on the audio-recorder, the educators introduced themselves to the group by stating their name, school, and the grade level they taught. Then I explained to the educators we would do a community building activity that would allow us to get to know each other better. This activity was adapted from the *Ice Breakers and Warm-ups* protocol, activity 10 (see Appendix E). I asked the educators to select two different color Starburst candies. Then I displayed a slide on the screen that showed an orange, red, pink, and yellow Starburst with a different prompt beside each flavor. I explained to the educators they would use their Starburst and the prompts on the board to share two things about themselves. For example, if they chose orange they told the group about what they were looking forward to doing over the summer. For red, they named their favorite book they had used with their students. If they selected a pink Starburst, they shared their favorite hobby. Lastly, if they chose a yellow Starburst, they described one of their happiest moments as a teacher. After explaining the activity, I informed the educators they would do this activity in small groups. I also mentioned these would be the same small groups that they would have their small group discussions with over the next couple of days.

After explaining the Getting to Know You Activity, the 17 educators divided themselves into three small groups by counting off by threes. All of the "ones" became Group 1, the "twos" became Group 2, and the "threes" became Group 3. I asked the educators to count off by threes to help ensure the groups were random and also so that there were only three groups. It was important that these groups were small in order for everyone to have adequate speaking opportunities. The three small groups were static across both professional learning days. I referred to each small group as Group 1, Group 2, or Group 3. Tables 5-7 provide demographics of the participants in each of the three groups.

Group 1 consisted of six educators: one preschool teacher, three elementary school teachers, one middle school teacher, and a museum educator who taught students in grades five through eight. Their years of teaching experience ranged from half a year to thirteen years. All of the teachers were females, three of whom were African-American and the other three were White.

Group 2, the smallest of the three groups, consisted of five educators: two elementary school teachers, one middle school teacher, one high school teacher and one high school media specialist. Their teaching experience ranged from 0 to seven years. There were four African-American teachers and one White teacher in this group. There was one male and four females in this group.

Group 3 included six educators: four elementary school teachers, one middle school paraprofessional, and one middle school teacher resident. Their years of teaching experience ranged from 0 to 6 years. All of the educators in this group were females. Three of the educators were African-American and three of them were White.

Being that there was limited space in the conference room and one oversized table in the center of the room, I organized the three small groups' seating arrangements so they could engage in audio-recorded dialogue with minimal interference from the other groups. Group 1 consisted of six educators who clustered together at one end of the table. Group 2, the smallest group, consisted of five educators, and they sat at the middle of the table leaving a couple of chairs of space, one on each side of the table, between themselves and Group 1. Finally, Group 3 was composed of six educators, who moved their chairs and collaborated in a corner of the room near the back counter by a window, for small group discussions.

Table 6

Participant Demographics Group

Teacher	P-12 Segment	Position	Grade	Subject	Years of Experience	Gender	Race
Sonya	Elementary	Teacher	5th	All	13	Female	African-American
Mona	Middle	Teacher	8th	Humanities	12	Female	White
Kristie	Middle	Teacher	5th-8th	WWII & Holocaust	.5	Female	White
Sabrina	Elementary	Teacher	4th	All	1	Female	African-American
Tameka	Elementary	Teacher	K	All	4	Female	African-American
Jocelyn	Pre-school	Teacher	Pre-school	All	.5	Female	White

Note. ND denotes not disclosed

Table 7

Participant Demographics Group 2

Teacher	P-12 Segment	Position	Grade	Subject	Years of Experience	Gender	Race
Tiffany	Elementary	Teacher	3rd	All	0	Female	African-American
Mark	High	Teacher	9th-12th	Law & Criminal Justice	4	Male	African-American
Patricia	High	Media Specialist	9th-12th	All	7	Female	White
Deborah	Elementary	Teacher	4th	All	ND	Female	African-American
Shanelle	Middle	Teacher	6th	ELA	2	Female	African-American

Note. ND denotes not disclosed

Table 8

Participant Demographics Group 3

Teacher	P-12 Segment	Position	Grade	Subject	Years of Experience	Gender	Race
Heather	Elementary	Teacher	1st	All	ND	Female	White
Antoinette	Elementary	Teacher	2nd	All	3	Female	African-American
Tara	Elementary	Teacher	5th	Social Studies	0	Non-binary	White
Zoya	Middle	Paraprofes-sional	7th	ND	ND	Female	African-American
Lisa	Middle	Teacher Resident	6th	ELA	0	Female	African-American
Melissa	Elementary	Teacher	kindergar-ten	All	6	Female	White

Note. ND denotes not disclosed

Once the small groups were formed, each group engaged in the Getting to Know You Activity with Starburst that I had explained prior to forming the small groups. Educators who chose red shared their favorite book to use with their students. Some of them suggested literature that addressed social justice issues. Sonya, for example, stated "One of my favorite books to use in my classroom is Why War is Never a Good Idea, by Alice Walker, because in fifth grade we study all wars" (Sonya, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018). Sonya did not elaborate on how she used this book with her students. On the other hand, Patricia provided a more detailed account of how she used one of her favorite books with her students. She said,

> "And one of my favorite books to use in the classroom is *The Lorax* (Seuss, 1971). I noticed there's a copy here. After we finished reading it, I asked my media center aides [students] to write a paper telling what they would speak for if they could. What issue? And they presented some of the most beautiful papers. (Patricia, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018)

The smile on her face coupled with the expression in her voice demonstrated how proud Patricia was about how her students responded to the text. Both Sonya and Patricia's book titles informed me that they had used at least one book in their classroom that addressed a social justice issue.

Once everyone in each group had shared, I used my Starbursts to share additional information about myself with the large group. To further emphasize community and to illuminate the value in respecting and learning from divergent perspectives, I asked a volunteer to read the following quote from *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future* (Wheatley, 2002):

> We just have to find a few others who care about the same thing. Together we will figure out what our first step is, then the next, then the next. Gradually we become large and powerful. We don't have to start with power only with passion. (p 29)

After reading the above quote, we continued with two more volunteers reading additional quotes from Wheatley (2002): "Real change begins with the simple act of people talking about what they care about" (p. 26). "When we listen with less judgment, we always develop better relationship with each other. It's not differences that divide us. It's our judgments about each other that do. Curiosity and good listening bring us back together" (p. 40).

Wheatley's (2002) quotes helped create a pathway for the P-12 educators to think about the significance of working within a community to express their thinking, to challenge their thinking, to learn from others, and to grow professionally. To further emphasize community and establish a culture of trust and mutual respect, it was important for the groups to determine what their community norms would be (Owen, 2016; Stoll et al., 2006). Thus, after reading all three quotes, each small group discussed and created a list of community agreements they thought would be useful in their group's success with collaborative learning. Figure 5 provides images of

the community agreements generated by Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3. Creating community agreements within a professional learning community is significant in establishing a culture of respect within the group and supporting professional and productive collaborative learning. This urgency to establish norms or community agreements is compounded when having conversations around contentious social justice issues (Picower, 2011). The groups used the process outlined in the *Forming Ground Rules (Creating Norms)* protocol (see Appendix F). Each group wrote three to five community agreements on a large sheet of chart paper and then posted it on the wall in close proximity to where their group was located. I read the agreements aloud and provided positive feedback on the agreements each group created. I encouraged the educators to adhere to the community agreements and refer to them as needed throughout the professional learning.

After each group created their community agreements, I explained to the educators that sometimes we all may struggle with following a particular community agreement. I asked them to consider a particular community agreement that they may struggle with and then think about what they could do when they find themselves struggling. I did not require the educators to share this part of the activity aloud; however, I shared an example aloud to support the educators in thinking critically about something that they could do better at when working within a group. I explained that when I first became a teacher and I would get too excited about sharing my ideas and, as a result, I did not actively listen to others' ideas. I went on to explain that as I had become a more active listener over the years. After I provided this example, within their small groups, educators began discussing an agreement that they may struggle with. Jocelyn, who had been working as a preschool teacher for the past six months, voluntarily shared her struggle aloud with her small group. She said, "The one that I may struggle with within ours is sharing the air both

ways because sometimes I feel like, especially in the position I'm in now, I'm relatively new and I don't speak up or speak out yet" (Jocelyn, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018).

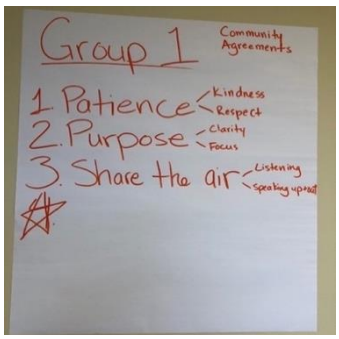
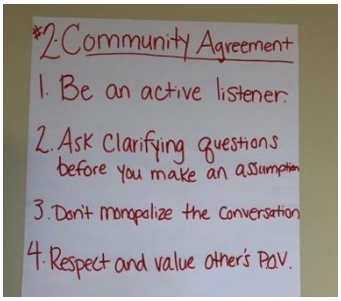
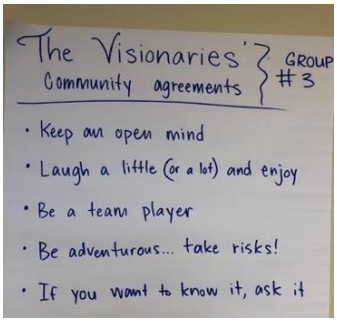
	Group 1 Community Agreements 1. Patience a. Kindness b. Respect 2. Purpose a. Clarity b. Focus 3. Share the air a. Listening b. Speaking up + out
	Group 2 Community Agreements 1. Be an active listener 2. Ask clarifying questions before you make an assumption 3. Don't monopolize the conversation 4. Respect and value other's POV
	Group 3 the Visionaries community agreements 1. Keep an open mind 2. Laugh a little (or a lot) and enjoy 3. Be a team player 4. Be adventurous...take risks! 5. If you want to know it, ask

Figure 5. Community agreements

Jocelyn's comment indicated her self-awareness that she probably does not voice her perspective as often as she should in her current role. It also suggested that she needed to feel comfortable in her environment in order to discuss her thoughts.

After the groups self-reflected on their community agreements, I modeled and explained the next activity, the Identity Mapping Activity (see Appendices G-I). Providing time for educators to unpack their sociocultural identities was critical to supporting them in examining and confronting privilege, marginalization, and oppression (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; Taylor, 2013). Within this activity, I identified several aspects of my social identity, including my race, gender, class, religion, first language, ability, and sexual orientation. Then I circled areas in which I had been privileged and underlined areas where I had experienced oppression. From there, I shared an example of how I had experienced privilege being a part of the middle-class. I mentioned my income-level allows me to have a healthier diet than I had prior to attaining a middle-class socioeconomic status. Further, I explained I can comfortably afford to buy food for a vegetarian or vegan diet. I also shared, with the P-12 educators, an example of experiencing oppression. I discussed a time when I patronized a local sandwich shop and was told there was no restroom when I asked for the nearest ladies' room. Then an older White male, who did not purchase anything, entered the same sandwich shop and asked for a restroom. The manager gave him a key to the restroom and told him it was around back.

After sharing my examples of privilege and marginalization, I asked the educators to examine their own sociocultural identities by creating an identity map and then answering the reflection questions on the back of the page. The reflection questions prompted the P-12 educators to describe aspects of their identities most fundamental to who they are; explain how they have experienced privilege in relation to a particular dimension of their identity; tell how they've experienced marginalization or oppression due to an aspect of their identity; and reflect on how their identity and treatment in society influences what they deem to be important in their teaching. After the educators completed their identity maps, they had small group conversations where

they shared their personal stories of privilege and marginalization. They used the Connections Protocol to structure their conversations (see Appendix J). This protocol, which structures time and turn-taking, is particularly useful in opening up a space for people to speak when they feel comfortable and ready. It also provides equity as everyone is only allowed to speak once until everyone in the group who wants to share has had the opportunity to do so.

When it was time for the P-12 educators to discuss their sociocultural identities within their small groups, all of the educators acknowledged multiple privileges that they have. Tara, for instance, stated, "I'm White, which is a privilege in itself. I'm a student still, so that's a privilege getting to learn. I'm also pansexual and nonbinary so those are privileges in my opinion" (Tara, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018). Tara's last three words, "in my opinion" suggested her awareness that some may associate being pansexual and/or nonbinary with marginalization. To that end, Tara went on to acknowledge two of her privileges as also being disadvantages. She mentioned that being nonbinary can be a disadvantage. Further, she discussed that being a student could be a disadvantage as well because she was a part of a lower socioeconomic class. Tara's comments suggested her awareness of how she viewed herself and how people in the world may have viewed her. Like Tara, other P-12 educators across small groups, continued to deeply reflect on their sociocultural identities through the Identity Mapping Activity.

Once educators completed the Identity Mapping Activity (Figure 6), I welcomed them to enjoy a snack from the basket of snacks that I placed at the center of the table. It included nutritional snacks and candy. Many educators ate snacks as we prepared to proceed to the next activity, which was Written Reflection 1. Previous studies have indicated that reflection is an integral component of an effective professional learning community (Danielson, 2016; Nicholson et al., 2016). Therefore, educators reflected on their knowledge and understanding throughout the

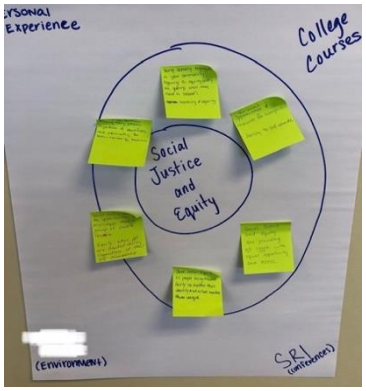
	• Access • Fairness • Necessary to survival • Opportunity • Commonality • Inclusion/inclusive • Not equal • Leveled playing field • Sometimes tolerance is achieved by being intolerant of what is wrong
	• Making sure everyone gets a seat at the table, taking action to make sure this happens • Recognition of an individual's background, gender, culture, etc. • Society treating one another equally without bias or preconceived notions • Treating all people the same, using the same rules and judgments regardless of differences • Being responsible for all people, making the village stronger • Equity means everyone gets the tools and resources needed to be successful in the journey of life, but the work needs to be meaningful on all sides—students, teachers, and society.
	• Being actively engaged in your community, fighting for equity (everyone getting what they need to succeed). Morality does not equal legality. • The same opportunities and resources for everyone; ability to self-advocate • Social justice and equity are providing all people with equal opportunity and access. • Valuing fair treatment for every person regardless of identifiers and advocating for • this—removing barriers • Social justice—opportunities and privileges that a group of people receive; Equity—When people are treated fairly regardless of their group membership • Social justice and equity—all people being treated fairly no matter their identity and what makes them unique

Figure 6. Social justice & equity circle maps

professional learning experience through both oral and written reflection. On Written Reflection 1, they reflected on the constructs of social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and their experiences using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity (see Appendices K-N). My original plan when designing the professional learning was to ask educators to complete Written Reflection 1 prior to creating their identity maps in an effort to pre-assess their knowledge and understanding. I jumped ahead of myself; however, and I facilitated the Identity Mapping activity before Written Reflection 1. I remembered that the teachers needed to complete their initial reflection only after I had collected their identity maps. Nevertheless, I distributed Written Reflection 1 and asked teachers to complete it independently and not refer to any resources. I told them I was interested in understanding their initial thoughts about social justice and equity. I continued by explaining at the end of Day 2, they would complete Written Reflection 2 to help them and I determine how their thinking has been influenced through their participation in the professional learning community. It was evident in some of the educators' responses that completing the Identity Mapping Activity first had some influence on their responses on Written Reflection 1.

Once teachers completed Written Reflection 1, we moved into the next activity, which focused on social justice and equity. My initial plan was to have educators engage in this activity by using the *Chalk Talk* Protocol (see Appendix O), which prompts educators to display their ideas, written or visual images, on a large visual. Then they connect similar ideas. While the educators did jot down their ideas on large paper to share with others, this was not a silent activity. The educators had discussions about social justice and equity. Working within their small groups, they discussed what social justice and equity means to them and how they know this information.

Each group then drew a circle map on a large sheet of chart paper and jotted down their thoughts about what social justice and equity mean. Then they displayed their chart paper on the wall alongside their community agreements. One person from each group volunteered to share with the large group what her/his group discussed. Antoinette shared on behalf of her group. She stated, "So going inward, what social justice and equity mean, being actively engaged in your community, fighting for equity, everyone getting what they need to succeed. Morality does not equal legality" (Antoinette, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2019). Sharing continued as the other two small groups provided their collective thoughts about what social justice and equity meant to them.

Next, each group discussed specific social justice issues that affected local, national, and/or global communities. Then they listed various social justice issues on a different sheet of chart paper and displayed it near their social justice and equity circle map, Figure 7. All three groups expressed immigration and the justice system and/or police brutality as social justice issues.

Once the groups completed their list of social justice issues, I provided a recap of the discussions that I heard as I circulated the room. From there, it was time for our networking lunch-hour. Being familiar with the area, I mentioned a few local eateries, all within walking distance of the university. A few other educators, who had also frequented the area before, named other restaurant options. I encouraged all of the educators to bring their lunches back to the conference room so we could all eat together and continue getting acquainted with one another. All of the educators obliged and brought their lunches back to our collaborative work space.

After lunch, we continued our discussion on social justice and equity. We began by distinguishing between equity and equality. Then I asked for someone from each group who had

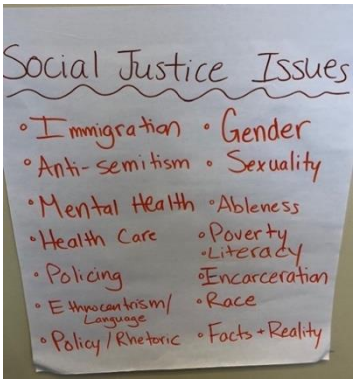
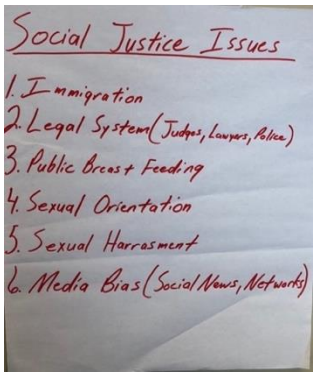
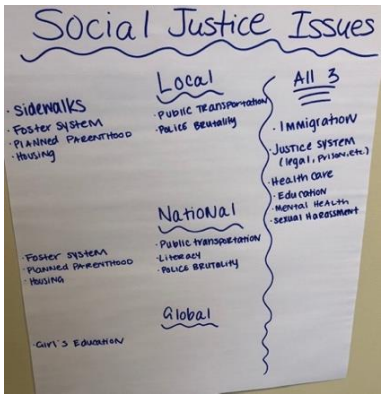
	Social Justice Issues • Immigration • Anti-Semitism • Mental health • Health care • Policing • Ethnocentrism/Language • Policy/Rhetoric • Gender • Sexuality • Ableness • Poverty • Literacy • Incarceration • Facts + Reality
	Social Justice Issues • Immigration • Legal System (Judges, Lawyers, Police) • Public breast feeding • Sexual orientation • Media Bias (Social news, networks)
	Social Justice Issues Local • Sidewalks, Foster system, Planned Parenthood, Housing, Public transportation, and Police brutality National • Foster system, Planned Parenthood, Housing, Public transportation, and Police brutality Global • Girls education All 3 • Immigration, Justice system (legal, prison, etc.), Health care, Education, Mental health, Sexual harassment

Figure 7. Social justice issues

not presented on behalf of her/his small group, to share the social justice issues her/his group generated. This led to a large group discussion about specific social justice issues and how they directly impact students as well as teachers.

Using the social justice issues generated by small groups as a reference point, a whole group discussion ensued about teachers discussing many of these contentious issues with their students. Sonya commented,

> I was just thinking how we know that a lot of these are difficult topics, and often times as teachers we either go too far or we shy away from them and the problem becomes, the lens really through which to talk about them. (Sonya, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018)

Then Melissa responded to Sonya and stated,

> For me as a kindergarten educator, it is a little overwhelming for this many issues to come to light in the kindergarten classroom. So, I think the lens we've taken with our students is teaching them what it means to be an activist and what it means to be an advocate and teaching the vocabulary words so that they can go out into the world and change some of these issues themselves because we can't tackle it all. (Melissa, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018)

Both Sonya and Melissa's comments implied that a vehicle, such as multicultural children's literature, could be useful for discussing contentious issues and teaching for social justice and equity. As the discussion ensued, educators shying away from discussing controversial issues with their students due to personal biases or out of fear of backlash from other stakeholders were topics that emerged. Then, we paused this discussion soon after four university faculty members, who each had a role in making the professional learning possible, entered the room. I asked the faculty

members to introduce themselves. Each faculty member introduced herself, explained her role, thanked the educators for their participation in the professional learning, and encouraged the educators' involvement in learning about social justice and equity and teaching for social justice and equity.

After the guests spoke, they left the room. Then, to fully transition our discussion from examining the constructs of social justice and equity to teaching for social justice and equity, I introduced the next activity. I asked the educators to focus their attention on their *Social Justice & Children's Literature* notebooks I provided for each of them. Previous studies have indicated that educators needed concrete examples of teaching for social justice and equity (Burke & Collier, 2017; Dover, 2013; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016); thus, I deliberately selected professional literature accordingly and included it in the notebooks.

I explained to them I created the notebooks as a resource to build their knowledge about teaching for social justice and equity and using multicultural children literature to teach for social justice and equity. I mentioned their notebooks could be used as a reference during the professional learning. In addition, in thinking beyond the two-day professional learning, I invited the educators to add additional professional literature to their notebooks.

I walked the P-12 educators through the organization of the notebook, which contained a different color tab to separate each section. I explained the content included within each section of the notebook and encouraged the educators to write a personally-helpful label on each tab. The first section included a compilation of professional literature on teaching for social justice and equity. The second section included an excerpt on critical books and an article on selecting and using multicultural literature. The third section included a book list of social justice books for students in grades P-12. Finally, the last section, provided teaching strategies, in a lesson-plan

format, for P-12 educators teaching for social justice. All of the teaching strategies were retrieved from Teaching Tolerance (n.d.).

After discussing the content of the *Social Justice & Children's Literature* notebook, I explained to the educators for the next activity they would focus their attention on the content behind the first tab, which featured professional literature on teaching for social justice and equity. I provided a brief summary of the first article, Rethinking 'The Three Little Pigs' (Wolpert, 2008). This article explained how a preschool teacher problematized how a brick home, which was more common in Eurocentric cultures, was privileged in the story while readers were led to view the straw and stick homes as inferior. The teacher encouraged other educators to support students in discovering why homes in a certain geographical location or climate were made of a particular material. The author also promoted looking for hidden messages in texts. Following providing a brief summary of this article, I proceeded with a quick summary of the rest of the articles. This was in an effort to support educators in thinking about which article(s) they were interested in reading.

Then, using the *Coffee Talk (Equity Focus)* protocol (see Appendix P), I explained the Teaching for Social Justice and Equity Coffee Talk activity. The groups were given approximately 25 minutes to read one or two articles in their entirety or skim through several articles overall. I provided a few extra minutes beyond the 25 as there were a few educators still writing. As they read, they used a template I created, Teaching for Social Justice and Equity Coffee Talk sheet, to take notes (Appendices Q-R). On the left-hand side of their sheets, they jotted down key ideas or insights they learned about teaching for social justice and equity. Afterwards, within their small groups, each person described what she/he learned. Meanwhile, other group members listened and took notes on the right-hand side of their Teaching for Social Justice and Equity

Coffee Talk sheet. Mark seemed to really appreciate the Power of Poetry (Pettway, 2018), and that was the article that he chose to discuss with his group. He said,

> After the 2016 election, some of the students felt uncertain about the country, about where the country was going. And she [the teacher in the article] used poetry to bring out some of the feelings and emotions the kids were feeling. (Mark, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2018)

Mark's comments suggested that he considered how students could use poetry as a form of literature to express their thoughts about social justice issues.

Once each group finished their discussion, I asked for a person who had not shared on behalf of her/his small group to share some key points with the large group. Before sharing what her group discussed, Tameka expressed, "We obviously looked at different articles critically so we spent a lot of time going over those articles" (Tameka, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2019). Her group had many key points that they discussed, so it took them a little longer to decide what they would share with the whole group. One of the articles that Tameka's group discussed was Teaching Social Justice in Theory and Practice (Blake, 2015). Tameka shared what her group discussed in relation to the article. She stated, "One thing we all liked was one of the articles about how to teach social justice in a classroom. It really focused on teaching students to be academic siblings instead of competitors" (Tameka, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2019). After each person shared, I elaborated further on teaching for social justice and equity by explaining four tenets of teaching for social justice (Sleeter, 2013). I also presented four tenets of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2008). I presented both models in an effort to support P-12 educators in their practical application of teaching for social justice and equity.

After discussing teaching for social justice and equity, the next two activities planned for Day 1 were a read aloud and discussion and a discussion of multicultural children' literature. However, we only had about 20 minutes remaining once we discussed teaching for social justice and equity. There was not enough time for us to get into either of the next couple of planned activities. Therefore, I decided it was best to move into the Closing Circle, a whole group activity, where the educators had an opportunity to reflect on their day. The *Talking Stick* protocol (see Appendix T) was used to guide this activity; thus, the person who was speaking held a plastic stick and then passed it to the next speaker until everyone had the opportunity to share.

The educators stood around the table as they shared key insights, lingering thoughts, and questions based on their experiences in Day 1 of the professional learning. Some educators discussed on how they learned new teaching strategies while others discussed how the day's activities assisted them in reflecting on their current teaching practices. Lisa, a teacher resident, stated, "For someone who's going to be in the classroom for the first time this year, I've taken so many notes. And all of you have so many good ideas. Thank you" (Lisa, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2019). Sabrina expressed that she had reflected on equity within her teaching practices. She stated,

> I've reflected a little bit on the practice I've used in my classroom, as far as the things that I feel like I've done well as far as equity and the things I can improve on as far as equity. (Sabrina, professional learning transcript, June 28, 2019)

Educators were given the option to pass if they were not ready to share. After all educators shared, I thanked them for their thoughts and contributions. I told them I was looking forward to continuing to get to know the next day.

Day 2: Using Multicultural Children's Literature to Teach for Social Justice & Equity

The second day of the professional learning began very similar to the first day. The educators signed in as they entered the room and made a nametag. All educators had arrived by 9:10. I welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the structure of the day. Then, in preparation for our Community Building activity, I asked the educators to locate a penny. I thanked them for honoring the community agreements yesterday and I asked them to continue to adhere to them during Day 2. From there, I explained the Getting to Know You Penny Activity, which is from the *Icebreakers and Warm Ups* protocol, Activity 9 (see Appendix A). The educators then worked within their small groups to share a significant event that occurred in their lives during the year on their penny. Patricia shared that in 1999 she started a job as a paraprofessional before later becoming a media specialist. Like Patricia, many of the P-12 educators had a year on their pennies in which they could easily recall a significant life event. However, if they could not recall an event for the year on their penny, they were encouraged to think of a different year and share a memorable event from that year. That was the case for Shanelle because the penny she selected indicated a year in which she was only one year old. As a result, Shanelle selected the year 2017 and shared a memory important to her that took place in that year. In reflecting on the year 2017, she said, "I started teaching sixth-grade ELA. And one of my students came to me and gave me a big hug and said 'thank you for teaching me'" (Shanelle, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). This memory suggested that Shanelle held in high regard having her teaching affirmed by her students.

Once each group had wrapped up their conversations, I used the year on my penny to share a significant event that took place in my life. I mentioned when implementing this activity with children, especially elementary students, it might be a good idea for the educator to share

her or his significant event first to model the activity. Mark discussed how he did a similar activity with his high school students. As he reflected aloud, he mentioned the importance of explicitly explaining instructions and expectations so that students will not make inappropriate comments. I reiterated Mark's point by encouraging the educators to set guidelines for the activity.

One educator from each group was elected by her/his small group to share her/his significant event with the large group. Melissa volunteered to share on behalf of her group. She announced, "Well, it's exciting! In 2017 I got engaged. Yeah, I got engaged in Lebanon in the middle of a river on a rock in the water. So, it was very eventful for me!" (Melissa, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). Like Melissa, Sabrina also had the year 2017 on her penny and volunteered to share with the whole group. She decided to share two memorable events from that year. Sabrina stated,

> 2017 was the first time that I returned to a country that I visited. I went back to Columbia, South America, and I got to go to a city that I had never been to before. I was visiting the little girl that I sponsor, so that was a really special time to get to see her. It [2017] was also the beginning of my teaching career, the fall of my first year of teaching, which was really hard. I had a super sweet set of kids that made it worth it and helped me push through. (Sabrina, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

The Getting to Know You Penny Activity provided an opportunity for the P-12 educators to connect as they shared personal stories and listened intently as others in the professional learning community shared their significant life events. Then, educators discussed how they might use or modify this activity with their students. Among the ideas educators suggested was for students to work in small groups and use the year on a penny to research significant historical events, social-justice related, that took place during that year.

After the Getting to Know You Penny Activity, it was time to get into one of the two planned activities we did not have time to venture into on Day 1, which was me modeling using a multicultural children's book as a springboard to teaching for social justice and equity. This activity was conducted with the whole group with all 17 P-12 educators. I began by explaining the multicultural children's picture book I was getting ready to use, *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* (DiSalvo, 1991), as well as all the other picture books in the room, could be used across grade levels. I added that the content of the lesson and teaching strategies may be modified for a variety of age groups. I also mentioned, in addition to the children's books, poems and other short texts could be used to teach for social justice and equity.

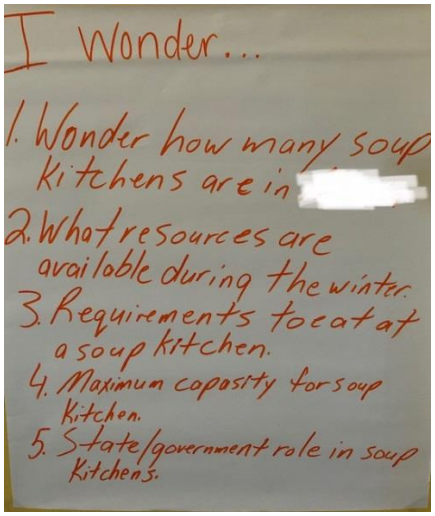
As I began the read aloud and discussion of *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* (DiSalvo, 1991), I explained to the educators I would be acting as teacher, and I asked them to be in a P-12 student role. I then proceeded with asking them if they knew what a soup kitchen was, and one person shared her knowledge of the soup kitchen with the group (see Appendix S). Then I asked them to show me a thumbs up if they had ever been inside a soup kitchen, a thumb down if they had not, or a thumb to the side if they were unsure. A couple of people with their thumbs up recounted what their experiences were like in a soup kitchen. Mona, for instance, reflected on the mixed emotions one could have in preparing meals and then actually meeting the people who need the meals. She explained,

> This was just for a local church. We weren't really making soup. We were putting together bagged meals for homeless people. It was just community fun. Everybody was laughing. When it came time to give it [the food] out, it got a little more serious. (Mona, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

After Mona shared her experience, I pointed out to the group that I intentionally generalized my question by asking if they had been to a soup kitchen rather than asking if they had eaten at a soup kitchen or if they had volunteered at a soup kitchen. I told them I was modeling being sensitive and open to the various experiences students bring to the classroom. I continued by saying it is important to provide students opportunities to share their experiences with the social justice issue, whatever those experiences may be, and then build the discussion from there. I also mentioned that when discussing the issue of homelessness, or any other social justice issue students and their families may be directly impacted by, it is very important to know your students, know how you will approach the topic, and create a comfortable environment for the discussions to take place.

Due to group size and seating arrangements at the elongated table in the center of the room, I decided it would be better for the group to listen to the story being read aloud on YouTube rather than me reading the story to them. I told them I would stop the reading periodically to pose questions, which I prepared ahead of time using recommended strategies from tolerance.org. Before I started the video, I asked one more question to model checking for background knowledge: Does anyone know how soup kitchens began? Then I started the video, stopping it several times to pose additional questions during and after the reading (see Appendix S). For example, I paused the video and asked the educators to tell me what kind of person they thought Uncle Willie, one of the main characters, was based on what they had read thus far.

The focus question after the reading was, what do you wonder about homelessness? I told the educators we would create an "I Wonder Chart" that included questions they had about homelessness (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). Mark volunteered to write the educators' responses on chart paper. Figure 8 shows some of the questions and thoughts the educators shared.



I wonder...

1. Wonder how many soup kitchens are in
2. What resources are available during the winter
3. Requirements to eat at a soup kitchen
4. Maximum capacity for soup kitchen
5. State/government role in soup kitchen

Figure 8. I wonder chart

P-12 educators continued generating questions and thoughts, even after the chart was full. For example, Patricia pondered, "There are so many unused buildings. I wonder if there isn't some way that they can be used for housing for people who need them" (Patricia, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). Patricia's comment was expounded upon by Tara who questioned whether or not people who need resources have access to them. She said, "One that's really important to talk about, and this can spur across multiple topics as well, is access to all of this. There's a lot of resources but not always access to it" (Tara, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). Comments made by Tara and Patricia, along with other questions raised by others within the professional learning community, indicated that they were connecting ideas and thinking deeply about the topic of homelessness.

Considering all of the questions and thoughts posed, I explained that any one of the questions or all of them could be used for student research questions. I mentioned they could have their students work in small groups or independently to select and research a question of interest to deeply examine the social justice issue. Whole-class research was another option I mentioned,

which I suggested could be more useful for students in primary grades in particular. It was important to explicitly state how this activity could be modified as I had told the educators, prior to beginning *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* (DiSalvo, 1991); the book could be used with all age groups and the teaching strategies could be modified to meet the needs of their students. In supporting any group of students with researching a social justice issue, I suggested the importance of locating and utilizing multiple resources. To that end, I encouraged the educators to consider inviting a guest speaker into their classrooms as one resource for students as they are researching and critically examining a social justice issue (Iwai, 2015). Moreover, as a teaching strategy, I recommended educators have their students prepare questions for the guest speaker ahead of the speaker's classroom visit.

I explained students engaging in research about a social justice topic can support them in developing an informed perspective, and not just an opinion, on a social justice issue. I continued by emphasizing it is not enough to merely do research; educators need to consider how students will express their social agency regarding the social justice issue. Then we had a large group discussion of specific forms of social agency in which students could engage in. Shanelle stated,

> I would have my students perhaps map a writing campaign to senators or representatives. Maybe even [write] editorials to put in the local paper. Start a YouTube channel and set those views as editorials as well. Maybe some kind of news set up situation where they talk about what they researched and learned and what they think can be done to make it a little better (Shanelle, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

Following-up on the strategies that Shanelle suggested for supporting students as social change agents, I showed the P-12 educators a website that provides editorials written by children on a range of social justice issues. We discussed how these editorials represented another form of

children's literature that could be used along with the multicultural children's books to discuss issues of social justice. I explained this website could also be a media platform for their students to submit editorials, serving as a form of social agency.

We paused our discussion as my mentor entered the room and requested a few minutes to speak with the educators. She told them she was leading the *Create to Learn* professional learning some of their friends and colleagues were participating in. She explained her role at the university as a professor and researcher. She mentioned she and I had collaborated for over ten years. She then thanked the teachers for giving up two days of their summer to participate in the professional learning. Prior to concluding her visit, she left university souvenirs for me to offer the educators at the end of the day.

After my mentor finished speaking to the educators, we continued our conversation about forms of social action. Educators offered ideas such as starting a food pantry and growing a community garden. I suggested another form of social agency can be using music and/or poetry as form of social agency and sharing a message with others about the social justice issue. As an example, I showed them a video where a group of high school students performed a poem about social injustice, using science as a metaphor to capture the minds and hearts of their audience (TED, 2013). After the video, I asked educators if they wanted to share their initial reactions to the video. Deborah said, "A powerful way for them to express their passion and what they want to get out. What they want to say, and who their audience is. Not just their peers. And they want other people to listen" (Deborah, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). Following Deborah's points, I reminded the P-12 educators that although there were high school students featured on the video, using poetry as a form of social agency can be done across grade levels

and age groups. Further, I discussed how students could share their poetry with the school community and others.

Once we wrapped up our discussion on examples of social agency, we engaged in one final activity before it was time to take our networking lunch break. The educators were given five minutes to work within their small groups to discuss what they deemed important when using multicultural children's literature with their students. One person from each group made a bulleted list of key ideas on chart paper, Figure 9. I provided a couple extra minutes when I saw Group 3 was still writing.

Afterwards, I asked the educators to go to the section in their notebooks that discussed multicultural children's literature. I explained they would read Using Multicultural Children's Literature to Teach Diverse Perspectives (Iwai, 2015). I also explained they would read a one-page excerpt on critical books from *Creating Critical Classrooms* (Lewison et al., 2008). I encouraged the educators to divide sections of the article by having each person in the group be responsible for reading a different section and then providing a summary for the group. I asked all of the educators to read the excerpt on critical books. Before the groups began their reading, we discussed what was meant by the term multicultural literature. I described it as stories that often go untold, particularly stories about people who have been marginalized or oppressed. Then we discussed the notion of books being used as mirrors and windows for students (Bishop Simms, 1990). I provided each educator with a Double-Entry Journal Activity Sheet (see Appendices U-V), a sheet I created for the educators to write down what they learned from the readings and their thoughts about what they learned. I explained instructions to them. Then, within their small groups, the educators discussed which section each person would be responsible for reading. From there, they read and took notes on their handouts.

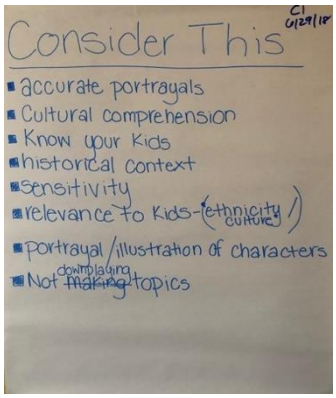
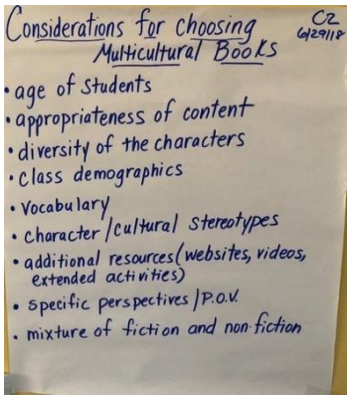
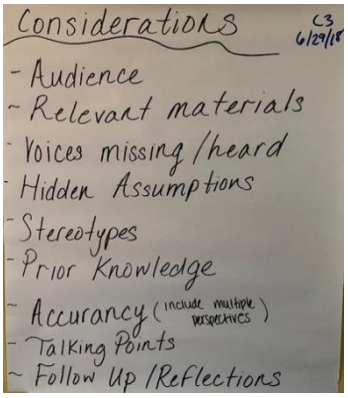
	Consider This • Accurate portrayals • Cultural comprehension • Know your kids • Historical context • Sensitivity • Relevance to kids (ethnicity/culture) • Portrayal/illustration of characters • Not downplaying topics
	Considerations for choosing multicultural books • Age of students • Appropriateness of content • Diversity of the characters • Class demographics • Vocabulary • Character/cultural stereotypes • Additional resources (websites, videos, extended activities • Specific perspectives/ POV • Mixture of fiction and nonfiction
	Considerations • Audience • Relevant materials • Voices missing/heard • Hidden assumptions • Stereotypes • Prior knowledge • Accuracy (include multiple perspectives) • Talking points • Follow up/reflections

Figure 9. Considerations for selecting and using MCL

Once they finished reading and noting their insights and thoughts about what they read, it was time for our networking lunch break. I told the group they would discuss what they learned from the reading after lunch. Just as I did yesterday, I encouraged the educators to bring their lunches back to our learning space as it provided another opportunity to connect and network with different educators from across grade levels, schools, and school districts. I also explained that after lunch a university staff member would come to our room to collect their $100 stipend payment forms and answer any questions they had about completing the form.

Once lunch concluded, I explained the *Final Word* Protocol, which the educators used to share their learning and understanding of Using Multicultural Children's Literature to Teach Diverse Perspectives (Iwai, 2015) and a one page excerpt on critical books from Creating Critical Classrooms (Lewison et al., 2008). I explained that although the protocol indicated three minutes for each person to share, it was okay if what they shared did not last exactly three minutes. I encouraged them not to exceed three minutes though.

As the educators began working, the university staff member entered the room. I asked the groups to pause briefly to ask him any questions they had about the payment form. I collected the forms and gave them to him. I told the educators if something was missing or incorrect on the form, the staff member would call them over to the area of the room where he was sitting reviewing the forms. I asked the educators to proceed with their discussions in the meantime.

When sharing their insights, many of the P-12 educators focused on the article. Patricia stated,

> Authentic dialogue was something they thought was important. My problem with that is if the dialogue is too authentic, it may make it difficult for students to understand. I have read books about the Holocaust and they will use some German terms, which are fine, but

> you have to make sure you're explaining to the students what they mean. (Patricia, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

She went on to question how one knows if a culture is being portrayed authentically in multicultural children's literature. Another educator in Patricia's group, Tiffany, followed-up with her insights from the part of the article that she read, which focused on the preparation that teachers must do prior to using multicultural children's literature with their students. She said,

> So, it just means take time beforehand. If you need to research, research. If you need to check your own biases or if you have any. Yeah, check your own biases and do that beforehand and make sure what you present is carefully thought through. (Tiffany, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

After about twenty minutes, I explained that for the sake of time, we would begin sharing what each group discussed regarding using multicultural literature and critical books in the classroom.

As with previous small group discussions, I asked the groups to elect one person who had not shared with the large group to present the main points of what her or his small group discussed. For instance, Zoya shared on behalf of her group. She said,

> So, a couple of things we hit on was the cultural iceberg. I don't know if anyone is familiar with the photo. Just not keeping, not staying on the surface level. Like really going deep. Like not just talking about food and holidays but really getting into the dialect. The language. The communication. The interaction with that culture and getting literature that displays that accurately. I think that's like the biggest thing. (Zoya, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

In preparation for the next segment of the professional learning where the educators would be planning activities surrounding a particular multicultural children's book and social

justice topic, we began discussing teaching resources and strategies. This was a whole group activity. First, I showed the educators teachingforchange.org (Teaching for Change, 2019). I emphasized the website was particularly useful in locating multicultural children's literature, and the books are organized according to social justice topic or theme. I mentioned that many of the books recommended on the site were displayed in our room. As examples, I held up and provided a synopsis of two of the books we had in the room that addressed identity: *One of a Kind Like Me* (Mayeno, 2016) and *Red: A Crayon's Story* (Hall, 2015). Then I showed them tolerance.org (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019), a website where they could locate teaching strategies in lesson plan format; many teaching strategies in their *Social Justice and Children's Literature* notebooks were developed by Southern Poverty Law Center.

I asked the teachers to go to the tab in their notebook that provided teaching strategies. I then provided an overview of three teaching plans in the notebook: a K-2 plan, a 3-5 plan, and a 9-12 plan. From there, I explained that next activity, which consisted of each group using the Book Talk Planning sheet (see Appendices W-X) to plan a lesson on a particular social justice topic presented in a multicultural children's book. Each group selected a multicultural children's book in the classroom to read. Group 1 chose *The Other Side* (Woodson, 2001). I had six copies of that book so this group agreed they would read the book to themselves and then work collaboratively to plan their lesson. Group 2 opted to read *A is for Activist* (Nagara, 2012). They decided one group member would read the book aloud to the other people in the group. Group 3 decided to read *Those Shoes* (Boelts, 2012). Like Group 2, Group 3 decided one person would read the book aloud to everyone in the group.

After they read their books, the groups collaboratively planned their lessons. During their planning, groups brainstormed questions and activities. Antoinette discussed an activity that could help students explore stereotypes and examine personal biases. She suggested,

> You could ask kids to bring in different pairs of shoes. Some could have holes in them. Some could be brand new. Some could be boots. They are just different shoes. Then ask the kids, okay if you saw someone wearing these shoes, what would you think? You could even bring like stiletto heels and hear what they say about those type of shoes. Whether you get businesswoman or whatnot. (Antoinette, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

Others found Antoinette's suggestion very intriguing and expounded upon it. Tara said, "Challenge those stereotypes. Maybe the worn shoes are somebody who was…I mean you could assign fake characters to them" (Tara, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). They continued exchanging ideas. Melissa elaborated on Tara's thoughts as she stated, "Or maybe pink shoes are for the male, or you know, something like that" (Melissa, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). The educators continued to collaboratively discuss questions and activities but each teacher wrote a separate plan. Once they completed their plans, one person from each group provided a synopsis of their book, the social justice topic(s), and questions or an activity they would do with students.

Following the Book Talk Planning Activity, I asked the teachers to complete Written Reflection 2. This reflection provided a space for the educators to re-examine their thoughts about social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Once educators completed Written Reflection 2, I explained they would be ordering three multicultural children's books for their classrooms as

part of their incentive for participating in the professional learning. I welcomed the educators to consider the books in our room. I also pointed them in the direction of the booklist provided in their notebooks. Further, I explained their book choices could come from other places as well. I provided a Text Selection sheet where the educators listed their books and provided a rationale for their book selections. At this point in the professional learning, we had less than an hour remaining. Thus, all of the educators made sure they wrote down their book choices, but only some of them provided a rationale.

To close the professional learning, I asked the educators to complete a professional learning feedback form (see Appendix AA). In an effort to encourage their authenticity and transparency about the professional learning, I asked them not to write their name on their forms. Once I collected their forms, we engaged in the final activity for the day—the Closing Circle. Just as in Day 1, the *Talking Stick* protocol was used for this activity. The educators were encouraged to express insights gained, highlights, lingering thoughts and next steps. When it was her turn to share, Mona mentioned, "I'm inspired to do more social justice teaching. I'm a liberal, so I get a little concerned that I'm too far to the left, but if we're all going to do it, then I'm going to do it too" (Mona, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). Lisa said, "I really enjoyed everything. I've learned so much. The materials that you've provided. The resources" (Lisa, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018). Mark shared a similar sentiment. He expressed,

> I enjoyed the workshop. The materials. The resources, especially to collaborate. That just gives you more ideas and that's what teaching is all about. So, I just enjoyed the whole thing. I wish you could come out to the schools, faculty meetings and present this. (Mark, professional learning transcript, June 29, 2018)

As the talking stick circulated the room, it became clear that each P-12 educator had been positively influenced by the social justice-driven professional learning community.

Once the Closing Circle came to an end, I asked participants if they would be interested in a possible follow-up interview and member checking. I passed around a sign-up sheet for each of those follow-up activities. Interested participants wrote their name, email address, and phone number on the respective form. Finally, I thanked the educators once again for participating in the professional learning. The session ended at 3:00pm.

5 FINDINGS

This chapter provides an overview of the key themes that emerged addressing the overarching research question as well as the supporting questions that further explained the findings: How can a social justice-driven PLC influence P-12 educators? What understandings do educators develop about social justice and equity? What perceptions do educators cultivate about teaching for social justice and equity? What knowledge do educators construct about using multicultural children's literature (MCL) to teach for social justice and equity?

In presenting the findings of this qualitative research, it was very important to use the participants' voices to share their understandings and experiences through their own words (Creswell, 2013; Saldana, 2016). Thus, each section begins with a quote that features a participant's voice and is directly connected to the theme discussed within that section. Following each quote, other participants are introduced, and their voices are used to share their stories and their thoughts about social justice and equity, teaching for social justice and equity, and using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity.

Social Justice and Equity

The sections below address the following research question: What understandings do educators develop about social justice and equity? In the first section, Expanding Conceptual Understanding, educators provide more nuanced explanations of social justice and equity as their professional learning progresses. Within the process of conceptualizing social justice and equity, they grapple with making a distinction between equity and equality, terms that were initially being used interchangeably within one of the small group discussions. In the second section, Privilege and Marginalization, findings are presented in relation to how educators explored social justice and equity through a critically examination and reflection on their sociocultural identities.

Finally, in the third section, Examining Biases, Assumptions, and Ideologies, social justice and equity are discussed in terms of evaluating taken for granted ways of thinking.

Expanding conceptual understanding. P-12 educators discussed the terms social justice and equity and what those concepts mean to them. As participants grappled with the concepts of social justice and equity, other terms such as fair(ness), equitable, equality, access, and opportunity became a part of group discussions. Sonya, for example, shared a pointed example with the group regarding how she supported students in her classroom in unpacking the term fair. She stated,

> I always have this conversation with my students at the beginning of the year. I have a big sign in my classroom that says I will not be fair. And so, we have the discussion that fair means equal. We're gonna all get the same thing. That's not what's gonna happen here. My goal is to be equitable. It's to make sure that you all have access to the same things. And I'm not gonna require the child in a wheelchair to jump up and touch my hand. I'm just not. It's not possible. That's not equitable. And so, I usually use a short kid and a tall kid and I give the tall kid a reward once they touch my hand and everybody's like eh. Exactly. (Sonya, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Sonya's classroom example led to educators taking a deeper look into social justice and equity.

Participants had multiple opportunities throughout the two-day professional learning sessions to examine the constructs of social justice and equity. They explicitly explored these constructs at the beginning of Day 1 of the professional learning as they wrote Written Reflection 1 (WR1) and at the end of Day 2 through Written Reflection 2 (WR2). The first four questions and prompts on both reflections were identical: 1. What do social justice and equity mean to you? 2.

Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity. 3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you. 4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity? The fifth question on WR1 was, have you used multicultural children's literature in your classroom before to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of a multicultural children's book and explain how you've used it. The fifth question on WR2 was similar; however, it focused on the educator's future plans. The question was, will you use multicultural children's literature in your classroom in the future to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of multicultural children's literature and explain how you would use it?

In exploring the constructs of social justice and equity, many P-12 educators developed a more nuanced conceptualization by the end of the second day of professional learning. Kristie, who holds a Master of Arts in History, demonstrated a more developed understanding of social justice and equity over the course of the two-day professional learning. Prior to participating in this social justice-driven professional learning community, Kristie took undergraduate and graduate courses that incorporated social justice education (Kristie, personal communication, October 26, 2018). On Written Reflection 1, Kristie characterized social justice and equity as "trying to create a culture of tolerance by increasing diversity and equality amongst all individuals" (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). By the end of the professional learning, Kristie provided a more in-depth explanation of social justice and equity. For example, digging a bit deeper on Written Reflection 2, Kristie suggested, "Equity is allowing everyone the same opportunities based on need. Social justice is the fight for representation and inclusion regardless of

race, gender, sex, religion, etc." (Kristie, personal communication, June 29, 2018). That definition indicated that Kriste considered specific identity categories in which people experienced oppression and marginalization.

Further, in the educators' enhanced understandings of social justice and equity, they used the words "access and opportunities" as they moved beyond the notion of social justice and equity as fairness. Lisa noted in her initial reflection, that social justice and equity mean, "ensuring we recognize the value of each person regardless of their identifiers and advocating for that" (Lisa, personal communication, June 28, 2018). In her follow-up reflection, Lisa asserted equity means "to ensure everyone has access—it's not fairness—it is creating a level playing field" (Lisa, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Lisa's second definition demonstrated that she expanded her knowledge about social justice and equity to include access. Having formerly worked in the corporate sector as a vice president in human resources, Lisa entered the teaching profession as a second career. She indicated that she received some training on social justice, but it was not specifically related to the field of education (Lisa, personal communication, October 25, 2018). Therefore, this social justice-driven professional learning community was Lisa's first opportunity to explore teaching for social justice and equity.

Like Lisa, Jocelyn also reconceptualized social justice and equity to include the term access. Initially, she described social justice and equity as "fairness regardless of circumstances" (Jocelyn, personal communication, June 28, 2018). She later modified her ideas as she expressed social justice and equity in terms of "giving individuals access to tools necessary for the same success" (Jocelyn, personal communication, June, 29, 2018). Moreover, Antoinette originally defined equity as "treating everyone fair and equal regardless of their group membership" (Jocelyn,

personal communication, June 28, 2018). Later, in Written Reflection 2, Antionette deemed equity as "making sure all people have the access they need to survive and succeed in life" (Antionette, personal communication, June 29, 2018).

Participants' evolving definitions of equity were supported when Sonya suggested clarification be made between the terms equity and equality, as she heard some of her group members using the terms interchangeably. In addition to being a fifth-grade teacher, Sonya worked part-time as a teacher educator. She also worked with my mentor in previous social justice-driven professional learning communities and co-presented at regional conferences. Sonya had implemented arts-integrated social justice projects at her elementary school. Further, through her professional knowledge and experiences in teaching for social justice, Sonya believed the distinction between equity and equality must be discussed within this professional learning as teachers' understandings of these terms could influence students' abilities to look beyond fairness when they think of the term equity.

Sonya jotted her suggestion about distinguishing between equity and equality on a sticky note and gave it to my mentor as the group left to pick up their lunches on Day 1. My mentor took a picture of the sticky note and texted it to me during our lunch break, Figure 10.

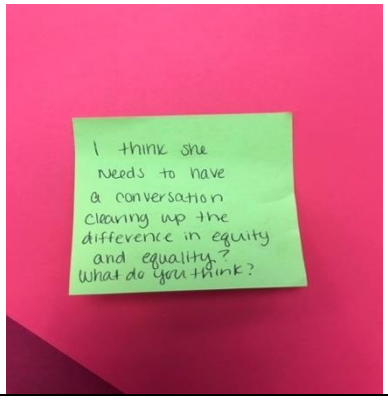
	I think she needs to have a conversation clearing up the difference in equity and equality? What do you think?

Figure 10. Suggestion

Although I was glad to see that Sonya made this suggestion, I had hoped she, or any of the other educators within the PLC, would have felt comfortable coming directly to me to share any suggestions for moving forward. However, I was aware as the facilitator, it can take time to establish rapport with educators (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). Subsequently, our after-lunch discussion began with me expressing the significance of teachers as learners and learners as teachers. I invited the educators to ask me questions, pose questions to their group, and offer their comments or suggestions at any point within the professional learning, even if that meant pausing a planned activity. I also encouraged the educators to take on a similar approach when teaching for social justice and equity in their classrooms. After inviting educators' suggestions, I honored Sonya's request to distinguish between equity and equality. This was a whole group discussion. I asked the group, what is the difference between equity and equality, or is there a difference? Tiffany shared her thoughts about equity by not only discussing what the term means but contextualizing it within teaching. She suggested,

> Equity—it's to level the playing field as needed per student. So different people will have different playing fields. What do I need to do for that individual person to get them on the same playing field as the other students? (Tiffany, personal communication, June 28, 2018).

Tiffany's comment about equity was expounded upon by Heather, who recounted an image she had seen of three people of various heights standing on different size boxes in order to see a sports game. I was familiar with the picture she spoke of because I had seen it in a graduate course I took at the beginning of my doctoral studies. I located the Equality Equity image, as depicted in Figure 11, and projected it on the screen for everyone to see it (Maguire, 2016).

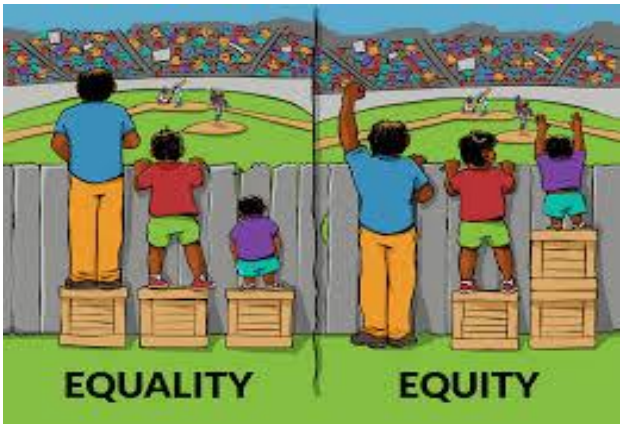


Figure 11. Illustrating equality VS equity

Educators used the image as a reference point as they continued to grapple with how the terms could be distinguished. As Jocelyn reflected upon the picture and previous comments made by other educators in the room, she stated, "In looking at this and listening, it kinda feels like equity is about the end goal and everyone having the chance and support to get to success" (Jocelyn, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Sonya added her fifth-grade students had this equality and equity picture in their social studies notebooks, and they used it to explore the concept of fairness. At that point, I suggested that while the focus of the professional learning was on using multicultural children's literature to springboard conversations about social justice and equity, educators should also consider using single images and photos such as the one we were examining, to spark critical conversations about social justice and equity. A part of critical literacy is analyzing media and popular culture (Lewison et al., 2008); thus, utilizing different forms of media such as the examples that I provided the participants could be beneficial in empowering students with tools to question the world and how various groups and individuals are positioned in society. Media and popular culture could also be used to help students conceptualize social justice-related terms just as the educators and I were doing.

Following our in-depth discussion of the equality/equity picture, I transitioned into the next activity where the small groups would choose one person from their group to share the social justice issues their group generated before lunch. As the groups began deciding who would present on their behalf, we paused as Melissa asked if she could offer one last comment about the picture. Melissa had prior experience with social justice and equity as her school had launched a diversity and equity task force (Melissa, personal communication, October 27, 2018). She had also served as a coach for a Critical Friends Group where she facilitated discussions about social justice-related articles (Melissa, personal communication, October 27, 2018). Everyone stood still and listened as Melissa interpreted the photo.

> Melissa connected the equality/equity picture to multiple perspectives. She articulated, I'm just thinking. I haven't seen this image before, but I'm thinking of perspective here and how equity […]. Say the image on the left, if you're asking those three people what's happening on the other side, they're each going to have a different perspective. (Melissa, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018).

Building on Melissa's comment, I mentioned thinking about multiple perspectives is critical to teaching for social justice and equity. Melissa's point added another layer to our discussion about equity and equality. It moved beyond focusing on the constructs of equality and equity and into thinking about how one's worldview and perspective are shaped in part by one's position in society. Her comment, I figured, was a great segue way into introducing multicultural children's literature that emphasize multiple perspectives. At that point, I referenced and held up two children's picture books in the room that focused on multiple perspectives *Seven Blind Mice* (Ed Young, 2002) and *Voices in the Park* (Browne, 2001). I mentioned that those books could provide a good starting place for supporting students in thinking about multiple perspectives.

The discussion about equity and equality graphic supported educators in thinking about social justice and equity in terms of need. Approximately one-third (6 out of 17) of the educators did not use the word "need", as in students' needs as learners, on Written Reflection 1 in their initial definitions of social justice and equity but did so on Written Reflection 2. This was the case for educators in different groups. For example, Tameka suggested "Equity is giving everyone what they need" (Tameka, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Patricia wrote "Social justice is being fair to all people, not being judgmental, and making policies and decisions that will offer assistance in areas of need" (Patricia, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Antoinette stated equity means "making sure all people have the access they need to survive and succeed in life" (Antoinette, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Defining social justice and equity with regard to need demonstrated that these educators were not thinking of the terms simply as everyone getting the same thing. Further, it became clear that educators' definitions of equity on Written Reflection 2 were influenced by the large group discussion of the equality/equity photo.

Although the equality/equity graphic shaped some of the educators' definitions of social justice and equity in terms of need by the closing of the professional learning, other educators used "need" in their descriptions of social justice and equity at the beginning of the professional learning. Tara and Shanelle discussed equity in terms of need at the onset of the professional learning. They were the only two participants out of seventeen who did that early-on. Shanelle had two years of teaching experience and had taken a college course on social justice prior to participating in the PLC. At the time of the study, Tara was enrolled in a social justice and equity-centered graduate program and expected to begin a third-grade teaching position in the fall. Both educators' recent background knowledge on social justice and equity likely factored into

their initial definitions of the terms. Thus, this suggests that more experienced educators may have not even had the opportunity to learn about teaching for social justice and equity unless that participated in a graduate program.

I examined Tara and Shanelle's responses on Written Reflections 1 and 2 further to determine if their definitions had changed, and if so, to what extent? By Written Reflection 2, Tara expanded her definition as she noted that social justice and equity means "Giving voice to groups and people that have been/are marginalized". On the other hand, Shanelle did not change her definition very much by the end of the professional learning. Her initial statement was that equity means "Everyone gets the tools and resources they need to be successful" (Shanelle, personal communication, June 28, 2018). She later wrote equity means "making sure everyone has the tools they need to be successful" (Shanelle, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Although there was only a subtle change to Shanelle's definition of social justice and equity, the fact that she included "making sure" implied that enacting those terms must be done with intentionality.

Another notable finding regarding defining social justice and equity was that some educators used words related to a person's sociocultural identity. As described in chapter four, my original intention was for the P-12 educators to complete Written Reflection 1 immediately after the community building exercises. However, I jumped ahead of myself and initiated the Identity Mapping Activity prior to Written Reflection 1. As a result, on Written Reflection 1, I noticed when they defined social justice and equity, six of the 17 educators used terminology associated with group membership and identity dimensions, which was discussed during the Identity Mapping Activity. For instance, Deborah stated on Written Reflection 1: "Social justice and equity mean that each individual is recognized for who they are (their background, racial, social status,

and gender)" (Deborah, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Deborah expanded her thinking about social justice and equity, however. By the end of Day 2, she suggested, "It means that each person is recognized for their specific gender, race, economic status etc. and given the same opportunities on a level playing field" (Deborah, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Deborah's extended definition and reference to a "level playing field" indicated that other activities, particularly the discussion regarding equality and equity graphic, influenced her thinking about social justice and equity.

Overall, the small group and large group discussions and activities supported P-12 educators in enhancing their definitions of social justice and equity. Sonya's request to distinguish between equity and equality played a significant role in helping educators in thinking through their perceptions of social justice and equity. Heather was influenced by Sonya's request, which prompted her to mention the equity/equality graphic. After listening to everyone's perceptions and ideas, Heather shifted our conversation in a slightly different direction when she offered her ideas about multiple perspectives. Thus, the P-12 educators certainly co-constructed their knowledge and understanding about social justice and equity.

Privilege and marginalization. A part of unpacking social justice and equity was considering privilege and marginalization. The P-12 educators critically examined multiple dimensions of their sociocultural identities to consider ways in which they had experienced privilege and/or marginalization. Through the example below, Melissa shared a myriad of ways in which she had experienced privilege and marginalization in society. She expressed,

> So, I'm a mother which is the greatest privilege ever but I'm a single mom, so it's also a disadvantage in lots of ways. Also, being a teacher, I feel is a privilege, but it's also a disadvantage whenever people consider you a babysitter, and they're like, 'Why don't you

> choose something else? You're too smart to be a teacher'. I consider myself a world citizen because I grew up overseas. And so that has afforded me lots of privileges, like to travel and stay with different people around the world, things like that. I'm agnostic and come from a very Catholic family so, that to me, is a disadvantage because they often judge me about that. And then being female, that is a privilege in some ways. I don't know. That one's tricky for me because I've experienced both sides of it. Being female, I feel like certain times I get extra attention or extra help from certain people, whereas other times I'm undermined, and I'm not taken seriously. (Melissa, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Melissa's comment underscored that certain aspects of her sociocultural identity such as her occupation and gender had influenced both privilege and marginalization in society.

To scaffold educators in thinking deeply about social justice and equity and the relationship between these constructs and our identities, each educator constructed an identity map (Appendix F). Creating an identity map allowed educators to dissect various aspects of their sociocultural identities such as race, gender, social class, occupation, religion, sexual orientation, language, and ability. On one side of the identity map, educators drew a web. They wrote their name in the center of the web and surrounded their name with multiple dimensions of their identities. Then they circled aspects of their identities in which they had experienced privilege and underlined aspects of their identities in which they had experienced marginalization. From there, the educators used the back page of their identity maps to reflect on how their sociocultural identity is connected to experiences of privilege and/or marginalization in society. Lisa reflected on the identity map experience as she stated:

> I really loved the self-identity activity because I think we tend to put a face or stereotype on discrimination, right? Who's discriminated against, who discriminates. And I think that it could really be eye-opening to understand that we've all been on both sides of that for different reasons. And to understand what that looks like could be very helpful. (Lisa, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Lisa's statement demonstrated that examining identity could help people become more empathetic and disrupt stereotyping and discrimination. Professional learning that includes opportunities for educators to share their personal stories and critically examine them could support educators' personal and professional growth (Taylor, 2013). Educators sharing their personal stories of privilege and marginalization within the professional learning community provided a model of what they could facilitate in their classrooms.

The P-12 educators were empathetic as various stories of marginalization were shared, and they made connections between their experiences. More specifically, they reflected on experiences of social injustice based on their gender. For example, Shanelle recounted how she was denied employment because she was female and could potentially become pregnant. Female educators shared additional examples of oppression or marginalization based on their gender. Two female educators mentioned their gender made them concerned about their safety. On her Identity Mapping Reflection, Jocelyn indicated experiencing disadvantage being a female, particularly when going out at night. Further, Kristie also discussed being oppressed as a female with experiences of "cat-calling" and "harassment" (Kristie, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Others discussed not receiving the same respect as men. Within their small group discussions, both Melissa and Tiffany added being a female can be a disadvantage as women are often not taken as seriously as men. For instance, on her Identity Mapping Reflection, Tiffany discussed

being oppressed as a female when being "excluded from conversations" (Tiffany, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Moreover, several women associated being female with inferior treatment in society overall.

In contrast to experiences of gender-based oppression that female participants revealed, Mark, the only male educator who took part in this professional learning, indicated he acknowledges the advantages of being a male. Mark entered the teaching profession as a second career seven years ago after retiring from the military. He discussed how being a male teacher, particularly at the high school where he worked, had been advantageous as he was able to command students' attention with ease and had very little behavior issues in his classroom. Mark went on to express how his colleagues often counted on him and his ability as a male to influence appropriate student behavior as they send students who are being disruptive to his classroom regularly. He stated, "They're always calling for, hey we need you out on bus duty or I need you in this hallway to break up a fight. Like I feel like I'm awesome" (Mark, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Mark's comment implied that male teachers, in some settings, are more appreciated. After Mark discussed how much he is respected and depended upon at his high school, the elementary educators in his group commented about how more male educators are needed on the elementary level.

In addition to experiencing privilege and/or marginalization on the basis of gender, participants also discussed how socioeconomic status (SES) and level of education play a role in the opportunities and access one has in society. Sabrina named being college-educated as a privilege. She stated, "I hold a degree and knowledge that affords me certain opportunities I would not

have otherwise" (Sabrina, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Similarly, Deborah commented that being a college graduate "has afforded me more opportunities in professional and social situations" (Deborah, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Kristie mentioned,

> So, one of my likely advantages I think I've had in life is that my family was middle-class growing up, and so that allowed me to go to a good school in a good school district, and then have an education and go off for higher education, go abroad, study abroad. Not everybody has those opportunities. (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

The educators' personal stories demonstrated their understanding of privilege and access related to SES. Conversely, their narratives implied that those who were not college-educated and within the middle class or above could experience marginalization or oppression. More pointedly, educators who did not grow up within a middle class or above SES status and within a college-educated family, but attained a middle-class status later in life, offered their first-hand perspectives on the challenges that can accompany not being from a college-educated family. As a first-generation college graduate, Sonya agreed that being college-educated does offer privileges; however, she added being the first person to attend college in her family was also a disadvantage because she had no one to walk her through the system. Mona connected to Sonya's point and stated, "Can I tell you something? I'm also the first person in my family to graduate college. I had the same problem" (Mona, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Sonya's story supported Mona in divulging her personal experiences and provided a connection between the two of them. Kristie pointed out,

> I feel like every one of us has something on our shoulder that we connected to […]. Like, we're all different but connected in some way. There are some things on our list that are

> probably going to cross cultures, cross race, cross all of those things. (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

To Kristie's point, although Sonya was African-American and Mona was White, they both could relate to being a first-generation college graduate.

Educators shared more personal examples of the role socioeconomic status plays in experiencing privilege. Two educators, Zoya, a middle-school paraprofessional, and Mark, a high school law and criminal justice teacher, were both military veterans, and they discussed within their small groups the social benefits they experienced due to their service in the military. Zoya noted, "Being a veteran comes with not only monetary privileges but also people often associate a veteran with good qualities" (Zoya, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Mark affirmed, "I have so many advantages, especially being a retired military to suddenly benefit all these other opportunities and puts you in a different social class, in terms of, you know, middle-class or not" (Mark, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). He went on to say walking into a restaurant after work, still wearing his ROTC uniform, meant customers would thank him for his service and voluntarily pay for his meal. Mark discussed how he felt a sense of guilt, so he stopped wearing his uniform. He stated, "A lot of other people overseas are getting blown up and I'm here wearing my uniform and people are saying 'thank you, for your service.' Like, yeah, but I'm retired already. So, I didn't feel right" (Mark, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Mark's comments raised the idea that sometimes people may intentionally diminish the privileges they receive in society.

As educators continued to discuss privilege and marginalization, the notion that context matters became apparent. During a recap of main points discussed within small group conversations on privilege and marginalization, Jocelyn spoke on behalf of her group. She stated, "We

found that our prejudice and advantages can be context-related and that even though there are different contexts where you can experience different kinds of disadvantages or privileges, that we're still all people and all have connections somehow" (Jocelyn, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). This realization Jocelyn shared was consistent with the various stories I heard as I circulated the room listening to small group discussions.

I stopped where Group 1 was located and heard Jocelyn discuss how she had been oppressed due to her sexual orientation. She recounted how she felt marginalized being a straight woman attending an all-female university where many of the women self-identified as lesbian. Jocelyn stated,

> I experienced a disadvantage being straight. The context that I was in when this happened was that I went to a women's college. And there was a group of girls that I was hanging out with and I got, like straight up, "Oh you're straight. That's stupid. You won't be for much longer." (Jocelyn, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Considering the idea that, typically, people who self-identify as heterosexual are usually a part of a majority group and therefore experience privilege in comparison to people who identify as LGBTTQQIAAP, this example of a heterosexual woman being oppressed based on her sexuality clearly illuminated that context often plays a role in oppression.

Likewise, Shanelle provided another example of how context plays a role in experiencing privilege or marginalization. Shanelle believed being African-American contributed to her being hired to work at her school. She expressed,

> The teaching job I just received, I got because, I think, I was an African-American woman who looks like the students I'm teaching. I look like their parents, their aunts,

> their sisters, you know, whatever it is they connect to and I think that was an advantage for me at that point. (Shanelle, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

After Shanelle shared her experience, Tiffany chimed in and offered a different perspective regarding race and hiring practices, suggesting sometimes a White teacher is hired to work in a school predominately comprised of students of color because she or he is presumed to be more qualified. She stated,

> I'm teaching at schools that are mostly Latino-American, but some of the schools aren't doing well. So, they think that if they bring more teachers in, White teachers or teachers from middle-class, it will make the school look better. So that they can meet their goals and not have the government intervene. So, it can go in two ways. (Tiffany, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Tiffany and Shanelle's contrasting perspectives reiterated Jocelyn's assertion that context plays a role in experiencing privilege and or marginalization.

In addition to the contextual factors associated with their sociocultural location, educators also grappled with their geographic location, the physical context, and how living in a particular city or state influenced experiences of privilege or marginalization. Deborah, an African-American woman and a fourth-grade teacher, spoke about how growing up in New York, she was always surrounded by people from various ethnic groups, and her group of friends were of different nationalities. She could not recall experiencing any discrimination. After the horrific and traumatizing terrorists attack in New York on 9/11, Deborah moved to this city in the southern part of the United States. According to United States Census Bureau data, as of 2017, this city's racial population consisted of 52% black or of African descent; 40% White; 5% Hispanic or Latino; 4% Asian; .3% American Indian and Alaska native, and 2% mixed races (United States

Census Bureau). Thus, although the city is racially and ethnically diverse, Deborah explained people were segregated along racial lines.

While Deborah characterized this southern city as segregated, Sonya having been born and raised in the same southern city, expressed being African-American in this city was a privilege as there were more opportunities for minorities in this city. She attributed this awareness to traveling abroad. Sonya suggested,

> There's something about international travel and the way you view yourself and your place in the world. So, realizing that literally being from this large urban city was a privilege, especially when it comes to being African-American because it imbues a confidence that I find that many other African-Americans from other places don't have. (Sonya, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Sonya's comment implied that race along with geographic location contributed to shaping one's self-identity.

Like Sonya, other P-12 educators discussed privilege and marginalization while considering geographic location. Tara, who was White, discussed how living in an urban city can be advantageous. She suggested, "Yeah, there are so many opportunities and things you can go and do and see and be" (Tara, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Heather elaborated on Tara's point regarding experiencing privilege living in an urban city. Referring to another southern city in the United States, she provided her perspective on growing up in a small town versus a large city. Heather commented,

> Yeah, I agree because my family is from a town in Louisiana and I see my nieces, they're the same age as my kindergarteners, and I see the different exposure. They don't go to museums and they don't go to events and festivals and all these things. It's just different

> because that's not what's happening in their town. So being in an urban environment is definitely a privilege. (Heather, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Heather's assertions revealed that she associated a lack of access to cultural events and historical venues with being less-privileged in society.

In addition to sharing stories of privilege and or marginalization based on geographic location, P-12 educators discussed oppression in terms of race. Five out of nine of the African-American educators mentioned they had experienced discrimination based on their race. Tiffany mentioned she had been called "the n word" and had been stereotyped based on the color of her skin. Deborah also noted, she had experienced prejudice based on her skin color but did not provide a specific example (Deborah, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Zoya provided a more detailed account of the discrimination she experienced based on stereotypes about people of color. She wrote,

> Often times people assume because of my race that I come from a low-socioeconomic status and other assumptions. I recently applied for a mortgage loan and the mortgage counselor assumed that I had poor credit and referred me to a credit specialist before even looking at my credit. (Zoya, personal communication, June 28, 2018)

Zoya's comment suggested her first-hand experience with racism and classism.

As most of the African-American P-12 educators wrote about their experiences of racial discrimination, most of the White educators wrote about experiencing privilege based on their race. Six of the eight White participants acknowledged White privilege and how they had benefited from overall. Tara asserted, "Being White is inherently a privilege. Nothing has ever been made harder for me because of the color of my skin, which isn't true for everyone" (Tara, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Heather wrote "I have experienced privilege because I am

from an upper middle-class White family. There have been more opportunities afforded to me because of that status" (Heather, personal communication, June 28, 2018). After writing about her experiences, when it was time for small group discussions on privilege and marginalization, Heather expressed the social challenges she faced as a White woman dating an African-American man. Her personal story prompted Zoya to explain how her Nigerian father was opposed to her dating some who was African-American.

Examining biases, assumptions, and ideologies. In addition to discussing privilege and marginalization, examining biases, assumptions, and ideologies was a prominent topic of discussion. As the P-12 educators discussed teaching for social justice and equity and multicultural children's literature, they examined personal biases and assumptions. Melissa, for instance, checked her assumption as her group read *Those Shoes* (Boelts, 2012). She explained,

> Well, I mean my assumption might have been that the White kid would buy the Black kid the shoes. But that's not the case. So, it's switching your thinking, you know? Yeah, I mean that's a bad assumption ——micro-aggression really. That's interesting. (Melissa, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018)

Melissa's statement demonstrated that she intentionally confronted assumptions about race and socioeconomic status.

Educators acknowledged how examining their sociocultural identities and thinking about the associated privileges and disadvantages helped them consider what this means for how they view their students and how they approach teaching. Tara wrote, "It can help you understand what biases and perspectives you carry with you, and what you need to check at the door" (Tara, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Tara's statement demonstrated that she believed un-

packing her sociocultural identity laid the groundwork for intentionally examining and ameliorating personal biases. Another educator in Tara's group, Zoya, expounded upon Tara's point about examining biases. She stated, "I think many times we look at a student and unintentionally try to identify them which leads to assumptions that are often times incorrect" (Zoya, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Zoya's point suggested not only her awareness of biases but how they can be misinformed. This notion connects to Zoya's personal experience with discrimination, discussed previously, where a mortgage loan officer made assumptions about her financial literacy based on her physical appearance. Moreover, for Zoya, unpacking her identity and personal experiences of discrimination supported her critical examination of thinking about biases, assumptions, and ideologies that educators may carry with them into their classrooms and hinder growth.

Educators focused on the intricate connection between understanding the complex nature of identity and what that means for them as educators. Heather said, "I feel as though all of these things make me very understanding of all different types of people and children when it comes to teaching" (Heather, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Melissa, stated, "Helps me better understand students and also how to advocate if needed. Disadvantages help me relate and privileges help me make a difference" (Melissa, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Melissa's statement suggested that understanding sociocultural identity comes with a responsibility to advocate for those who have been disempowered by society.

Other educators commented on how unpacking their sociocultural identities led to a deeper understanding of themselves and those around them. Deborah asserted,

> Understanding how I am privileged and disadvantaged opens my eyes to the world around me. How I am understood and how I should understand others. It helps me to see

> under the first layer of a person, what is beyond what everyone sees. (Deborah, personal communication, June 28, 2018)

Deborah's comments implied that she was problematizing assumptions that she and others in the world may have about someone based on her or his outward physical characteristics. It also suggested that she had developed a deeper understanding of identity, one that moves beyond what a person sees by demonstrating additional analysis of immediately apparent information.

As conversations about social justice and equity progressed on Day 2 of the professional learning, educators critically reflected on their personal assumptions. As a whole group, while participating in a read aloud and discussion of *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* (DiSalvo, 1991), Mona reflected on her thoughts prior to volunteering to serve at a soup kitchen. She confessed, "Before I went to a soup kitchen I had preconceived like personally, where I am going, what about the neighborhood, you know cause I was a volunteer. I had all these preconceived notions about what I was gonna do" (Mona, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018). Mona's comment suggested that she had reflected on her past experiences with a marginalized group and confronted personal assumptions about them.

In addition to examining assumptions, educators also examined ideologies. While sharing a summary of critical points her group discussed, Heather mentioned, "Be aware of your own ideology and struggles" (Heather, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Heather's comment on behalf of her group suggested that they considered the significance of being cognizant of ideologies. Kristie interrogated the colorblind ideology and the negative implications it posed to society. She asserted,

> That's why I think the statement that we should all be colorblind is so bad. Because like, yes, we should treat people equally regardless of their color, but if we're colorblind,

> we're ignoring the fact that everyone of us at this table, every one of your students has a background, has a religion, everybody's different. (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018)

Further, Kristie suggested the importance of celebrating what makes people different along with finding commonalities. As she spoke, she referenced the Identity Mapping activity and discussion that the group participated in the day before. Kristie's statements connoted that willfully ignoring the multiple dimensions of a person's identity could be harmful.

Together with examining assumptions and ideologies, participants also interrogated their individual biases. During her follow-up interview, Tameka expressed the importance of establishing and addressing personal biases. She discussed, for instance, how participating in the social justice-driven PLC supported her in not just focusing on the marginalization of just one particular group during a certain time of the year. When I asked her to elaborate further, she stated, "I think like I was saying earlier, which groups I thought should be focused on, which minorities I felt were important to teach kids about […] physical characteristics play into that […] but then there are so many other things beyond that" (Tameka, personal communication, July 17, 2018). Tameka's comments suggested that not only had the PLC supported her in examining her biases but also in expanding her thinking about other groups who experienced marginalization and oppression.

Along with critically reflecting on biases, assumptions, and ideologies, educators also considered the media's role in shaping ideologies. More specifically, they discussed print media, television and movies. Kristie contended,

> Not every culture is always represented on television or in movies, at the Academy Awards, you know. That was a big thing a few years ago, so I thought that one was just

> interesting because we should make sure that we're promoting like all cultures and not just us. (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

In thinking about diversity, especially in relation to the images presented in the media, Mona, who identified "being fat" as a fundamental group membership to who she is, expressed her ex-

Figure 12. Tess Holiday Cosmopolitan Magazine

citement to see Tess Holiday, a self-described "overweight" body-positive model, featured on the covers of magazines. Figure 12 shows an image of Tess Holiday on the cover of Cosmopolitan Magazine (Ford, 2018). Mona's comment was a precipitation of discussions that occurred the next day of the professional learning when educators discussed the significance of students being able to see people who look like they do and/or share their experiences in the books they read.

Teaching for Social Justice and Equity

The sections below address the following research question: What perceptions do educators cultivate about teaching for social justice and equity? In the first section, Going Deeper, educators discussed how teaching for social justice and equity requires them to support their students in developing the tools to critically examine and question their world. In the subsequent section,

Empowering Students, educators discussed the importance of taking up students' inquiries. Then, in the next section, Multiple Perspectives, educators championed the idea of students being knowledgeable of multiple perspectives and able to respectfully critique different viewpoints. In the Rethinking Instructional Practices section, educators expressed the significance of critically examining and rethinking how they usually teach a concept or topic. Finally, in the last section, P-12 educators mentioned the teaching strategies and resources from the social justice-driven PLC that were beneficial to them in learning to teach for social justice and equity.

Going deeper. When discussing their thoughts about using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity, educators expressed the significance of moving beyond food and celebrations when discussing a cultural group. Heather stated,

> I liked how you talked about surface level of culture. Cause I think a lot of the times, we just do[…] like you said, bring in food or whatever. But I don't know if ya'll have seen that iceberg picture where it's like, there's a little top of the iceberg and then underneath there's this big huge thing that encompasses a lot of different aspects of the culture that we miss. (Heather, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Other educators within the professional learning community continued to build upon this notion of going deeper when teaching for social justice and equity. Deep thinking or critical thinking for teachers and students is necessary for humanization (Freire, 1970/2012). Thus, educators within the professional learning engaged in deep thinking and included it in their co-constructions of teaching for social justice and equity.

Collaboratively, teachers read a collection of professional articles and took notes in order to gain a better understanding of what teaching for social justice and equity is, what it looks like,

what it sounds like, what the teacher's role is, and what the student's role is in the learning process. Then they engaged in small group discussions of their understanding of teaching for social justice and equity while continuing to take notes on important insights offered by others in their group. Teachers across groups signaled a part of teaching for social justice and equity is facilitating students to think on a deeper level. In her follow-up interview, Sonya mentioned the importance of examining the why behind oppression specifically regarding teaching her students about slavery. She declared,

> Literacy is a social justice issue. If they understand there was a reason why it was against the law to teach slaves to read. You could teach them to play music, you could teach them a lot of things, but you couldn't teach them to read. Why?" (Sonya, personal communication, July 16, 2018).

Like Sonya, Sabrina also noted teaching for social justice and equity required "more than the 'what happened?' but 'why it happened'?" (Sabrina, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Both comments suggested that an important aspect of teaching for social justice and equity was to discuss underlying reasons for marginalization and oppression.

In addition to going deeper by ascertaining root causes and rationalizations of marginalization and oppression, educators also determined that teaching for social justice requires educators to question the materials they are using to teach their students (Lewison et al., 2008). Zoya wrote, "Question what you're given. Are articles and literature racially-biased?" (Zoya, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Zoya also discussed supporting students with deep thinking as she reflected on what teaching for social justice and equity mean. She stated, "Teaching that allows students to critically think, analyze, and research these issues (social justice issues) to develop thoughtful ideas and plans to help remediate the problem" (Zoya, personal communication,

June 29, 2018). Zoya's statements indicated that teaching for social justice requires students as active participants who think critically about societal issues, research them, and then determine appropriate social action.

Like Zoya, other P-12 educators expressed ideas that supported the notion of teaching for social justice by supporting students with thinking on a deeper level. After reading about teaching for social justice and equity and participating in a small group discussion of what was learned, Melissa wrote, "Model metacognitive thinking through read alouds (thinking critically)" (Melissa, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Another person in her group, Antoinette, discussed, "Have kids reflect on what they read/do before and after" (Antoinette, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Their comments reflected specifically what they thought should happen to support students with thinking on a deeper level.

Educators also offered a broad view of what teaching for social justice and equity means. In his expression of what he learned from his PLC discussion on teaching for social justice and equity, Mark wrote, "Teach students to critique society and the world" (Mark, personal communication, June 28, 2018). In a similar vein, Tiffany explained "Teaching in a way that leads students to take a critical look at society and to question the systems/narratives that exist" (Tiffany, personal communication, June 29, 2018). These remarks implied that educators developed the idea that teaching for social justice meant ensuring that students have necessary tools to take a critical look at society and not just accepting social conditions the way they are.

The educators' emphasis on getting students to think on a deeper level was further demonstrated in the questions they posed as they collaboratively planned lessons around a social justice topic, using a multicultural children's book that their group selected. Each group selected a multicultural children's book to read. Then they used a Book Talk Planning sheet where they

wrote questions to ask students before, during, and after reading the book (Appendix R). Then, on the back of their sheets, the educators developed three instructional activities that students could engage in that would enhance their knowledge and understanding of the social justice issue and promote students' social agency. The purpose of this activity was to allot time for educators to collaboratively discuss and plan activities around a social justice issue. My hope was that P-12 educators who read the same book would use each other as resources in thinking through possible questions they could ask students to engage in critical dialogue and thoughtful action in response to a social justice issue. I also hoped, at the end of this activity, educators across groups would benefit from hearing some of the questions and activities created regarding a different multicultural children's book and/or social justice issue.

Educators in Group 1 selected and read *The Other Side* (Woodson, 2001), a story about Clover, an African-American girl, and Annie, a White girl, who were contemplating friendship. The girls' houses were separated by a fence that segregated their towns along racial lines, and they were told by their parents not to go on the other side of the fence. The social justice issues presented in this book were racism and segregation. After reading this story, teachers in Group 1 posed the following after-reading questions and prompts: Where do we see "fences" in our communities/nation? What fences in your life/world exist that may need to be knocked down? What fences exist in our school? Analyze the symbolism in the words and pictures. Create another story of Clover and Annie today. Is it the same story? The questions that Group 1 posed implied that the fence in the story was a social barrier; therefore, their questions encouraged students to think critically about social barriers around them. Their questions demonstrated supporting students in thinking critically about social justice issues on a local, national, and international level.

The general nature of their questions offered students opportunities to take the discussion in different directions. It was evident that this group was intentional in crafting questions to support students in thinking critically about social justice and equity.

Educators in Group 2 also posed several questions they could ask to encourage their students to critically examine social justice and equity. They read *A is for Activist* (Nagara, 2012), an informational alphabet book that covered a range of social justice topics and associated vocabulary from A-Z. Examples of topics included were racism, sexism, homophobia, and xenophobia. Some of the questions this group posed were: What is an activist? Do you know any activists? Can you think of other issues that are important that the book doesn't mention? What issues would be important for you to be active about? Just as in the case with Group 1, Group 2 also developed questions to support critical thinking, particularly by considering issues that mattered to their students. Another way that this group encouraged deep thinking was by incorporating social agency.

Digging deep was also evident in the questions educators in Group 3 posed on their Book Talk Planning sheets. They elected to read *Those Shoes* (Boelts, 2012), a story about Jeremy, a boy who wanted a popular pair of shoes, but he could only afford the off-brand pair. He bought the off-brand pair at a Thrift Store, but they ended up being too small for him. As much as he wanted to continue wearing those shoes for popularity, he ultimately decided to give the shoes to a classmate in need of shoes. After reading *Those Shoes* (Boelts, 2012), Group 3 generated the following questions: Why does the main character think they (those shoes) are so important? What message do you think the author is trying to send? Do your things define you? If shoes would talk, what would they say? What groups of people are represented? In comparison to questions posed by the other two groups, the questions elicited by Group 3 focused primarily on

the story itself. Like the other two groups, though, the questions that Group 3 posed supported students in thinking critically through making personal connections.

Empowering students. Coupled with asking questions to elicit deep thinking, educators also discussed the importance of student empowerment. For example, discussing teaching for social justice and equity included conversations about the importance of considering students' lived experiences and not just teaching issues that impact their communities but empowering them with tools to become social change agents. Sabrina asserted,

> Some teachers do a great job at the critical thinking part of it all! But as far as empowering the kids past that, I think that's another aspect. We're going to teach critical literacy and teach these issues. That can't just be talk about the issue! Let's discuss this, okay next thing. It needs to be some form of empowerment, especially if we have kids in our group who feel marginalized or disadvantaged based on the issue. It has to be more than just everybody thinks it sucks, okay let's move on. (Sabrina, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Empowering students and considering their voice were major topics of discussion as educators continued to examine what teaching for social justice and equity meant. In doing so, Mark began rethinking his teaching approach. He pondered,

> Thinking outside the box! That's what I'm trying to think now […]. On Monday we do this. Tuesday we do this. Wednesday we do this. We don't like doing this. I don't care. We are going to do this. Getting out of that and trying to do something that they like or maybe [bringing something that interests them] into the curriculum. Trying to figure out the different learning styles —trying to figure out what things that draw [their interests]

> out. Instead of me just directing; this kind of gives me ideas. (Mark, personal communication, June 29, 2018)

Mark's comments suggested that he was considering how students could become empowered by having some influence over the curriculum. Another educator, Tara focused on empowering students as well. When asked to explain her understanding of teaching for social justice and equity on Written Reflection 2, she noted empowering students. She stated, "Empowering students to be informed, active members in their community who can make a difference" (Tara, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Tara's statement implied that, for her, teaching for social justice also meant empowering students and developing their capacity for social agency. Similarly, other educators concluded that, for them, teaching for social justice and equity meant empowering students (Esposito & Swain, 2009).

Educators addressed student empowerment in their discussions regarding making time for student-initiated discussions. Deborah shared her insights with her group regarding opening up the classroom for students to discuss topics of their interests, and she commented on how she is guilty of sometimes dismissing students' inquiries. She explained,

> When a student has different comments, should you ignore them, should you dismiss them, or should you use that as a discussion? Sometimes as teachers we're like, 'okay', but if you really think about you can make that a discussion for your kids and change it into that. And I know I've been guilty of it. Somebody says something and I'll be like go sit down. And not thinking in broader terms of you know what, let's make this a real discussion that people can learn from. (Deborah, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Deborah's statements suggested that teaching for social justice and equity required flexibility on the teacher's part and creating a space where student can initiate discussions about issues that matter to them.

Deborah was not the only educator who reflected on dismissing students comments and the need to create a space for students' inquiries. Tameka, for example, suggested, "I think sometimes when stuff comes up, it was kinda like, okay we're not going there, but maybe go there every now and then" (Tameka, personal communication, July 17, 2018). Further in her interview, Tameka added to her thoughts about providing opportunities for discussion regarding social justice and equity. She continued,

> I think with going through the training and thinking about it, the conversation is gonna happen, regardless. If a child brought something up, something they felt was important enough to bring up so maybe you have the space to make sure that the conversation is around facts and maybe not get so opinion-centered. (Tameka, personal communication, July 17, 2018)

Thus, the teacher must intentionally create an environment for students to have dialogue surrounding issues that matter to them. To that end, Jocelyn discussed the significance of an environment where students feel comfortable in taking risks and sharing their thoughts and perspectives. She commented, "Empower students' voices in a safe space" (Jocelyn, personal communication, June 28, 2018). That was one of Jocelyn's takeaways after reading about and discussing teaching for social justice and equity with her small group. Further, Jocelyn's insight revealed her learning that student voice can become empowered when an appropriate teaching and learning environment is established.

Deborah, Tameka, and Jocelyn's points about empowering student voice were reiterated by Zoya. She asserted,

> Even if they say something that's shocking, or controversial, let them speak, their voice, their views, their opinions. Don't ignore, don't dismiss it, but really let them voice their opinion. Let them discuss it, and then you can kind of talk them through different things. (Zoya, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Zoya's point about allowing for "controversial" comments implied that students become empowered not only when they have the space to take risks but when the teacher takes risks in allowing for conversations around student-selected contentious issues to take place.

In addition to having the space to voice their perspectives, educators also acknowledged the significance in students knowing that their voice matters and can make a different outside of the classroom. In her follow-up interview, Shanelle insisted, "I just want them to know that their voice can be heard outside of those four walls, and it has merit, and it has reason. There's value in their voice, and that value should not be stifled. It needs to be heard" (Shanelle, personal communication, July 31, 2018). Shanelle's statement suggested that teaching for social justice was about empowering students beyond the classroom to act as social change agents.

The P-12 educators continued reflecting on the importance of empowering students. On the last day of the professional learning, when discussing insights she had developed through her participation in the social justice-driven professional learning community, Tara commented, "Put the learning in their [the students'] hands more" (Tara, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018). Tara's assertion implied that teaching for social justice and equity requires student-centered learning. In that regard, educators also discussed choice and inquiry as invaluable means for empowering students. For example, when planning three social justice activities

around the issue of segregation, Group 1 suggested that activities be differentiated and choice be provided to students. On the professional learning feedback form, when asked about what challenged their learning, an educator stated, "Allowing students more opportunity for free choice" (Anonymous, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Melissa offered, "Start the discussion with inquiry and also give the amount of time that it takes to really dive deep into these topics" (Melissa, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Both of these comments suggested that choice and inquiry are integral to teaching for social justice and equity. For example, students could have choice in deciding which social justice issue(s) they would like to focus on and develop questions of inquiry. They could also decide what form of social action they could take on the issue after doing their research. Within the professional learning, we discussed giving students opportunities to choose a social justice issue to research. We also discussed having the students generate questions that they have about the issue.

Multiple perspectives. When educators discussed what teaching for social justice and equity meant, they also placed emphasis on developing their students' abilities to take on multiple perspectives. Tiffany elaborated on how she could highlight that in her classroom. She mentioned,

> One (idea) that I really liked was looking at perspective. And I thought that it was really great to be able to get creative with that. So, I thought as an idea doing a book or a play or having students write a soliloquy about what somebody's perspective could be and how that could change. (Tiffany, personal communication, July 20, 2018)

Tiffany was not the only educator who discussed the salience of students learning about various perspectives. Tameka also discussed multiple perspectives, particularly the different viewpoints of students in the classroom. Tameka stated,

> You're not going to agree with everything everyone says. Your objective is not to just prove them wrong. Your objective is to hear them out and be okay with disagreeing, and I think that has to happen in your classroom. There are going to be multiple perspectives, but you need to hear all of them and then decide what you believe within that. (Tameka, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Tameka's statements suggested that multiple perspectives be valued in the classroom. Sabrina added, "We have to teach students to be okay with disagreeing. I feel like that's something that explicitly has to be taught and celebrated in the classroom so that they know this is good. This is healthy when I leave the classroom today" (Sabrina, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Sabrina's comments implied that teaching for social justice requires educators to be intentional in teaching students that having different points of view is permissible and students can still leave the discussion with respect for divergent thinking. Antoinette concurred as she mentioned, "It's okay to disagree with others' opinions/viewpoints (Antoinette, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Patricia discussed, "Let the children debate among themselves before teacher takes over" (Patricia, personal communication, June 28, 2018).

Rethinking instructional practices. Empowering students could require educators to rethink their instructional practices. In addition to examining multiple perspectives when teaching for social justice and equity, P-12 educators examined their instructional practices. For instance, Melissa thought about previous statements she made in her classroom and how those comments could have not only perpetuated stereotypes about people in other countries but caused a feeling of inferiority for a student sitting in her classroom.

> You know she was saying check yourself? I had one of those moments this year, where I had a child in my class who didn't have a vehicle. His family didn't have a vehicle, and

> he walked to school every single day. I knew that, but somehow that wasn't in the forefront of my mind. And often when the little ones were like complaining about walking long distances, I would often say things like, "Well people in other countries have to walk so far, and they don't have transportation, and I realized at the end of the year, that I was building pity instead of empathy. And I was like, "Oh my gosh, this whole time I could have been saying things like, "people who walk are really strong" and "wow, they're physically-fit and like, I could change the narrative. (Melissa, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018)

Melissa's thoughts were indicative that she was aware of the language she used to describe people had the power to shape what her students though about certain individuals and cultural groups. Using language to disrupt taken for granted beliefs and assumptions is consistent with disrupting the commonplace (Lewison et al., 2008). Throughout the professional learning we discussed the powerful nature of language and its role in teaching for social justice and equity.

Rethinking instructional practices also consisted of thinking about how historical events are taught. Sonya declared, "People teach Rosa Parks like she was tired and wanted to sit down. This was planned" (Sonya, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018). Sonya's suggestion implied that educators need in-depth background knowledge on a topic prior teaching for social justice and equity.

Rethinking and examining instructional practices included a consideration of who is included in the curriculum. In her follow-up interview when asked what she learned the most about in participating in the professional learning community, one insight, Tameka mentioned was how having a more expansive understanding of teaching for social justice has influenced her thinking about her instructional practices. She elaborated, "I think mostly the new definition helped me to

turn the way I was thinking about it or how I was shaping. Also, addressing my own biases of which groups should be talked about when teaching for social justice" (Tameka, personal communication, July 17, 2018). Tameka's thoughts indicated her direct connection between biases and instructional practices. The social justice-driven professional learning community expanded Tameka's thinking regarding various cultural groups who experienced oppression and were often left out of the curriculum.

Further, in rethinking their instructional practices, P-12 educators also discussed how teachers sometimes shy away from having conversations about social justice and equity with students. Antoinette made a personal connection as she added, "I tend to shy away from certain issues because I'm biased or ignorant to what's going on" (Antoinette, professional learning transcription data, June 28, 2018). Kristie emphasized the importance of not generalizing an experience, particularly when teaching students about slavery. Kristie stated,

> Not that you're promoting slavery or war, but slavery looks different in different locations. It's not all one thing. Internment is not all one thing. Making sure kids are able to make that distinction, you have to explain some of that. And so, again, that's not generalizing all experiences in like one experience. (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018)

Kristie's thoughts implied that rethinking instructional practices involved educators examining the perspective(s) in which they teach concepts.

Rethinking instructional practices also included creating a space where students can question the teacher. Tara provided an example of how she would allow her students to question her,

> If I give you a test question that wasn't fair or whatever, I want you to question me. So, I think in addition to just encouraging kids to challenge things and what they read and what

> they see, encourage them to challenge you, in respectful ways of course. (Tara, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Educators went on to discuss that when students inquire about specific topics and teachers do not have "the answers", it is okay not to know and to suggest researching together. To that end, educators also mentioned teaching and learning may not always go as planned, specifically in thinking about teaching for social justice and equity. Shanelle, a sixth- grade ELA teacher, asserted, "It doesn't have to be scripted. That's one thing that I keep coming back to" (Shanelle, personal communication, July 31, 2018). Further, a few teachers, Antoinette, Melissa, and Tara described teaching as an experiment. That is, when teaching for social justice and equity educators must be okay with not knowing exactly what direction a lesson may go in, especially because students' inquiries, questions, or comments may take the lesson in different directions. Thus, this demands flexibility and strong content knowledge and the ability to facilitate conversations.

Another layer of teaching for social justice and equity teachers reflected on as they examined their instructional practices is that language matters. Kristie wrote, "Language is a powerful tool" (Kristie, personal communication, June 28, 2018). When asked to explain her understanding of teaching for social justice and equity, on Written Reflection 1, Mona discussed language as a key characteristic. She stated, "Being mindful of your role as a role model and the language, materials, etc. that you use" (Mona, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Thus, thinking through how language is used by the teacher was important along with how language is used in literature. On the professional learning feedback form, when asked to tell what they learned and/or will definitely use, an educator commented, "Pay attention to language in literature and see if it is exclusive or stereotypical" (Anonymous, personal communication, June 29, 2018).

The educator's comment suggested that educators intentionally consider how language is used in texts that they are using in their classrooms.

In her follow-up interview, when asked how she thought what she learned in the professional learning community might influence her teaching about social justice, Shanelle also expressed being more conscientious about how she uses language in her classroom. She acknowledged,

> Oh, I'm much more aware now. The things I say, I'm thinking about it actively before I actually say it because I know now that there are just so many different elements with a child that you may not have thought about before, and you may have said something in class and didn't realize when a child was offended or upset or why they shut down on you in class. And it's only because you said something in class and you just weren't as sensitive as you could've been to what they're experiencing. (Shanelle, personal communication, July 31, 2018)

A teacher even discussed how it is important to recognize and value a student's home language, and one way to demonstrate that value is to refer to students who are learning English as dual language learners instead of English language learners. By doing so, teachers can de-privilege the English language and place value on learning two languages.

Teaching strategies and resources. In addition to educators' conversations about using language in the classroom to promote social justice and equity, they also had discussions about teaching strategies and resources. Several of the P-12 educators indicated that the social justice-driven professional learning community supported them in acquiring strategies and resources for teaching for social justice and equity. Shanelle expressed her gratitude, particularly for learning about a website for her students to exercise their social agency. She stated,

> So, the first thing was those websites that you shared with us. I had no idea that those websites, besides tolerance.org, existed. So like Indy Kids, that was a great website. I actually used it in my summer program moving forward from this one (post professional learning). Just to know that there's that space, there's that platform available that we could use—it's amazing! Like I said, I didn't even know that was available for us. (Shanelle, personal communication, July 31, 2018)

Shanelle's comment indicated that educators need resources in order to teach for social justice and equity.

Other educators also mentioned teaching strategies and resources as they reflected on their learning within the social justice-driven professional learning community. On their professional learning feedback forms, 12 out of 17 educators indicated that they will definitely use teaching strategies and resources from the professional learning. In addition, in her follow-up interview, Tiffany explained, "We had a good range of resources" (Tiffany, personal communication, July 20, 2018). One teacher described the resources as "relevant materials." Many of the teachers noted they learned about and/or will definitely use the websites provided during the professional learning. Two teachers, for example, listed indykids.org as a website they plan to use. On the second day of professional learning, I showed the teachers this website and discussed how it could be used for students to not only read editorials written by other children about a multitude of social justice issues but their students can actually submit their writing to this website for others to read about a particular social justice issue. Shanelle seemed to be very fascinated by this site as she generated ideas about how she could use it with her students. She mentioned in her interview she was interested in having her students write and publish editorials as a form of social agency.

Together with websites and publishing, educators discussed a variety of other teaching strategies they could use to support their students as social change agents. They mentioned performing a reader's theater, writing poetry, performing a speech, and creating a mural. Educators also expressed interest in using specific activities with their students that were used in the professional learning to facilitate conversations. They discussed using the identity map with their students. Sonya maintained,

> I'm definitely going to use some of the protocols and the identity map. I really liked the identity map because, for me as a teacher of early-ish grades, it provides a way into those conversations. So, I need to teach the word gender. That's an avenue. Race. (Sonya, personal communication, July 16, 2018)

Sonya considered how she could use the identity map and specific social justice-related vocabulary terms to support her students in understanding terms associated with social justice and equity.

Sonya was only one of several educators who planned to use the identity map with their students. At the end of the second day, during our Closing Circle, many participants reflected on incorporating the identity map in their classrooms. Sabrina stated,

> I liked the identity mapping. I've also done a writing title from where I see the world. So, I like how those can be used to kind of have students start off at the beginning of the year knowing each other better and knowing themselves better and knowing the lens that they have as they go into the school year. (Sabrina, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Heather would also use the identity map with her first graders. She suggested,

> I really liked the first activity that we did with, you know, what categories you fall in and all about you because I feel you connect with people quicker. I guess by knowing what their background is and yours. And I definitely want to implement that. Maybe on a smaller scale because they'll be in first grade. But, I'm interested to see how it goes. (Heather, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Heather's comment suggested that she was considering how to modify what she learned in within the PLC for her first-grade students. That was what I encouraged the P-12 educators to do at the onset of the professional learning and reminded them of that as we discussed various instructional activities.

Using MCL to Teach for Social Justice and Equity

The sections below address the following research question: What knowledge do educators construct about using multicultural children's literature (MCL) to teach for social justice and equity? In the first section, Relevancy, educators discussed the significance of ensuring that students see people who look like them in the texts they read. In the next section, Author, educators grappled with whether or not an author outside of a cultural group can write about that group. They also discussed the significance of students questioning the author. Finally, in the last section, Multiple Perspectives, P-12 educators discussed the importance of seeking those missing voices and counternarratives when locating multicultural children's literature to use in their classrooms.

Relevancy. As educators discussed using multicultural children's literature in their classrooms to teach for social justice and equity, a major topic of discussion was relevancy. Zoya offered a poignant example of why it is important to her that students see themselves in the books they read. She stated,

> I had a very dark complexion child and she came up to me bawling, crying about how these kids and how you know they were saying about how dark she was and whatever. She was upset, and so I looked at her and I was just like, "Do you think you're ugly?" and she was like "no." And I was like "I don't either." And then I made her say, "I am beautiful, I am strong." You know I made her say it so she felt it. (Heather, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Zoya also discussed that it is especially important for adolescent girls to see themselves in the books they read. She commented,

> I think the biggest thing for me even working in middle school, especially with girls, at that age they are very insecure. So, I think the thing that helps girls the most is seeing someone who looks like them who's confident in their own skin and they can relax. You know what? She looks like me. She's confident. (Zoya, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Zoya's comment implied that when students see themselves in the books they read their identity is affirmed. Students' identities being affirmed has been identified as integral to teaching for social justice and equity through culturally relevant pedagogy (Esposito & Swain, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

One educator pointed out that not all people of color, particularly dark-skinned girls, have opportunities to see themselves in the books they read. Sonya asserted, "I find often times dark-skinned little girls don't see themselves in the literature. And if so, then the person is always from Africa. It's crazy. So just making sure that all of my students and their backgrounds are represented" (Sonya, personal communication, July 16, 2018). In a similar vein, Sabrina discussed, "I want my students to see/read books with children that look like them, speak like them,

and fight against issues that are relatable to them" (Sabrina, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Lisa and Deborah also discussed the importance of considering students' identities when using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Deborah stated, "Consider the demographics of your students—their culture, race, gender, etc." (Deborah, personal communication, June 29, 2018). During the professional learning we discussed books being used as mirrors for students to see people who look like them and who share similar experiences (Sims Bishop, 1990). Thus, there was a significant emphasis on students seeing themselves in the books they read. We also discussed books as windows or opportunities for students to see out into the world and see and learn about people who make look different from them and have different lived experiences (Sims Bishop, 1990). Although both the former and latter were discussed, educators' responses about what they deemed important to consider when selecting and using multicultural children's literature focused primarily on the former.

Choosing books that are relevant to students was also evident in the educators' text selections. Within this activity the educators listed three multicultural children's books and/or professional learning books they wanted for their classroom. They were asked to provide a rationale underneath their text selections. This activity occurred on Day 2 of the professional learning, during the last hour. Due to time constraints, some educators did not have time to write their rationale for their text selections.

Heather selected the following multicultural children's books to use in her classroom: *I Love My Hair* (Tarpley, 1998), *The Crayon Box that Talked* (DeRolf, 1997), and *Hip Hop Speaks to Children* (Giovanni, 2008). In her rationale for selecting those books, Heather stated, "I chose these books because I can see them closely relating to my students" (Heather, personal communication, June 29, 2018). In addition to students being able to see characters in stories

who may have similar characteristics as them, teachers also discussed using multicultural children's literature that features social justice issues, particularly issues relevant to their students' lives and the communities in which they live. Tara noted, "Always, always connect it to the real-world when possible. This makes it meaningful and memorable" (Tara, personal communication, June 29, 2018). She furthered this point on her Written Reflection 2 as she stated, "Your children should be able to see themselves in their books, and they should be able to see the rest of the world accurately, honestly, and through multiple perspectives" (Tara, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Tara's comment alluded to books being used as windows; this was one of the few instances in the data where the books and mirrors concept occurred (Bishop-Simms, 1990).

During a follow-up interview, when asked about any new understandings she had gained through her participation in the professional learning community, Tiffany said, "Analyzing literature for actual socially responsive or social justice content is probably something else that I've learned" (Tiffany, personal communication, July 20, 2018). Further, among the multicultural children's literature Tiffany selected to use with her students was *Waiting for Papa* (Lainez, 2004), a story about eight-year old Beto, who anxiously awaited his father's arrival from El Salvador. Tiffany wrote the following rationale in selecting this book: "This is an applicable book to many of my students. It is relatable and may be a great way to discuss the background and experiences of my students" (Tiffany, personal communication, June 29, 2018). The school that Tiffany would be working in for the upcoming school year had a predominant composition of students from immigrant families. Thus, Tiffany was very intentional about selecting books where her students could relate to the characters.

Having books that include characters relatable to her students was also very important for Jocelyn, a pre-school teacher of students with autism. She selected *My Brother Charlie* (Peete &

Peete, 2010), a story about a boy named Charlie who had autism and struggled making friends and showing his true feelings. Despite Charlie's social hardships, he had so many amazing abilities that made him unique.

Middle school and high school educators also selected books based on what they thought would be relevant to their students. Lisa selected *The Only Road* (Diaz, 2016)*, The Stars Beneath Our Feet* (Moore, 2017)*, and Seven Blind Mice* (Young, 2002). Her rationale for selecting these books for her middle school readers was that they are relevant to the students she will be working with. Shanelle wanted relevant books for her students. When asked about how she planned on using multicultural children's literature in her classroom, Shanelle shared,

> One of the books I just received is *The Hate U Give* (Thomas, 2017), which is being turned into a movie. And I know last year a lot of the students were talking about going to see this movie, and it's a very timely and relevant book because we know the brutality that's happening in our system, especially to those people of color. And I want to be able to bring that social justice, that idea into my classroom. (Shanelle, personal communication, July 31, 2018)

Comparably, Mark discussed how he plans on using multicultural children's literature with his high school students as he discussed, "I would use it to cover biases and how they affect policing in communities" (Mark, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Both Shanelle and Mark, who were in the same small group, considered discussing the social justice issue of police brutality with their students in the next school year.

Questioning the author. As educators explored multicultural children's literature, they questioned who has the authority to write about a marginalized group. Shanelle queried,

> Is it that only the person who is marginalized or who has been oppressed tell the story or can the story be effective if it's someone from outside of that marginalized group? You know what I'm saying? Does it have to be an African-American person that tells the African-American story? Can it be a Latino? Can it be a White person? You know? The idea that only those people who have been oppressed or marginalized can tell their story. You know? Could it be someone else? (Shanelle, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Shanelle's questions implied that she considered the author of a story when trying to ascertain the authenticity of a story.

Other educators also wondered if someone who was not a part of a cultural group could write about that group. To address that question, I reiterated a point I had made prior to small groups beginning their discussion on multicultural children's literature, and that was, it depends. This multicultural literature demonstrates divergent perspectives on the topic (Fox & Short, 2003; Tunnell et al., 2016). As the teachers perused through the multicultural children's books in the room and considered other recommended social justice books provided in their notebooks, Kristie pondered aloud, "How do you feel about books like this, that are written by a White man? I guess that depends on who it is?" (Kristie, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018). Sonya replied, "It would depend. Does that make sense?". Kristie's questioning indicated that selecting multicultural children's literature entailed an analysis of who wrote the book.

In addition to discussing the author's identity, the educators also discussed how the author portrays characters. Mona, for instance, mentioned characters of color should not always be depicted as poor or sad. Tiffany also discussed social class and being mindful of not perpetuating stereotypes about particular groups of people. She maintained, "Am I putting a black person in a

poor role and putting a White person in a middle-class role? Or am I switching it?" (Tiffany, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018). Moreover, seven out of 17 educators wrote about the importance of not stereotyping or challenging stereotypes that either naturally occur or are societally engrained about different groups of people. During and after reading about selecting and using multicultural children's literature and critical books, the teachers noted some key ideas they learned and how they were thinking about those ideas. Jocelyn wrote, "Every individual can be a good person regardless of race, anyone can be strong. Leadership can come from anyone. No race or culture owns one adjective" (Jocelyn, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Jocelyn's comments implied that educators consider texts that do perpetuate stereotypes about cultural groups and then support their students in challenging them. Kristie articulated, "Show the uniqueness of individuals" (Kristie, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Kristie's statement suggested her awareness of intergroup differences and how it is important to select multicultural texts with that idea in mind.

Other P-12 educators commented on the power of using multicultural children's literature to dispel stereotypes. Heather noted, "I think if we promote multicultural literature, it will bring about much change with stereotypes" (Heather, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Lisa wrote, "I think it would be helpful to identify the stereotypes and specifically model the contrary to dispel pre-conceived ideas" (Lisa, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Similarly, Shanelle expressed, "It is important to consider the images represented, that stereotypes are not perpetuated, that the stories told are authentic" (Shanelle, personal communication, June 28, 2018).

Along with avoiding or challenging stereotypes, teachers also mentioned the significance of a story being told authentically. Jocelyn, a preschool teacher, wrote, "the more descriptive, the more specific, the more rich the learning experience can be" (Jocelyn, personal communication,

June 29, 2018). In reflecting on the importance of books that authentically portray cultures, Patricia stated, “We may not always know how authentic the representation is in the book” (Patricia, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Zoya acknowledged, “I need to do my research to ensure the book is representing authentic culture” (Zoya, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Zoya’s statement indicated in order to determine if a cultural group is being authentically portrayed, educators must go beyond the book itself and seek other sources.

Multiple perspectives. In addition to questioning the author of a single text and possibly having a different perspective, P-12 educators discussed having multicultural children’s literature that offered different perspectives. Deborah suggested that a part of doing so meant that educators surveyed their classroom libraries to ensure that their students could see multiple representations of various cultural groups. She expressed,

> So, I mean she was talking yesterday about how we send messages by not only what we say, but by what we do. So, if your classroom library doesn’t include multiple portrayals and perspectives, especially that look like your kids, then you’re saying to them that you can’t do this. (Deborah, professional learning transcript data, June 29, 2018)

Deborah’s assertions implied that teaching for social justice and equity required educators to critically examine the instructional materials they had in their classrooms, specifically the books that were available to their students.

Educators not only discussed having multicultural children’s literature in their classrooms, but they also discussed the value in using those tools to teach multiple perspectives. For instance, the educators commented on how it is imperative to teach children that they can challenge the author. Mark articulated, “Students should challenge the author’s views” (Mark, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Melissa discussed, “Teach children to challenge authors

and to disagree with messages. That's how they are going to learn to think critically and giving them opportunities to do that within like your own classroom library and things like that" (Melissa, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018). Further, Deborah added,

> Students should understand they can challenge and disagree with what they're reading. And just because you're reading it from an author that, "This is it. What the author says is the end all and be all." You can question it. As a student, you can question and challenge what you're reading. You can ask questions about it and not just accept it for what it is. (Deborah, professional learning transcript data, June 28, 2018)

Deborah's statement indicated that, for her, teaching for social justice and equity meant supporting students in questioning what they read. Similar to Deborah's comment, Zoya suggested questioning the author, specifically checking for racial biases. Zoya stated, "Are articles and literature racially biased?" (Zoya, personal communication, June 28, 2018). The educators' comments emphasized their understanding of the importance of questioning what they read and teaching their students to do the same.

Educators also began to think about multiple perspectives in terms of looking at a situation from various angles. Reflecting on the significance of multiple perspectives, specifically regarding the social justice issue of homelessness, Sonya stated,

> Like when we were talking about the homeless thing and I was thinking about *Fly Away Home* (Bunting, 1993) because I remember when I first heard that story I was like, I would not classically consider these people homeless. But what would make you choose to live in an airport? You didn't just be like, "Oh, planes are fascinating." No, you didn't have anywhere else to go. So just those kinds of strategic conversations and looking at

> things from slightly different perspectives. (Sonya, personal communication, July 16, 2018)

Sonya's comment implied that she was considering counter-narratives and how she could support her students in that same regard.

Another example of how educators acknowledged multiple perspectives in relation to multicultural children's literature occurred when a teacher commented on *One of a Kind Like Me* (Mayeno, 2016). The book is about a little boy who was adamant about wearing a purple dress to his school's costume party and courageously addressed those who questioned his choice of attire. Tara, who self-identified as pansexual, mentioned that usually books that address topics of gender identity feature a White main character, but *One of a Kind Like Me* (Mayeno 2016) offered the perspective of someone who is Latino. Tara's comment signaled that she was knowledgeable of the significance of using stories that offer the perspectives of more than just a single race who has experienced a particular type of oppression.

Educators considered the importance of sharing multiple perspectives with their students as they made their text selections. Kristie selected, *Step Up to the Plate* (Krishnaswami, 2017)*, Sylvia and Aki* (Conkling, 2011)*, and Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust* (Bunting, 1989). In her rationale, Kristie explained she selected "WWII or Holocaust books that show various perspectives" (Kristie, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Mona, Jocelyn and Tiffany selected books we discussed during the professional learning that explicitly demonstrated multiple perspectives, *Voices in the Park* (Browne, 2001) and *Seven Blind Mice* (Ed Young, 2002). It was evident from these P-12 educators' text selections that they wanted to explicitly teach multiple perspectives.

Lastly, in considering multiple perspectives, most of the educators mentioned stories about minority groups or stories that often go untold when asked to "describe what multicultural children's literature means to you", question three on Written Reflection 2. Deborah stated, "Literature is multicultural when stories are told about groups that are usually not in the majority. These stories include cultures that most are not exposed to" (Deborah, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Sonya stated multicultural children's literature is "literature that addresses issues of social justice and/or presents minorities or viewpoints in a non-negative light" (Sonya, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Sabrina described multicultural children's literature as the "untold narrative". Lisa characterized it as "literature that represents a viewpoint from a marginalized group" (Lisa, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Moreover, the P-12 educators' definitions of multicultural children's literature became centered upon marginalized groups of people.

Summary

Findings from this study of P-12 educators who participated in a social justice-driven professional learning community show how educators expanded their understandings of the constructs of social justice and equity, the perceptions they developed about teaching for social justice and equity, and the knowledge they cultivated about using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. Teachers expanded their definition of social justice and equity to include opportunity and access. Teachers also gained a richer understanding of social justice and equity by unpacking their social identities and examining the relationship between their social identities and experiences of privilege and/or marginalization. In doing so, they determined context also plays a role in experiences of privilege and marginalization.

In regard to teaching for social justice, P-12 educators concluded teachers must dig deep with the questions they ask, particularly in getting students to think critically about issues of social justice. Additionally, educators determined students need to feel empowered to ask questions, and they need to be taught the value in multiple perspectives. Educators also rethought instructional practices and concluded language matters in teaching for social justice and equity.

Finally, in using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity, P-12 educators emphasized the importance of using literature that is not only representative of the demographics of the students in their classroom but is relevant to the social justice issues that matter to their students. Educators also discussed the significance of considering who is writing the story and how it is being told. Also, of prime concern to the educators was using literature that represents multiple perspectives and being intentional about including the narratives of people whose stories often go untold.

6 DISCUSSION

This qualitative case study investigated how a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC) influenced P-12 educators. The study focused specifically on the educators' understandings of social justice and equity; the perceptions they cultivated about teaching for social justice and equity; and, the knowledge they constructed regarding using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity. The discussions that took place during professional learning meetings were analyzed along with documents collected during the meetings and follow-up interviews. Three overarching themes emerged from the findings discussed in chapter four: intentionality, multiple perspectives, and teaching strategies and resources. This chapter discusses each of those main themes in relation to the existing literature. Following a discussion of the three major themes, I share study limitations, implications, future research, and concluding thoughts.

Themes

Intentionality. A major theme that emerged from the data is that the work of the social justice educator requires intentionality. Teachers must be intentional in examining their sociocultural identities and how various aspects of their identities contribute to experiences of marginalization and or privilege in society (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999; Taylor, 2013). This is especially important for educators as their beliefs, values, assumptions, and ideologies about students and their families are influenced in part by their sociocultural identities. In addition, and of equal significance, educators' thoughts about students and their families affect how they approach teaching and interacting with them (Irvine, 1999). Thus, intentionality in critically examining their own sociocultural positions in society presented a viable opportunity for P-12 educators in this study learning to teach for social justice and equity. It also emphasized the lenses through which they see out into the world.

Moreover, unpacking their sociocultural identities supported P-12 educators in thinking about ways in which they could more effectively serve their students' learning needs. Previous studies have indicated a self-examination of one's identity and hearing the stories of others offer a broader understanding of privilege, marginalization, and oppression (Agarwal et al., 2010; Taylor, 2013). My research study reaffirmed this notion as participants gained a deeper understanding of privilege and marginalization by unpacking and critically examining their sociocultural identities, sharing personal narratives, and hearing the stories of others within the PLC. Participants indicated that this exercise supported them in recognizing their own biases and learning from the diverse experiences of others. As an added benefit, using the identity map as a tool to dissect and discuss identity provided an example of how educators might facilitate a discussion of identity within their various teaching contexts with their students.

In conjunction with intentionally examining their sociocultural identities, educators teaching for social justice and equity intentionally evaluate how they define social justice and equity and other related terms. The understandings educators develop and continuously refine about teaching for social justice and equity and related concepts such as multicultural education (Banks, 1995), multicultural children's literature, culturally relevant teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1995), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010), and critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2008) have invaluable implications on their approach to teaching for social justice and equity.

Educators' conceptualizations of social justice also influence the instructional materials and topics they choose to incorporate or omit from their curriculum (Esposito & Swain, 2009; MacPherson, 2010). To that end, previous studies indicated some educators' limited understandings of social justice-related terminology and the consequences that such narrow understandings can have on how they enact social justice pedagogy (Brinson, 2012; Guerrero et al., 2017; Iwai,

2013). Findings from the current study suggested how educators selected multicultural children's literature with intentionality once they had gained a wider understanding of social justice and equity; named social justice issues; and, grappled with a broader definition of multicultural children's literature, which extended beyond race or ethnicity. Findings from this study suggested that P-12 educators gained a more nuanced understanding of social justice and equity and related terms such as equality and multicultural children's literature. Tiffany and Tameka, for example, both acknowledged in their follow-up interviews that a broader understanding of social justice and equity supported them in being more inclusive in the social justice topics and multicultural children's literature that they selected to use in their classrooms.

Another area of intentionality in teaching for social justice and equity was the importance of valuing student voice. P-12 educators within this study expressed the significance of creating learning environments where students feel comfortable initiating discussion topics that matter to them even if they are contentious social issues. For instance, educators in the current study discussed how the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States of America provoked their students to initiate discussions about deportation and immigration. This instance was consistent with similar occurrences discussed by other educators across the country as students experienced anxiety, trauma, ridicule, and fear of deportation (Costello, 2016; Sondel et al., 2018). Therefore, this study, along with previous studies on teaching for social justice and equity, revealed teaching for social justice and equity requires teachers to possess a disposition that honors students as learners and also as teachers who have a considerable influence on not only their peers' learning but the teacher's learning as well (MacPherson, 2010; Osorio, 2018). Teachers placing intentional value on student voice and sharing the teaching space is a liberating type of education that positions the educator as one who works alongside students (Freire, 1970/2012).

Being intentional about creating a student-centered learning environment grounded on social justice and equity can be liberating for students and is paramount to the work of social justice educators as they seek to engage their students as active contributors in the teaching and learning process who can critique and problematize areas where social injustice, oppression, and marginalization exist (Freire, 1970/2012; Henry A. Giroux, 1994; Kumashiro, 2015). Moreover, intentionality in valuing student voice also means empowering students with tools to critically examine and question what they read, what they see, what they hear, and how marginalized groups are positioned in society (Lewison et al., 2008). To that end, educators in the current study suggested that students be taught to challenge ideas—be it ideas from their peers, a message an author presents in a text, or a statement made by the classroom teacher. Deliberately placing value on student voice defies traditional schooling (Freire, 1970/2012). Although social justice educators may use their lesson plans to guide the instructional process, they anticipate that a lesson could go in whatever direction the students take it, and they support that shift. Thus, P-12 educators in the current study concluded that teaching for social justice encompasses being willing to take a lesson in the direction of students' inquiries, questions, and concerns. This study reaffirmed the notion that teaching for social justice and equity requires that educators be comfortable with uncertainty, rather intentionally provoking it.

Multiple perspectives. A second overall theme in this study was teaching for social justice and equity demands considering and critically examining multiple perspectives. This study revealed that educators find it important to move beyond relying exclusively on a single narrative, particularly the dominant narrative, or the story told most often, when discussing particular subjects with their students. They often expressed the need to look for untold stories, missing voices,

and counternarratives when selecting multicultural children's literature and when discussing historical events. On Written Reflection 2, Sabrina described multicultural children's literature as the "untold narrative" (Sabrina, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Comparably, Deborah, a third-grade teacher stated, "Literature is multicultural when stories are told about groups that are usually not in the majority" (Deborah, personal communication, June 29, 2018). Seeking multiple perspectives on a topic and including those various perspectives within the curriculum are essential to teaching for social justice (Sleeter, 2013). Further, incorporating multiple perspectives within the curriculum is critical to multicultural education and an anti-oppressive education where the perspectives and stories of marginalized groups are integral to the school curriculum rather than being presented as an add-on or as an event that takes place around a specific holiday or month (Banks, 2004).

The theme of multiple perspectives was also evident in the educators' discussions of teaching students that it is okay to disagree with each other and have different perspectives on a topic. Tara suggested, "Create a space for critique" (Tara, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Zoya agreed as she discussed, "Be bold, ask tough questions. Let students challenge each other" (Zoya, personal communication, June 28, 2018). Thus, in order to teach students to respectfully disagree and challenge the perspective and ideas of their teacher and classmates, the teacher must create and sustain a classroom community where everyone feels valued and respected. Equally important, students must feel comfortable taking risks in their learning, which could mean offering a different point of view, questioning someone else's point of view, and questioning their own perspective and biases. A primary benefit of teaching students to respect-

fully disagree and challenge their own thinking and that of those around them, particularly regarding social justice and equity, is they become better positioned to understand the oppressive social conditions experienced by marginalized groups of people and act as social change agents.

The need for teaching strategies and resources. In addition to overall themes of multiple perspectives and intentionality, the need for teaching strategies and resources was another major theme in the current study. Previous studies found that educators who were interested in teaching for social justice needed concrete examples on what teaching for social justice entailed to support them in envisioning it and operationalizing it in their own educational contexts (Burke & Collier, 2017; Dover, 2013; Riley & Crawford-Garrett, 2016). The current study added to those findings as educators within this study consistently noted how the social justice and equity-driven professional learning offered specific teaching strategies, websites, instructional materials, and other resources they could use in their classrooms to teach for social justice and equity. In a follow-up email, post professional learning, Kristie indicted that she uses what she learned in the professional learning often and has shared resources that we discussed with colleagues.

Another participant, Tameka referred to a suggested booklist in her *Social Justice & Children's Literature* notebook to create a Donor's Choose grant to supply her multicultural classroom library. For Tameka, writing the grant provided an advantageous opportunity to build her multicultural book collection beyond the three books that she would be receiving as a part of her participation within the social justice-driven PLC. In her second follow-up interview, she mentioned that her request had been filled within two weeks of her writing the grant. Moreover, when educators have resources to support them in taking up teaching for social justice and equity, a social justice booklist for example, they can better determine their next steps in creating educational spaces for teaching for social justice equity. This particular finding is pivotal to the

education community as it has considerable implications for designing future social justice-driven professional learning and developing content that includes specific examples of teaching for social justice and equity and finding ways to access resources.

Resources educators found important were not limited to teaching strategies, websites, and instructional materials. P-12 educators in this study noted the importance of having the time and opportunity to collaborate with various educators who worked within different contexts to develop their own knowledge. Shanelle expressed how much she valued the opportunity to collaborate with educators from different schools. In addition, she expressed wanting to keep in touch with those educators to find out how teaching for social justice and equity was going in their classrooms and to serve as a supportive network for continued growth.

Sonya shared a similar sentiment regarding the positive influence that the social justice-driven PLC had on her. She stated,

> I got to hear from and learn from people in different capacities that I might not have otherwise. There was a lot of rarity in there. There was a museum educator. These people don't get together in the same room often. (Sonya, INT, p.9, 173-177)

Therefore, results from this study added to the knowledge base of how a professional learning community comprised of educators across various contexts could serve as an added benefit when learning to teach for social justice and equity.

Implications

Findings from this study revealed that a social justice-driven PLC influenced P-12 educators, who worked in different settings, in a myriad of ways. Discussions and activities supported them in expanding their definitions of social justice and equity. Through readings and collaborative discussions, educators broadened their understanding of teaching for social justice and equity. They also acquired teaching strategies and resources. Finally, the educators furthered their

knowledge and understanding of how to select and use multicultural children's literature in their classrooms as a springboard to discussing issues of social justice with their students.

This study has several implications for teachers, school leaders, and policy makers. Educators need more opportunities to participate in transformative professional learning, where they are not focusing on learning technical skills and new programs to support students in acquiring rudimentary knowledge and skills (Freire, 1970/2012; Kohli et al., 2015; Servage, 2008; Sleeter, 2011). Transformative professional learning, instead, builds educators' critical consciousness and their capacity to develop learning spaces and instructional practices that engender a more just and equitable society. The P-12 educators in this study were able to expand their critical consciousness through reflection and dialogue with other educators.

Research has suggested that trust, collaboration, and reflection are essential components of effective professional learning communities (Cherrington & Thornton, 2015; Hallam et al., 2015; Stoll et al., 2006). Thus, those components are especially important to consider when designing and facilitating a social justice-driven professional learning community as educators discuss ideologies, biases, assumptions, instructional practices, and contentious social justice issues. Thus, intentionality must be given to supporting educators in establishing trust and building community. Trust and community were established between the educators in this study through the use of protocols that supported them in learning more about each other and determining norms or agreements that would undergird their discussions and collaborative work during their time together. Intentionality must also be given to providing the time and space for educators to critically reflect on their instructional practices and learning throughout their participation in a social justice-driven professional learning community.

After participating in transformative professional learning, educators need to have the autonomy to actually implement what they have learned. After participating in the summer professional learning, Shanelle informed me via a follow-up email that she is currently teaching sixth through eighth graders through a scripted reading program. Like other educators in the social justice-driven PLC, Shanelle was very enthused about incorporating what she learned in her classroom once the school year had begun. Sadly, teaching from a scripted curriculum counters teachers' abilities to enact social justice pedagogy. Knowing that Shanelle is required to teach from a scripted curriculum, I had hoped to have the opportunity to speak with her to determine if she was able to apply any of what she had learned in the PLC; unfortunately, she did not respond to my email regarding a second follow-up interview, heightening questions that she was unable to pursue teaching for social justice and equity.

Unfortunately, barriers such as having to teach from a scripted curriculum can inhibit educators from teaching for social justice and equity. The theme expressed earlier about being intentional in valuing student voice and inquiry typically becomes obsolete in a scripted curriculum. Further complicating the matter, teachers working at schools predominantly comprised of students from low-income families are more likely required to teach from a scripted curriculum in comparison to teachers serving schools predominantly serving a majority population of students from middle class and affluent families. Teaching for social justice and equity can have significant benefits for all students, especially students from low-income families and students of color who are often confronted with an education that does not honor and value their cultural resources and perpetuate the oppressive social conditions that have historically constrained their social mobility.

Future Research

Future research on a social justice-driven PLC could investigate how being a part of the PLC influences educators over an extended period of time. For example, the professional learning could take place throughout the school year either through face-to-face meetings, online meetings, or a combination of both. The research could also investigate how what the educators learned during the professional learning influenced their teaching. The following questions might be considered for this research: How does a social justice-driven PLC support educators in enacting social justice pedagogy? In what ways do P-12 educators and their students take up social justice and equity?

Concluding Thoughts

There are a multitude of social justice issues impacting students, families, and entire communities every day. Many social justice issues in the United States of America have become exacerbated in recent years with political rhetoric associated with the 2016 presidential election. The current social and political climate presents fertile ground for teaching for social justice and equity. Teaching for social justice and equity requires that educators have the disposition, professional knowledge, and support to do so effectively. Accordingly, working within a professional learning community provides educators an invaluable opportunity to develop and expand their knowledge and understanding while supporting their peers in the same regard. They further serve as models for others on their faculty.

As an education community, we must revisit the purposes of school and revise as necessary to ensure social justice pedagogy is integral to teaching and learning. In doing so, educators must problematize and question the assumptions of school and curriculum (Eisner, 2003). From there, the purposes of school should be clearly articulated so that educators can intentionally create educational spaces that genuinely reflect those purposes. In addition, as educators, we must

continuously work to critically examine whether or not and to what extent those purposes are being fulfilled.

The extent to which we prepare students to critique and question inequality and become social change agents has dire consequences for shaping a more just and humane world where everyone, regardless of his or her sociocultural identity, has access and opportunities to thrive in life. This task is indeed complex; however, it is necessary. Educators need and want professional learning and support with teaching for social justice and equity. This research study addressed the overarching question of How can a social justice-driven professional learning community (PLC) influence P-12 educators? Findings from this study indicated that educators were positively influenced by intentionality, multiple perspectives, and teaching strategies and resources and steps, even if small, were made toward social justice and equity.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Georgia State University
Informed Consent

Title: Evaluation of a CREST-Ed Menu of Service (MOS) Professional Development: Social Justice and Children's Literature Principal Investigator: Dr. Caroline Sullivan
Student Principal Investigator: Felicia Baiden
Sponsor: US Department of Education

Purpose
The purpose of the study is to determine the knowledge and understanding that P-12 teachers and other educators construct through their participation within a social justice-focused professional learning community (PLC). You are invited to take part in this research study because you are a P-12 teacher or other educational support person that took part in a CREST-Ed sponsored professional development activity. A total of 80 people will be invited to take part in this study.

Procedures
If you decide to take part, you will be asked to release examples of your work such as reflection papers and journal entries created during the professional development session. Those that consent to participate in research will be placed in a separate breakout session group and will be audio recorded for research purposes. You may be asked to review preliminary study findings at a later date with the student PI via email and this review is expected to take approximately 60 minutes. Finally, you may be asked to participate in two audio-recorded 60 minute in-person or telephone interviews with both interviews occurring within six months after the professional development session at a time and place of your choosing. The total time commitment to review preliminary findings and to participate in the interviews is approximately 180 minutes over three days.

Future Research
Researchers will remove information that may identify you and may use your data for future research. If we do this, we will not ask for any additional consent for you.

Risks
In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life.

Benefits
This study is not designed to benefit you personally. Overall, we hope to gain information about how teachers can be supported in developing instructional practices that engender a more just and democratic society.

Alternatives
The alternative to taking part in this study is to not take part in the study.

Compensation
You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Voluntary Participation
You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop

Version Date: July 5, 2018

out at any time. You may refuse to take part in the study or stop at any time. This will not cause you to lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Confidentiality

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. The following people and entities will have access to the information you provide:

- Dr. Caroline Sullivan
- Felicia Baiden
- GSU Institutional Review Board
- Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP)
- Collaboration and Resources for Encouraging and Supporting Transformations in Education (CREST-Ed) evaluation staff
- US Department of Education

We will use a participant ID rather than your name on study records. The information you provide will be stored on a password-and-firewall protected computer in the office of the student PI. All hard copies artifactual data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the office of the student PI. The key code sheet used to identify participants will be stored in a different locked file cabinet to protect privacy. The key code sheet used for this study will be destroyed on June 11, 2023. All electronic files will be destroyed on June 11, 2023. When we present or publish the results of this study, we will not use your name or other information that may identify you.

Contact Information

Contact Dr. Caroline Sullivan at 404-413-8404 and ccsullivan@gsu.edu or contact Felicia Baiden at fbaiden1@student.gsu.edu and 404-664-7203.

- If you have questions about the study or your part in it
- If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study

Contact the GSU Office of Human Research Protections at 404-413-3500 or irb@gsu.edu

- if you have questions about your rights as a research participant
- if you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research

Consent

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and be audio recorded, please sign below.

_____
Printed Name of Participant

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

_____ _____
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix B

Interview Protocol (Interview #1)

Please do not use any names or identifying information about other people.

1. Tell me about what you've learned the most about through your participation in the professional learning community.

2. Explain any other new understandings that you've gained regarding teaching for social justice and equity through your participation in the professional learning community.

3. How do you think what you've learned in the professional learning community will influence your teaching about social justice?

4. How has the professional learning community influenced your thinking about using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice?

5. Do you envision using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice (e.g., any particular books, topics, strategies, or activities)? Can you describe/provide some examples?

6. Is there anything else that we haven't discussed that you'd like for me to know concerning your experiences within the professional learning community or what has happened since then?

Appendix C

Interview Protocol (Interview #2)

1. How have you been able to apply what you've learned about using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity?

2. What particular multicultural children's literature and/or related activities have you used in your classroom since your participation in the professional learning community?

3. Tell me about your experience in applying in your classroom what you've learned in the professional learning community (e.g., what went well, any challenges).

4. Discuss any other multicultural children's literature or specific topics that you'd like to address in your classroom to teach for social justice.

5. Is there anything else that we haven't discussed that you'd like for me to know concerning your experiences within the professional learning community or what has happened since then?

Appendix D

Professional Learning Overview

Professional Learning Day 1

Time Frame	Topics
9:00-9:30	• Facilitator Introduction • Explanation of Research and Informed Consent
9:30-10:00	• Community Building/Community Agreements

10:00-11:00	• Teachers will create an identity map. They will critically examine their identity maps to determine ways in which they may be privileged and/or disadvantaged in society.
	  o Teachers will discuss their identity maps within their PLC.
	• Unpacking Social Justice and Equity
	  o Teachers will reflect on what social justice and equity mean.
	  o Teachers will explore and discuss social justice and equity as they are defined in professional literature. Teachers will discuss any modifications they'd like to make to how they define social justice and equity.
	• Social Justice Issues
	  o Teachers will discuss social justice issues impacting people in local, national, and/or global communities.

11:00-12:00	• Networking Lunch
12:00-1:00	• Teachers will reflect on factors they consider when selecting children's literature for their classroom. • Selecting Multicultural Children's Literature o Teachers will reflect on how they might add to or modify how they select children's literature in lieu of any insights gleaned from PLC and professional literature.

1:00-3:00	• Using Multicultural Children's Literature to Teach for Social Justice and Equity
	  o Teachers will explore and discuss the four dimensions of critical literacy
	• Read Aloud/Discussion
	  o Teachers will listen to a multicultural children's book being read aloud. They will engage in a discussion of the social justice issue presented in the book through questions and/or activities related to each of the four dimensions of critical literacy.

3:00-3:30	• Closing Circle o Teachers will reflect on any new insights gleaned from today's PLC meeting. Teachers will also reflect on any questions that have or what they'd like additional information on.

Professional Learning Day 2

Time Frame	Topics
9:00-9:15	• Community Building/Community Agreements
9:15-9:45	• Read Aloud/Discussion o Teachers will listen to a multicultural children's book being read aloud. They will discuss questions and/or activities that they could implement with students in relation to each of the four dimensions of critical literacy.
9:45-11:00	• Book Talk o Each teacher will select a multicultural children's book to read. o Each teacher will share her/his book with PLC by providing a brief synopsis and then discussing questions/activities to explore with students in relation to the social justice issue(s) presented in the text. Teachers will provide feedback to other teachers in the PLC.
11:00-12:00	• Networking Lunch
12:00-1:30	• Multicultural Text Set o Teachers will develop a multicultural text set of three books to use in their classrooms. o Teachers will reflect on their text selections (e.g., quality of the content presented in the books, social justice issues presented in the books, relevance of social justice issues to local, national, and or global communities)
1:30-3:00	• Social Justice and Equity o Teachers will write a post reflection on how they define social justice and equity. o Teachers will pose questions that they have in relation to teaching for social justice and equity. The PLC will respond to those questions.
3:00-3:30	• Closing Circle o Teachers will reflect on any new insights gleaned from participating in the PLC. They will reflect on any questions or lingering thoughts. They will also tell what they'd like more information on. Additionally, the teachers will discuss next steps in using multicultural children's literature to teach for social justice and equity.

Appendix E

Ice Breakers and Warm-Ups

Ice Breakers and Warm-Ups

Shared at the June 2000 National Facilitators Meeting

The following exercises designed to help people get to know one another.

1. If you were to write your **Autobiography**, what would the title be and why.

2. Write on the inside of your tent card (table name card) **a fact about yourself** that no one would be likely to guess. Read them out loud. Gives people a hook. (i.e., "Faith, who raises sheep.")

3. **Draw a picture that describes who you are --** can be symbols, colors, you doing something...

4 **Create a flower**. Each person puts one petal on the flower, on which is written something important about them. If we can find something we all have in common we put it in the center.

5. **Human Scavenger Hunt**, where you find things interesting about each person from a list that might be work related or not. Items like, find someone who has facilitated a protocol, someone who has taught in another country, someone who has created a portfolio that works... People share who they found in the whole group.

6. People at each table find **four things they have in common and share with the large group as an introduction**. Can't be anything about education. (At one table, all had an Uncle Harry they didn't like).

7. People post one **clue about themselves** (with no name) on a bulletin board. Later in the day, add another clue beside the first clue (more if there is time) and people guess identities from the clues at the end of the day. People make assumptions and then they find that it's very revealing and fun.

8. **Post cards from the edge**. Bring a collection of wild postcards and hand them out. Each person finds something in the post card that relates to their experience as a teacher or principal and shares that with the group.

9. **Give out pennies and look at the dates**. Go around the room and share something that occurred for you in the year of the penny. It can be something about your education (as a child, a teachers etc.) or it can be just about life. You'll need a good collection of pennies with varied dates.

10. **Skittles**. People grab one, there is a guide by color: Yellow, something you're doing this summer; green, something about work; red, an adventure you've had in education, etc. Whatever you want for categories.

Appendix F

Forming Ground Rules Protocol

SRI SCHOOL REFORM INITIATIVE
A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

Forming Ground Rules (Creating Norms)

Developed by Marylyn Wentworth.

Gaining agreement around Ground Rules, or Norms, are important for a group that intends to work together on difficult issues, or who will be working together over time. They may be added to, or condensed, as the group progresses. Starting with basic Ground Rules builds trust, clarifies group expectations of one another, and establishes points of "reflection" to see how the group is doing regarding process.

Time
Approximately 30 minutes

Process

1. Ask everyone to **write down what each person needs in order to work productively in a group**, giving an example of one thing the facilitator needs, i.e. "to have all voices heard," or "to start and end our meetings when we say we will." (This is to help people focus on process rather than product.)

2. **Each participant names <u>one</u> thing from her/his written list**, going around in a circle, with no repeats, and as many circuits as necessary to have all the ground rules listed.

3. **Ask for any clarifications** needed. One person may not understand what another person has listed, or may interpret the language differently.

4. **If the list is VERY long — more than 10 Ground Rules — ask the group if some of them can be combined to make the list more manageable**. Sometimes the subtle differences are important to people, so it is more important that everyone feel their needs have been honored than it is to have a short list.

5. **Ask if everyone can abide by the listed Ground Rules**. If anyone dislikes or doesn't want to comply with one of them, that Ground Rule should be discussed and a decision should be made to keep it on the list with a notation of objection, to remove it, or to try it for a specified amount of time and check it again.

6. **Ask if any one of the Ground Rules might be hard for the group to follow**. If there is one or more, those Ground Rules should be highlighted and given attention. With time it will become clear if it should be dropped, or needs significant work. Sometimes what might appear to be a difficult rule turns out not to be hard at all. "Everyone has a turn to speak," is sometimes debated for example, with the argument that not everyone likes to talk every time an issue is raised, and others think aloud and only process well if they have the space to do that. Frequently, a system of checking in with everyone, without requiring everyone to speak, becomes a more effective Ground Rule.

7. **While work is in progress, refer to the Ground Rules whenever they would help group process**. If one person is dominating, for example, it is easier to refer to a Ground Rule that says, "take care with how often and how long you speak," than to ask someone directly to stop dominating the group.

8. **Check in on the Ground Rules when reflection is done on the group work.** Note any that were not followed particularly well for attention in the next work session. Being sure they are followed, refining them, and adding or subtracting Ground Rules is important, as it makes for smoother work and more trust within the group.

Appendix G

Identity Mapping Part I

Name_____

Date_____

Identity Mapping (Part I)

(Activity adapted from *Teaching Tolerance* PD Café Identity Mapping, Issue 58, page 16)

Create your identity map by indicating various group memberships. Examples of group memberships are race, gender, social class, professional role, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, etc. Circle groups in which you have experienced privilege. Then underline groups in which you've experienced disadvantage.

Appendix H

Identity Mapping Part II

Name_____

Date_____

Identity Mapping Reflection (Part II)

(Questions adapted from *Teaching Tolerance* PD Café Identity Mapping, Issue 58, page 16)

1. Which group memberships are most fundamental to who you are?

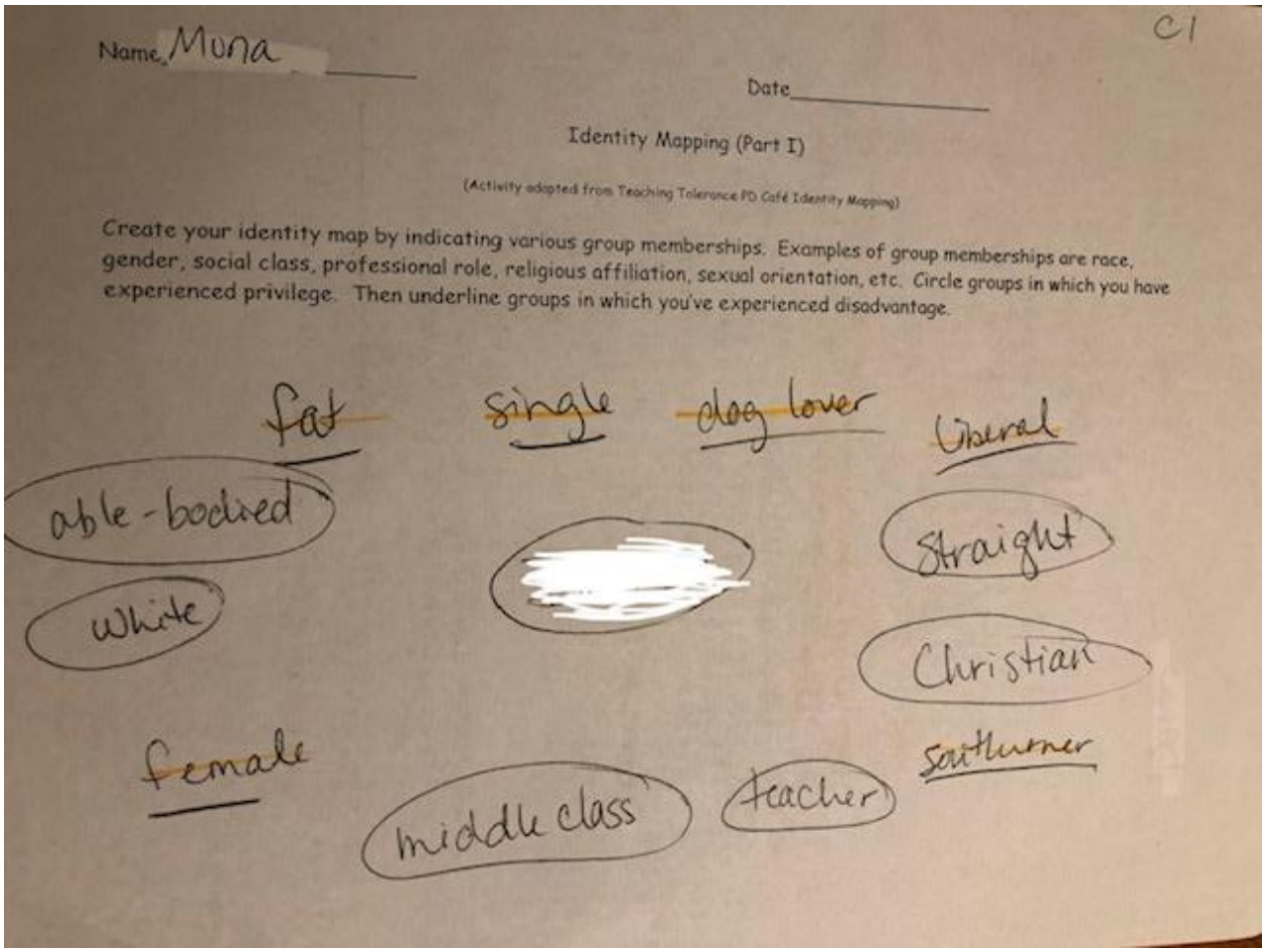
2. Have you experienced a disadvantage because of a group membership? If so, explain.

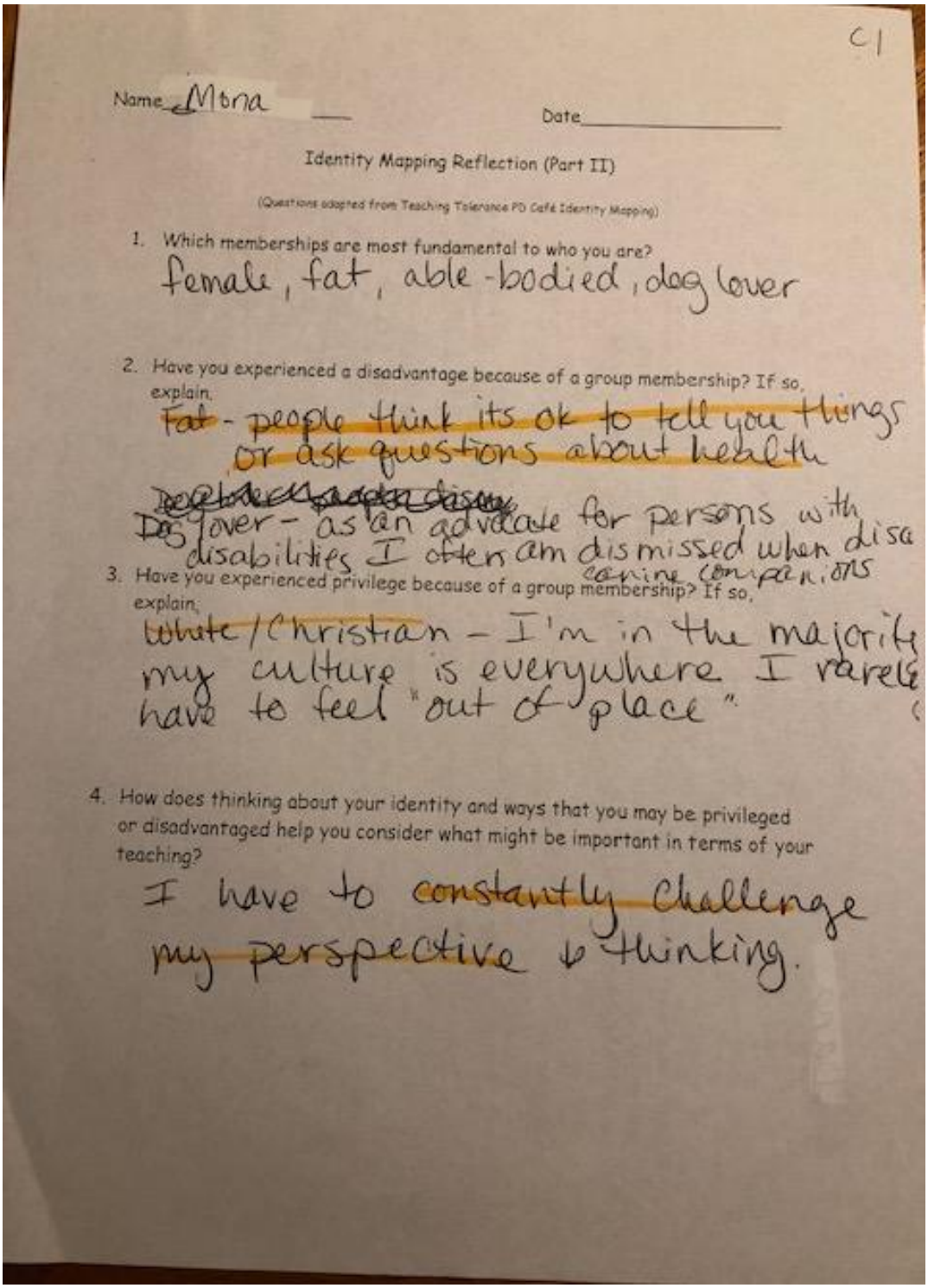
3. Have you experienced privilege because of a group membership? If so, explain.

4. How does thinking about your identity and ways that you may be privileged or disadvantaged help you consider what might be important in terms of your teaching?

Appendix I

Identity Participants Part I and Part II





C1

Name Mona Date

Identity Mapping Reflection (Part II)

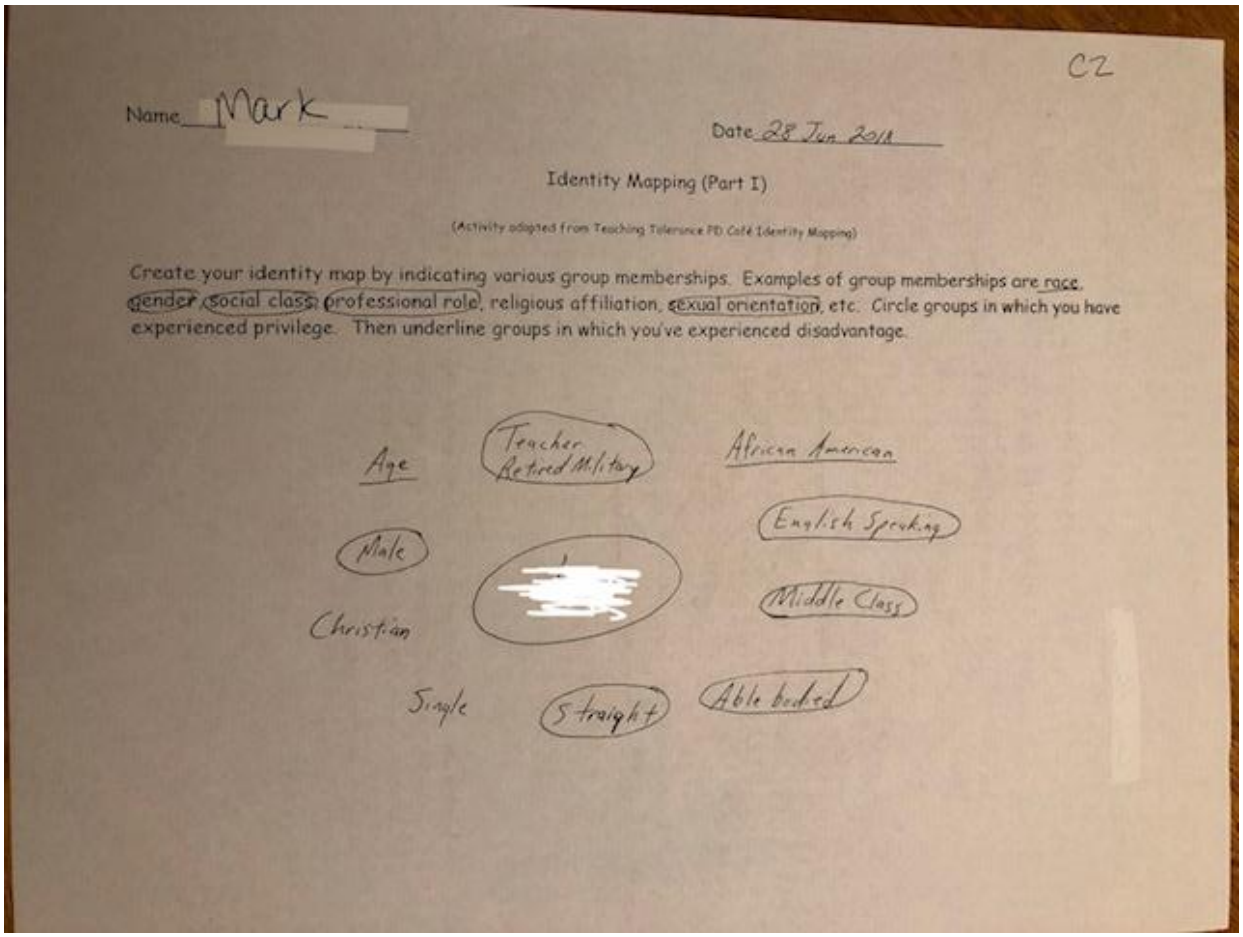
(Questions adapted from Teaching Tolerance PD Café Identity Mapping)

1. Which memberships are most fundamental to who you are?
female, fat, able-bodied, dog lover

2. Have you experienced a disadvantage because of a group membership? If so, explain.
Fat - people think its ok to tell you things or ask questions about health
Dog lover - as an advocate for persons with disabilities I often am dismissed when disa canine companions

3. Have you experienced privilege because of a group membership? If so, explain.
White/Christian - I'm in the majority my culture is everywhere I rarely have to feel "out of place".

4. How does thinking about your identity and ways that you may be privileged or disadvantaged help you consider what might be important in terms of your teaching?
I have to constantly challenge my perspective & thinking.



C2

Name Mark [redacted]

Date 28 Jun 2011

Identity Mapping (Part I)

(Activity adapted from Teaching Tolerance PD Café Identity Mapping)

Create your identity map by indicating various group memberships. Examples of group memberships are race, gender, social class, professional role, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, etc. Circle groups in which you have experienced privilege. Then underline groups in which you've experienced disadvantage.

Age

Teacher
Retired Military

African American

English Speaking

Male

[redacted]

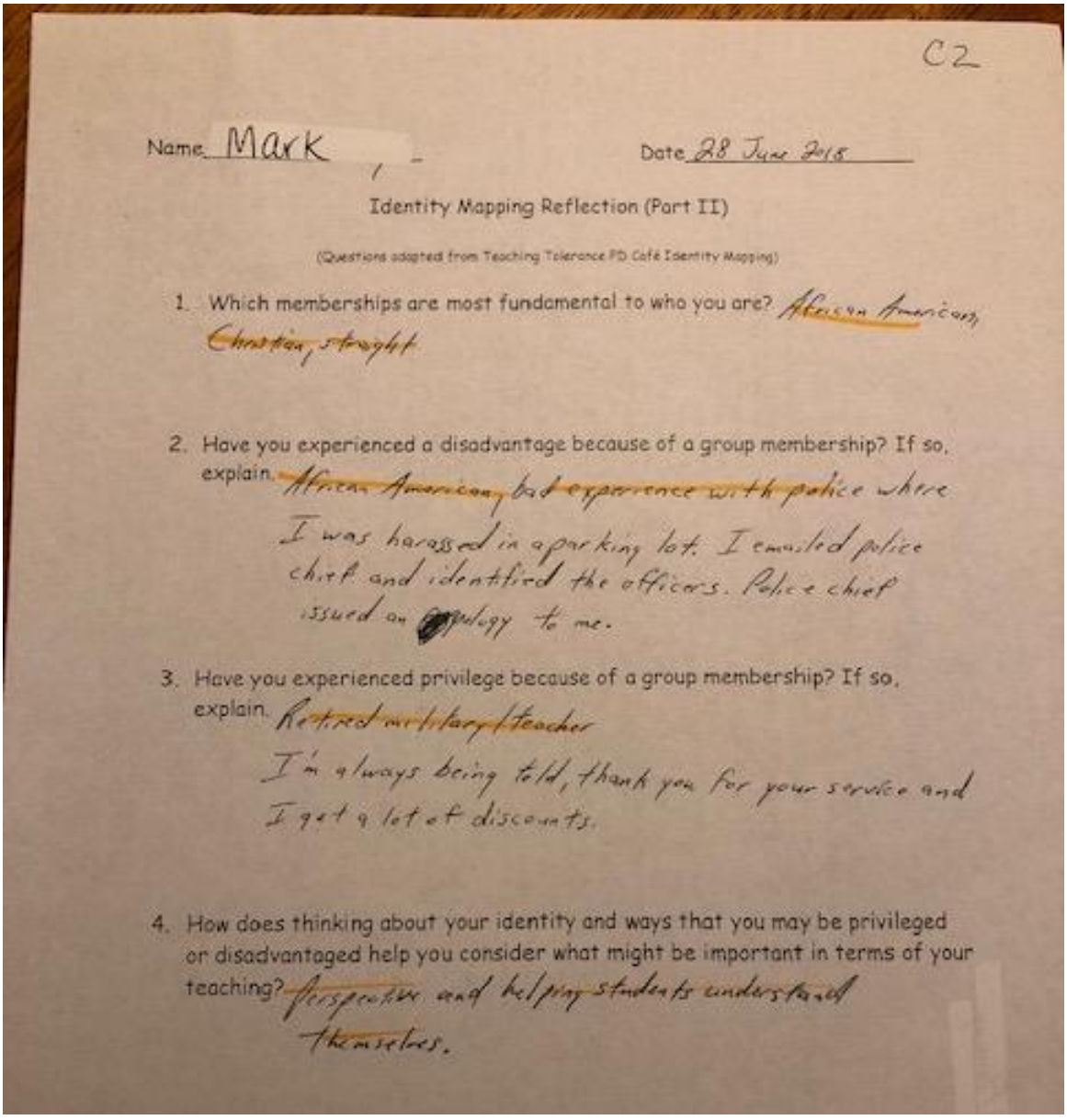
Middle Class

Christian

Single

Straight

Able bodied



C2

Name Mark Date 28 June 2015

Identity Mapping Reflection (Part II)

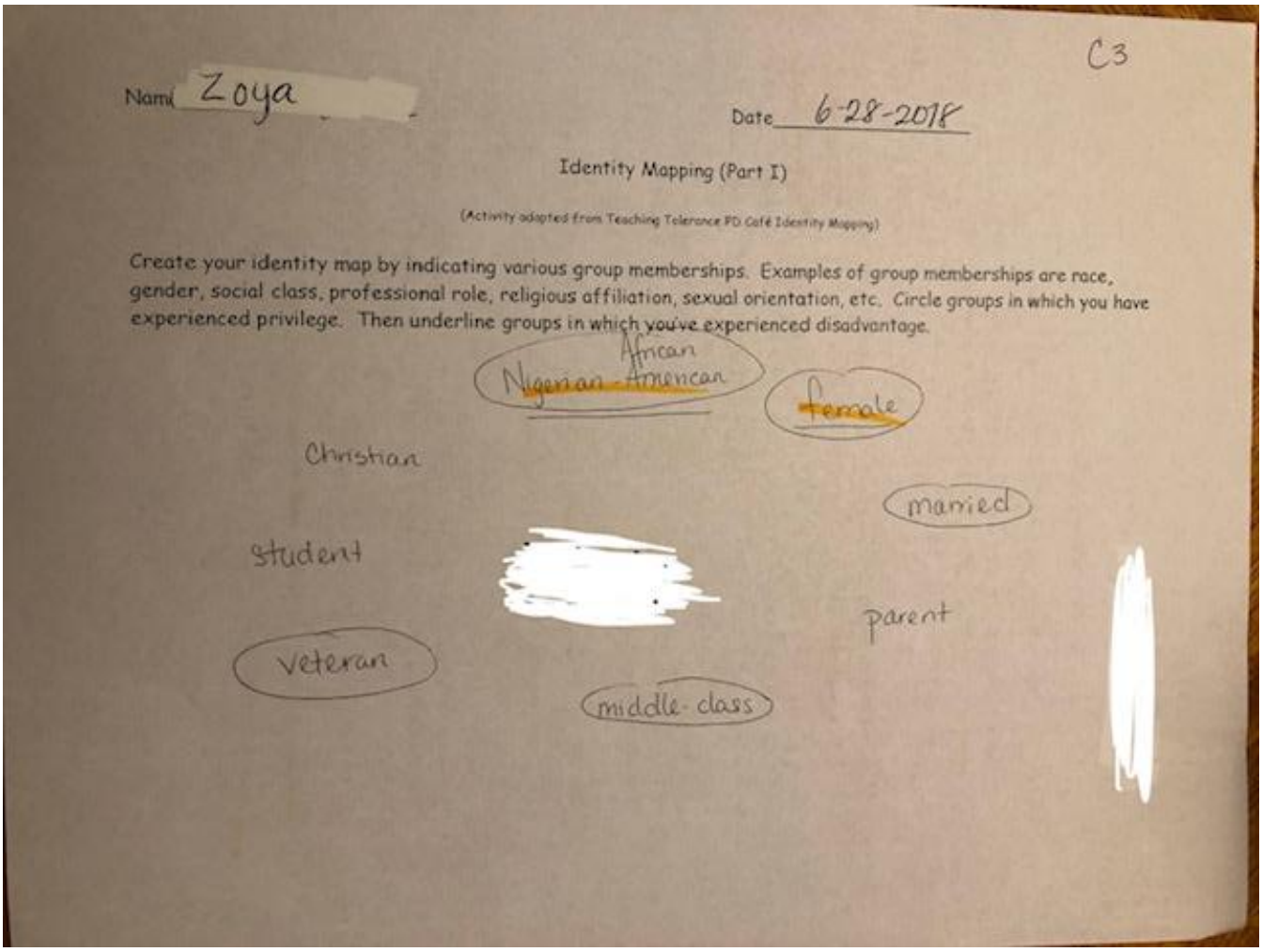
(Questions adapted from Teaching Tolerance PD Café Identity Mapping)

1. Which memberships are most fundamental to who you are? African American, Christian, straight

2. Have you experienced a disadvantage because of a group membership? If so, explain. African American, bad experience with police where I was harassed in a parking lot. I emailed police chief and identified the officers. Police chief issued an apology to me.

3. Have you experienced privilege because of a group membership? If so, explain. Retired military/teacher
I'm always being told, thank you for your service and I get a lot of discounts.

4. How does thinking about your identity and ways that you may be privileged or disadvantaged help you consider what might be important in terms of your teaching? perspective and helping students understand themselves.



C3

Name Zoya

Date 6-28-2018

Identity Mapping (Part I)

(Activity adapted from Teaching Tolerance PD Café Identity Mapping)

Create your identity map by indicating various group memberships. Examples of group memberships are race, gender, social class, professional role, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, etc. Circle groups in which you have experienced privilege. Then underline groups in which you've experienced disadvantage.

African
Nigerian-American

female

Christian

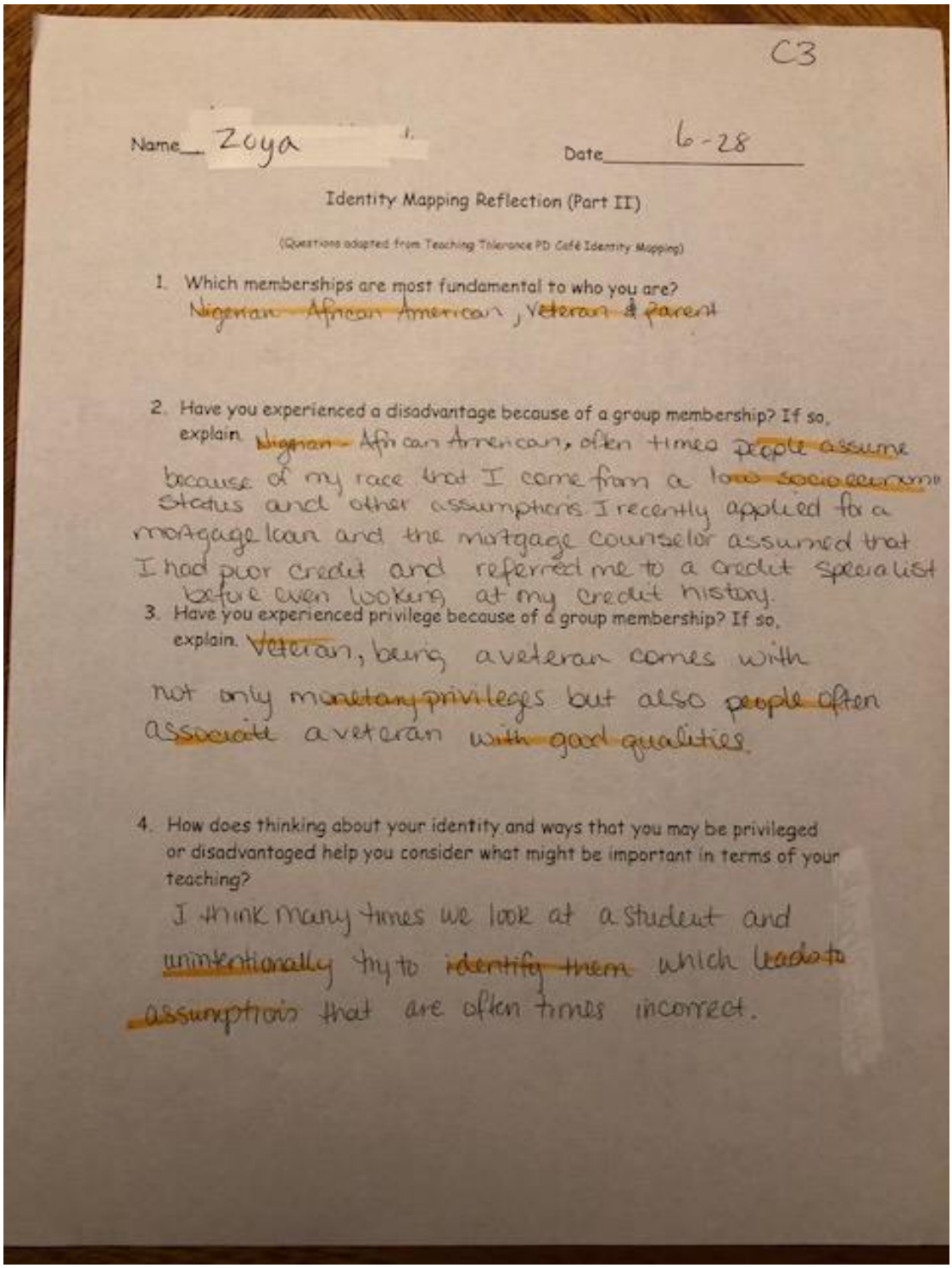
married

student

parent

veteran

middle-class



C3

Name Zoya Date 6-28

Identity Mapping Reflection (Part II)

(Questions adapted from Teaching Tolerance PD Café Identity Mapping)

1. Which memberships are most fundamental to who you are?
Nigerian African American, Veteran & Parent

2. Have you experienced a disadvantage because of a group membership? If so, explain. Nigerian African American, often times people assume because of my race that I come from a low socioeconomic status and other assumptions. I recently applied for a mortgage loan and the mortgage counselor assumed that I had poor credit and referred me to a credit specialist before even looking at my credit history.

3. Have you experienced privilege because of a group membership? If so, explain. Veteran, being a veteran comes with not only monetary privileges but also people often associate a veteran with good qualities.

4. How does thinking about your identity and ways that you may be privileged or disadvantaged help you consider what might be important in terms of your teaching?
I think many times we look at a student and unintentionally try to identify them which leads to assumptions that are often times incorrect.

Appendix J

Connection Protocol

Connections

Developed by Gene Thompson-Grove.

What is *Connections*?

Connections is a way for people to build a bridge from where they are or have been (mentally, physically, etc.) to where they will be going and what they will be doing. It is a time for individuals to reflect — within the context of a group — upon a thought, a story, an insight, a question, or a feeling that they are carrying with them into the session, and then connect it to the work they are about to do. Most people engage in Connections at the beginning of a meeting, class, or gathering.

There are a few things to emphasize about Connections for it to go well…

- It is about connecting people's thoughts to the work they are doing or are about to do.
- Silence is OK, as is using the time to write, or to just sit and think. Assure people that they will spend a specific amount of time in Connections, whether or not anyone speaks out loud. Some groups — and people within groups — value the quiet, reflective time above all else.
- If an issue the group clearly wants to respond to comes up in Connections, the group can decide to make time for a discussion about the issue after Connections is over.

The "rules" for Connections are quite simple

- Speak if you want to.
- Don't speak if you don't want to.
- Speak only once until everyone who wants to has had a chance to speak.
- Listen and note what people say, but do not respond. Connections is not the time to engage in a discussion.

Facilitating the process is also straightforward. Begin by saying "Connections is open," and let people know how long it will last. A few minutes before the time is up, let people know that there are a few minutes remaining, so that anyone who hasn't yet spoken might speak. With a minute or so to go, let the group know that you will be drawing Connections to a close, and again ask if anyone who hasn't spoken would like to speak. Before ending, ask if anyone who has spoken would like to speak again. Then end.

Ten minutes is usually enough time for groups of 10 people or fewer, 15 minutes for groups of 11-20 people and 20 minutes for any groups larger than 20 people. Connections generally shouldn't last more than 20 minutes. People can't sustain it. The one exception is when there is a group that has been together for a period of time doing intensive work, and it is the last or next to the last day of their gathering.

Some people will say that Connections is misnamed, since people don't connect to (or build on) what other people have said. However, the *process* is a connecting one; and powerful connections can still occur, even though they are not necessarily the result of back and forth conversation.

Appendix K

Written Reflection I and II

Name_____ Date_____

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

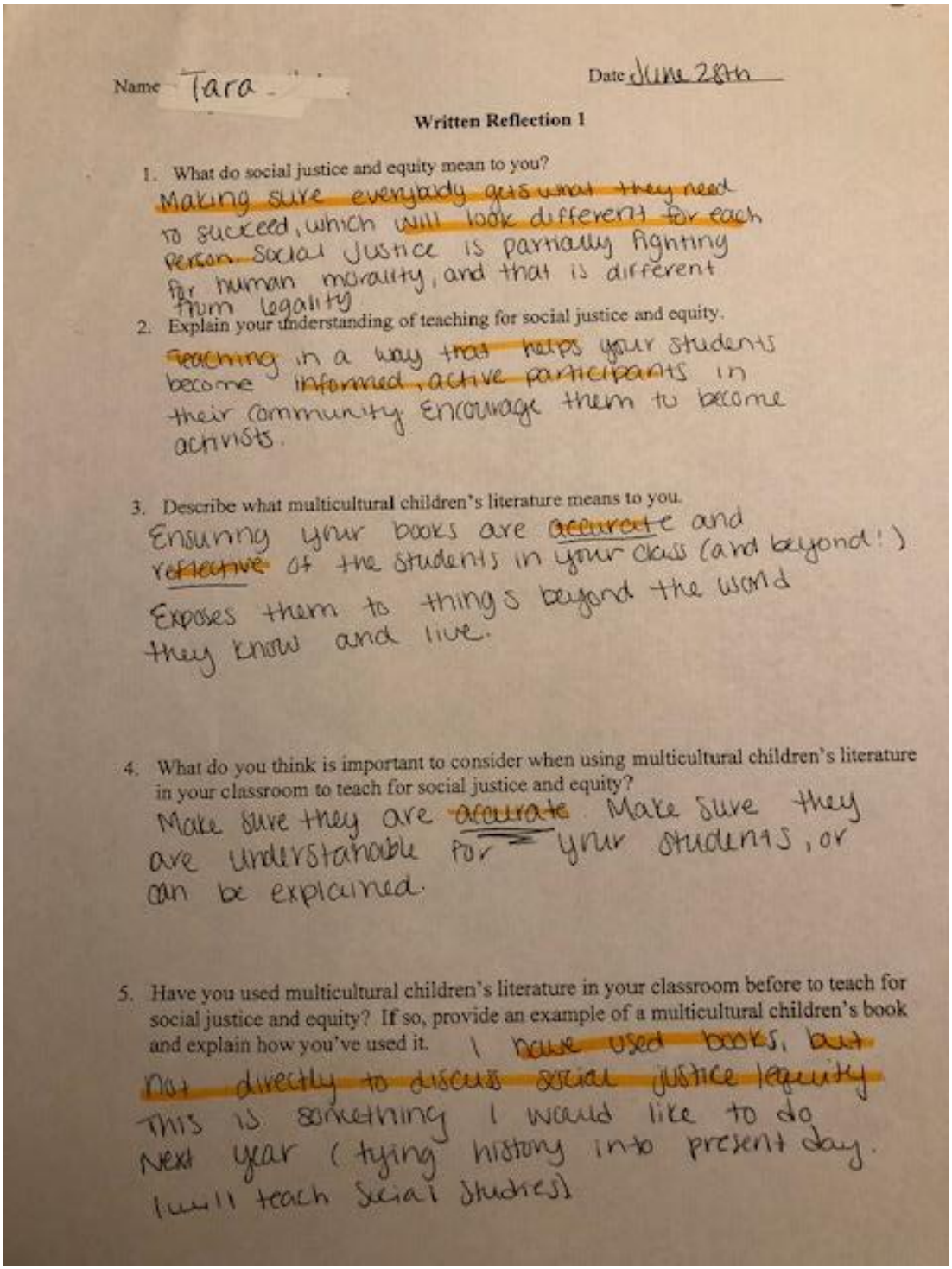
3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

5. Have you used multicultural children's literature in your classroom before to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of a multicultural children's book and explain how you've used it.

Appendix L

Written Reflection 1 Participants



Name Tara

Date June 28th

Written Reflection 1

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

Making sure everybody gets what they need to succeed, which will look different for each person. Social justice is partially fighting for human morality, and that is different from legality

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

Teaching in a way that helps your students become informed, active participants in their community. Encourage them to become activists.

3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

Ensuring your books are accurate and reflective of the students in your class (and beyond!)

Exposes them to things beyond the world they know and live.

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

Make sure they are accurate. Make sure they are understandable for your students, or can be explained.

5. Have you used multicultural children's literature in your classroom before to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of a multicultural children's book and explain how you've used it. I have used books, but not directly to discuss social justice/equity. This is something I would like to do next year (tying history into present day. I will teach Social Studies)

Name Patricia Date June 28, 2018

Written Reflection 1

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

Treating everyone by using the same rules or standards

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

To assist students in understanding that there are multiple points of view in society, and that all people deserve to be treated with respect

3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

Using multicultural literature is an opportunity to lead students to understand the multiplicity of experiences and backgrounds in which they can relate.

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

The ages of the students
The reading levels of the students

5. Have you used multicultural children's literature in your classroom before to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of a multicultural children's book and explain how you've used it.

I have used The Lorax as a springboard to having my Media Center Aides write a paper explaining what issue would be important enough to them for them to speak up about.

Name Melissa Date 8/28/18

Written Reflection 1

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

Social justice and equity is about ensuring that all people have equal opportunity, and access, regardless of their identity

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

Children need to be taught explicit vocabulary and to be given multiple chances to put their learning to work.

3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

Multicultural children's literature is having books available and engaging students in read alouds and discussions across all differences and cultures. Children should see people in a multitude of ways and see themselves in stories

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

It's important to make sure that the literature you have supports the identities of those in your classroom as well as others that are not represented. They need to be age appropriate and either relatable or used for pushing your student thinking

5. Have you used multicultural children's literature in your classroom before to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of a multicultural children's book and explain how you've used it.

Yes, We used Martin's Big Words in my KG class to really get deep with the understanding about civil rights. We discussed Ruby Bridges and how children can play a significant role in history and how they can all be activists themselves.

Appendix M

Written Reflection 2

Name_____ Date_____

Written Reflection 2

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

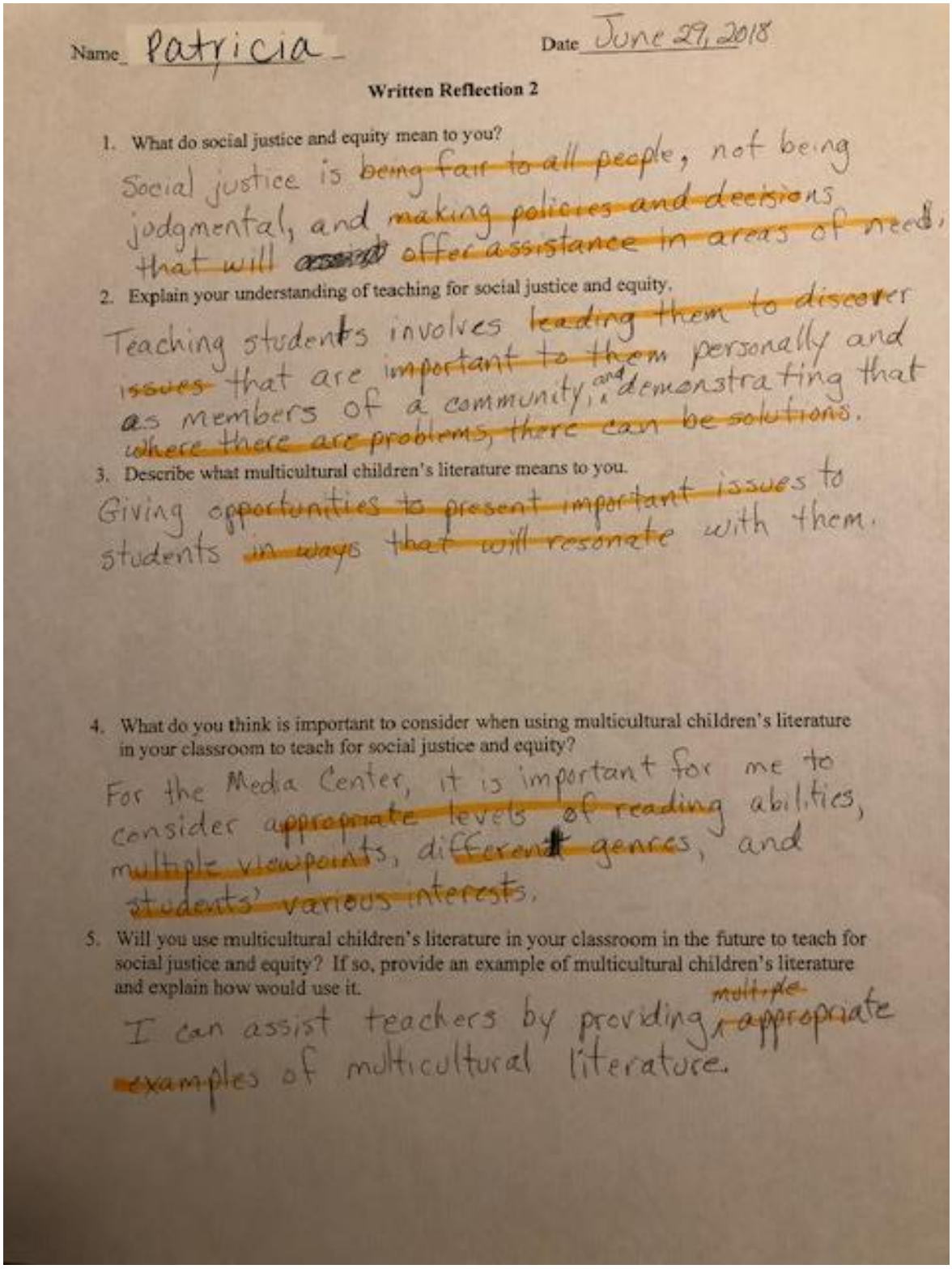
3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

5. Will you use multicultural children's literature in your classroom in the future to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of multicultural children's literature and explain how would use it.

Appendix N

Written Reflection 2 Participants



Name Patricia Date June 29, 2018

Written Reflection 2

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

Social justice is being fair to all people, not being judgmental, and making policies and decisions that will offer assistance in areas of need.

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

Teaching students involves leading them to discover issues that are important to them personally and as members of a community, and demonstrating that where there are problems, there can be solutions.

3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

Giving opportunities to present important issues to students in ways that will resonate with them.

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

For the Media Center, it is important for me to consider appropriate levels of reading abilities, multiple viewpoints, different genres, and students' various interests.

5. Will you use multicultural children's literature in your classroom in the future to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of multicultural children's literature and explain how would use it.

I can assist teachers by providing multiple appropriate examples of multicultural literature.

Name: Tara

Date: JUNE 23rd

Written Reflection 2

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

GIVING A VOICE TO GROUPS AND PEOPLE THAT HAVE BEEN/ARE MARGINALIZED. ACCESSIBILITY. PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN FIGHTING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BE INFORMED, ACTIVE MEMBER IN THEIR COMMUNITY WHO CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ACCURATELY EXPOSING THEM TO MULTIPLE CULTURES AND PERSPECTIVES.

3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

YOUR CHILDREN SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THEMSELVES IN THEIR BOOKS, AND THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE REST OF THE WORLD ACCURATELY, HONESTLY, AND THROUGH MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

WHAT VOICES ARE HEARD/MISSING?
ACCURACY AND INCLUDING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES
PRIOR KNOWLEDGE/FOLLOW UP

5. Will you use multicultural children's literature in your classroom in the future to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of multicultural children's literature and explain how would use it.

YES
STARRING STONES COULD BE USED TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT REFUGEE & ISSUE FACING THE WORLD TODAY

Name Melissa Date 6/29/18

Written Reflection 2

1. What do social justice and equity mean to you?

Taking action to create more awareness and work towards all people groups having opportunity and access to resources they need

2. Explain your understanding of teaching for social justice and equity.

To me Social justice means all people of social groups feeling justified and important in society

Equity is everyone having their voice heard and providing the means to have a fair chance

3. Describe what multicultural children's literature means to you.

Multicultural children's literature means having marginalized groups represented and celebrated for the benefit of understanding and awareness

4. What do you think is important to consider when using multicultural children's literature in your classroom to teach for social justice and equity?

- Depictions
- Illustrations
- Tangible examples
- Relevancy
- Background knowledge
- Multiple perspectives
- Accurate portrayal

5. Will you use multicultural children's literature in your classroom in the future to teach for social justice and equity? If so, provide an example of multicultural children's literature and explain how would use it.

Yes, absolutely! I plan to Bird and Visiting Day to discuss the prison system to young children. It can be a great segway into the disproportionate # of Marginalized groups in the system and also how it impacts families, etc.

Appendix O

Chalk Talk Protocol

Chalk Talk

Developed by Hilton Smith, Foxfire Fund; adapted by Marylyn Wentworth.

Purpose
Chalk Talk is a silent way to reflect, generate ideas, check on learning, develop projects, or solve problems. It can be used productively with any group — students, faculty, workshop participants, or committees. Because it is done completely in silence, it gives groups a change of pace and encourages thoughtful contemplation. It can be an unforgettable experience. Middle level students absolutely love it — it's the quietest they'll ever be!

Time
Varies according to need; can be from 5 minutes to an hour

Materials
Chalk board and chalk, white board and dry-erase markers, or large roll paper on the wall and chart markers

Process
1. The facilitator explains *very briefly* that Chalk Talk is a silent activity. No one may talk at all and anyone may add to the Chalk Talk with words or graphics as they please. You can comment on other people's ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment. It can also be very effective to say nothing at all except to put finger to lips in a gesture of silence and simply begin with Step 2.

2. The facilitator writes a relevant question in a circle on the board.
   Sample questions:
   - What did you learn today?
   - So What?, or Now What?
   - What do you think about social responsibility and schooling?
   - How can we involve the community in the school, and the school in community?
   - How can we keep the noise level down in this room?
   - What do you want to tell the scheduling committee?
   - What do you know about Croatia?
   - How are decimals used in the world?

3. The facilitator either hands a piece of chalk to everyone, or places many pieces of chalk at the board and hands several pieces to people at random.

4. People write as they feel moved. There are likely to be long silences — that is natural, so allow plenty of wait time before deciding it is over. Participants may write comments, ask questions, draw images/graphics, show connections between various comments.

Protocols are most powerful and effective when used within an ongoing professional learning community and facilitated by a skilled facilitator. To learn more about professional learning communities and seminars for facilitation, please visit the School Reform Initiative website at www.schoolreforminitiative.org.

Appendix P

Coffee Talk Equity Protocol

Coffee Talk (Equity Focus) Protocol

Initially developed by Frances Hensley (2009); refined by Susan Taylor and Connie Parrish (2009-2013)

The purpose of Coffee Talk is to provide a lightly facilitated way for participants to enlarge their thinking by: **reading** several related articles; **writing** reflectively about their responses; and **talking** with others. It works well with large groups and is particularly well suited for use with readings that come out of an equity or social justice perspective.

Time: Approximately 50-75 minutes

Materials: 5-6 short readings (1-5 pages), organized loosely around a topic or theme that is thought-provoking and current. Like Block Party, this protocol can be used with a variety of texts, poems, articles or whole books.

Steps

1. **Facilitators present brief text introductions** of 5-6 short readings. (5-7 minutes)

2. **Participants read and make notes** about the selected texts – facilitators provide 25-40 minutes of reading time, even though there is more reading than can be done in the time allotted. Participants must choose among texts (reading one or two deeply; reading "in"/skimming all 5-6; etc. The goal here is about enlarging perspectives through reading and conversation and not about covering material). (25-40 minutes)

3. **Participants gather back together as a whole group for individual written reflection** – participants write about their reading & thinking, responding to any or all of the prompts below or simply free-writing about the readings and their responses to them: (5-10 minutes)

   a. What was **comforting/comfortable**?

   b. What did you find **challenging or confusing**?

   c. What are you **wondering** about/what **questions** do you have?

   d. What to you most want to **remember**?

4. **Participants share their thinking/have some talk** in groups of 3-4. Participants leave their seats with readings and written reflections in hand. They gather/stand together as they mingle and make sense of the readings. After 5-7 minutes, participants might be invited to change groups, or change topics, or change speakers, and then continue for another 5-7 mins. There might be a third round of changing partners, etc. before debriefing as time/interest allow. (15-25 mins)

5. **Debrief protocol in whole group**. What worked well? What challenged us? What might we do differently next time? How might we apply this to our own work? (3-5 minutes)

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Appendix Q

Teaching for Social Justice and Equity Coffee Talk

Name_____ Date_____

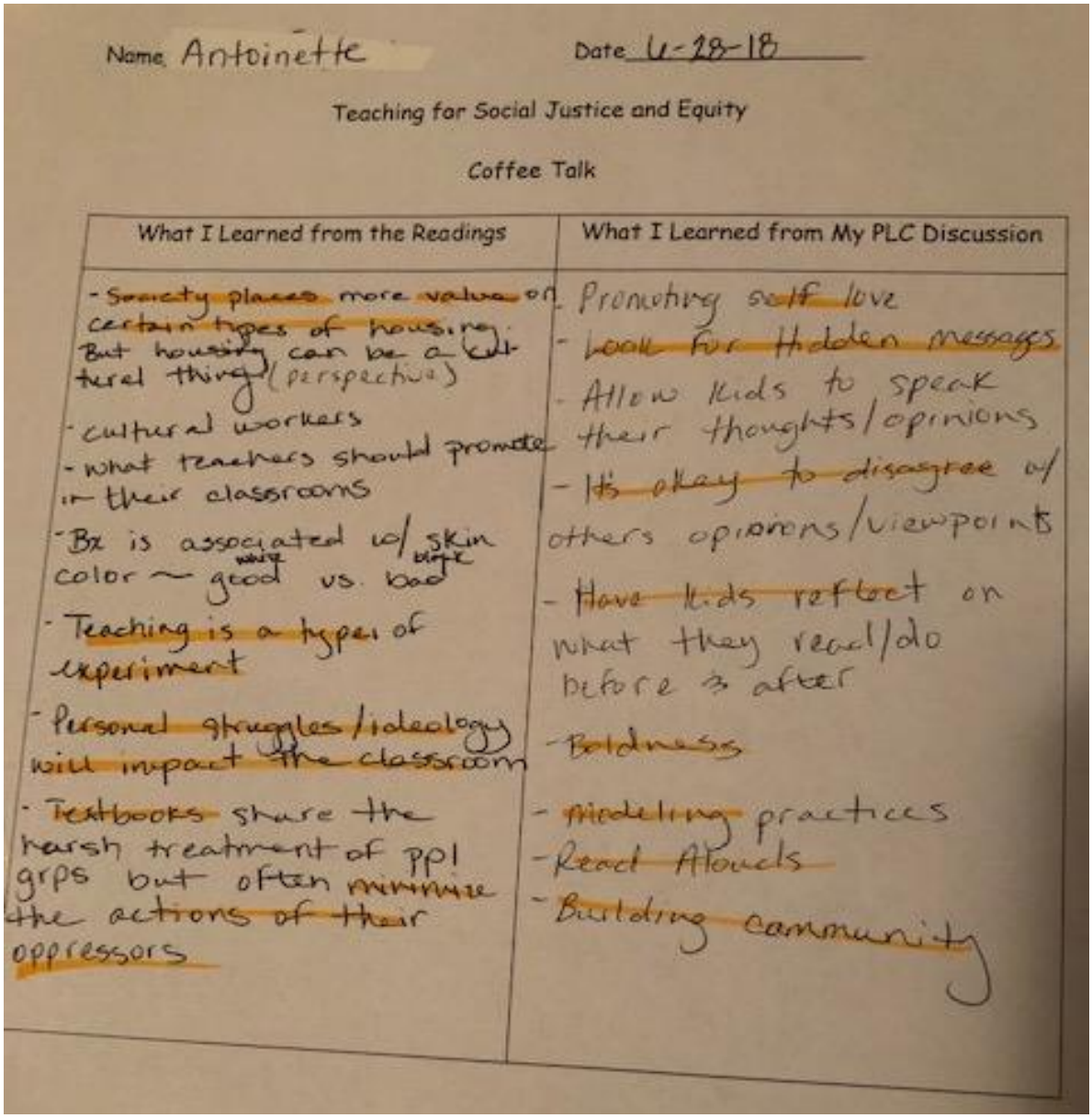
Teaching for Social Justice and Equity

Coffee Talk

What I Learned from the Readings	What I Learned from My PLC Discussion

Appendix R

Teaching for Social Justice and Equity Coffee Talk Participants

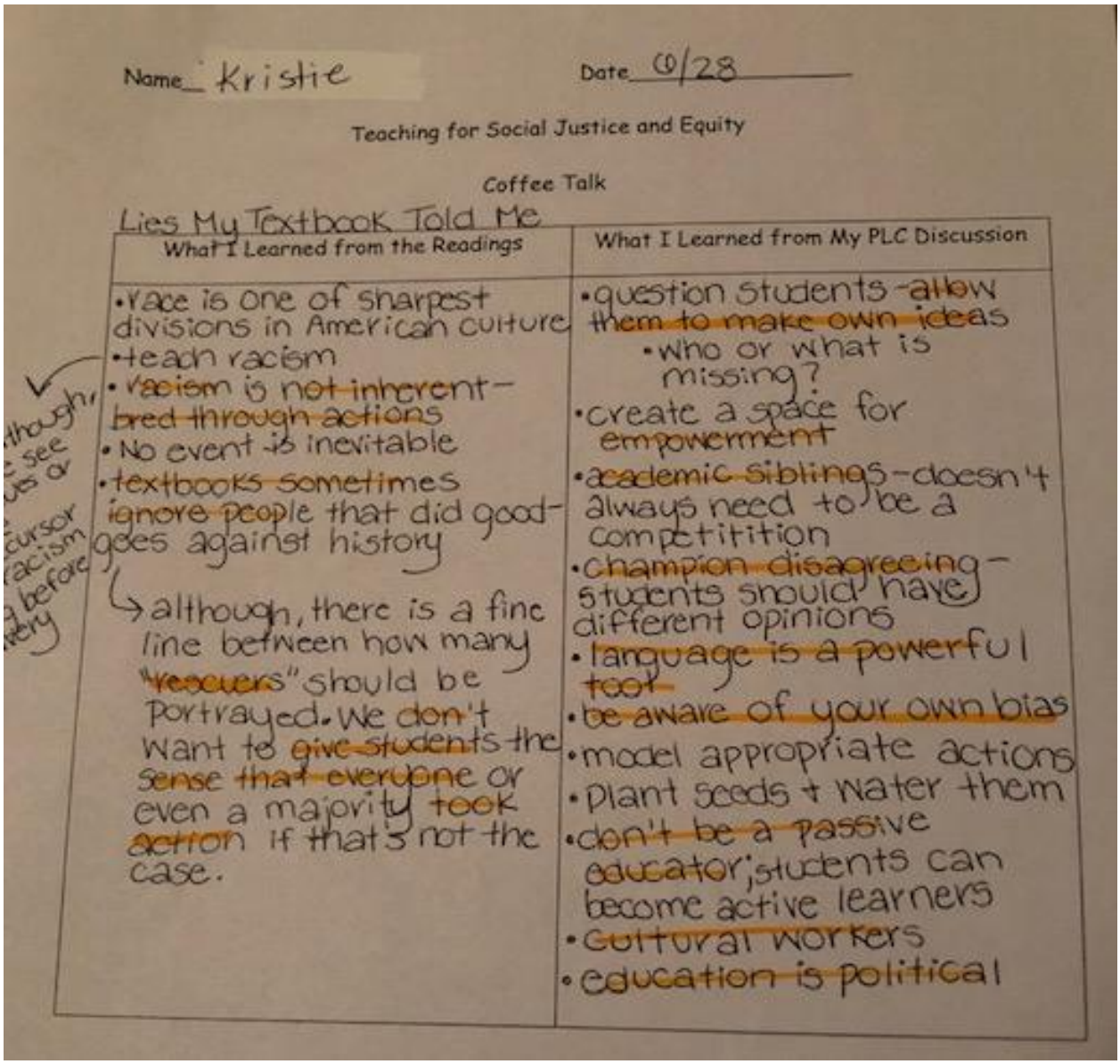


Name Antoinette Date 6-28-18

Teaching for Social Justice and Equity

Coffee Talk

What I Learned from the Readings	What I Learned from My PLC Discussion
- Society places more value on certain types of housing. But housing can be a cultural thing (perspective) - cultural workers - what teachers should promote in their classrooms - Bx is associated w/ skin color ~ good vs. bad - Teaching is a type of experiment - Personal struggles/ideology will impact the classroom - Textbooks share the harsh treatment of ppl grps but often minimize the actions of their oppressors	- Promoting self love - Look for Hidden messages - Allow kids to speak their thoughts/opinions - It's okay to disagree w/ others opinions/viewpoints - Have kids reflect on what they read/do before & after - Boldness - Modeling practices - Read Alouds - Building community



Name Kristie Date 10/28

Teaching for Social Justice and Equity

Coffee Talk

Lies My Textbook Told Me

What I Learned from the Readings	What I Learned from My PLC Discussion
• race is one of sharpest divisions in American culture • teach racism • racism is not inherent - bred through actions • No event is inevitable • textbooks sometimes ignore people that did good - goes against history ↳ although, there is a fine line between how many "rescuers" should be portrayed. We don't want to give students the sense that everyone or even a majority took action if that's not the case.	• question students - allow them to make own ideas • Who or what is missing? • create a space for empowerment • academic siblings - doesn't always need to be a competition • champion disagreeing - students should have different opinions • language is a powerful tool • be aware of your own bias • model appropriate actions • plant seeds + water them • don't be a passive educator; students can become active learners • Cultural workers • education is political

Name Jocelyn Date 6/28/18

Teaching for Social Justice and Equity

Coffee Talk

What I Learned from the Readings	What I Learned from My PLC Discussion
"How to teach SJ in the classroom" • Critical examination → examine/identify patterns of inequality, bigotry or discrimination = explore possible solutions • equal access, equitable treatment • creating conversations empowers students • cultural competency ★ • build a safe, encouraging space where students can speak • community of conscience ★ • students → co-learners instead of competitors work together, solve problems • narratives of learning materials; real world issues • connect classroom to surrounding community "The Power of Poetry" • Still I rise by Maya Angelou • won't give up, confidence, strength → working towards an inclusive, safe, empowering, and affirming world for all "Four Dimensions of Critical Literacy" • Disrupting the Common Place → new lens, interrogating texts, analyzing pop culture + media, developing the language of critique and hope ★ how language shapes identity + society • Considering Multiple Viewpoints → stories of others, reflect on multiple and contradictory perspectives, interrogate voices in texts, "who's missing?", seek out those voices that have been marginalized, make difference visible • Focusing on the Sociopolitical → systems, power structures, language, go beyond personal and seek out context of sociopolitical systems, challenging inequality, use literacy to engage, redefine literacy ★ as a form of cultural citizenship and politics that increases opportunities for subordinate groups to participate in society → ★ Literacy is an ongoing act of consciousness + resistance • Taking Action & Promote Social Justice → engage in reflection + action → transform, question injustice, how language is used to maintain power, forms of language to be used as cultural resources, challenge and redefine cultural boarders, cross them, have diverse cultural resources	"SJ in Social studies" – call critical literacy from existing topics / content – "Where? where? for who? who's silenced?" → Question and Evaluate, and empower students' voices in a safe space / launching pad → empowering past the classroom "Lies my textbook told me" – gaps in the textbooks, filled by teachers – outliers, sugarcoating o [redacted] Education, Literacy o Empowerment (Facebook fury)

Appendix S

Read Aloud Questions

Before the Reading	During the Reading	After the Reading
Does anybody know what a soup kitchen is? Thumbs up if you have ever been inside a soup kitchen. Thumbs down if you have not. Thumbs to the side if you're not quite sure. Mona, I see that you have been inside a soup kitchen before. Can you explain to us what it was like? One more person who has visited a soup kitchen who doesn't mind sharing your experience with us? How does a person become homeless? Does anybody know how soup kitchens began?	How would you describe Uncle Willy thus far? What type of person do you think Uncle Willy is just based on what you know so far? Can you tell us why? Are people always friendly to people who are living on the streets? What do you notice about what Uncle Willy said to this guy? How's business? What? Wow. Why do you think he asked him how's business, he's living on the street? Alright and then notice how Uncle Willy, he referred to the can man by name. How's business Frank? But what about the little boy? How would you describe the little boy so far based on what you know? And why would you describe him as apprehensive Melissa? So, Uncle Willie is talking to Frank, so what might be another reason other than stranger danger that the little boy seems to be apprehensive? So based on what was just described about the soup kitchen, what kind of place would you say the soup kitchen is? I know Mona mentioned her experience and what it felt like being in a soup kitchen but based	Why do you think Uncle Willy never asks Frank where he lives? Why wouldn't he want to ask that? Okay any other reason why he wouldn't ask? What do you think Uncle Willy means by sit down and make yourself uncomfortable? Why would he tell the little boy that, what does that mean? Anything else you would like to add? What does sit down and make yourself uncomfortable mean, Antoinette? Another thing…Uncle Willy actually greeted each person by their name as he was shaking their hand. Did you notice that? So what message do you think the author is trying to share here? And if you notice at the end, I heard the word citizens. Can you imagine that? So, what are you wondering in relation to homelessness right now?

	on what you just saw in the picture and what was described, what do you think the environment is like in the soup kitchen? So it has a bright atmosphere, it says the walls are bright. And like you said it's friendly on the inside. So it may look a little rough on the outside. Once you go in it's friendly, then the signs read have a nice day. No smoking please. What do you think is important there? Especially thinking about the type of people who may be coming to the soup kitchen.	

Appendix T

Talking Stick Protocol

The Talking Stick Ceremony

Developed in the field by educators.

Whoever has the stick talks, and everyone else listens. The stick is passed to the right, and as it reaches each person, s/he is invited to share briefly what the day meant for him or her. Participants might share a new insight or a question, describe some significant learning they did, or talk about what they propose to do in the future as a result of their learning during the day.

If someone does not want to speak at this time, s/he may pass the stick on to the next person. The stick can go around the circle several times in this way.

Some people conclude the activity by asking participants to look around at the people in the circle, acknowledging them in silence — what they have learned from them, what they have accomplished, and what they hope to do. Some groups then stand and turn completely around in their places, facing outward, and imagine what they will be doing in the days immediately ahead.

And then it is over.

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Appendix U

Double Entry Journal

Name_____ Date_____

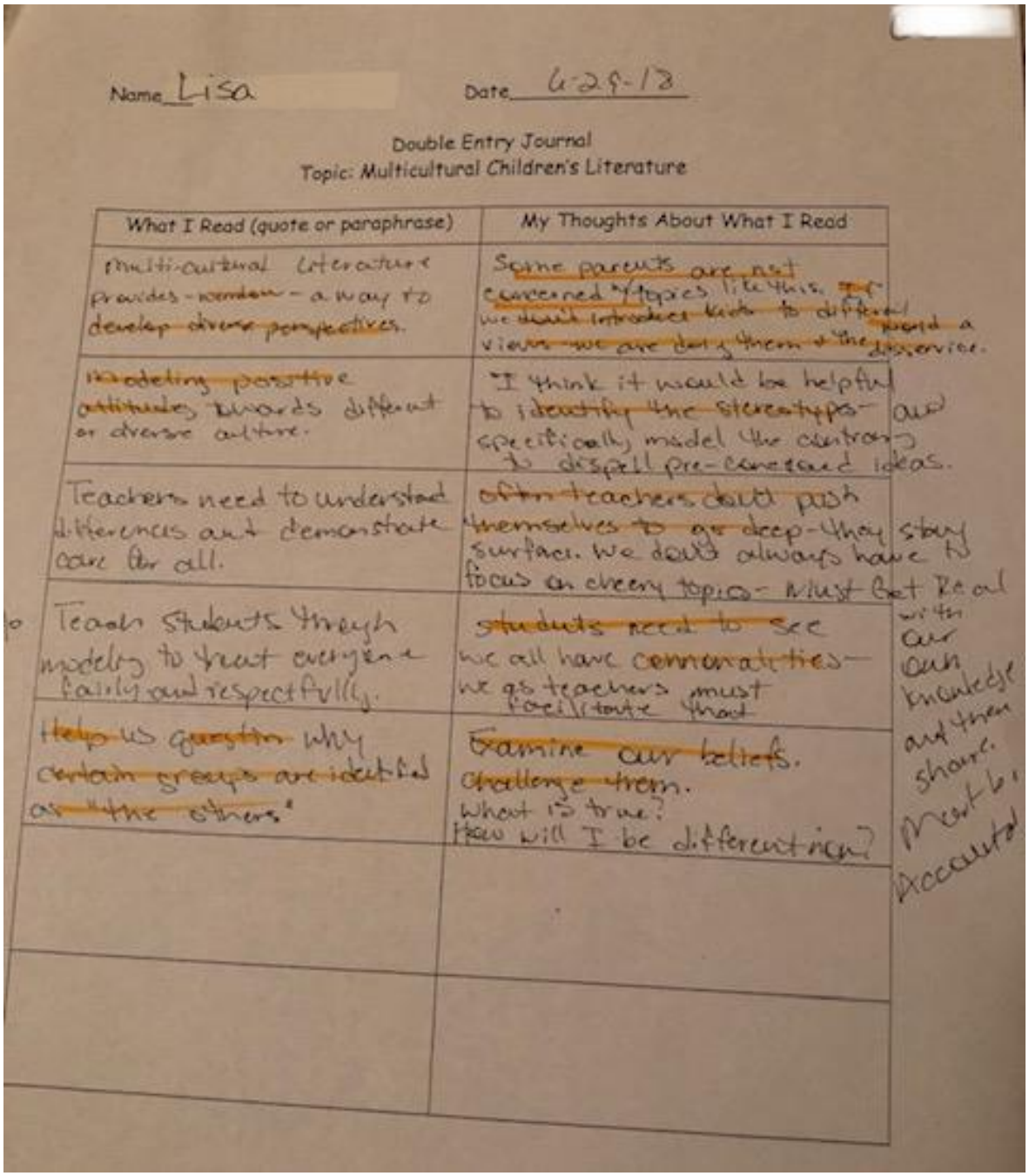
Double Entry Journal

Topic: Multicultural Children's Literature

What I Read (quote or paraphrase)	My Thoughts About What I Read

Appendix V

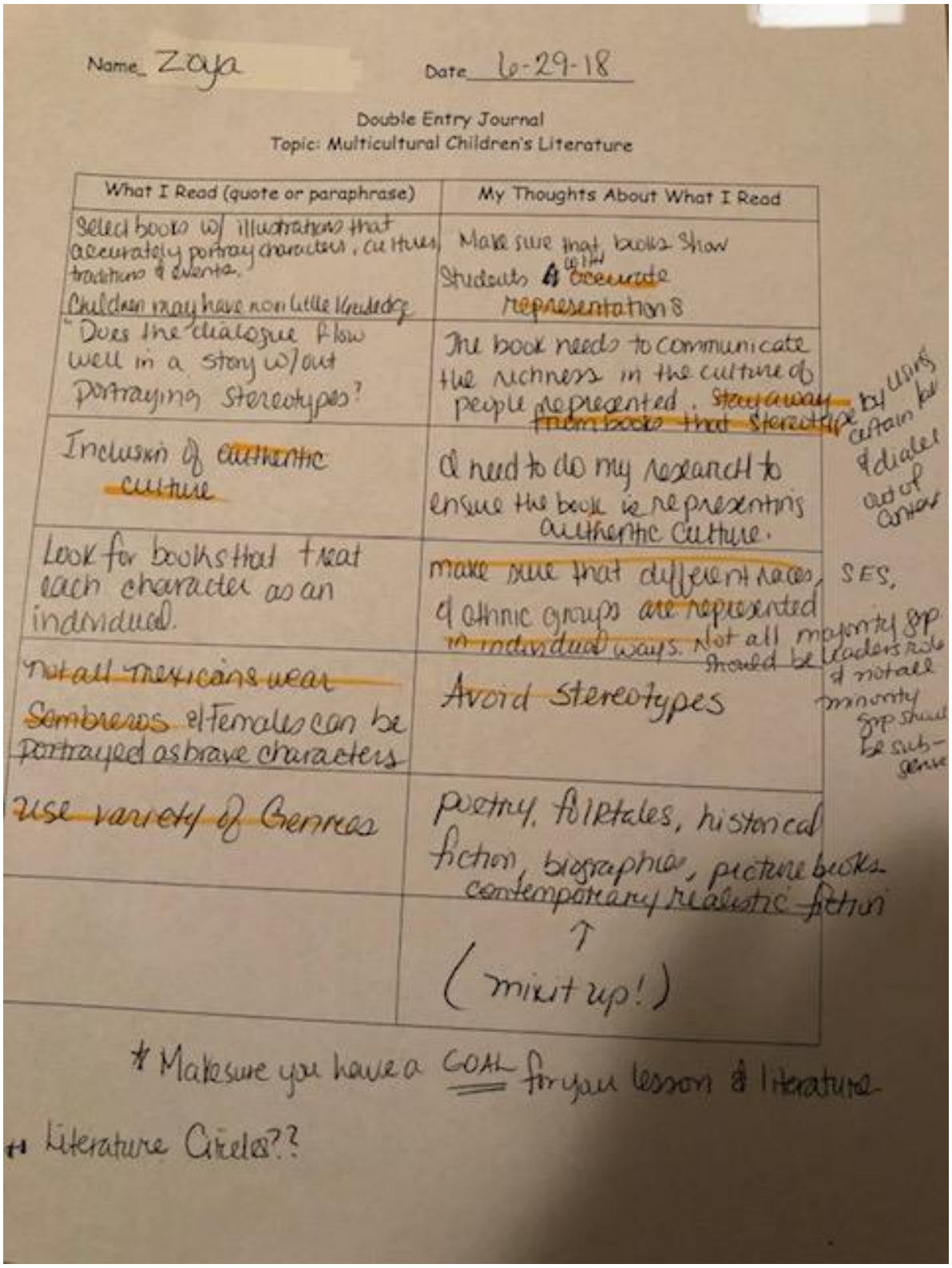
Double Entry Journal Participants



Name Lisa Date 6-29-13

Double Entry Journal
Topic: Multicultural Children's Literature

What I Read (quote or paraphrase)	My Thoughts About What I Read
multi-cultural literature provides ~~a window~~ a way to develop ~~diverse~~ perspectives.	Some parents are not concerned w/ topics like this. ~~We~~ we don't introduce kids to different ~~world~~ a view ~~we are doing them a~~ the disservice.
~~M~~modeling ~~positive~~ attitudes towards different or diverse culture.	"I think it would be helpful to ~~identify the stereotypes~~ and specifically model the contrary to dispell pre-conceived ideas.
Teachers need to understand differences and demonstrate care for all.	~~often teachers don't push themselves to go deep~~ - they stay surface. We don't always have to focus on cheery topics - Must Get Real with our own knowledge and then share. Must be accountable
Teach students through modeling to treat everyone fairly and respectfully.	~~students need to see~~ we all have commonalities - we as teachers must facilitate that
~~Help us question~~ why certain groups are identified as "the others"	~~Examine~~ our beliefs. ~~challenge them.~~ What is true? How will I be different now?



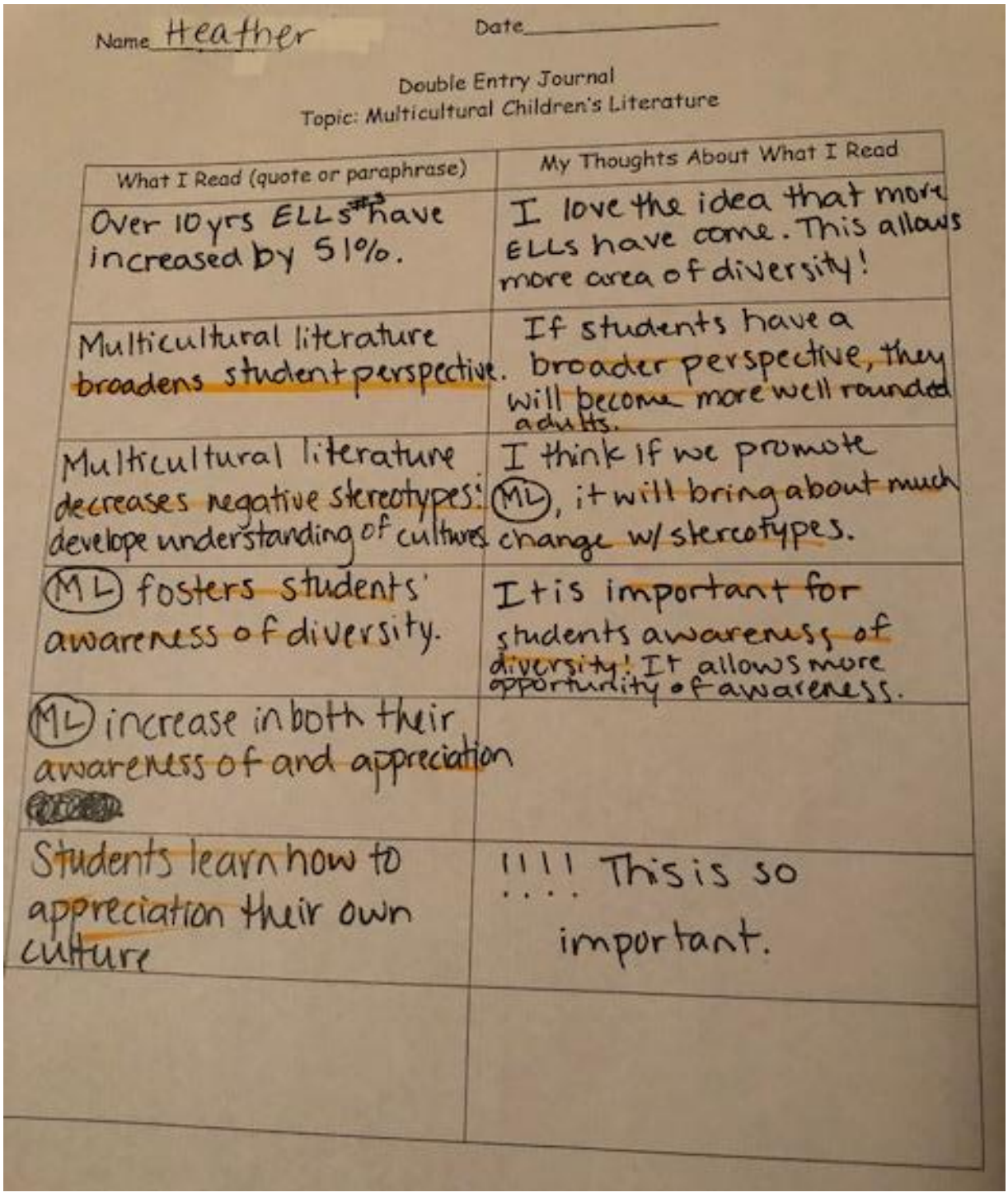
Name Zaya Date 6-29-18

Double Entry Journal
Topic: Multicultural Children's Literature

What I Read (quote or paraphrase)	My Thoughts About What I Read
Select books w/ illustrations that accurately portray characters, cultures traditions & events. Children may have non little knowledge	Make sure that books show Students & with accurate representations
"Does the dialogue flow well in a story w/out portraying stereotypes?	The book needs to communicate the richness in the culture of people represented. Stay away from books that stereotype by using certain ~~be~~ & dialect out of context
Inclusion of authentic culture	A need to do my research to ensure the book is representing authentic culture.
Look for books that treat each character as an individual.	make sure that different races, SES, & ethnic groups are represented in individual ways. Not all majority ~~gp~~ should be leaders role & not all minority ~~gp~~ should be sub-genre
~~not all Mexicans wear Sombreros~~ ~~el~~ Females can be portrayed as brave characters	Avoid Stereotypes
use variety of Genres	poetry, folktales, historical fiction, biographies, picture books, ~~contemporary realistic fiction~~ ↑ (mix it up!)

* Make sure you have a GOAL for your lesson & literature

* Literature Circles??



Name Heather Date _____

Double Entry Journal
Topic: Multicultural Children's Literature

What I Read (quote or paraphrase)	My Thoughts About What I Read
Over 10 yrs ELLs have increased by 51%.	I love the idea that more ELLs have come. This allows more area of diversity!
Multicultural literature broadens student perspective.	If students have a broader perspective, they will become more well rounded adults.
Multicultural literature decreases negative stereotypes; develope understanding of cultures	I think if we promote (ML), it will bring about much change w/ stereotypes.
(ML) fosters students' awareness of diversity.	It is important for students awareness of diversity! It allows more opportunity of awareness.
(ML) increase in both their awareness of and appreciation	
Students learn how to appreciation their own culture	!!!! This is so .... important.

Appendix W

Book Talk Planning

Name_____ Date_____

Book Talk Planning

Book Description

Title of the Book	
Author	
Social Justice Issue(s)	

Grade Level _____

What questions will you ask students?

Before Reading	

During Reading	
After Reading	

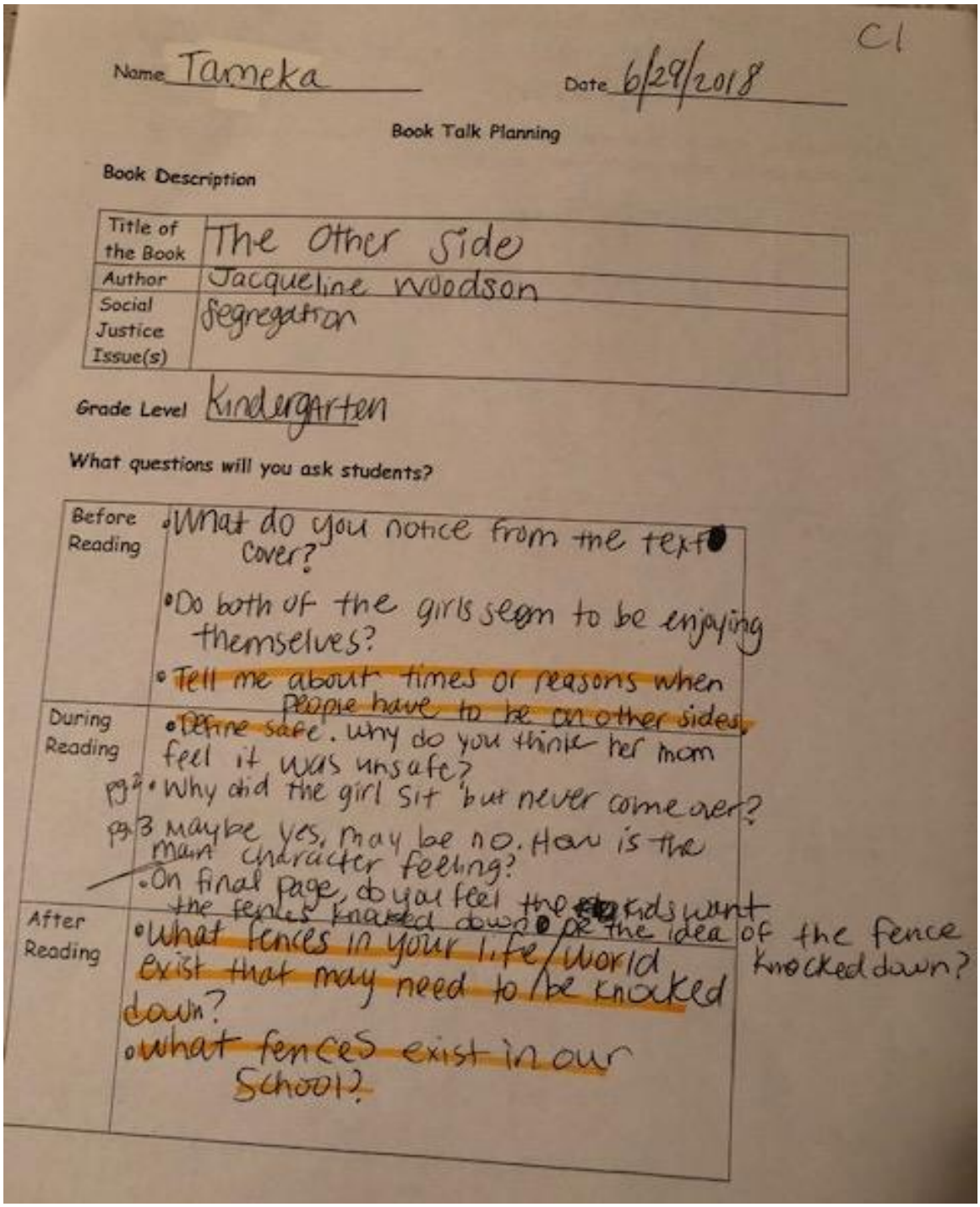
Describe the activities that students can engage in to think more deeply about the social justice issue and to take social action.

Activity 1	

Activity 2	
Activity 3	

Appendix X

Book Talk Planning Participants



C1

Name Tameka Date 6/29/2018

Book Talk Planning

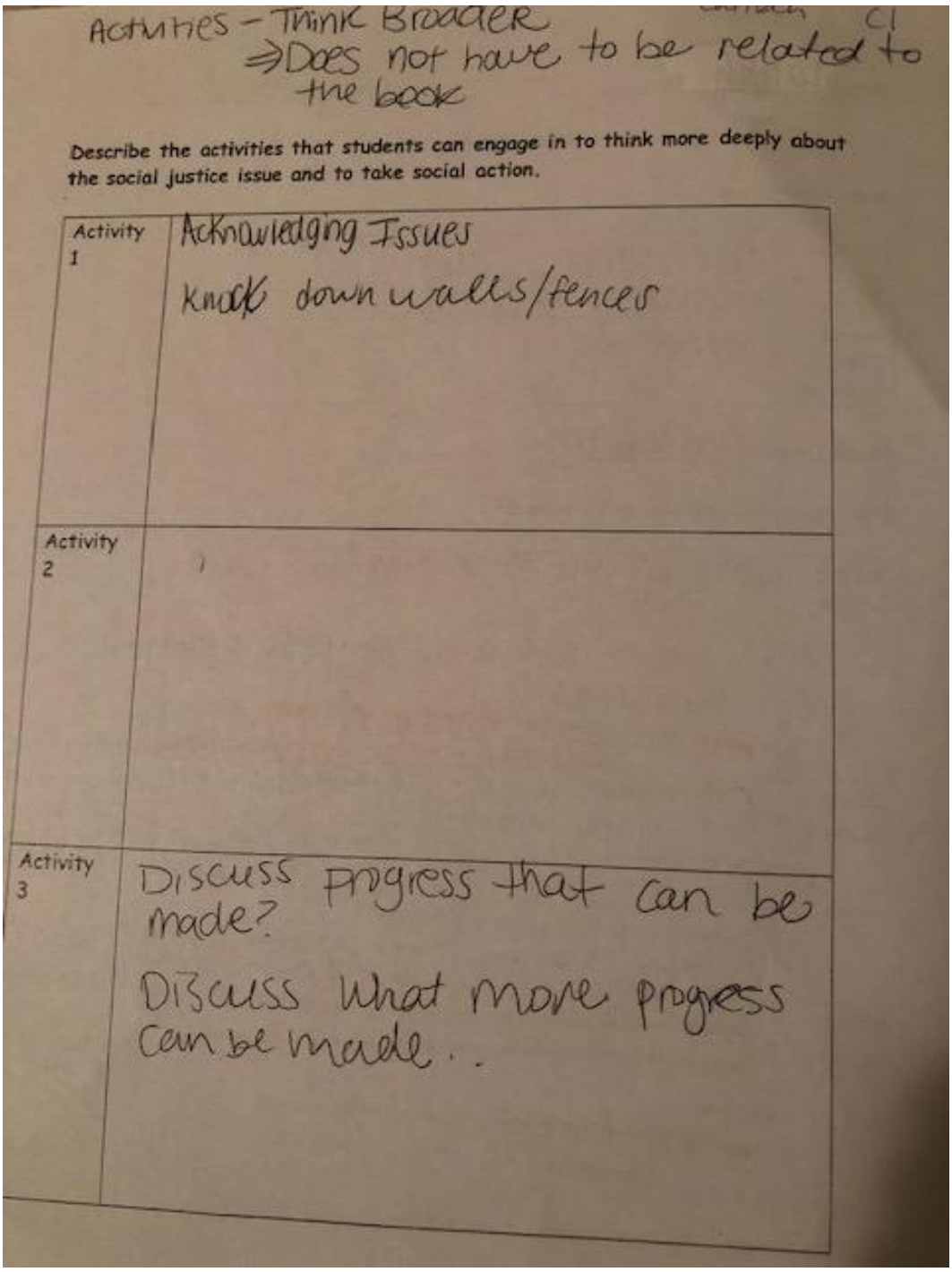
Book Description

Title of the Book	The Other Side
Author	Jacqueline Woodson
Social Justice Issue(s)	Segregation

Grade Level Kindergarten

What questions will you ask students?

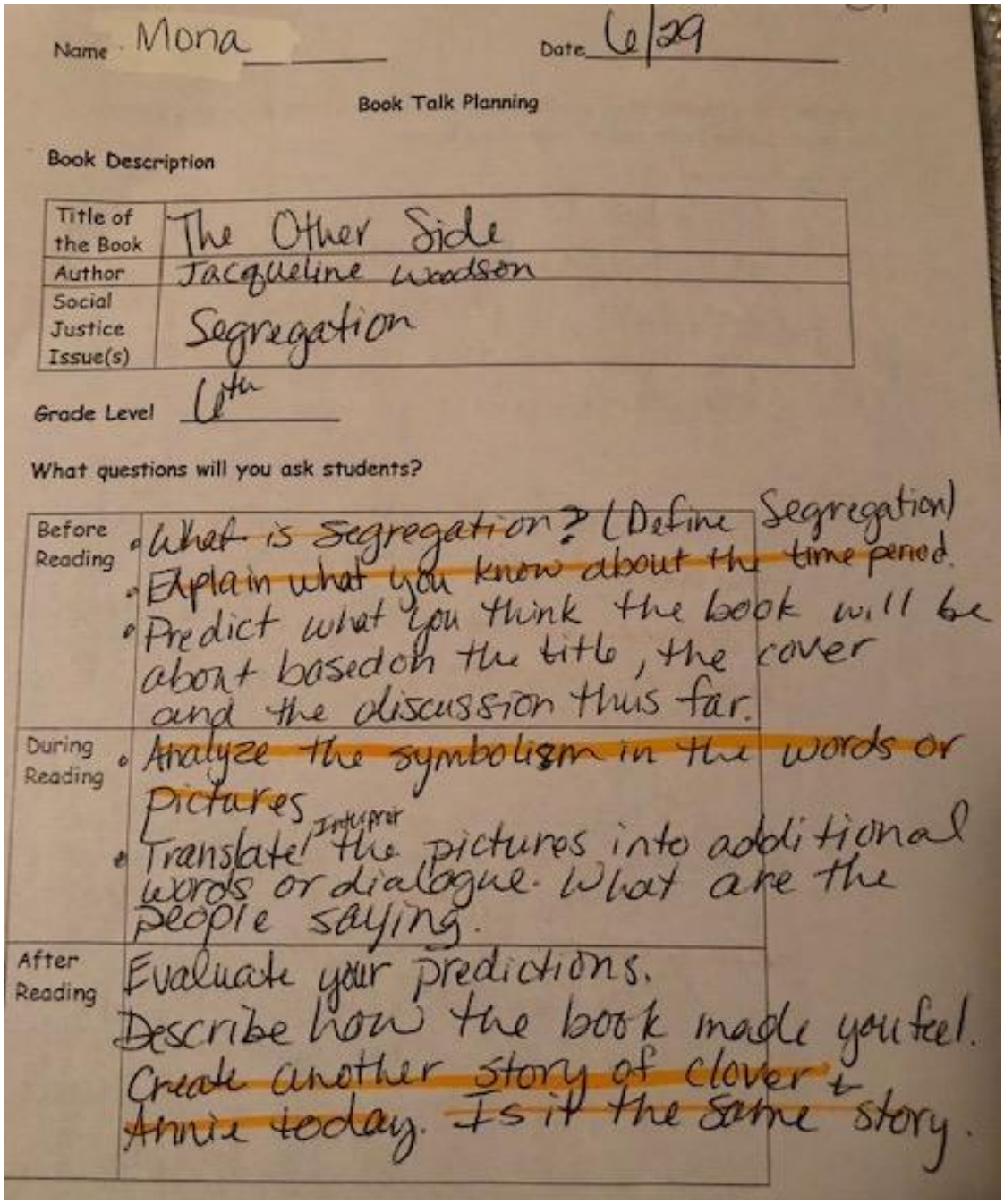
Before Reading	• What do you notice from the text cover? • Do both of the girls seem to be enjoying themselves? • Tell me about times or reasons when people have to be on other sides.
During Reading	• Define safe. Why do you think her mom feel it was unsafe? pg2 • Why did the girl sit but never come over? pg3 Maybe yes, may be no. How is the main character feeling? • On final page, do you feel the kids want the fences knocked down or the idea of the fence knocked down?
After Reading	• What fences in your life/world exist that may need to be knocked down? • what fences exist in our school?



Activities - Think Broader
⇒ Does not have to be related to the book

Describe the activities that students can engage in to think more deeply about the social justice issue and to take social action.

Activity 1	Acknowledging Issues Knock down walls/fences
Activity 2	
Activity 3	Discuss progress that can be made? Discuss what more progress can be made..



Name Mona Date 6/29

Book Talk Planning

Book Description

Title of the Book	The Other Side
Author	Jacqueline Woodson
Social Justice Issue(s)	Segregation

Grade Level 6th

What questions will you ask students?

Before Reading	• What is Segregation? (Define Segregation) • Explain what you know about the time period. • Predict what you think the book will be about based on the title, the cover and the discussion thus far.
During Reading	• Analyze the symbolism in the words or pictures • Translate/Interpret the pictures into additional words or dialogue. What are the people saying.
After Reading	Evaluate your predictions. Describe how the book made you feel. Create another story of Clover & Annie today. Is it the same story.

Describe the activities that students can engage in to think more deeply about the social justice issue and to take social action.

Activity 1 (you or characters)	Alphabet book covering topis in the books. You can include emotions, objects, ~~or~~ ideas of the book or the history that surrounds it.
Activity 2	Using Voices in the Park as a model, ~~give voice to one of the other characters in the story~~. Write/draw etc ~~from their point of view~~.
Activity 3	Imagine that Clover and Annie are meeting in ~~2018~~ and ~~re-write this story~~ using similar & but updated ~~symbolism~~ setting/ symbolism, etc. (Give specifics about illustrations, presentation, etc.) Discuss progress made & to be made

Name Patricia Date June 29, 2018

Book Talk Planning

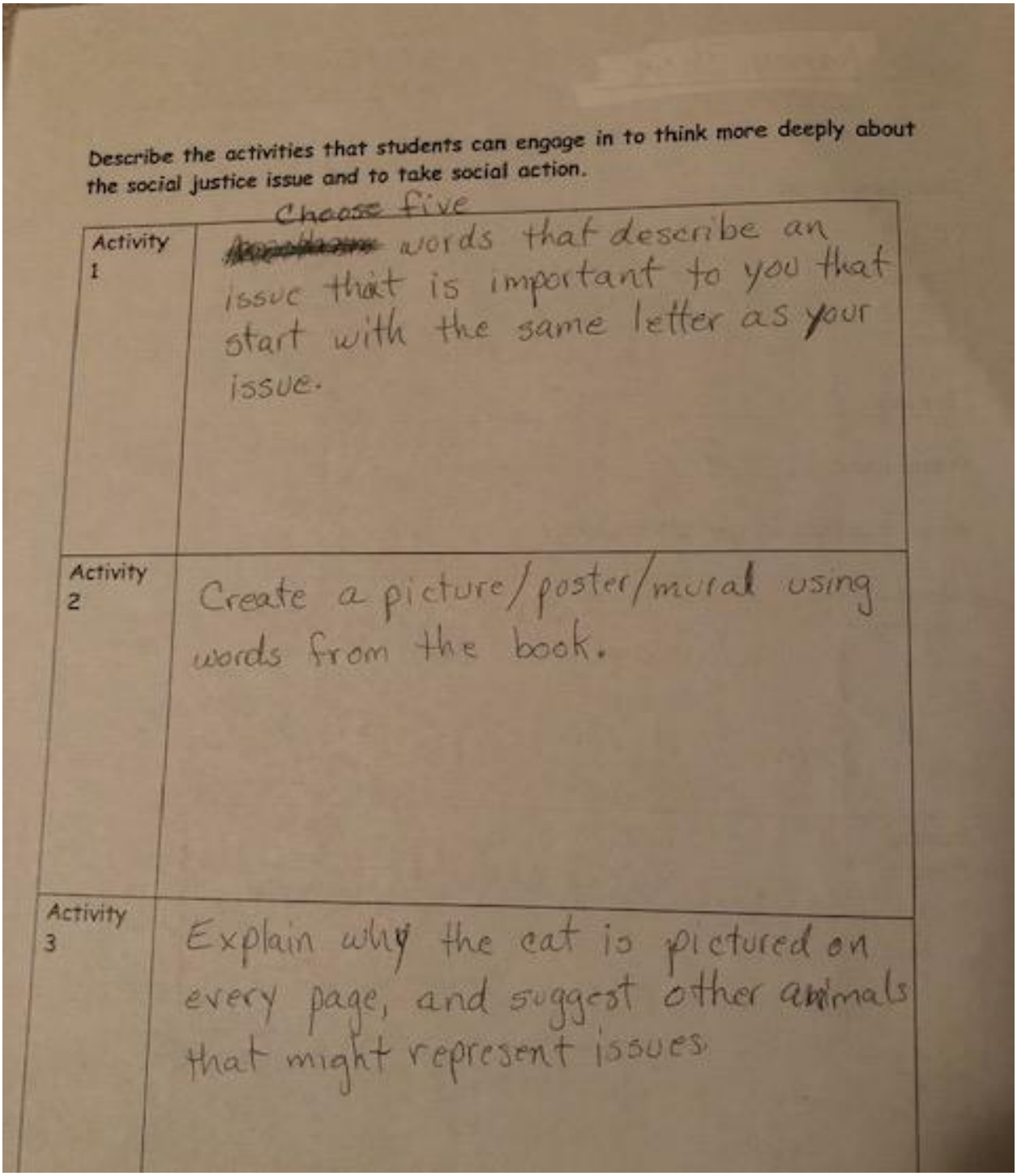
Book Description

Title of the Book	A is for Activism
Author	Innosanto Nagara
Social Justice Issue(s)	Multiple- from Activism to Zapatista and all things in between

Grade Level 4-6

What questions will you ask students?

Before Reading	What is an activist? Do you know any activists? Does anyone know what the hand sign means? Why do you think there is a cat on the cover? What issue would be important for you to be active about?
During Reading	Do you know what ____ means? Can you find the cats on each page?
After Reading	What do you think the cat represents throughout the book? Did the book mention the issue that was most important to you? Can you think of other issues that are important that the book doesn't mention?



Describe the activities that students can engage in to think more deeply about the social justice issue and to take social action.

Activity 1	Choose five ~~[illegible]~~ words that describe an issue that is important to you that start with the same letter as your issue.
Activity 2	Create a picture/poster/mural using words from the book.
Activity 3	Explain why the cat is pictured on every page, and suggest other animals that might represent issues.

Name Heather — Date 6.29.18

Book Talk Planning

Book Description

Title of the Book	Those Shoes
Author	Maryj Beth Bodt Noah Jones
Social Justice Issue(s)	Poverty, Intergenerational Housing, Accessibility Bullying, Socioeconomic

Grade Level 1

What questions will you ask students?

Before Reading	-What do you think this story will be about? - Do you have a favorite pair of shoes? - What makes them your favorite? - Do you want/need shoes?
During Reading	-What makes these shoes so special? -Why do you think he wants these shoes? -Why does his grandma say no to the new shoes?
After Reading	- Do your things define you? - Would you give you things away to people that needed them more than you?

Describe the activities that students can engage in to think more deeply about the social justice issue and to take social action.

Activity 1	Gratitude: "If Shoes would talk, What would they say?" characterize shoes. all diffnt types w/ different jobs, materials where have they gone?
Activity 2	Draw/Write: Draw a shoe & its journey in your life, someone else's etc.
Activity 3	

Appendix Y

Text Selections

Name_____ Date_____

Text Selections

Title of the Book	Author	ISBN

Please explain what made you decide on your text selections.

Appendix Z

Text Selections Participants

C3

Name Lisa Date 6-29-18

Text Selections

Title of the Book	Author	ISBN
The Only Road	Alexandra Diaz	978-1-4814-575[illegible]-4
The Stars Beneath our Feet	David Moore	978-1-5247-0124-6
~~Seed Folks~~	~~Paul Fleischman~~	~~0-06-027471-9~~
Seven Blind Mice	Ed Young	978-0399222260

Please explain what made you decide on your text selections.

Middle School Readers w/ ~~Relevant topic~~ for students I will be working with.

C2

Name Mark Date 29 June 2018

Text Selections

Mis-Education of the Negro Carter G. Woodson

Title of the Book	Author	ISBN
~~Young Martin's Promise~~	~~Myles the Dream Mayers~~	9781585093205
Just Mercy-A Story of Justice & Redemption	Bryan Stevenson	978-0-8129-9452-0
Native Son	Richard Wright	0-06-092980-4

Please explain what made you decide on your text selections.

Appendix AA

Professional Learning Feedback

☺ WORKSHOP FEEDBACK ☺

Workshop: Social Justice + Children's Literature

Dates: 6/28-6/29, 2018

What are 3 things from this workshop you learned and/or will definitely use?

1. Important to show students agency
2. Be an active educator so students can learn to be active listners
3. the classroom should be a place for disagreeing, not always competition

What are 2 things that challenged you during this workshop?

1. Disrupt the commonplace
2. We are a diverse group w/ a lot of experiences. This challenged me to think about the thoughts experiences of others.

What is 1 thing you are still curious about or 1 question you have?

How do you teach a subject to a group of students who may have experienced it when you haven't?

What additional comments would you like to share? (*feel free to continue on the back*) This challenged me to think deeply about my own priviledges + how I can be an advocate for marginalized groups.

☺ WORKSHOP FEEDBACK ☺

Workshop: Social Justice & Childrens Literature

Dates: 6-29-18

What are 3 things from this workshop you learned and/or will definitely use?

- To connect social issues w/ literature
- Self-advocation & How important it is to teach this to Students
- MODELING – model the things you want to see your Students do.

What are 2 things that challenged you during this workshop?

- Recognizing my own biases.
- Realizing ~~racism discrimination~~ comes in various ~~forms~~ & ~~example~~ people who are not a minority have also experienced it.

What is 1 thing you are still curious about or 1 question you have?

- ~~How do we communicate~~ with parents about controversial topics that will be discussed in class? What do we do if parents do not want their children to participate?

What additional comments would you like to share? *(feel free to continue on the back)*

Great workshop. ~~very insightful~~ & engaging.

☺ WORKSHOP FEEDBACK ☺

Workshop: Social Justice : Children's Lit.

Dates: 6.29.18

What are 3 things from this workshop you learned and/or will definitely use?

- incorporating multicultural literature
- exposing children to social justice issues
- Identity Mapping ☺

What are 2 things that challenged you during this workshop?

- aknowledging everyone has their own biases towards particular topics.
- allowing students more opportunity for free choice

What is 1 thing you are still curious about or 1 question you have?

I would love to know how to align social justice/equity with standards.

What additional comments would you like to share? ***(feel free to continue on the back)***

This class was awesome! I gained so ~~much~~ knowledge through collaboration with other educators.

Appendix BB

Content of *Social Justice & Children's Literature* Notebook

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