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Adolescent Literacy Practices and Positive Youth Development through Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning

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Adolescent Literacy Practices and Positive Youth Development through Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning

by

Paula Taylor-Greathouse

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in English Education Department of Secondary Education College of Education University of South Florida

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Keywords: Comprehensive Approach to Literacy, Integrated Course Design Model, Secondary Remedial Reading, Active Teaching and Learning, Lasting Learning

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. Mom, you have been an inspiration for me in so many ways. You are not only my mother, you are my best friend. You have been my cheerleader and rock since day one. Without you, I don’t think I would have ever come this far. Dad - You are the strongest and most loving man I know. You have instilled in us the value of education and encouraged each of us to succeed academically. You always saw the potential in me. Thank you for not letting me give up! Your faith in me has served as a foundation for everything I do. Bob - without your love and support, I would have never been come this far. Thank you for believing in me, even when I sometimes didn’t believe in myself. Preston - you are my heart and soul. You gave me the strength to preserver. What I do in life, I always do for you! Lani - Your words of encouragement and faith have helped carry me through. I couldn’t have asked for a more supportive and loving brother. Shannon, Rob, Grant, Carter, Reagan, Pierce, and Hayes - The smiles and laughs have always come when I needed them the most! Thank you for always reminding me that family is number one! Bob and Linda - You always let me know how proud you are of me and my accomplishments. Your words remind me daily that I could move mountains. Deb, Tim, Colin, Caitlyn, Butch, Linda, Courtney, Jessica, Tanner, Matthew, Scotty, Jake, and Meg. You all are the best cheering section ever!
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was not to disprove the effects of the current, common remedial literacy course design and the literacy practices within that help adolescent RLLs pass statewide assessment tests, but to describe the potential long-term impact of an innovative comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design model. In this study I sought to determine if the 2012 CAL design with a particular demographic of student produced “significant” or lasting learning as defined by Fink (2003). In other words, did the 2012 CAL design promote sustained or increased practices of literacy and PYD over time with adolescent remedial literacy learners? Findings were documented through the participants’ voices one year after participation in the CAL design. These findings demonstrate metadiscursivity with literacy and personal development in all six of Fink’s taxa, thus indicating the design produced significant learning as defined by Fink (2003). All four participants demonstrated evidence of sustained or increased growth in their awareness of their learning practices and purposes, as well as their personal development. A major conclusion of this study was that remedial literacy educators and policy makers who impact the current remedial curriculum designs in secondary schools can no longer assume that students who enter the secondary remedial classroom with a deficiency in literacy do not have the potential for academic success and personal growth. Findings from this study demonstrate that this demographic of student can move from a negative to a positive trajectory and come to see themselves as successful and thriving individuals.
Chapter One: Introduction

Richard Allington (2001) describes the 21st century as an “unfettered flow of information [where children must learn] to search and sort through information, to synthesize and analyze information, and to summarize and evaluate the information they encounter” (p. 7). These 21st century task demands require a higher level of literacy than that of prior generations, thus making the literacy needs of adolescents more critical today than they have ever been (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999; Vacca, 2004). Additionally, literacy use for adolescents has become increasingly more complex and demanding (Alvermann, 2002). Hinchman, Alvermann, Boyd, Brozo, and Vacca (2004) contend that literacy instruction is essential for students because it helps them shape and use literacy in ways that lead to meaningful learning. Literacy instruction which takes place during adolescence becomes absolutely vital in preparing them for life both in and out of school. The ability to read, write, listen, view, respond, and reflect will not be just imperative academically, it will be central to students’ well-being.

In lieu of the increased and increasing demands in literacy, designing and implementing effective literacy instructional approaches for students who are lacking in literacy skills can be one of the most pressing challenges facing schools. Neglecting to consider the magnitude of possessing literacy skills needed in today’s world and not teaching literacy effectively, especially to adolescent’s who are deficient in literacy skills, may lead to difficulties later in life (Costa & Kallick, 2000; Gardner, 1999; Houge, Peyton, Geier, and Petrie, 2007; Indrisano & Chall, 1995). Houge, Peyton, Geier, and Petrie (2007) state that “[t]here is evidence that deficient literacy
skills are associated with social, economic, and psychological problems” (p. 283). Unfortunately, there is little evidence to show that secondary remedial literacy classes are successful at increasing the necessary literacy dexterity that high school students need to successfully participate in today’s society (Kamil, 2003; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999).

Many of today’s literacy theorists and researchers refer to the adolescent who is deficient in literacy as marginalized (McCarthey & Moje, 2002; Moje, 2008; Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore, 2000), and often equate literacy with the acts of reading and writing. Moje et al. (2000) posit that marginalized adolescents are “those who are not engaged in the reading and writing done in school; who have language or cultural practices different than those valued in school; or who are outsiders to the dominant group because of their race, class, gender, or sexual orientation” (p. 405). For this study, I have adopted a comprehensive definition of literacy that extends beyond reading and writing and recognizes the adolescent at the center of adolescent literacy. In doing so, literacy becomes both an act and an identity. Therefore, I refer to the participants in this study as remedial literacy learners or RLLs. These students do engage in reading and writing in and out of school. They also engage in the literacy acts of listening, viewing, responding, and reflection. However, RLLs possess minimal skills in performing these acts as well as a lack of awareness of why and how literacy translates to their lives. Remedial literacy learners lack an understanding how literacy practices can be used to learn about content, themselves, and their worlds simultaneously and the benefits associated with these uses. Their limited literacy skills and practices, as well as their limited metadiscursivity (self-awareness), places them “in danger of failing in school and becoming academically disadvantaged in comparison with their peers” (Ravitch, 2007, p. 22), and also places them at risk for potential problems beyond the classroom (Houge, Peyton, Geier & Petrie, 2007; Joftus, 2002).
Statement of the Problem

Moore, et al. (2000) argue adolescents today:

. . . will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future (3).

Adolescent remedial literacy learners who struggle with literacy and are not receiving instruction that address the expanded literacy dexterities required for these task demands suggests that these adolescents will be “undereducated, underemployed, and underprepared to participate successfully in the 21st century” (Hock & Deshler, 2003, p. 50). Therefore, because of the importance of being literate today and the increasing number of students entering remedial literacy classrooms (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; McCardle & Chharba, 2004), a call has been issued to educators to create contexts for adolescent RLLs that allow for meaningful learning experiences to occur (Alvermann, 2002; Cambourne, 2001; Fisher & Ivey, 2006; Moje, 2008) and experiences that will be beneficial to them beyond the remedial classroom in all aspects of their lives. Moore (1999) advocates that adolescents deserve more than a one-size-fits-all approach to literacy. One suggestion is for educators to adopt a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in the remedial classroom (Correnti & Rowan, 2007; McConachie, Hall, Resnick, Ravi, Bill, Bintz, & Taylor, 2006; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Stockhill, Learned, Rainy, Rappa, Nguyen & Moje, 2011; Taylor & Gunter, 2005). A comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) is curricular integration of “reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening, performing, and thinking” (Taylor & Gunter, 2005, p. 22) aligned with the influences of the social and developmental contexts of the learner (Taylor & Gunter, 2005).
There is an abundance of literature regarding current comprehensive approaches to literacy instruction and the short-term impact of these approaches in successfully helping adolescent RLLs pass state-mandated tests (Correnti & Rowan, 2007; McConachie, Hall, Resnick, Ravi, Bill, Bintz, & Taylor, 2006; Rasinski & Padak, 2004), but absent is the presence of comprehensive approaches that document long-term consequences, specifically with adolescent remedial literacy learners. Additionally absent from the literature are the voices of those adolescent RLLs themselves.

Without research that documents the lasting impact—impact which is sustained or continue to develop over time—of innovative CAL designs specifically intended for students in the secondary remedial literacy classroom, we will continue to provide evidence for “band-aid” fixes for adolescent RLLs in order for them to pass tests. But at what cost is this to their future learning and well-being? Given the importance of literacy and its implications for individual lives and society at large, an investigation into alternative approaches which adopt a comprehensive perspective to remedial literacy instruction designed to produce lasting impact may be of immense value to students and their respective communities.

A Call to Action

Extant literature on literacy and adolescent literacy instruction reveals a gap between current remedial literacy instructional practices and the needed literacy practices to handle the task demands of the 21st century. Influenced by this literature, I conducted an action research study in which a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL), framed through an integrated course design model, was implemented with a class of 24 adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) in spring 2012. The CAL design recognized literacy as a complex, multi-dimensional human experience that had potential for both short- and long-term impact on the learner and considered,
at its center, the purposes for which one uses literacy. The CAL design also viewed students as resources and helped the adolescent RLL participants acknowledge themselves as thriving, literate, and intelligent human beings.

For nine weeks, 24 adolescent RLLs and I worked through a series of integrated design phases that utilized young adult (YA) literature in organized literacy events that enabled them to learn literacy skills and strategies while promoting positive youth development (PYD) and literacy practice in tandem. Positive youth development (PYD) is the building of competencies which enable adolescents to become successful adults (National Collaboration for Youth, 1996; Politz, 1996). Goals for the 2012 CAL design were two fold. The first was to create a learning experience for the students, one that promoted immediate increase in literacy proficiency, literacy practice, and positive youth development. The second goal was to create a “significant” learning experience for students that would promote the continued practice of literacy and PYD beyond the remedial literacy classroom. For both studies, the 2012 CAL and this study, Fink’s definition of significant learning were adopted. Fink defines “significant” learning as any “learning that occurs that has some kind of lasting change and is important in terms of the learner’s life” (Fink, 2003, p.30).

The initial findings from the 2012 CAL action research study revealed an immediate impact on literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and PYD with all participants (See Chapter 3 of this study); it met the first intended goal. What was not determined from the data, however, was whether or not “significant” learning (as defined by Fink) took place.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this intrinsic case study was not to disprove the effects of the current, common remedial literacy course design and practices that help adolescent RLLs pass statewide
assessment tests, but to describe the potential long-term impact of an innovative comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design model. Through this study I sought to determine if the 2012 CAL design with a particular demographic of student produced “significant” or lasting learning as defined by Fink (2003). In other words, did the 2012 CAL design promote sustained or continued development of literacy practices and PYD over time with adolescent remedial literacy learners? Findings were documented through the participants’ voices, demonstrating their metadiscursivity with literacy and personal development in an effort to align and extend current research in adolescent literacy learning and positive youth development. It is the intention of this study to fill the gap that exists in documenting the long-term impact of a CAL design that used Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning as a framework in the secondary remedial classroom through the voices of the RLL participants.

**Research Questions**

The intention of this study was to determine whether the 2012 CAL design created a significant learning experience - as defined by Fink - for four adolescent RLLs that promoted both literacy practice and positive youth development. Data analysis of protocols from the initial project indicated that 100 percent of the 2012 CAL participants demonstrated short-term growth in literacy practices and positive youth development (See Chapter 3 for findings). However, what could not be determined from these findings were any long-term or lasting impact in both literacy practices and positive youth development, thus making the CAL design a significant learning experience, according to Fink’s definition. Simply stated, the central question driving this study was whether or not the CAL design was a “significant” learning experience—as defined by Fink. In order to determine this, I explored the following subset of questions:
In what ways do four adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) who participated in a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design 12 months prior,

1. Employ/sustain literacy practices learned in the program?
2. Describe themselves in terms of the key characteristics of positive youth development (PYD) according to Lerner’s Five C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection Character, and Caring?
3. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy in relation to their literacy development?
4. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy in relation to their personal development?

**Theoretical Framework**

The goals of the 2012 CAL design were twofold: 1) to promote immediate and noticeable impact on adolescent RLLs’ proficiency, practices, and positive youth development; and 2) to promote lasting impact on literacy practices and positive youth development. For the first goal, the theoretical frameworks that informed the action research are as follows: 1) literacy as a multidimensional concept, 2) literacy practices, and 3) positive youth development. These three frameworks were infused into Fink’s Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) which Fink proposes, when used, promotes significant learning. (See Chapter 2, Part 1).

The second goal—and the purpose of this study—was to examine any lasting impact (impact sustained or continued to be developed 12 months after) of the 2012 CAL design to determine if a “significant” learning experience occurred for participants, according to Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning (See Chapter 2, Part 1). Therefore, the theoretical framework
this study utilized was Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning because it encompasses the “what” (literacy and PYD) and “how” (activity as a whole) of the CAL approach in terms of lasting effects.

**Taxonomy of Significant Learning**

L. Dee Fink (2003) purports that “significant learning requires that there be some kind of lasting change that is important in terms of the learner’s life” as a result of participation in an academic course” (p. 30). Furthermore, what students learn should have a “high value for being of value in their lives after the experience or learning activity (course) is over by enhancing their individual lives, preparing them to participate in multiple communities or preparing them for the world of work” (Fink, 2003, p. 7). Fink, as cited in Magnussen (2008), states that “for truly significant understanding (and remembrance) of a topic, there must be a clarity leading to full recollection after the course is over” (p. 83). Fink suggests that one year is an excellent starting point to examine recollection in an effort to determine significance (personal communication with Fink, June, 2013). There are six components of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning:

1) Foundational Knowledge, 2) Application, 3) Integration, 4) Human Dimension, 5) Caring, and 6) Learning How to Learn which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two, Part 1.

Fink (2003) ascertains the strength in his Taxonomy of Significant Learning stems from its relational and interactive nature. If students “learn how to apply content and see connections with other content knowledge, understand the human implications of what they have learned, and come to care about learning how to keep learning, it may be possible that they will both retain what they have learned and continue to utilize the concepts once they leave the classroom” (Fink, 2003, p. 58).
Definition of Terms

The following terms are pertinent to this study. These terms are arranged alphabetically in accordance with the format for dissertations (Meloy, 2001).

Adolescent: Refers to a person between the ages of 14 and 18 who is a member of a secondary, or high school, context.

Adolescent Remedial Literacy Learner (RLL): Any secondary student who is “in danger of failing in school and becoming academically disadvantaged in comparison with their peers” (Ravitch, 2007, p. 22) as a result of a deficiency in literacy as determined by failing the state-mandated assessment in literacy. Additionally, the RLL is at risk for potential problems beyond the classroom.

Change: Refers to any impact that occurred within the participant as a result of a Comprehensive Approach to Literacy (CAL) instructional design activity.

Comprehensive Approach to Literacy (CAL): An instructional design that combines context, content, and participant in the creation of a significant or meaningful literacy learning experience.

Deficit Model of Instruction: An instructional approach that assumes the learner is a problem to be fixed (Damon, 2004).

Direct/Explicit Instruction: Teacher-driven instruction that focuses on the teaching of skills and strategies in isolation of their context.

Lasting Impact: Lasting impact refers to any sustained or continued development experienced 12 months after participation in the comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) instructional design. Twelve months is the suggested starting point to determine significance according to Fink (personal communication, June, 2013).

Literacy: The acts of reading, writing, listening, viewing, responding, and reflecting that develop an individual’s potential for fully participating in society. It is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, and communicate using print and non-print texts associated with varying contexts and for varying purposes; it is a multidimensional concept. Literacy encompasses cognitive, linguistic, social, and developmental processes in both what is learned and what is practiced (Kucer, 2009).

Literacy Event: Observable and measurable uses of the cognitive domain of literacy and measured on state assessment tests. Literacy events are what Kucer (2009) describes as the foundation on which learners become users of literacy.
**Literacy Practices:** What one does with literacy in order to learn about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world (Moje, 2008). Literacy practices connect directly to one’s beliefs, values, and attitudes and changes over time as one continues to use literacy to learn.

**Fusion:** A classroom comprising of students who did not achieve proficiency on a state-mandated literacy assessment. A fusion classroom combines the teaching and learning of English and Reading.

**Metadiscursivity:** One’s employment of literacy in a multitude of ways, for a multitude of purposes, and within a variety of contexts. Furthermore, the individual is cognizant of why s/he uses literacy within each (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer & Morris, 2008).

**Positive Youth Development (PYD):** The building of adolescents’ competencies relevant to enabling them to become successful adults (National Assembly, 1994; National Collaboration for Youth, 1996).

**Significant Learning:** “Learning that occurs that has some kind of lasting change and is important in terms of the learner’s life” (Fink, 2003, p.30).

**Thriving:** Thriving is “an orientation toward life marked by balance, meaning, and learning from experience, in which one knows and finds resources that foster one's talents, interests, and aspirations, and through which one contributes to the common good” (Phelps, Balsano, Fay, Peltz, Zimmerman, Lerner, & Lerner, 2007, p. 3).

**Rationale for Order of Chapters**

Because this study is a follow-up to the 2012 CAL action research study, the order in which I present the information is will help readers better understand the purpose and discoveries. Therefore, Chapter Two – the Literature Review – is divided into two parts. Part One is the literature review for this study. Part Two is the literature review that guided the 2012 CAL instructional design. Because I sought to determine the lasting effects, if any, of the 2012 CAL instructional design on the participants’ literacy practice and PYD, it is important for the reader to have an understanding of these concepts given their examination in order to answer the research questions. Chapter Three is an overview of the 2012 CAL action research study. For readers to understand how this study extended the 2012 CAL study, they must have insight into
the 2012 CAL instructional design, methods and findings. Chapter Four houses the methods utilized for this study, and Chapter Five presents the findings. Finally, Chapter Six presents the reader a summary of the study and its findings, as well as the study’s limitations and implications.
Chapter Two: A Review of the Literature

The purpose of this study is to describe any potential long-term impact of a course redesign to determine if the design produced “significant” learning—learning that is sustained or increases over time—as defined by Fink (2003) with a particular demographic of student. The design’s impact was analyzed according to Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning. In order to complete this task, two actions occurred. The first was the implementation of an Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) (Fink, 2003) in creating spaces that promote significant learning, and the second was an examination of any lasting impact that may have occurred at least one year after participation in the integrated course. This chapter is divided into two parts. Part one is an analysis and discussion of the literature on Significant Learning, Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning, and Fink’s Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM). Part Two is phase one of the ICDM, an in-depth analysis of the situational factors of the course in which the ICDM was implemented.

Per Fink’s (2003) “significant” learning Integrated Course Design Model (which will be discussed in part one of this review), part two’s literature review was guided by the organizational structure of the Fusion classroom in which the study was conducted—the interplay between the content, the context, and the participant. Considering this make-up, part two of this literature review is organized according to each situational factor in the Fusion classroom that may affect learning (see Figure One).
Magnussen (2008) informs us that “current educational research has challenged previous conceptions about learning and has shifted instructional focus to the importance of learning with understanding” (p. 83). In the classroom, many educators rely on their content textbooks and the resources the publishers create as supplements to determine what needs to be learned and how (Budiansky, 2001; Daniels and Zemelman, 2004; Magnussen, 2008). However, some theorists and researchers suggest that instead of requiring students to learn the isolated facts present in textbooks, courses should be designed to connect the major concepts to one’s world (Fink, 2003; Levine, Fallahi, Nicoll-Senft, Tessier, Watson, & Wood, 2008; Magnussen, 2008). Teachers who maintain this latter view want their students to learn something important and meaningful (Daniels and Zemelman, 2004; Fink, 2003; Levine, et al., 2008; Magnussen, 2008), something “significant” that extends beyond the course and has lasting meaning in the lives of the participants (Fink, 2003). Unfortunately, if current curriculum is designed with a limited view of the content—creating a disconnect between content and the purposes for which one uses the content—then reaching the goal of producing “significant” learning may be impossible (Fink, 2003).
Learning Taxonomies

Bloom’s Taxonomy

Benjamin Bloom (1956) is credited as the creator of the most common taxonomy of educational objectives. Bloom’s Taxonomy consists of six kinds of hierarchical learning: Evaluation, Synthesis, Analysis, Application, Comprehension, and Knowledge (recall). This taxonomy has been used by teachers to formulate instructional goals and as a learning evaluation instrument since it was introduced (Fink, 2003; Lalley & Gentile, 2009; Levine et al., 2008), and teachers continue to use it today, more so in remedial classrooms (Marchand-Martella, Martella, Modderman, Petersen, & Pan, 2013). When framed using Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956), today’s remedial literacy classes are guided by curriculum that assumes literacy is best learned through developmental tasks, or a linear series of cognitive skills that are developed in order for a concept to be learned and mastered (Dale & Crain-Thoreson, 1999; Fink, 2003); this, in turn, is what is measured on state-mandated assessments. This model assumes that “wholes can be broken into parts, that skills can be broken into sub-skills, and that these skills can be sequenced in a learning line” (Fink, 2003, p. 20). There is little evidence, however, that demonstrates the success of remedial literacy classes that follow this perspective to increase the necessary literacy dexterity that high school students need to successfully participate in today’s society (Kamil, 2003; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999; Vaughn, Cirino, Wanzek, Wexler, Fletcher, Denton, Barth, Romain, & Francis, 2010). Furthermore, Lalley and Gentile (2009) ascertain even when material is initially mastered “much will be forgotten in a few hours or days” (p. 28).

Fink (2003) states “important kinds of student learning that do not easily emerge from Bloom’s Taxonomy such as learning how to learn, leadership and interpersonal skills, ethics, communication skills, character, tolerance, the ability to effectively adapt to change, etc.” (p. 29)
is what educators are expressing a need for. In an age of increased task demands required both in and out of school, and the repercussions of not possessing proficient literacy skills, Fink’s perspectives may be beneficial in redesigning the secondary remedial literacy classroom.

**Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning**

In 2003, L. Dee Fink introduced a new approach to designing, or redesigning, college courses that he believed if implemented would create learning experiences that would result in “significant” changes in students’ lives. Fink (2003) expanded Bloom’s Taxonomy in an effort to create learning experiences that would last beyond the course, what Fink coins “significant” learning. Fink’s (2003) approach considers areas beyond the cognitive, beyond Bloom’s mastery and application. Additionally, this taxonomy includes areas not represented in Bloom’s Taxonomy such as “learning how to learn, leadership and interpersonal skills, ethics, communication skills, character, tolerance, and the ability to change” (Fink, 2003, p. 29).

Fink’s Taxonomy extends the traditional taxonomy of Bloom through the addition of elements related to human interaction that he believes are important in creating “significant” learning experiences (Fink, 2003; Levine, et al., 2008; Magnussen, 2008). There are six components of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning: 1) Foundational Knowledge, 2) Application, 3) Integration, 4) Human Dimension, 5) Caring, and 6) Learning How to Learn; these are illustrated in Figure Two. The following are the operational definitions for each domain as they appear in Fink’s (2003) *Creating Significant Learning Experiences* (pp. 30-33):

**Foundational Knowledge (FK).** Fink, in the first taxon, recognizes there is a need for students to "know" something. Fink defines knowing as a student’s ability to understand and remember specific information and ideas. This cognitive knowledge forms the foundation for other kinds of learning to occur (p. 30).
Application (A). For knowledge to be useful, students must be able to apply it. This taxon occurs when students learn how to engage in some new kind of activity or action; it is what we want the students to be able to “do” with the content. These actions may be intellectual, physical, social, etc. Learning how to engage in various kinds of thinking (critical, creative, practical) is an important form of application learning. It is in this dimension that learning moves forward through practice (p. 31).

Integration (I). When students are able to see and understand the connections between different things (i.e. the content and other content areas, the content and their lives), an important kind of learning occurs. This act of making new connections gives learners a new form of power, especially intellectual power (p. 31).

Human Dimension (HD). When students learn something important about themselves and/or others, they discover the personal and/or social implications of what they have learned. What they learn, or the way in which they learn, sometimes gives students a new understanding of themselves or a new vision of what/who they want to become. At other times, they acquire a better understanding of others - how and why others act the way they do, or how they might interact more effectively with others. Acquiring this taxon allows learners to recognize their potential and how to be effective members of a community (p. 32).

Caring (C). Sometimes a learning experience can change the degree to which students care about something. These changes may appear as new feelings, interests, and/or values. When this occurs, they are likely to have more motivation for learning more about it, making it part of their lives. Without the motivation for learning, nothing significant happens (p. 32).

Learning How to Learn (LL). Learning in the final taxon occurs when students gain knowledge about the process of learning itself; it is here that students become metadiscursive,
developing self-awareness. They may be learning how to be a better student, how to engage in a particular kind of inquiry (e.g., the scientific method), or how to become self-directed learners. They are aware of their learning practices and purpose. This type of learning may lead to continued learning as this taxon enhances their capabilities not only as students, but how learning in school extends and enhances their lives outside of school (p.33).

![Figure 2](image-url)

**Figure 2.** Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning (p. 30)

**Relational Aspect of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning**

Unlike Bloom’s, Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning is “relational and interactive” (Fink, 2003, p. 34). The diagram shown in Figure Three illustrates the interactive character of this taxonomy. Fink (2003) ascertains “if students learn how to apply content and see connections with other content knowledge, understand the human implications of what they have
learned, and come to care about learning how to keep learning, it may be possible that they will both retain what they have learned and continue to utilize the concepts” once they leave the classroom (p. 32), thus supporting the relational and interactive nature of his taxonomy.

Figure 3. Fink’s (2003) Interactive Nature of Significant Learning (p.32)

**Designing a Significant Learning Experience**

Significant learning requires a learning-centered approach in the classroom, one where educators decide first what students can and should learn in relation to the subject and then figure out how such learning can be facilitated (Fink, 2003). Fink states that “unless a course is designed properly, all other components of effective teaching will have only limited impact” (Fink, 2003, p. 60). Therefore, he suggests answering of a series of questions to reach decisions related to design: 1) What are the important situational factors in a particular course? 2) Based on these situational factors, what should the learning goals be? 3) What forms of feedback and assessment should be implemented? 4) What teaching and learning activities will ensure the reaching of the learning goals? and 5) Are all the components integrated? (Fink, 2003). To
ensure that each taxon in the Taxonomy of Significant Learning is addressed within a course, influenced by the responses to the questions posed, Fink (2003) suggests that the following Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) be utilized when creating significant learning experiences (Figure Four):

![Diagram of Integrated Course Design Model](image)

**Figure 4.** Fink’s Integrated Course Design Model (2010, p. 5). (Major criteria are shown in bold).
Situational Factors

The first step in creating a “significant” learning experience begins with an examination and analysis of the situational factors that may affect learning. Within this analysis, Fink (2003, 2004, 2005; Fink & Fink, 2009) suggest that there are five factors to be considered: 1) the context, 2) the expectations of others about what students should be learning, 3) the characteristics of the students, 4) the characteristics of the subject, and 5) the characteristics of the teacher. Each is defined below as they appear in Fink and Fink, 2009 (p. 5-6):

- **The context** - the number of students in the classroom, the instructional level, the nature of instruction (face-to-face, on-line, etc.), and the time allotted for instruction.

- **The expectations of others** – others have expectations about what students should learn in a particular course. For example, an objective for a remedial literacy course may be to prepare students to pass the state-assessment or an objective could be to prepare them for future literacy task demands. Expectations can be immediate or long-term.

- **The characteristics of the students** - students come into our classes with various levels of prior knowledge about the course subject. Additionally, they come to us with various levels of motivation. Often, they have preconceived notions about the subject; that is, the subject is difficult (e.g., Statistics), unimportant for most people (e.g., World Geography), or self-evident/based on common sense (e.g., Psychology).

- **The characteristics of the subject** - particular subjects have particular characteristics. Some subjects, like the sciences, math, and engineering, have a “convergent” character. This means that in general there is a single correct or best answer to a problem or question. Other subjects, like the humanities and fine arts, are “divergent,” meaning they welcome multiple answers to the same question.

- **Characteristics of the Teacher** - The teacher is an important factor with particular characteristics. Each teacher has her/his own strengths and limits as well as preferences with regard to teaching methods/technique, and I would add beliefs about their subject matter.
While it is not necessary to explore each of these factors for every course design or redesign, what must be considered is which ones are the most pertinent to the design; “which ones warrant the most attention” (Fink & Fink, 2009, p. 6). However, no matter what course is being designed or redesigned, the context must be examined in-depth because it ensures that all taxa of the Taxonomy of Significant Learning reflect all the components of the classroom: students’ characteristics, the nature of the subject, and the educational expectations of the course. Isakovski, Kruml, Bibb, and Benson (2010) maintain the importance of this first step by stating that “without this step, it would be impossible to design and implement a well-integrated learning process that meets the demands of both the students and the instructor” (p.27).

**Learning Goals**

Learning Goals appear at the top of Fink’s (2003) ICDM (Table Four); however, it is the second undertaking in designing “significant” learning experiences. Fink (2003) suggests that educators begin designing or redesigning a course by first establishing what the learning goals will be for the course based upon the in-depth analysis of the situational factors, not the concepts or the activities. By doing so, the educator can begin to connect the learning goals to specific learning outcomes – keeping the focus on the learner rather than the concepts to be learned.

**Active Teaching and Learning**

The next charge in Fink’s (2003) course design is to create active teaching and learning experiences that will lead to successful mastery of the learning goals produced. Fink (2009) suggests that students need to “(a) do something with the content and (b) reflect on the meaning of the content” (p. 8). As a result of his research on active learning and how educators implemented these two ideals, he recommends that students should be experiencing activities within and across several activity domains in order to meet both (See Table One).
Table 1. Multiple kinds of activities to promote active learning (Fink 2009, p. 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting Information</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Reflect Dialogue with:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Doing”</td>
<td>“Observing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Original Data</td>
<td>Real doing in authentic settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original Sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect, Vicarious</td>
<td>Secondary data and sources, Lectures, textbooks</td>
<td>Case studies, simulations, role play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Course web site, Internet</td>
<td>Teacher can assign students to “directly experience”…… Students can engage in “indirect” kinds of experience online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Feedback and Assessment**

Assessment and feedback, phase three of the ICDM, is essential in not only monitoring current learning, but as a way to promote “significant” learning – learning that is lasting. Fink advocates that assessment and feedback should be a conduit for dialogue between a student and teacher; it is something more than just grading (2003, 2004; Fink & Fink, 2009). When assessment becomes a dialogue, students are encouraged to monitor and evaluate their own performance. Additionally, a dialogic structure of assessment allows the teacher to create what Isakovski, Kruml, Bibb, and Benson (2010) refer to as “performance-feedback-revision-new performance” (p. 29). Assessment and feedback that promote active student involvement in the learning process while allowing educators to monitor the learning, makes reflection an imperative part in this component of Fink’s (2003) course design/redesign model.
Integration

In Fink’s ICDM, the three aforementioned components--learning goals, active teaching and learning activities, and feedback and assessment--are connected. Fink (2003) purports the amalgamation of these components ensures that all the situational factors are addressed within the course design: nature of the content, the characteristics of the participants, and the educational expectations.

Studies Using Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning and What’s Missing.

Several researchers have applied Fink’s model in disciplines such as biology (Tesser, 2008; Watson, 2008), psychology (Fallahi, 2008; Levine, 2008), art (Torosyan, 2009), education (Apul & Philpott, 2011; Countryman, 2012; Fayne, 2009; Nicoll-Senft, 2008), career preparation (Isakovski, Kruml, Bibb, & Benson, 2010), service learning (Saulnier, 2003), policy (Kruegar, Russell, & Biscoff, 2011) and in the medical field (Plake, 2010) at the collegiate level. Within these disciplines, Fink’s Taxonomy has also been used as a theoretical framework for learning in on-line environments (Abdallah, 2007; Isakovski, Kruml, Bibb, & Benson, 2010; Magnusson, 2008).

Four of the aforementioned studies (Fallahi, 2008; Levine, 2008; Nicoll-Senft, 2008; & Watson, 2008) reported that the implementation of the Integrated Course Design Model to create significant learning experiences did in fact promote continued learning, but not in all six of Fink’s taxa. All four of these studies solely used quantitative measurements (i.e. Likert scale, pre/post multiple choice assessments, student writing graded using a rubric). Watson (2008) found an increase in Fundamental Knowledge, Application, Human Dimension and Learning How to Learn, but not in Integration and Caring. Nicoll-Senft’s (2008) redesign of a course resulted in increased learning in Application, Integration, Human Dimension, and Learning How
to Learn but not in Fundamental Knowledge or Caring. Levine (2008) and Fallahi (2008) both reported significant gains in Fundamental Knowledge, Application, Human Dimension and Learning How to Learn, but not in Integration and Caring in their findings.

Only one qualitative study using Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning as a theoretical framework has been conducted to date. Abdallah (2007) captured the voices of participants as they demonstrated their awareness of growth in learning in each taxon as it related to their experience in an on-line environment. Abdallah collected over 300 statements through asking open ended, on-line questions to the participants. Analyses of these responses were used to determine if the on-line environment was worth continuing in a university where teacher-centered course designs were the norm. According to the participants, not only was this course design worth continuing, it was one that promoted “significant” learning in all six taxa of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning.

Finally, three studies (Magnusson, 2008; Isakovski, Kruml, Bibb, & Benson, 2010; Saulnier, 2003) failed to measure any learning at all; rather, they only provided an overview of how they implemented Fink’s ICDM in their effort to create a “significant” learning experience through Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning.

While each of these studies sought to measure learning through Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning, those that employed quantitative methods fell short in capturing growth in each taxon. What this may indicate is a weakness in using quantitative measurements to capture significant learning according to Fink’s Taxonomy. Perhaps this is because this taxonomy relies on the learner’s metadiscursivity or self-awareness of growth, both academically and personally. This limitation influenced the choice of qualitative methods for this study.
Torgesen, Wagner, and Rashotte (1997) argue that assessing reading interventions immediately after they occur does afford researchers the opportunity to examine the intervention’s effectiveness as a foundation, however, a true examination of an intervention’s effectiveness can only be determined by long-term follow-up. Significant learning is defined by Fink as learning that has lasting impact, learning that extends beyond the course. This definition suggests that the design must be examined longitudinally in order to determine its true impact. Each study examined, both quantitative and qualitative, fell short in meeting this definition.

The absence of any study that examines the lasting impact of any learning which occurs as a result of using Fink’s ICDM to create significant learning influences this study, as it will fill this void in the literature.

Finally, Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning has been employed as a theoretical framework in studies across several disciplines only at the collegiate level, perhaps because this framework was created with college courses in mind. To date, no research exists that applies Fink’s model to secondary contexts, let alone in remedial courses at the secondary or post-secondary level. This gap in the literature influences this study.

Part II: Situational Factors of the Fusion Classroom

Fink (2003, 2004, 2009, & 2010) maintains that in order for his taxonomy to be effective in creating significant learning – learning that is lasting - a series of design criteria must be met (See Table Four). The first criterion in the design/redesign of a course is to perform an in-depth analysis of the situational factors that may affect learning. Part two of this literature review satisfies this criterion. As such, Part two of this literature review is guided by the organizational structure of the Fusion classroom in which the 2012 CAL design was implemented (see Table One). In keeping with Fink’s (2003) ICDM, this literature review influenced the learning goals,
active teaching, active learning, and feedback and assessment activities of the 2012 CAL design. These Integrated Course Design Model criteria will be addressed in Chapter Four.

**Context: The Fusion Classroom**

Before the situational factors of the Fusion classroom can be explored, the characteristics of this context must be understood. Fusion is the combination of an on-level English course fused with a remedial reading course designed for students scoring below proficiency on the reading portion of the state-mandated assessment. The premise behind this synthesis is to provide students with an extended opportunity to master the necessary reading skills that are measured on the state-mandated assessment while exposing them to literature and language covered in the grade-level English course. Fusion courses are blocked courses, making them 96 minute periods which students attend daily during the entire school year. The participants in a Fusion course are considered remedial and at risk for academic failure.

**Content: What is Literacy?**

Characteristics of the teacher is one of the principles that Fink (2010) purports must be examined in-depth when creating a “significant” learning experience because teachers’ beliefs guide their expectations about student abilities and the instructional decisions they make (Fang, 1996; Fink, 2010; Johnson, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Raths, 2001). Because the 2012 CAL design was influenced by the researcher’s beliefs about what constitutes literacy and who she perceived the remedial learner to be, an examination of the definition of literacy adopted and the characteristics of the adolescent remedial learner is necessary.

The term literacy is a fairly recent development. Up until the 1980’s, the education system considered literacy the sole acts of reading and writing and viewed these acts as skills separate from one another (Gee, 2000; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). From the simple ability of
being able to write and read one’s name, literacy has developed into a complex and multidimensional concept that includes one’s ability to view, listen, respond, and reflect (Alvermann 2001; Gee 1999, 2000; Guadalupe & Cardoso, 2011; Luke 2000). Many literacy theorists and researchers contend that literacy includes the acts of reading, writing, viewing, listening, responding, and reflecting – all of which influence thinking - and advocate that these acts occur beyond the cognitive and within social contexts (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 1990, 1999, 2001; Kucer, 2009; Moje, 2002, 2008, 2009, 2010; Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011; Street, 1995, 2000). Kucer (2009) demonstrates this ideal through his Multidimensional Model of Literacy (see Figure Five).

**Figure 5.** Kucer’s (2009) Multidimensional Model of Literacy (p. 4)

**Kucer’s Multidimensional Model of Literacy**

Kucer’s Multidimensional Model of Literacy situates itself in four dimensions, each one present in every act of literacy and each building off the next: 1) cognitive, 2) linguistic, 3) sociocultural, and 4) developmental (Kucer, 2009; Kucer & Silva, 2006). This model supports
the multidimensional nature of literacy adopted in the 2012 CAL action research study. The
domains of this model as described in Kucer’s (2009) *Dimensions of Literacy* (pp. 5-6) are as
follows:

**Cognitive.** Kucer’s cognitive component sits at the center of this model. Within this
scope, the literacy participant is considered primary, and literacy is considered solely an
autonomous act. This element of literacy stems from the individual and his or her cognition. In
order for the learner to move beyond this domain requires him or her to have a desire to explore,
construct, and share meaning.

**Linguistic.** The linguistic element of Kucer’s model reflects a learner’s ability to traverse
between different language systems in order to connect to the cognitive meanings being
constructed. These systems—defined as cue systems (or codes) by Kenneth Goodman (1996)—
reflect the structure, syntax, and semantics of a text. It is the linguistic element that requires the
literacy learner to consider the nature of language (its systems) since this domain focuses on the
text itself. Literacy learners become code breakers (construct meaning) and code makers
(express meaning) as they transact with the language of a text. It is these transactions, as breakers
and makers, which, if practiced and mastered, would move the participant from a structured
meaning to a deeper understanding of text in the hope that learning extends to discoveries about
one self and one’s world.

**Sociocultural.** The third element in Kucer’s model concerns itself with the social aspect
of literacy and learning and tells us that when we limit our view of literacy to just the individual
and the text, we are overlooking the social dimensions that affect literacy and literacy practices.
Referencing Gee (1990), Kucer states by not considering the social dynamics of literacy it
“situates literacy in the individual person, rather than in the society of which that person is a
member. As such, it obscures the multiple ways in which reading, writing, and language interrelate with the workings of power and desire in social life” (p. 27). Without considering the social, literacy is again reduced to simply an autonomous, cognitive act.

Developmental. Kucer’s final dimension of literacy concentrates on development and encompasses all the other dimensions. In this domain, Kucer (2009) contends that each act of literacy reflects those aspects of literacy that the individual does and does not control in any given context. Potentially, development never ends, and individuals may encounter literacy events that involve using literacy in new and novel ways. These experiences offer the opportunity for additional literacy learning that results in developmental advancements. Development, in this sense, reflects growth in an individual’s ability to effectively and efficiently engage in the linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions of literacy in an array of contexts.

As a whole, Kucer’s (2009) Multidimensional Model of Literacy concerns itself with the dimensions and complexity of literacy events. He states that “children must come to command these various aspects of reading and writing [literacy events] if they are to be successful literacy users in their worlds” (Kucer, 2009, p. 310). Kucer (2009) advocates that teaching and learning literacy through this multidimensional lens will afford learners opportunities, once mastered, to shift from learning to be literate (using literacy as a skill tool) to becoming literate (using literacy as a multidimensional tool). Therefore, it has been suggested that literacy instruction needs to be more than just literacy events; it should also include a set of prescriptions about how literacy is used, when it is used, and why it is used (Moje, 2000, 2008; Street, 1984, 1995, 2001). Furthermore, literacy when viewed in this way should be metadiscursive in nature.
Metadiscursivity “is the ability to engage in many different discourse communities, to know how and why one is engaging, and to recognize what those engagements mean for oneself and others” (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008, p. 4). When used in this sense, literacy becomes a practice. A group of ten leading literacy researchers and theorists (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, Gee, Kalantzis, Kress, Luke, Like, Michaels, & Nakata, 1996) known as the New London Group, argue “that literacy education should be as much about learning to be metadiscursive, a self-awareness of why one uses literacy, as it is about teaching conventional codes and scripts” (as cited in Moje, et al., 2008, p.108).

Theorists such as Barton (1994), Moje (2002, 2008, 2009, 2010), and Gee (1990, 1999, 2001) conceptualize literacy in terms of social practices. They define literacy practices as “what people do with literacy” (p. 7). Street (2001) asserts that in order to understand literacy as a practice, in-depth and detailed accounts of literacy being practiced in different contexts needs to occur. Heeding this call and applying the lens of literacy as a practice, Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) developed a Model of Literacy Practices which affords researchers and educators a framework for identifying and measuring literacy in use - the measurement of literacy practices. It is important to acknowledge that conceptions of literacy as a practice do not deny the cognitive or behavioral aspects of reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and reflecting; instead, they situate them as processes in a much larger social context (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Moje & O’Brien, 2000; Purcell-Gates, Briseño & Perry, 2011). Literacy scholars, such as Street (2001), Barton and Hamilton (2000), and Gee (2000) have theorized that from literacy events one can infer literacy practices, but “it has not always been clear how to connect the invisible practices to visible events” (Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011, p. 451). This model of literacy practices is an attempt to make those connections more explicit.
Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry’s Model of Literacy Practices

Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry’s Model of Literacy Practices is theoretically framed around the premise that literacy is always situated within social and cultural contexts (2011); see Figure Six. Within this frame, “there are multiple discursive literacy practices that can be inferred from texts and purposes for reading and writing those texts—and analysis of these practices must be shaped by and interpreted within the sociocultural/sociolinguistic contexts within which they occur” (Bakhtin, 1986; Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1984, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978 as cited in Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011, p. 441). Because literacy practices are not easily observable, these researchers felt it imperative to fill the gap that exists within this topic in an effort to assist others who conduct literacy research by providing a means to construct frames that would provide greater understanding of literacy in practice. This model was developed and shaped from the findings of a longitudinal study on literacy practices entitled, “The Cultural Practices of Literacy Study” where Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) examined and analyzed literacy within sociocultural contexts. What emerged from these data were a set of codes that when applied to data and analyzed would permit researchers to identify literacy practices as well as analyze one’s metadiscursivity. This model makes measuring literacy practices through metadiscursivity possible. The codes used to create this model will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four, as they were a framework for measurement for this study. At the center of Purcell-Gates, Briseño and Perry’s Model of Literacy Practices lay two shaded domains--function and text--which represent observable literacy events. These are the domains that our current state-mandated literacy assessments measure and the domains that drive our current remedial literacy course designs (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003). Within these shaded areas, we can see the connection to the inner two
domains of Kucer’s (2009) Model of Literacy. Much like Kucer, these inner domains look at the participant’s intent for reading, writing, listening, viewing, responding, and reflecting and the text(s) utilized to perform those tasks. Progressing out from these two domains, intent coupled with text(s) mediate the participant’s social purpose for engagement in the literacy event. Again, similar in nature to Kucer’s Model of Literacy, this domain reinforces the social nature of literacy and adopts a socio-psycholinguistic perspective. It is here that Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry extend Kucer’s model to demonstrate what one does with these events, and why and how these practices can be understood and measured.

**Figure 6.** Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry’s (2011) Model of Literacy Practices (Perry, p. 56)

Because a person’s immediate intent is often shaped by larger domains of social activity, Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) believe we must consider literacy shaped by other contextual layers. The Social Activity Domain of this model reflects the human experiences that are involved when one practices literacy. Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry’s (2011) example of
this is an individual’s personal history, beliefs, and values. These three attributes will ultimately shape the literacy practices s/he chooses to employ within specific contexts and the purposes for those choices. The Social Activity Domain in this model also recognizes that literacy activities can cross physical spaces. For example, an activity related to school can take place in a school, at home, or even at a sporting event (e.g. if one is doing homework while sitting in the bleachers).

It is here in the Social Activity Domain that one begins to examine what a person does with literacy and why.

While the previous domain examines the practices of literacy and its purpose, the creators of this model suggest that these observations, and all the domains for that matter, are practiced according to the contexts within which they are situated. Therefore, power relationships and social structures are an overarching, integral component of literacy practices, especially in educational contexts.

**Studies of Adolescent Literacy Practices**

Barton and Hamilton (2000) clearly distinguish the notion of practices from events by stating that literacy practices are not observable because practices “also involve values, attitudes, feelings and social relationships” (p. 7). Because of these attributes, Barton and Hamilton (2000) suggest that literacy practices are difficult to measure; however, the literature reveals an escalation of research on adolescent literacy practices within the last 15 years.

Moje, Overby, Tysvaer and Morris (2008) examined the literacy practices of 716 ninth and tenth-grade adolescents in a Midwestern school district. The purpose of their mixed methods study was to document what and how adolescents read and write outside of school in an effort to assist educators in adopting practices that would address a wide range of adolescent interests, needs, and skills. Furthermore, these practices also lend support to adolescents in their
academic, community, and workplace literacy practices in school. The findings revealed that outside of school, these adolescents participated in a variety of reading and writing activities on a daily basis. Reading for positive models of resilience, inspiration, and guidance was a dominant theme across all age levels and gender.

Elizabeth Moje (2000) conducted a longitudinal qualitative study on the literacy practices of five males who had gang affiliations in an effort to describe how youth use unsanctioned literacy practices as tools. Specifically, Moje sought to answer the following question: how do adolescents learn and use different literacies at school, at home, and in their unsanctioned social group? (p. 652). What Moje found was that these participants practiced literacy as a way to make and represent meaning within their unsanctioned group, they practiced literacy to change or construct identities depending on the context they were situated, and they practiced literacy to maintain social positions. These practices reveal a high level of metadiscursive awareness as their literacy practices allowed them to maintain relationships and to make sense of their “complicated world in which they and their families were often marginalized” (Moje, 2000, p. 680).

Nagle (1999) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study to learn more about the literacy histories of 20 vocational high school students. Through interviews, Nagle’s intention was to learn about this particular demographic of students’ connections and/or disconnections between home and school literacy practices. This demographic was of interest to him for two reasons: 1) because he had taught in a vocational school for 17 years, and 2) it is often a demographic overlooked in education. In his findings, Nagel reports that each participant’s literacy history, as told through individual stories, revealed their struggles with reading and writing in school and what was expected of them in terms of literacy practices outside of school.
Most of the participants felt a literacy disconnect between home and school, and this disconnect had influenced their positions within school both academically and socially. Nagel attributed this to the participants’ sense of being unable to read and learn as well their peers (low self-efficacy). Additionally, there was much confusion about why they were expected to practice specific literacies in school, since they were members of a vocational program who intended on entering the workforce immediately after graduation.

The literature has established that literacy is more than a cognitive event, that literacy is a practice that adolescents engage in for a plethora of reasons. While the studies presented are important because they provide educators an opportunity to learn why certain youth engage in literacy practices, they assume that adolescents already possess proficient literacy skills and the metadiscursivity necessary to practice literacy in a way that is beneficial to them in many contexts. Studies which examine this perspective with adolescents in remedial classrooms are limited. Furthermore, studies that examine literacy practices longitudinally are absent from the literature. If researchers agree that literacy is complex and multidimensional in nature and that in order to be successful members of society one must possess the skills to be able to use literacy in a variety of contexts for a variety of purposes, then a review of the literature of current literacy instructional interventions in the remedial classroom is warranted.

**Literacy Approaches in the Remedial Classroom**

Literacy as a multidimensional concept brings forward new avenues of discussion and research in regards to how one approaches literacy with adolescent students, especially with adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) in remedial classes. O’Brien (1998) refers to our current literacy approaches with RLLs as “schooled literacy” in that the focus is on cognitive literacy skills, in reading and writing specifically. O’Brien goes on to define school-based
literacy as “a tool for learning content” (p. 28). This involves the participation in any traditional school activity such as answering comprehension questions or writing essays. Phelps (2001) in *Reconceptualizing the Literacies in Adolescents’ Lives* counters the idea of literacy being only “schooled literacy” in that school-based literacy fails to represent the true complexity and variability of a person’s literacy practices. Donna Alvermann (2001) affirms this by emphasizing that adolescents use literacy for purposes well beyond schooled literacies. Alvermann explains,

> Many adolescents of the Net Generation find their own reasons for becoming literate - reasons that go beyond reading to acquire school knowledge of academic texts. This is not to say that academic literacy is unimportant; rather, it is to emphasize the need to address the implications of youth’s multiple literacies (p. 2).

Framed through a Mastery Model of Learning (Bloom, 1968), today’s remedial classes are guided by curricula which assume that concepts are best learned through developmental tasks, or a linear series of cognitive skills (Allington, 2011; Dale & Crain-Thoreson, 1999) this is what is measured on state-mandated assessments. Learners are taught until “mastery” is achieved at each of the levels as defined by state-mandated assessments (Dale & Crain-Thoreson, 1999). Further, it is assumed that if mastery is achieved at each level, then the more general concepts have also been taught and learned (Allington, 2011; Fink, 2003). Placing this perspective in the literacy remedial classroom suggests that literacy is viewed as a working tool (much like the hammer a carpenter uses), an event that allows students to perform specific cognitive literacy tasks (i.e. recognizing main idea, defining words in context, etc.) to demonstrate literacy proficiency (as defined by state measurements). Unfortunately, this perspective falls short in preparing our adolescent RLLs for the task demands they will encounter outside of the remedial classroom (Allington, 2011; Moje, 2008, 2002).
Within remedial classrooms and through this cognitive skills approach, literacy strategies and literacy skills are explicitly taught to help students find answers to comprehension questions which are posed on state-mandated reading assessments that purport to measure one’s literacy (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003). This perspective of and approach to literacy concentrates solely on the cognitive experience and assumes the learner within the remedial classroom is a problem to be fixed (Damon, 2004; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003) because s/he is deemed remedial and at risk for failure. The result of defining and teaching literacy through this lens creates the current remedial pedagogical deficit approach to literacy experienced by adolescent RLLs today (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

After a thorough review of the literature on approaches to literacy in the secondary remedial classroom, the creation of literacy spaces which consider literacy through a narrow lens, a direct/explicit instructional approach, seems like a logical methodology in helping this demographic of student learn the skills necessary to pass state-mandated assessments, but at what cost is this to their future learning? Research tells us that supporting the learning of the basic cognitive functions of literacy can be beneficial (Almasi, & Fullerton, 2012). But what happens to these students when they leave the literacy classroom and are unable to use literacy as a practice? Have we prepared them to successfully navigate the task demands of the 21st century through our current narrow perspective and instruction of literacy? If not, what can we do in the remedial classroom to remedy this? The primary factor in choosing a program design is to make it fit the specific needs of the student, not the other way around “[b]ecause each student with learning problems is unique, a combination of approaches and various teaching strategies are needed to meet the needs of students” (Mercer & Mercer, 1983, p. 471). Therefore, an
examination of who the remedial literacy learner is is warranted, as they are an integral component of the situational factors that can affect learning in the Fusion classroom.

**Participant: The Adolescent Remedial Literacy Learner (RLL)**

In order to understand adolescent literacy practices and what these practices mean in terms of well-being, one must have an understanding of who the adolescent RLL is, since literacy learning is a human experience and problems in literacy learning may not necessarily be literacy specific (Worthy, Patterson, Salas, Prater & Turner, 2001; Moffett & Wagner, 1983). Positioned as failing students, many adolescents within remedial literacy classes do not believe that they will ever become successfully literate (Mueller, 2001). Additionally, a disconnect exists between the purposes of literacy and how these purposes connect to their lives (Staughton, 2007). Adolescent RLLs are often “locked in a losing battle with reading that has affected not only their reading progress, but their self-image as well” (Mueller, 2001, p. 66) and often demonstrate a lack of interest in literacy learning and frequent disengagement with the purposes of literacy as a result of failure and being labeled (Mueller, 2001; Sadoski, 2004). It is crucial, therefore, to understand the balance in learning between the cognitive domain and the affective domain. The cognitive domain involves the ability to recall information and the development of intellectual abilities and skills (Bloom, 1968). Cognitive learning is often the primary focus of remedial education and is what state-mandates assessments are intended to measure (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003). The affective domain involves attitudes, motivation, and values of the learner (Smith & Ragan, 1999). Affective learning is defined as “changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciation and adequate adjustment” (Bloom, 1956, p. 7). In other words, affective learning involves valuing the content.
If we are to begin to conceptualize what belongs within an effective literacy program that has the potential to make a positive difference in the trajectory of adolescent RLLs, Staughton (2007) suggests we take into account their lack of connection between literacy and their lives, their limited knowledge of the purposes of literacy, their low self-efficacy as a result of their perceptions of being inadequate and ineffective learners, and their inability to apply appropriate strategies to literacy tasks. In other words, Staughton (2007) recommends we address both the cognitive and affective domains of learning. The underlying question then becomes who are adolescents and what does this mean in terms of literacy instruction? What follows is a review of the literature on the cognitive and emotional development of the adolescent remedial learner. This literature informed the learning goals, the active teaching and learning, and feedback and assessment activities implemented in the 2012 design.

Ryan, Stiller, and Lynch (1994) remind us that “learning is as much an interpersonal process as it is cognitive” (p. 226). As such, a brief overview of self-efficacy and self-determination theories are included since these theories are directly linked to motivation and engagement, two attributes of the remedial learner that the literature informs us is linked to learning.

Influences of the Developing Adolescent

After a review of the literature on the adolescent remedial learner, several aspects of adolescent development emerged as influential in informing this study. These concepts are cognitive, social, and emotional development, as well as self-efficacy and self-determination. Through an examination of the literature on these developmental attributes and theories, the literature ascertains that understanding the cognitive, social, and emotional development, as well
as self-efficacy and self-determination is important in our approaches to learning with this demographic, a position adopted for this study.

**Cognitive Development.** At the core of adolescent cognitive development lies the “attainment of a more fully conscious, self-directed and self-regulating mind” (Steinberg, 2005, p. 70). Adolescents develop the ability to cognitively capture multidimensional concepts (Piaget, 1985). This ability to think about “dynamic processes” or multidimensional concepts (emotional, motivational, ecological) within and between systems (contexts) helps adolescents navigate situations, especially ones that require them to discern opposing constructs (Kuhn, 2009; Fischer & Bidell, 2006; Chandler, Lalonde, Sokol, & Hallett, 2003; Habermas & Bluck, 2000). This ability is significant not only to what adolescents learn but how they learn (Kuhn, 2009; Larson, 2011). Cognitive autonomy addresses an individual’s ability to have independent attitudes and beliefs and think for one’s self (Steinberg, 1999). Autonomy is defined as “the opportunity to be in control of one’s behavior or more specifically to be the source of one’s behavior” (Ward, Lundberg, Ellis, & Berrett, 2010, p. 22).

Cognitive autonomy in adolescence is important as it allows for opportunities to learn the skills that can help them manage their own lives and make healthy choices (Jacobs & Klaczynski, 2002; Stefanou, Perencevich, DiCintio, & Turner, 2004). When cognitive autonomy is developed, adolescents are said to be able to negotiate and compromise conflicts, express their own opinions, and appreciate differing perspectives (Jacobs & Klaczynski, 2002; Stefanou, Perencevich, DiCintio, & Turner, 2004; Steinberg, 1999). It has also been suggested that fostering cognitive autonomy skills in adolescents can help adolescents prepare for important tasks in adulthood (Jacobs & Klaczynski, 2002).
Research on adolescent cognitive development also involves the study of cognitive development within social contexts (Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Cauffman & Steinberg, 2000; Miller & Byrnes, 1997). These perspectives maintain that adolescent development in the “real world” is a function of social and emotional, as well as cognitive, all of which are addressed within Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning.

**Social and Emotional Development.** Social and emotional development is the process through which one learns to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors (Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg & Haynes, 1997). Today’s adolescents face social hurdles every day; they interact more with peers, seek friendships and social acceptance, and develop relationships (Brand & Dugan, 2010; Larson, Richards, Moneta, Holmbeck & Duckett, 1996; Steinberg & Silk, 2002). Simultaneously, the demands for observance and practice of cultural norms and standards also increase. Adolescents begin to take more control over their decisions, emotions, and actions. In the school context, one that involves an intense socialization process, adolescents become increasingly aware of their classmates’ and teachers’ perspectives (Berzonsky & Adams, 2003; Brand & Dugan, 2010; Steinberg & Silk, 2002).

One important aspect of emotional development in adolescence is the ability to regulate emotions, or demonstrate emotional autonomy. Emotional autonomy has been defined as an adolescent’s ability to have feelings that are separate from others’ feelings (Kostiuk & Fouts, 2002). Kostiuk & Fouts (2002) argue that the closer an adolescent comes to achieving emotional autonomy, the more they learn that there are many ways to view a situation. Therefore, when problems arise, Kostiuk & Fouts (2002) contend that many adolescents are more equipped to look for their own solutions rather than relying on outside influences such as parents and friends.
The regulation of emotions “consists of both intrinsic and extrinsic processes that are responsible for learning to recognize, monitor, evaluate, and modify emotional reactions” (Thompson, 1994, p. 2). Fox (1994) states that regulating emotions is the ability to react to the emotional demands of one’s experiences in a way that is socially responsible (as referenced in Kostiuk & Fouts, 2002). The inability to control one’s emotions can result in misidentification and misdirection of emotions, possibly obstructing an adolescent’s ability to learn (Cole, Michel, & Teti, 1994; Kostiuk & Fouts, 2002). Research informs us that emotion drives our mental behaviors; there is a connection between intellect and emotion in learning (Elias, Zins et al., 1997; Lazarus, 2000). Aviles, Anderson, and Davial (2006) assert that adolescents who have limitations in their social-emotional development often demonstrate poor social, emotional, and academic success.

What this literature suggests is that by creating spaces within the remedial literacy classroom for adolescents to develop skills and strategies for emotional regulation, learning may be enhanced—especially for adolescent RLLs who are experiencing emotional difficulties by solely being a participant in a remedial class.

**Self-Efficacy Theory.** Albert Bandura (1986) defines self-efficacy as “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required in attaining designated types of performances” (p. 391). In other words, self-efficacy relates to how one feels, how one thinks, and how one behaves. In the educational realm, self-efficacy is a belief that students have a capacity to influence their academic achievement. Efficacious students participate more in the classroom, work harder at assigned tasks, and consciously continue to try and overcome difficulties, thereby achieving higher levels of academic success (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2008). For example, after a student completes an academic task, s/he
immediately forms a judgment in his or her competence for that particular task. If students believe that they have been successful at the task, their confidence to accomplish similar or related tasks is raised. In other words, when students believe that they have been successful, they become willing and confident to tackle similar tasks (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2008). Some theorists have hypothesized that self-efficacy beliefs are created and developed as students interpret information from four sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Mohamadi, Asadzadeh, & Ahadi, 2011).

Mastery Experiences. According to Bandura (1997), mastery experiences are the most important sources of efficacy. Mastery experiences prove particularly powerful when individuals overcome obstacles or succeed on challenging tasks. If students perceive their performance to be a success, an expectation is formed that suggests future performances of the same or similar task will most likely be capable (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Mohamadi, et al., 2011; Usher & Pajares, 2008).

Vicarious Experiences. The second source of self-efficacy suggests that students build their efficacy beliefs through vicarious experiences. In today’s standards and assessment-driven literacy classrooms, academic success is measured by proficiency on state-mandated assessments. Students enter these contexts with a belief they are incapable of becoming successful at this academic endeavor. Students within these contexts begin to measure their academic capabilities in relation to the performance of others. By examining others’ successes and failures, students use this information to contribute to their judgments about their own capabilities. From these judgments, it is assumed that they will most likely modify their beliefs
accordingly (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Mohamadi, et al., 2011; Schunk, 1987; Usher & Pajares, 2008).

**Verbal Persuasion.** Verbal persuasions that students receive from others (peers and teacher within the classroom context) serve as a third source of self-efficacy. Verbal persuasion is widely used in promoting self-efficacy because of its ease and availability. Students can be “led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past” (Bandura, 1997, p. 198). Encouragement from teachers and peers whom students trust can boost students’ confidence in their academic capabilities (Usher & Pajares, 2008). For at-risk students, depending on others to provide evaluative feedback and judgments about their academic performance can be key. Positive, encouraging communications can promote student effort and self-confidence (Usher & Pajares, 2008). “The potency of the persuasion,” however, “depends on the credibility, trustworthiness, and expertise of the persuader” (Bandura, 1997, p. 198).

**Physiological States.** The final source of self-efficacy concerns itself with the physiological or emotional experiences of the individual. Emotional self-efficacy is “the perceived capability of coping with negative emotions” (Murris, 2002, p. 337). Bandura (1997) tells us that “avoidance of stressful activities impedes development of coping skills, and the resulting lack of competency provides a realistic basis for fear” (p. 199). Emotions such as anxiety and fear can alter individuals’ beliefs about their capabilities (Bandura, 1997; Evans, 1989; Leonard & Davey, 2001; Mohamandi, et al., 2011; Pollard, Triggs, Broadfoot, McNess, & Osborn, 2000).

The literature regarding the remedial learner references the low-self-efficacy that these learners come to our classrooms having at their core. As such, the literature on self-efficacy and
ways in which one can help to foster positive self-efficacy is important in influencing the creation of activities within an innovative instructional design that serves this demographic of student. Including tasks in the 2012 CAL instructional design through which the remedial learner experiences each source - mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states – may be necessary to promote positive self-efficacy.

**Self-Determination Theory.** Self-Determination Theory (SDT) proposes that all humans are motivated to achieve autonomy, form relationships, and feel competent at certain tasks (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000). Adolescents are said to be intrinsically and/or extrinsically motivated to engage in certain tasks (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002; Veronneau, Koestner, & Abela 2005). Intrinsic motivation means doing something because it is interesting or because one enjoys it, and extrinsic motivation means doing something because it has a separable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In addition, Self-Determination Theory is structured in terms of social and environmental motivational factors.

Ryan and Deci’s SDT (1985) asserts that individuals seek out tasks that are challenging and offer stimulation because they have an intrinsic need for competence. Intrinsic motivation in and of itself suggests a natural proclivity towards attention and exploration that is crucial to social and cognitive development (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004). Some authors have defined intrinsic motivation in terms of the task being interesting because it may have an reward attached to it (Ryan & Deci, 2000), while others have defined it in terms of the personal satisfaction a person obtains from a task internally (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Although intrinsic motivation is considered a key component of motivation, some of the tasks people perform are not intrinsically motivated. Extrinsic motivation concentrates on the
external factors, often social environments or social tasks, which motivate an individual. Extrinsic motivation is said to engage individuals in an activity as a means to an end (Linnenbrink & Pintich, 2002; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Self-Determination Theory proposes that there are varied forms of extrinsic motivation and examining these different forms of extrinsic motivation is important since teachers cannot always rely on intrinsic motivation to promote learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000), especially with at-risk, remedial students whose self-efficacy may hinder their intrinsic motivation (Mueller, 2001; Staughton, 2007).

The Developing Adolescents’ Connection to Course Design

If an educator’s belief is that learning is active, self-constructed, and intentional (Fink, 2003; Sinatra, 2000), then the ways in which courses are designed at the secondary level must be reflective of the developing nature adolescents (Scales, Berson, Roehlkepartain, Sesma & Van Dulmen, 2006). The literature on the remedial learner tells us that prior to even entering classroom contexts, adolescents who have been labeled “remedial” come with lower self-efficacy and motivation, which in turn effects engagement in the learning (Swafford, 2007). Emotional, social, and cognitive components of the developing adolescent may also attribute to lack of motivation to learn. Within these stages, students may not be developmentally ready to respond to the challenges that would lead to growth. For example, adolescents who have been labeled remedial as a result of low proficiency scores on a state-mandated assessment, “likely have identified themselves as having less ability than others” (Swafford, 2007, p. 158), thus possibly experiencing low self-efficacy which could lead to lower motivation to tackle the challenges that would promote positive development. Regardless of what adolescent RLLs believe is the reason(s) for their being placed in a remedial classroom, Pressley (1998) contends that adolescents must be successful in perceiving themselves as successful. Consequently, the way in
which literacy is approached within the remedial literacy classroom with adolescent RLLs must support motivation and seek to improve these students’ low self-efficacy (Swafford, 2007).

Further, teachers who adopt the current narrow definition of literacy and instruct accordingly do so with a perception that the remedial learner is a problem to be fixed (Damon, 2004; Lerner, 2005). What this leads to is confusion between limited literacy experience and intellectual limitations (McGill-Franzen, 1992), often with the latter taking precedence in perspective and instruction. This narrow definition and subsequent instruction remove the human experience of learning and allow for little opportunity for adolescent RLLs to adapt and use what strengths they do bring to the classroom.

Adolescent cognitive, social, and emotion development as well as self-efficacy may contribute to the widening gaps in literacy between students with and without literacy proficiency. It is suggested that teachers build on what is “known about adolescents to create classroom environments and literacy-related tasks that will engage adolescents” (Swafford, 2007, p.162). Furthermore, these environments and tasks should foster a connection between adolescents’ academic literacies and their lives outside of school (Moje, et al., 2004). Moje et al. (2008) argue that adolescents “read and write when they have a well-articulated purpose, a purpose that is usually centered in a network of social activity” (p. 146). In order to reach the developing adolescent RLL within the remedial literacy classroom, a new approach to instruction is warranted that views literacy learning as a human experience because problems in literacy learning may not necessarily be literacy specific (Worthy, Patterson, Salas, Prater & Turner, 2001; Moffett & Wagner, 1983). So how do we do this?
A Positive Youth Development (PYD) Approach in the Classroom

Literature on current instructional approaches in the remedial classroom informs us that a deficit model of education views the resources that some adolescents possess as “falling short” of standard expectations. The term “deficit” typically assumes that the adolescents’ language and thinking are inadequate in substantial ways (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). One way to debunk deficit views of adolescent remedial learners is for educators to begin to see students through a different lens and to focus instead on their strengths. The literature on adolescent cognitive, social, and emotional development as well as self-efficacy and self-determination theory informs us that there may be an array of developmental obstacles which hinder an adolescent’s ability to learn and grow. Fortunately, the literature also reveals that a new vision of adolescence as a period of relatively healthy growth has been recently adopted by educational psychologists.

Resiliency theories regarding adolescents suggest that adolescents are comprised of more strengths than deficiencies. Resiliency focuses on the healthy behavior that exists in spite of storm and stress (Lerner, 2006; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Compas, Hinden & Gerhardt, 1995) and holds the notion that every adolescent has the potential to develop successfully (Lerner, 2006, 2007; Lerner et al., 2005; Lerner, Lerner, & Phelps, 2008; Zimmerman, Phelps, & Lerner, 2007). Resiliency has been defined as “the process of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure, coping successfully with traumatic experiences, and avoiding the negative trajectories associated with risks” (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005, p. 400).

This shift from viewing adolescents as problems to be fixed, to adolescents who contain positive and adaptive features is the precipice for the Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach to learning. Providing positive opportunities, creating and fostering positive
relationships, and presenting positive examples from which individuals can use as frameworks, may be one way to promote adolescent social, emotional, and cognitive development. Brofenbrener (1968) reminds us, “any program seeking to meet the educational needs of disadvantaged children (at-risk) must address itself not only to the development of cognitive competence but also of patterns of motivation and behaviors appropriate to a productive, cooperative society” (Brofenbrener, 1968, p. 2) - something not considered in today’s remedial classrooms.

Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, and Hawkins (2003) contend that the philosophy guiding the PYD perspective is that resilience and competency building are primary, the key to helping young people navigate adolescence in healthy ways. As such, PYD’s roots are grounded in Developmental Systems Theory. Developmental Systems Theory proposes that there is a bidirectional, influential relationship between developing adolescents and their environment(s) or system(s) (Brofenbrener, 1976; Lerner et al., 2005). The changes and potential for transformation during this relationship is referred to as plasticity (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesna, 2007; Lerner et al., 2005; Lerner, 2005; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003). Plasticity proposes that adolescents are capable of change during any point within their development, even across different trajectories (Lerner, 2005; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Lerner et al., 2005). As a result, the PYD perspective supports youth’s strengths with resources and ecological supports to promote healthy development.

In 2002, the National Research Council published a list of contexts that promote positive youth development. While many theoretical frameworks and models stemmed from this report, the most empirically supported framework to date is the 5 C model (Heck & Subramaniam, 2009; Lerner, 2005). The 5 C model suggests that adolescents experience positive development
if their strengths and assets are supported within their environments (Lerner et al., 2005; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). The positive development that results from this alignment can be categorized by Five C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring. These Five C’s are based on researchers’ hands-on experiences, the adolescent development literature (Eccles & Gootman 2002; Lerner, 2004, 2005; Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003), and are connected to findings of positive outcomes in youth development programs (e.g., Lerner et al., 2005; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). See Table 17 (Chapter 4, p.133) for the definitions of the 5 C’s as found in Lerner et al. (2005, p. 23) which apply to this study. The theoretical framework for the 5 C model also stems from Developmental System Theory, a focus on plasticity as development (Lerner, 2004, 2005; Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). Furthermore, the 5 C model of PYD allows positive growth to be defined and measured (Heck & Subramaniam, 2009; Lerner, 2005; Lerner & Steinberg, 2009; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

Individuals bring with them a social consciousness (social expectations, social behavior), interpersonal skills (e.g. ability to manage problems, relationships), and a self-efficacy (e.g. perception of self as learner) into any context. When placed in a context such as a classroom, individuals must learn to navigate their individual assets within the rules and boundaries that the context has established in order to be successful (Lerner, 2005). There are three principal ecological assets that guide education in promoting PYD and resilience in the classroom: caring relationships, high expectations, and meaningful participation (Catalano, et al., 2004; Lerner, Bowers, Geldhof, Gestsdóttir, & DeSouza, 2012). These principal ecological assets have been found to “mediate against involvement in risk behaviors” (California Healthy Kids Survey, 2007, p. 5). When ecological assets work in tandem with individual assets to promote positive development or thriving (a developmental, positive, on-going change), engagement and
participation of an individual in classroom activities is said to increase as well as individuals’ likelihood of thriving (Lerner, et al., 2012; Theokas, Almerigi, Lerner, Dowling, Benson, Scales, & von Eye, 2005). Figure Seven is a visual representation of this perspective.

**Figure 7.** Theokas et al. (2005) Internal and External Settings for Positive Youth Development (PYD) in a Classroom Environment (p.131)

**Why a Positive Youth Development (PYD) Approach in the Classroom**

So why examine and promote a PYD perspective in schools, more specifically, in remedial classrooms? First, students spend the majority of their adolescent lives in school. Most of this time in school is spent in the classroom, “one of the most proximal and potentially powerful settings for influencing youth” (Pianta & Hamre, 2009, p. 33). The interactions that take place within this setting can inhibit developmental change or provide positive supports for its participants. As such, schools can present opportunities for adolescents to development competence, character, and social and community connections—the fundamentals for positive youth development (Bumbarger & Greenberg, 2002; Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, &
Arthur, 2002; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005; Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2002).

Subsequently, classrooms run on interactions; relationships are formed between students and teacher, students and other members of the classroom, and even between texts being examined within the classroom and by students (Catalano et al., 2004). These relationships and their emotional, social, and cognitive value are fundamental supports to the worth of the adolescent’s experience within this context, especially those experiences that promote positive development (Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). It is suggested that with an increase and attention to developmental components in a classroom setting, adolescents’ social, emotional, and cognitive development will increase (Bumbarger & Greenberg, 2002; Catalano et al., 2004; Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Lerner et al., 2005) and as such, adolescents will thrive (Lerner, Brentano, Dowling, & Anderson, 2002; Lerner, et al., 2005a; Scales & Leffert, 1999; Theokas, et al., 2005). Thriving has been defined as a point in adolescent development in which individual assets help to do the following: 1) limit engagement in high-risk behaviors, 2) enjoy resilience in the face of adversity, 3) help create and maintain healthy, positive relationships; and 4) help adolescents contribute to their community in positive ways (Benson, 2006; Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 2012; Leffert, Benson, Scales, Sharma, Drake, & Blyth, 1998; Lerner & Dowling, 2005; Scales et al., 2000;).

Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walburg (2004) argue that pedagogy which focuses on both the adolescent and the content promotes learning environments that encourage and support participant engagement, motivation, and commitment to academic learning - a perspective the Fink adopts in his Taxonomy of Significant Learning. Catalano et al. (2004) further support this perspective by maintaining healthy development as a promoter of positive development through
increasing the connection between adolescents and school. According to Gomez and Ang (2007), schools are places in which a PYD approach can be promoted because a) they are places that adolescents spend the majority of their time, b) both academic and non-academic environments influence many areas of adolescent development (identity, peer relationships, cognitive, and social development, vocational development), c) positive experiences lead to PYD and resilience, and d) schools have resources for interventions. Even with this recognition, however, the study of PYD in school contexts are limited (Larson, 2000) and the study of PYD in remedial classrooms with adolescent RLLs is nonexistent.

**Studies of Positive Youth Development (PYD) in the Classroom**

Positive Youth Development has been studied as a framework for few educational settings (Felner, Favazza, Shim, & Brand, 2001). In an exhaustive search of the literature, only two studies reported findings of using a PYD framework in a classroom setting: the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) and the Reading, Writing, Respect, and Resolution Program (4R’s).

Both RCCP and the 4 R’s programs were developed by the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility in New York City and studied by Jones, Brown, and Aber (2008). Both programs include a lesson-based curriculum supporting social and emotional learning, as well as training and support for teachers to use these skills in the classroom (Jones, Brown, & Aber, 2008). The RCCP has been rigorously evaluated using a quasi-experimental design, and the 4R’s program has been examined using an experimental design that evaluated changes in setting-level features in order to reflect the theory of change for the program (Jones et al., 2008). Four schools were chosen, each one representing a different stage in program implementation, in order to reflect the evolution of the programs within the New York City
public school system. The study found that “children showed increases from ages 6 to 12 (over elementary school years) in the skills and behaviors thought to underlie later aggression and violence” (p. 62).

**How a Positive Youth Development (PYD) Approach Might Help an Adolescent Remedial Literacy Learner (RLL) in the Classroom**

Over the last 40 years, services and policies aimed at reducing problem behaviors of troubled youth have increased, and many programs with these approaches have been extensively studied. Unfortunately, there is a paucity of research on using the PYD approach in educational settings, especially in secondary schools or with remedial learners.

For the adolescent RLL in the remedial classroom setting, there is a need to simultaneously experience meaningful challenges, supportive relationships, and competence building exercises—all of which are said to promote significant learning as defined by Fink (2003)—in order to ensure their future success (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). As aforementioned, students who are members of remedial classes had to fail in order to become members. This alone is cause for a student’s self-efficacy to be lowered. Donna Alvermann (2002) states,

> Adolescents’ perceptions of how competent they are as readers and writers, generally speaking, will affect how motivated they are to learn in their subject area classes (e.g., the sciences, social studies, mathematics, and literature). Thus, if academic literacy instruction is to be effective, it must address issues of self-efficacy and engagement (p. 191).

In an extensive review of how instructional approaches can influence students’ engagement, motivation, and academic performance, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) suggest direct/explicit instructional practices, while important, do not directly impact student outcomes. Instead, the level of engagement is the mediating factor through which classroom activities influences student outcomes. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) called for “instruction that fosters
student motivation, strategy use, growth in conceptual knowledge and social interaction” (p. 417), a comprehensive approach that recognizes the human experience in learning. In my view, the approach Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) advocates is a PYD approach, a component that Fink also suggests is necessary for significant learning to occur.

A PYD approach emphasizes the strengths, resources, and potential of adolescents. Course designs which combine PYD and academic instruction have not been investigated. Most inquiry into PYD and educational contexts focus on the structural settings of a school as opposed to individual classrooms (Felner, Favazza, Shim, & Brand, 2001; Jones, Brown, & Aber, 2008). Additionally, these studies also focus on elementary school-aged children and herein lies the gap. If one accepts the notion that tasks within school contexts must be developmentally appropriate in order for learning to take place, and that the PYD approach to instruction addresses the issues that adolescent RLLs carry in a way that allows them to shift trajectories, then I would argue that the lack of inquiry into this approach within secondary remedial literacy classrooms creates a gap between practice and theory, something this study seeks to address.

Influence of the Literature Review

The literature on significant learning tells us that there is much more to learning than learning content at the cognitive level. Wirth and Perkins (2008) advocate that the successful student should “know how to apply knowledge to new areas, integrate knowledge with other aspects of life, understand the implications of knowledge for self and others, care about learning, and learn how to learn” (p. 10). These goals, coupled with Fink’s ideals on significant learning, parallel the goals that literacy researchers argue are necessary but absent within the current literacy instruction being employed in secondary schools (Alvermann, 2002; Cambourne, 2001; Fisher & Ivey, 2006; Moje, 2008). Furthermore, the literature reviewed on the developing
adolescent reiterates the strength of adolescents’ beliefs in their ability or inability to tackle a particular task directly affects how well the task will be performed. For remedial learners, this strength is weakened, making learning a struggle and limiting the experiences these students have that can help strengthen their already weak self-perceptions. Weissberg and O’Brien (2004) state that the missions of schools should be to develop students who are “knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring, connected and contributing” (p. 87) - all components of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning. Therefore, addressing the nature of the participant within a remedial context becomes imperative if educators are to 1) help this demographic become resilient and develop positively, and 2) provide effective significant learning experiences as defined by Fink. In an effort to align and extend the current research on the situational factors that comprise the Fusion classroom, the researcher adopted this perspective and implemented Fink’s ICDM in an effort to promote significant learning as measured through The Taxonomy of Significant Learning in the 2012 study.
Chapter Three

The 2012 Comprehensive Approach to Literacy (CAL) Action Research Study

Background

The literature review on adolescent literacy reveals a gap between theory and practice. The first of these gaps is the narrow, limited definition of literacy that educational systems have adopted (Moje, 2008; Street 2001). As a result of this perspective, literacy instruction that takes place within remedial literacy classrooms focuses solely on cognitive strategies and skills, thus neglecting the other dimensions of literacy – especially the human experience (Allington, 2011; Alvermann, 2001; Dale & Crain-Thoreson, 1999; Fink, 2003; Phelps, 2001). Theorists and researchers agree that literacy is more than a single isolated skill; it is complex and multidimensional and as such should be addressed through this ideological perspective in the classroom if we are to successfully prepare students for the increased task demands of this century (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; McCardle & Chharba, 2004; Moje, 2008; Street, 2001).

In addition to the disconnect between how literacy is defined and how it is approached in the classroom, the literature also reveals that there is an extent amount of evidence that deficient literacy skills are also associated with social, economic, and psychological problems (Guthrie, Schafer, Wang, & Afflerbach, 1995; U.S. Department of Education, 2000). Further, any approach to instruction in literacy should also include a human dimension (Kucer, 2009; Moje, 2008).

Because of the importance of being literate today and the increasing number of students entering remedial literacy classrooms (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; McCardle & Chharba, 2004),
a call has been issued to educators to create contexts for adolescent RLLs that allow for meaningful learning experiences to occur (Alvermann, 2002; Cambourne, 2001; Fisher & Ivey, 2006; Moje, 2008). One suggestion is for educators to adopt a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in the remedial classroom (Correnti & Rowan, 2007; McConachie, Hall, Resnick, Ravi, Bill, Bintz, & Taylor, 2006; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Stockhill, Leaard, Rainy, Rappa, Nguyen & Moje, 2011; Taylor & Gunter, 2005). Furthermore, this design should promote “significant” learning – as defined by Fink - as a way to help prepare RLLs for the increased task demands they will encounter beyond the remedial classroom. A comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) is curricular integration of “reading, writing, speaking, viewing, listening, performing, and thinking” (Taylor & Gunter, 2005, p. 22) – an extension of the current perspective - aligned with the influences of the social and developmental contexts of the learner (Fink, 2003; Kucer, 2009; Taylor & Gunter, 2005). The literature on significant learning argues that when these elements, or situational factors, are addressed within an integrated course design by the teacher, learning that is significant and lasting will occur.

The product of my analysis of the literature on the situational factors that comprise the Fusion classroom led to the creation and implementation of a CAL design framed through Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) in my own classroom. From this, an action research study which examined the degree to which significant learning occurred as a result of this model ensued. The CAL design took into account the multi-dimensions of literacy, the purposes one uses literacy or will need to use literacy, and placed the learner at the center in an effort to promote significant learning as defined through Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning.

The CAL design was framed through Fink’s Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM)
with two goals in mind. The first was to produce short-term impact in literacy proficiency in order to meet the purpose of the Fusion course (remediation) required by my district and to document any short-term impact in literacy practices and positive youth development (PYD) the participants might have experienced, an extension of the current framework. Short-term is defined as the nine-week period of time between the beginning and end of the 2012 CAL design. Goal two was to create a CAL design that promoted lasting impact on both the participants’ practices of literacy and PYD because the literature demonstrates the importance of literacy and positive development beyond the school context in one’s life. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to acquaint the reader with findings from the initial study which was intended to meet goal one in the overall design in order to understand this study (my dissertation).

Prior to the implementation of the 2012 CAL design in my classroom came two district stipulations: the first was it could not precede the state-mandated assessment; and second, I had to produce and report empirical evidence of its effectiveness or ineffectiveness. Because the 2012 CAL design created the framework from which this study stems, the following is a brief overview of the framework for this inquiry, the questions posed, the methods utilized, as well as a synopsis of my findings for the 2012 comprehensive approach to literacy action research study.

**Framework**

The comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) design was framed using Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) in order to create and evaluate a potential significant learning experience through Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003) for a class of adolescent remedial literacy learners (see Chapter Two, Part One). After an in-depth analysis of the situational factors of the Fusion classroom, my inquiry of the literature revealed the following two findings: 1) There is a need to approach literacy as multidimensional in lieu of
today’s task demands and promote literacy practice (Moje, 2008; Phelps, 2001; Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011); and 2) the current deficit approach to instruction in remedial classrooms does not place the adolescent RLL at the center nor does it encourage positive youth development (Swafford, 2007; Worthy, Patterson, Salas, Prater & Turner, 2001).

If theories and theorists agree that literacy extends beyond the acts of reading and writing, beyond print (Alvermann, 2002; Hinchman, Alvermann, Boyd, Brozo, and Vacca, 2004; Kucer, 2009; Moje, 2008; Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011) AND that possessing proficient literacy skills is necessary to one’s well-being in society (Costa & Kallick, 2000; Gardner, 1999; Houge, Peyton, Geier, and Petrie, 2007; Indrisano & Chall, 1995), one must ask the question: Why does our educational system still adopt an “autonomous” model of literacy (Street, 1994); one that considers literacy solely a cognitive skill? This perspective defines literacy as a neutral, context-free set of cognitive processes that are acquired through practice with the written word only. What this suggests is that written language requires higher level of abstract thought than verbal or visual language (Street, 1994). Luke (1998) suggests this misplaced literacy focus in the classroom might be harmful in that it lacks preparation of students for a world in which literacy has a broader definition. Because I adopt a multidimensional definition of literacy for this study, and in an effort to address the concern posed by Luke (1998), the use of Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning seemed an appropriate framework for the 2012 CAL.

First, Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning affords learners an opportunity to experience the transference from literacy event to literacy practice within their current contexts. Through Fink’s Foundational Knowledge taxon, the learner is provided the basic skills and strategies of literacy. These skills/strategies are expanded and explored through the Application
and Integration taxa, thus moving the learner forward in their literacy practices. This shift, according to the research, is a necessary one in preparing adolescents for the increased complex literacy task demands of the 21st century (Moje, 2008; Moje, et al., 2000; Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011).

Next, Fink (2003) maintains learning that is significant must be relevant and meaningful. Given the multi-dimensions that constitute literacy and the importance of literacy in one’s world today, the opportunity to apply and integrate literacy – in all its dimensions – may be beneficial to adolescent remedial literacy learners’ future success both in school and out of school. Staughton (2007) states adolescents do not have “a sense of the purposes of literacy, why it is important and how it connects to their lives” (87). The interconnectedness of literacy as an event (Fundamental Knowledge) to literacy as a practice (Application and Integration) through this framework gives literacy a purpose and links literacy to the learner’s life. Additionally, the use of this taxonomy as a framework may have the potential for significant or lasting literacy learning – as defined by Fink.

In addition to addressing content in a course, and if an educator’s belief is that learning is active, self-constructed, and intentional (Fink, 2003; Sinatra, 2000), then the ways in which courses are designed at the secondary level must be reflective of the developing nature adolescents (Scales, Berson, Roehlkepartain, Sesma & Van Dulmen, 2006). Adolescents, remedial or not, bring their interests, abilities, and literacies with them to class. Yet we often fail to build on these elements in our literacy programs and what happens in classrooms often is isolated from their lives, something Schoenbach, et al., (1999) refer to as the absence of the human experience within the remedial literacy classroom.
The literature on the remedial learner tells us that prior to even entering classroom contexts, adolescents who have been labeled “remedial” come with lower self-efficacy and motivation, which in turn affects engagement in the learning (Swafford, 2007). By developing students’ assets (relationships, skills, opportunities and values that promote thriving), one can help learners, especially remedial learners, build character, confidence, competence and citizenship, all of which leads to academic success (Scales et al., 2006). The inclusion of the Human Dimension and Caring taxa in Fink’s(2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning not only recognizes the human dimension in learning, it identifies it as an integral part of the learning processes. Because the goals of the 2012 CAL include the positive development of the remedial literacy learner, the use of this taxonomy was appropriate.

Weissberg and O’Brien (2004) maintain the purpose of schooling is to develop students who are “knowledgeable, responsible, healthy, caring, connected, and contributing” (p. 87). This perspective suggests that curriculums begin to integrate the human dimension of learning with academic learning, something that Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning does and the current framework being used in the remedial classes does not. If we are to begin to conceptualize what belongs within an effective literacy program that has the potential to make a difference in the negative trajectory of adolescent remedial literacy learners, Staughton (2007) suggested we take into account

1. Their limited and inaccurate idea of the purposes and goals of literacy including a perceived lack of connection between literacy and their lives, their interests, and the knowledge that they bring to the school
2. Their positioning as inadequate and ineffective learners and their internalizing of that positioning resulting in decreased motivation and self-efficacy.
3. Their inability to apply helpful and appropriate strategies to literacy tasks. (88-89).

Because Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning addresses these ideals it was an appropriate framework for the 2012 CAL study. Additionally, the 2012 CAL has two goals – one short-term and one long-term. The use of this framework in the 2012 CAL, and in the follow-up study, was influenced by the potential it had to produce lasting impact – or what Fink’s coins “significant learning” – for both literacy practices and positive youth development.

Research Questions and Methods

The purpose of the 2012 CAL action research study was to document the immediate or short-term impact of a redesigned Fusion course that took a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) and promoted positive youth development (PYD) simultaneously in an effort to support significant learning. The 2012 CAL design implemented Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) in an effort to promote literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and positive youth development. Therefore, I sought to answer the following questions:

To what extent does a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) design framed through Fink’s Integrated Course Design Model (2003) and measured through Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003) immediately impact

1. Literacy proficiency with adolescent remedial literacy learners?
2. Literacy practices with adolescent remedial literacy learners?
3. Positive youth development with adolescent remedial literacy learners?

Action Research

The 2012 CAL study employed an action research methodology. Reason and Bradbury (2001) define action research as research that bridges theory and practice through action and
reflection. Kemmis and McTaggert (2000) define action research as a social process which is participatory in nature. Action research is characterized by the researcher being both a participant and a facilitator in solving a problem (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Because teachers are insiders, they have an intimate knowledge about the operations of their classrooms (Kemmis & McTaggert, 2000). The 2012 CAL design study had these qualities in mind.

The district in which the study was conducted required a literacy instructional design that conflicted with the literature on literacy and how it should be approached, especially with adolescent remedial literacy learners. It also failed to address the human experience in learning. The selection of action research for the 2012 CAL study supports my effort to renegotiate the current approach to literacy my district requires in an effort to improve both the teaching in my class and student learning.

Data Collection and Analysis

Given the situational factors of the Fusion classroom, I collected both quantitative and qualitative data for the 2012 CAL study in an effort to measure all six of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning taxa. The data were collected as follows:

Quantitative Data: Pre and Post: Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR), Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI), Positive Youth Development Inventory (PYDI), and Assessment of Writing.

Qualitative Data: Pre and Post: Reading/Writing Survey, Participant Journal Entries (on-going throughout the CAL), and Researcher Observation Journal Entries (on-going throughout the CAL).

A mixed methods concurrent triangulation strategy was employed. I used both quantitative and qualitative methods to enhance the findings. This model involved the concurrent but separate collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data so that I, as the
researcher, could better understand the research problem. I merged the two data sets by bringing the separate results together in the interpretation.

**Participants and Setting**

The participants in the 2012 CAL study were 24 tenth-grade adolescent RLLs currently enrolled in a Fusion course. Fusion is the combination of an on-level English course fused with a remedial reading course designed for students scoring below proficiency on our state-mandated reading assessment. The premise underlying this combination of courses is to provide students with an extended opportunity to master the necessary reading skills that are measured on the state-mandated assessment while exposing them to literature and language covered in their grade-level English course. Fusion courses are blocked courses, making them 96 minute periods which students attend daily during the entire school year. The participants in a Fusion course are considered remedial and at risk for academic failure. Each member of this course gave assent and parental/guardian permission to participate. Because I was the principal investigator and the action researcher, only students enrolled in my course were eligible.

**Overview of the Instructional Design**

Several considerations were considered in the creation and implementation of this course design based on my analysis of the literature on what constitutes literacy, who the adolescent remedial learner is, and the call to create significant learning experiences for students as defined by Fink.

In his book *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*, Fink (2003) presents two key ideas: 1) All teaching should produce significant learning, and 2) the use of a taxonomy for identifying what constitutes “significant” learning is essential. In accepting the premise that education should be learner-centered and that what is learned should extend beyond the
classroom, Fink (2003) proposes the use of an integrated course design; one that ensures all taxa of the Significant Learning Taxonomy are being addressed within a course (see Chapter Two, Part One). Step one in the implementation of his ICDM was to perform an in-depth analysis of the situational factors of the course. This step was completed in Chapter Two, Part Two. The second step of the ICDM required the educator to create learning goals influenced by the analysis of the literature. These goals drove the teaching and learning activities as well as the feedback and assessments performed within the course.

**Learning Goals**

Fink and Fink (2009) provide educators with six generic learning goal stems that integrate all six taxa in the Taxonomy of Significant Learning. They are as follows (see Table Two):

Table 2. Fink’s (Fink & Fink, 2009) Generic Learning Goals (p. 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goal Stems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand and remember the key concepts, terms, relationships, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know how to use the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be able to relate this subject to other subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the personal and social implications of knowing about this subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value this subject, as well as value further learning about the subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know how to keep on learning about this subject after the course is over</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using these stems, the learning goals established for the 2012 CAL study are displayed in Table Three. These goals were established as a result of the in-depth analysis on the situational factors of the Fusion classroom and as such, reflect both literacy and positive youth development. These learning goals appear as short term (ST) and lasting (L) within each of the six taxa of Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning: Fundamental Knowledge (FK),
Application (A), Integration (I), Human Dimension (HD), Caring (C), and Learning How to Learn (LHL). Only the short term goals will be addressed in this chapter, since any lasting impact can only be realized a year or more after the course is over (personal communication with Fink, June 2013). Lasting impact will be discussed in Chapter Five, as it is the focus of this dissertation.

Table 3. Short Term (ST) and Long Term (L) Learning Goals of the 2012 CAL Study

By the end of this course, my hope is that students will:

**FK:** **Fundamental Knowledge** - Develop an understanding of when and how to employ literacy strategies and skills when comprehending texts (all forms of text), and develop an understanding how reflective practice leads to positive development (ST). Remember and recall literacy skills/strategies taught. Remember and recall activities that promoted positive development (L).

**A:** **Application** - Apply literacy skills/strategies through creation of a problem base learning project. Develop a connection to their community (ST). Continue to practice literacy within a variety of contexts for a variety of purposes (to learn about concepts, one self and one’s world). Continue connection with community (L).

**I:** **Integration** - To use literacy in other disciplines in school and to contexts outside of school in an effort to increase literacy practices (ST). Continue or increase uses of literacy as a practice in school and in contexts outside of school in an effort to learn about concepts, one self and one’s world (L).

**HD:** **Human Dimension** - Develop character, competence, and confidence (as defined by Lerner) (ST). Demonstrate sustained or continued personal growth in all the aforementioned areas (L).

**C:** **Caring** - Want to become a better student and person. Set goals (ST). Demonstrate sustained or continued interest in wanting to continue to be a better student. Set additional goals (L).

According to Fink (2003), creating learning activities capable of fostering significant learning requires a comprehensive view of teaching and learning if one is to meet the learning goals established for a course. Therefore, several considerations were made in the formation and implementation of the teaching and learning and feedback and assessment activities for the 2012 CAL study: my analysis of the literature on the situational factors of the Fusion course and Fink’s (2009) outline of multiple kinds of activities that promote active learning (See Table Five, p. 22). Additionally, Fink (2003) stresses the importance of integration of all four components of his ICDM: situational factors, learning goals, assessment tools, and learning activities. To ensure this integration, the 2012 CAL design took students through a three phase process: Phase 1 – Preparation, Phase 2 – Implementation, and Phase 3 – Assessment.

**Phase I – Preparation**

Fink (2003) maintains in order to add power to the learning experience, educators must implement active modes of learning into a course’s design. One way to accomplish this is to adopt a holistic view of active learning (Fink, 2003). A holistic view of active learning, according to Fink, consists of three domains: getting information and ideas, experiencing, and reflecting (See Table Five, p. 22). Given my findings in the literature regarding the adolescent remedial learner, an examination of the participant’s sense of safety within the classroom prior to the implementation of the CAL design was conducted.

**Creating a Safe Environment**

To grow and learn, students often must confront issues that make them uncomfortable (Boostrom, 1998; Holley & Steiner, 2005). However, if students are going to be asked to risk self-disclosure, the rewards (e.g., personal growth) must outweigh the penalties (e.g., possible
embarrassment or ridicule). Creating a safe classroom space can “reduce the negative outcomes experienced by students willing to risk disclosure” (Holley & Steiner, 2005, p. 50).

As an action researcher, it was imperative to the success of the 2012 CAL design that the participants trusted my ability as a teacher and a researcher in the ability to provide a safe environment for them to explore the text and themselves. Students’ perceptions of a safe environment is said to encourage participation and honest sharing of ideas, beliefs, and values (Boostrom, 1998; Latting, 1990). In order for the students to examine their beliefs and values and monitor their development, honesty and sharing were necessary. It is important to note that the 2012 CAL design could not be implemented if the participants were not trusting of the environment or the teacher/researcher. Appendix A is a survey distributed to the participants to determine if they felt the classroom was safe and trusted the teacher/researcher to keep them safe.

Once assured that participants were trusting of the environment and the teacher/researcher, discovering exactly where the students were in terms of literacy awareness and self-efficacy was possible. Participants completed a Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI) (See Appendix B) and a Fall Reading/Writing Survey (Appendix C). It is important to note that the use of valid and reliable measures was imperative to ensuring that the 2012 CAL design meet the individual needs of the participants if literacy proficiency and literacy practices were to increase and PYD was to occur.

**Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI)**

As a starting point, it was important to assess exactly where students were in their literacy skills/strategy understanding. Research demonstrates that awareness of metacomprehension strategies is characteristic of good readers (Cantrell & Carter, 2009; Paris & Jacobs, 1984;
Schmitt, 1988). Paris and Jacobs (1984) suggest that acquiring this knowledge could be used informally to design a reading program that includes explicit instruction in metacomprehension skills or is structured so that it fosters the development of such skills. Since the purpose of a Fusion course is to provide direct and explicit instruction, the course design began with the collection of data through the Metacomprehension Strategy Index. The findings from this data were used informally on several levels; it kept intact the educational expectations of the course itself (direct/explicit instruction in skills), while simultaneously assisting in the creation of extension teaching and learning activities intended to promote significant learning as defined by Fink.

The MSI is a 25-item multiple choice questionnaire that asks students about the strategies they could use before, during, and after reading a narrative selection (See Appendix B). The MSI assesses students' awareness of a variety of metacomprenhension behaviors that fit within six categories: 1) predicting and verifying, 2) previewing, 3) purpose setting, 4) self-questioning, 5) drawing from background knowledge, and 6) summarizing and applying fix-up strategies.

The MSI has been shown to be a reliable measure of metacomprehension strategy awareness. Lonberger (1988) reported an MSI internal consistency value of .87 using the Kuder-Richardson Formula. To increase overall reliability of the MSI, it was designed to have several questions that address each strategy cluster. Validity data for the MSI come from several sources. Schmitt (1988) compared it with The Index of Reading Awareness (IRA), a self-report measure of awareness of the need to evaluate, plan, and regulate reading processes (Paris, et. al., 1984; Paris & Jacobs, 1984). A statistically significant correlation was found between the MSI and the IRA ($r = .48$, $p < .001$). Table Four represents a portion of my record for reporting the Metacomprehension Strategy Index.
Once students’ current understanding of literacy skills/strategies - when and how to use them – were assessed, the next charge was to document the participants’ current literacy practices and literacy self-efficacy. The measurement tool used to accomplish this was the Fall Survey, Reading/Writing by Janet Allen (See Appendix C). A leader in the field of adolescent literacy, this instrument was purposefully chosen because it housed within it questions that would allow the participants to self-report their current literacy practices. Allen states,

In schools where educators have listened to students’ voices and developed instructional practices that helped overcome barriers to literacy success, great improvements in students’ literacy have been made. Students who were surveyed and interviewed were passionate about their dislike and disinterest in the reading curriculum that exists in most middle-level and secondary classrooms (Allen, 2001, p. 59-60).
The literature on literacy practices revealed the limited attention to adolescent remedial learners’ voices concerning literacy practices in classroom contexts. Thus, the use of this instrument as a data collection tool to document literacy practices both in school and out of school aligned to the literacy practice goal of the 2012 CAL design.

**Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR)**

Given the purpose of a Fusion course and to ensure that the design aligned with the educational expectations of the course, I assessed the participants’ current literacy proficiency levels. These findings were not only used as a tool for measuring potential growth experienced as a result of participation in the 2012 CAL, it also helped guide the teaching and learning activities that the participants experienced. The Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR) was chosen as the measurement tool for several reasons: 1) it is a measurement tool that the researcher had used in the past, 2) it is studied in a reading course at the University of South Florida, and 3) the design of the DAR implies that reading is a multi-dimensional construct comprised of a range of skills. Furthermore, the DAR has been tested and proven to be a reliable diagnostic assessment in identifying the weaknesses of a small number of students who struggle with comprehension, especially those who struggle with grade level texts (Francis, Snow, August, Carlson, Miller, & Iglesias, 2006).

The participants of the 2012 CAL study were members of a Fusion class, a class designed for students who have failed the state-mandated assessment which indicates they struggle with grade level texts. The strengths of the DAR lie in its ability to help teachers determine whether lack of comprehension stems from poor word-reading skills, poor fluency, or weak vocabulary skills (Francis, Snow, August, Carlson, Miller, & Iglesias, 2006). Furthermore, the DAR allows teachers to ask clarifying questions when answers are unclear and gives teachers a greater
opportunity to understand the strengths and weaknesses of individual students (Francis, Snow, August, Carlson, Miller, & Iglesias, 2006); see Appendix D. The DAR was administered to all participants as a pre and post assessment. The data obtained from each administration was compiled and charted into individual report templates.

**Diagnostic Assessment of Writing**

Participants within the context of the 2012 CAL study were members of a Fusion class as a result of not meeting the proficiency standard in reading and writing on the state-mandated assessment. In order to determine where the participants were in relationship to their writing ability, administering a writing assessment was necessary. In the state of Florida, students’ writing proficiency is determined by a one-time writing assessment. In order to align the writing assessment to the state’s rubric, the prompt must emulate the state assessment writing prompt. The writing sample was assessed using the state rubric for writing (see Appendix E). The prompts for the 2012 CAL study were designed to reflect a theme that the participant encountered in the text. The following were the prompts provided: Pre- Describe the qualities of a good teacher, Post – Describe the qualities of a good parent.

**Positive Youth Development Inventory (PYDI)**

Measuring adolescents’ PYD occurred in two ways within the 2012 CAL design. The first was a pre- and post- Positive Youth Development Inventory (Arnold & Meinhold, 2008); see Appendix F. The second was through self-reported developments as noted in participants’ journals.

The Positive Youth Development Inventory (PYDI) is a Likert scale measurement that was constructed based on Lerner’s 5 C’s Model of Positive Youth Development (PYD). Psychometric testing on the PYDI has been conducted since 2004. The scales have been refined
based on the results of the preliminary factor analysis, and as of 2008, the scales have been completed and confirmed valid and reliable (Arnold & Meinhold, 2008). Permission by survey creators was granted prior to use.

Because the district in which the 2012 CAL stipulated that the teacher/researcher provide empirical evidence of PYD, this instrument was chosen for two primary reasons: 1) to satisfy the district requirement and 2) after an exhaustive search of PYD measurements, this was the only instrument that had been tested and proven both reliable and valid.

**Novel Choice**

The decision to utilize young adult (YA) literature in this design stems from evidence provided in the literature that utilizing high-interest reading material for at-risk students can be a critical component in fostering not only motivation and engagement but also positive personal growth (Brewster, 2008; Kuta, 1997; Moore, Alvermann, & Hinchman, 2000). Brewster (2008) states, “Most literate people can mention at least one or two books which have affected them profoundly, which have expanded their potential for growth and development, and have provided not only instruction and knowledge but also understanding and inspiration” (p. 175). Given what the literature revealed about the remedial learner and his or her self-efficacy, motivation, and engagement, YA literature as the tool in this design seemed appropriate.

The purpose of the 2012 CAL design was threefold: 1) to promote literacy proficiency, 2), to promote literacy practices, and 3) to promote positive youth development. In order to achieve these goals through the use of literature, a YA novel of high interest with a main character who develops both positively and demonstrates resiliency was necessary. After careful consideration, *Deadline* by Chris Crutcher was chosen as the YA novel for the 2012 CAL study. It is important to note that I consider this book to be a valid and reliable construct as the author
himself is an adolescent therapist. I would deem him an expert on the adolescent and the adolescent experience and trust that his representation of the adolescent world is accurate.

**Novel Summary**

*Deadline* is the story of a high school senior named Ben Wolf. Ben has been diagnosed with a rare and terminal blood disease just weeks before he is to begin his senior year of high school. Because Ben is 18, he has the legal right to keep this information to himself and he does. Instead of allowing this devastating news to affect him in a negative way, Ben strives to be the best person he can be. He decides to challenge himself physically (goes out for football), mentally (learns everything he can), spiritually (evaluates his relationship with religion), and emotionally (becomes active in promoting equity in his community). As we followed Ben’s journey to leave this world in a positive way, readers were able to not only be spectators but were given opportunities to become participants in Ben’s world. Table Five shows how this YA novel allowed students to work through each of Lerner’s 5 C’s of PYD alongside of and with Ben. See Table 17 (Chapter 4, p.133) for the definitions of the 5 C’s as found in Lerner et al. (2005, p. 23).

**Table 5. Deadline and Lerner’s 5 C’s**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confidence</th>
<th>Realized through Ben’s words and actions throughout the entire novel. For example, his choice to participate in a new sport and to pursue Suzuki.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Realized through Ben’s words, actions (continued reading of fiction and non-fiction to educate himself), and his conversations with Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Realized thorough Ben’s civics project, his classroom participation in Mr. Lambeer’s class discussions, elements of his relationship with his mom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Civics Project that Ben must perform for Mr. Lambeer’s class required a community connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Ben’s refusal to tell his family (or anyone) his secret. Ben’s relationship with specific characters throughout the novel, specifically the following: Rudy, Suzuki, Cody, his mother.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a tool for literacy practices, *Deadline* offered many opportunities for participants to use literacy practices to gain meaning into Ben’s world and their own in addition to learning and practicing literacy skills and strategies. The author’s rhetorical techniques afforded participants several occasions to examine and analyze language use, complex character development, meaning of words within context, look at multiple plots, tone, and theme, to name a few. Furthermore, because of the multiple plots and themes, critical examination of what was said and what was not said as well as the power relationships demonstrated within *Deadline* made this YA novel an excellent text to use as a medium through which to explore the same concepts in the participants’ current lives.

**Interactive Read-Aloud**

Research shows that one form of classroom practice that allows opportunities for teacher-led modeling of reading strategies and promotes student-led discussion is the interactive read aloud (Alor & McCathren, 2003; Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004). During the interactive read aloud, I modeled fluent reading, encouraged students to contribute by asking open-ended questions, and then built on their responses (Barrentine, 1996; Pantaleo, 2007). The dialogic nature of the interactive read aloud provides opportunities to develop complex thinking and learning as students construct meaning of both text and self (Santoro, Chard, Howard, & Baker, 2008; Sipe, 2008).

Studies on read alouds indicates that “comprehension is increased when students have opportunities to contribute to the conversation, explore ideas, and consider concepts about the text alongside teacher-guided modeling of reading strategies” (Wiseman, 2012, p. 259). According to the literature on the effects of using this approach in the classroom and aligning it
to the goals of the 2012 CAL study, this instructional approach was fitting for the outcome desired.

**Classroom Discussion of Literature**

Discourse aroused in a classroom from YA literature can greatly influence the culture of that classroom (Busching & Slesinger, 2002; Intrator, 2003; Schein, 2008). A key component of the 2012 CAL design asked participants to challenge or confirm their beliefs and values in order to gain insight into their being. It has been ascertained that discussions thrive and comprehension will deepen when students’ lives and identities are intentionally interwoven with classroom texts, such as the one chosen for the 2012 CAL (Busching & Slesinger, 2002; Intrator, 2003; Schein, 2008). Schein (2008) purports that classrooms which promote discussion of text on deeper levels (levels that connect to the participants current contexts), communities are formed that responsively address the often emotional situations of students’ lives.

Research demonstrates that conversations surrounding a text may have a significant impact on literacy instruction because they may influence and support adolescent’s development of comprehension strategies as well as their self-perceptions as literacy learners (Almasi, O’Flahavan, & Arya, 2001; Aukerman, Belfatti, & Santori, 2008; Boyd & Rubin, 2006; McIntyre, Kyle, & Moore, 2006; Parker & Hurry, 2007). Since this classroom practice promotes both literacy proficiency and PYD – two of three goals of the 2012 CAL- it aligned to the design.

**Journaling**

The use of journals in the 2012 CAL design was based on the belief that students are experts in their own learning. Theorists such as Carl Rogers (1982) support the notion of using journals for learning and personal growth. Rogers claims, “The only learning which significantly influences behavior is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning” (p. 223).
Accepting the importance of self-discovery and self-appropriated learning in this enterprise, creating opportunities for students to self-discover became essential in their development in both literacy and thriving.

Journaling as a learning strategy “provides opportunities for students to mull over ideas, uncover inner secrets, and piece together life’s unconnected threads, thus creating a fertile ground for significant learning” (Hubbs & Brand, 2005, p. 62). Some teachers use journaling to improve students’ writing abilities and attitudes toward writing. Reid (1997) studied the effect of journal writing on students’ confidence in their writing abilities and attitudes about writing. What she discovered was an increase in confidence of writing ability and attitude through the use of this medium. It has also been suggested that journal writing works to improve writing skills because every time students write, they individualize instruction; the act of silent writing alone may generates ideas, observations, emotions (Fullwiler, 1980). Using journals as a tool for improving writing skills satisfied this dimension of literacy within the 2012 CAL design.

**Phase II – Implementation**

**Introductory Activity: Preparing Students to Read**

The pre-reading strategy awareness data obtained from the MSI is what guided the introductory activity of the 2012 CAL design. Before-reading strategies included previewing (looking at text features), making predictions, drawing from background knowledge, self-questioning, and setting a purpose. Evaluating each participant’s scores on pre-reading strategy awareness, the introductory activities were tailored to meet all facets assessed by the MSI of and the comprehensive nature of literacy. The introductory activity was conducted in three parts: 1) individual activity, 2) small group activity, and 3) whole group activity.
Individual Activity

An anticipation guide is a comprehension strategy that is used before reading to activate students’ prior knowledge and build curiosity about a new topic. Anticipation guides stimulate students’ interest in a topic and sets a purpose for reading. Kylene Beers (2003) states,

Anticipation guides first act as a pre-reading strategy and encourage students to connect to ideas and make predictions. Then, they allow students to look for cause and effect relationships as they read. Finally, they allow students to generalize, to discuss those generalizations, and to explore their own responses to a text. (p. 77)

In this design, a visual anticipation guide was used to get participants to begin to think about life in order to help them reflect about who they are.

The word carpe diem means “seize the day.” In preparing the participants to encounter the themes in Deadline, it was important that participants began thinking about what that word meant to them. The intention was to get them to think about ways in which they “seize the day” and what those ways say about them as a person. Opening the CAL design, I asked participants to analyze the concept of carpe diem as expressed in the movie Dead Poets Society. Because one dimension of literacy is viewing, this pre-reading activity was appropriate for this design.

As a follow up to viewing the film, a video viewing guide (Appendix G) lead students through the concept of carpe diem in relation to what they just viewed. Recognizing that literacy also encompasses one’s ability to view and discern information from visual text, this guide was an excellent resource to allow students to practice dissecting visual text for meaning.

Small Group Pre-Reading Activity

Following the individual activity, I assigned participants to a small peer group to complete the next introductory activity. Using data obtained from the MSI, groups were arranged according to strengths and weaknesses in pre-reading strategy awareness.
Data driven formation of groups was essential in this activity for many reasons. Cooperative learning is an instructional practice intended to enhance student performance (Bekele, 2005; Dansereau & Johnson, 1994; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Roger & Johnson, 2009; Slavin, 1993). The literature on cooperative learning in the discipline of education suggests that groups within educational context be arranged heterogeneously. In education, a heterogeneous group refers to a team of students who have been created based on a range of low, average, and high student scores (Bekele, 2005; Roger & Johnson, 2009; Slavin, 1993). This is justified by the recommendation of Slavin (1993) who proposes that students should work in small, mixed-ability groups of four members: one high achiever, two average achievers, and one low achiever. An experiment by Bekele (2005) found that students who were grouped according to this theory perform better than students grouped randomly or on a self-selection basis. Therefore, it was necessary that the CAL design groups were influenced by research and formed according to the MSI data in order to provide mixed-ability among the participants.

**Whole Group Pre-Reading Activity**

One strategy of prereading is predicting and one literacy skill is using text features to predict. Schmitt (1990) states, “Predicting the content of a story promotes active comprehension by giving readers a purpose for reading (i.e., to verify the predictions). Evaluating predictions and generating new ones as necessary enhances the constructive nature of the reading process” (p. 455). As a whole group, participants viewed the cover of the book in depth, exploring the use of color, the type and size of the font, and the visual on the front cover in order to make predictions (Appendix H).
During Reading Activities

As previously discussed, the activities I chose for this design were daily read-alouds by the teacher, whole group discussions during and after each reading, journaling to demonstrate comprehension, practice writing, and journaling to self reflect. Appendix I is the Power Point that was created for each chapter reading. Discussions ensued according to participants’ reactions or through teacher-guided prompts. Additionally, as participants progressed through the text, the teacher/researcher periodically paused to examine elements of writing in an effort to afford students with opportunities to practice literacy strategies. For example, in Chapter Four of *Deadline*, Crutcher uses the word “pugilist” (p. 46) in the dialogue between Ben and Dallas. This was an opportunity to stop and ask participants to find meaning within the context using context clues.

Within the text, the main character is charged with completing a civics project for his Civics’ class. As a way to get participants engaged in their community (addressing the Connectedness “C” in Lerner’s 5 C’s Model), students completed a similar project to Ben’s. This imbedded activity required students to examine their communities, locate an injustice, research the injustice, and create a plan of action to resolve this injustice. The Power Point has several references to this project. The purpose of revisiting this project was to have students add to their list of potential resources in aiding them through the resolution and education of the injustice they chose. The project directions appear in Appendix J.

Phase III – Feedback Assessment

Throughout the entire design, feedback was provided daily through a written dialogue between the student in the students’ journals and me, the teacher/researcher. As a way to monitor comprehension, the teacher/researcher read each participant’s response and commented
to the comprehension prompts posed for each chapter. In an effort to monitor PYD, the teacher/researcher read each student’s personal prompt reflection and maintained a dialogue based on the topics and ideas revealed by the student. In the event that a student did not wish the teacher/researcher to read her or his personal reflection responses, the student simply folded the page in half to cover all text. The student was aware, however, that the teacher would read all reflective responses after the course was over.

To determine if there was an immediate impact on participants’ literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and PYD, the 2012 CAL design concluded by administering a post reading/writing inventory, DAR, and PYDI assessment. Additionally, a post writing assessment was administered.

Because the data being analyzing consisted of both qualitative and quantitative measures, participants were also asked to complete a set of journal prompts (documenting PYD) and produce an individual project demonstrating overall comprehension of the text. As a class, ten events within the story that made the story powerful in terms of meaning and message were determined by the participants. Once a consensus was reached, participants were asked to compile a play-list of songs where the song’s lyrics could represent each event we chose. The purpose behind this closing activity was to bring the students back to the opening activity which asked them to analyze lyrics in a song for theme. Appendix I contains the directions and expectations for this activity.

Study Findings

The data collected, both quantitative and qualitative, revealed a significant immediate short-term impact in literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and PYD for all participants as measured through Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003). All six short-term learning
goals established were met, and as a result growth occurred in each taxon. Since each learning goal represented one of Fink’s taxa in his Taxonomy of Significant Learning, and data and analysis for each taxon differed, the findings presented are a representation of the cross case analysis for each taxon.

**Fundamental Knowledge**

Fundamental Knowledge refers to the acquisition of content. It is the basis from which all other learning stems (Fink, 2003). Given the educational expectations of the Fusion class (remediation in an effort to assist students in passing the state-mandated assessment in Reading), the short-term learning goal established was reflective of the purpose of the Fusion course: students will develop an understanding of when and how to employ literacy strategies and skills when comprehending texts (all forms of text). Several quantitative measurement tools were used to capture this learning: a pre and post Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR) and a pre and post writing assessment. Through the use of these media, I was able to document any growth in literacy proficiency (as defined by the course purpose) that resulted from the ICDM, thus satisfying research question one.

A paired, two-tailed $t$ test was conducted using the data collected from each individual section of the DAR using Graphpad statistical software. Because I was comparing one variable for exactly two groups, and because the results could go in more than one direction (up or down) the use of a paired, two-tailed $t$ test was appropriate. The values inputted into each $t$ test were determined through the DAR scoring guide for each individual section. Each section score correlated with a grade level. Grade levels were determined by the literacy proficiency that was expected from a student in that particular grade. These values (grade level equivalence) varied by participant and by section. Findings revealed a statistically significant impact on the
participants’ literacy proficiency across all four sections of the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading: Word Recognition, Oral Reading, Silent Reading Comprehension, and Word Meaning. Given the educational purpose of the FUSION course and recognizing that reading encompasses a combination of several interrelated processes, each subtest on the DAR was examined separately. Tables Six through Nine below report the gains made in each section of the DAR by each participant. For the purpose of these charts, each participant was assigned a code letter; SA = Student A, SB = Student B, and so on.

**Word Recognition**

Participants were first assessed on the Word Recognition sub-test to determine the level from which the other assessments would begin. Participants were provided the word list that corresponds to their current grade level and asked to read the words aloud. If a participant is unable to recognize three or more words from the word list, the administrator repeated this section using the word list that corresponds to the grade below. This process continued until the participant scores mastery, which is the recognition of seven out of the ten words provided. Scores from the pre-assessment indicate a discrepancy between the current participant’s grade and the grade level reported in the domain score, with no participant scoring at current grade level. Scores from the post-assessment revealed 54 percent of the participants were now reported at or above grade level and 100 percent of the participants made growth in this domain. Table Six represents the findings from the pre and post assessments for this sub-test. The results reveal a significant difference between the pre (M= 7.63, SD= 1.28) and post (M=9.83, SD=1.31) scores; \(t\) (23) =10.6, \(p<.0001\). These results suggest that the 2012 CAL design had appositive impact on the participant’s word recognition skills.
Table 6. DAR Pre and Post Word Recognition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>14.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>22.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>26.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ</td>
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<td>34.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>SS</td>
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<td>38.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>42.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>44.00</td>
<td>46.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Oral Reading**

Once the participants grade level had been discovered, (as determined by the Word recognition sub-test), the Oral Reading grade-level subtest was administered. This sub-test allowed the administrator to evaluate the participant’s oral reading fluency and any errors in word analysis that the participant may be experiencing. Participants were given a passage to read aloud to the administrator. As the participant was performing this task, the administrator noted words that were missed, skipped over, or words that were inserted in the text. Also noted were words that were mispronounced, as well as the participants speed and phrasing. Scores from the pre-assessment indicate a discrepancy between the current participant’s grade level and the grade level reported in the domain score, with no participant scoring at current grade level. Scores from the post-assessment revealed growth in oral reading by each participant, with 54 percent of the participants now scoring at or above grade level. Table Seven represents the findings from the pre and post assessments for this sub-test. The results reveal a significant difference between the pre (M= 7.17, SD= 1.13) and post (M=9.79, SD=1.59) scores; t (23) =17.5, p<.0001. These results suggest that the 2012 CAL design had appositive impact on the participant’s oral reading skills.
Table 7. DAR Pre and Post Oral Reading

Silent Reading Comprehension

The next grade-leveled subtest given to the participants focused on their silent reading comprehension. The intention of this subtest was to measure how well students can extract information from text. Students were given a text to read silently and a set of five comprehension questions to answer. Once completed, students were then asked to orally retell what they have read. Mastery was met when students scored a 3 or higher on the questions and recalled information from the beginning, middle and end of the text. Scores from the pre-assessment indicate a discrepancy between the current participant’s grade level and the grade level reported in the domain score, with no participant scoring at current grade level. Scores from the post-assessment revealed growth in this subtest by each participant, with 54 percent of the participants now scoring at or above grade level. Table Eight represents the findings from the pre and post assessments for this sub-test. The results reveal a significant difference between the pre (M=6.83, SD=1.01) and post (M=10.33, SD=1.09) scores; t(23) = 16.6, p<.0001. These results suggest that the 2012 CAL design had appositive impact on the participant’s silent reading comprehension.
Word Meaning

The final grade-leveled subtest given to the participants focused on word meaning. The intention of this subtest was to measure the students’ language development. This sub-test was given orally. The administrator read the grade-leveled words to the student and asked the student to provide a definition/meaning of the word. Mastery was met when students provided the correct meaning for 3 or more words. Scores from the pre-assessment indicate that 24 percent of the participants began the 2012 CAL with mastery in word meaning. Scores from the post-assessment revealed growth in this subtest for 83 percent of the participants, while the remaining 17 percent maintained grade-level mastery. Table Nine represents the findings from the pre and post assessments for this sub-test. The results reveal a significant difference between the pre (M=8.26, SD= 1.88) and post (M=10.33, SD =1.31) scores; $t (23) = 6.85$, $p<.0001$. These results suggest that the 2012 CAL design had appositive impact on the participant’s word meaning.

The statistical analysis of the DAR showed the 2012 CAL design had an immediate positive impact on all students’ literacy proficiency in all the areas measured. The most significant changes in literacy proficiency occurred in the oral reading ($t (23) = 17.5$) and silent
reading comprehension ($t (23) = 16.6$) sections. Because the purpose of a Fusion course is to assist adolescent RLLs in improving literacy proficiency in an effort to help them pass a state-mandated assessment in Reading, these data were extremely meaningful.

Table 9. DAR Pre and Post Word Meaning

![Bar chart showing pre and post word meaning scores across different categories.]

Given the nature and characteristics of the adolescent remedial learner as presented in the literature, prior to even entering classroom contexts adolescents who have been labeled “remedial” come with lower self-efficacy and motivation, which in turn effects engagement in the learning (Swafford, 2007). Therefore, the immediate growth experienced in oral reading was significant in that it may indicate a stronger sense of one’s ability - a growth in self-efficacy. While this section of the DAR was conducted between the researcher and each participant only, the researcher did observe a willingness and ease to read aloud on the post-assessment that was not evident during the pre-assessment. My observation of participant body language and tone of voice are evidence of this claim. For example, participant SB was hesitant to read aloud in the pre-DAR oral reading assessment. After encouragement from the researcher, she did complete the task, but it was done through a soft, whispering voice, her body hunched over so far that her face was almost touching the assessment materials; I strained to hear her...
words. In completing the same section on the post-DAR oral reading assessment, participant SB jumped right into reading without any hesitation. Her voice was at a level that could be easily heard and she sat straight up in the chair as she read. Theorists tell us that efficacious students participate more in the classroom, work harder at assigned tasks, and consciously continue to try and overcome difficulties, thereby achieving higher levels of academic success (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Usher & Pajares, 2008). The connection between the immediate growth in oral reading and self-efficacy can only be realized through the voices of the participants themselves, however, this warrants further exploration.

Since cognitive learning is what state-mandated assessments are intended to measure (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003), and the Silent Reading Comprehension Section of the DAR solely measures cognitive learning, these results have significance. I hypothesize that implementing this design would have an impact on these students’ Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) assessment scores. This would be one direction for further research.

The second form of measurement for this domain was also quantitative in nature. The 2012 CAL design utilized the State of Florida’s FCAT writing rubric to measure immediate writing growth. Table 10 reveals the results of the pre- and post-assessment of writing.

Table 10. Pre and Post Writing Assessment
A paired, two tail t-test was conducted using Graphpad statistical software for this data. The results of this t-test reveal a 99 percent growth in writing as evident in the immediate increase in writing scores. There was a significant difference between the pre (M= 2.79, SD=.931) and post (M=4, SD=.659) scores; \( t(23) =11.63, p<.0001 \). These results suggest that the 2012 CAL design had appositive impact on the participant’s word meaning.

The literature on using journals as a tool for improving writing skills suggested that journal writing works to improve writing skills because every time students write, they individualize instruction; the act of silent writing alone may generates ideas, observations, emotions (Fullwiler, 1980). These data confirm this assertion. For educators who are charged with teaching adolescent RLLs writing to prepare them for state-mandated writing assessments, these data are meaningful.

**Application**

The Application domain of Fink’s Taxonomy concerns itself with what we want the students to be able “to do” with the content. It is in this dimension that learning moves forward through practice. The short-term learning goal established for this domain states that the students will practice literacy for a variety of purposes outside of the course activities in an effort to extend their literacy practices. Given the nature and characteristics of literacy and the importance of literacy practices in one’s world (Moje, 2008; Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011), the 2012 CAL study measured literacy practices qualitatively through a pre and post Fall Reading/Writing Survey (Allen, 2000) along with researcher observations in order to answer research question two.

The Model of Literacy Practices (Purcell-Gates, Briseño, & Perry, 2011) is a model designed to assist researchers and educators in measuring literacy practices (see Figure Six, p.
In order to accomplish this, the coding began at the literacy event level with observable or reported instances of reading and writing. Using the typologies that Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) created to measure practices based upon self-reported literacy event data and observations, the first step in analysis was to identify social activity domains of each event reported.

Once events were categorized by domain, a description of the types of texts the participants interacted with was necessary. Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) have established 41 text genres. These genres formed according to the types of texts they witnessed the participants utilizing in their longitudinal study. Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) stipulate that not all text forms will be usable in every study; text forms will be unique to each study as context and participants are unique. Only a portion of the 41 text genres they established applied to the 2012 CAL study. Additional text forms were identified and added as the observations made by the researcher revealed additional text forms being used by the participants. Table 11 is a list of the text codes with my additions appearing in bold.

**Table 11. Text Codes**

| Tx: Caption, artwork                                                                 |
| Tx: Classified ad, newspaper                                                       |
| Tx: Application, form                                                              |
| Tx: Dictionary definition, book                                                    |
| Tx: Fiction narrative, notebook                                                    |
| Tx: Homework, worksheet                                                            |
| Tx: Information text, handbook                                                     |
| **Tx: Joke/riddle, book**                                                          |
| Tx: Novel, book                                                                   |
| **Tx: Personal letter/note**                                                       |
| **Tx: Poetry, notebook**                                                            |
| Tx: Schedule, form                                                                |
| **Tx: Social media text, digital**                                                 |
| **Tx: Table of contents, handbook**                                                |
| Tx: LIT, copy text, notebook                                                      |
| Tx: LIT, instructional text, textbook                                             |
| **Tx: LIT, spelling list, notebook**                                               |
| Tx: Lyrics, notebook                                                              |
| Tx: News story, magazine                                                           |
| **Tx: Video, digital**                                                             |
| Tx: Notice/announcement, flyer                                                    |
After the textual genre was identified, a description of the function and purpose of each text with each participant was coded. Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) stipulate,

Within the frame of literacy as social practice, we could see function/purpose of a particular type of literacy engagement both on the closer level of participant fulfillment of a communicative function and on the level of larger social purposes that are not as close to the textual communicative function of the individual literacy event. For example, through the literacy act of writing a personal letter to a family member, the agent in one study can be seen as writing to inform the family member about what has been happening, how she is doing, etc. At the same time, we can look at the social purpose of this act as serving to maintain family bonds and connections. (p.447)

Function and purpose were identified and each was coded using the following communicative and social codes. Because data inform the codes, as suggested by typological analysis, only some of the 24 pre-determined function codes established by Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) applied; however, through the inductive analysis process additional codes were discovered. Tables Twelve and Thirteen are the codes used in this initial study, with the codes I added appearing in bold.

**Table 12. Communicative Function Codes**

Fn: To check for information  
Fn: To check how number problems can be solved  
Fn: To communicate online  
Fn: To communicate with family and friends  
Fn: To fill out application  
Fn: To inform about plans  
Fn: To invite someone to an event  
**Fn: To show understanding**  
Fn: To label location  
**Fn: To record thoughts/feelings**  
Fn: To indicate approval/disapproval  
**Fn: To learn new facts/information informal and formal**
Table 13. Social Purpose Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pr: In order to apply for/get a job</th>
<th>Pr: In order to inform someone of personal messages received/posted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pr: In order to inform discussion</td>
<td><strong>Pr: In order to understand text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr: In order to inform employer too sick to Work</td>
<td><strong>Pr: In order to inform one’s own self</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr: In order to inform others about a class</td>
<td><strong>Pr: In order to inform others about a person</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pr: In order to convey a personal message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy practice data analysis continued with the Reading/Writing survey (Allen, 2000). Participant answers from two questions – five and 19 – were extracted and measured in terms of practices using Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry’s (2011) typological analysis process. The data revealed immediate growth in three of the social activity domain codes established by Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011): ART – using one’s art, COM- community, SCH- school (see Chapter 5 for definitions of each). While the pre-Reading/Writing Survey revealed a perspective of literacy as a primary function of schooling, an awareness of literacy as a tool to learn about one’s self and one’s community only emerged in the post data. Participants’ reports of reading and writing practices on the pre-Reading/Writing Survey (Allen, 2000) support the notion that RLLs have a disconnect between the purpose and function of literacy within their lives (Moje, 2000).

The most significant literacy practice domain growth between the pre- and post-Reading/Writing Survey (Allen, 2000) found itself within the COM domain for reading and the ART domain for writing. As aforementioned, one intention of the 2012 CAL design was to provide the adolescent RLLs an opportunity to examine the connection between literacy practices and their lives in an effort to increase their own literacy practices. Through the teaching and learning activities that promoted this goal (journaling, creation of art, songs, poetry, and
stories for personal pleasure), the data reported on the post-Reading/Writing Survey (Allen, 2000) revealed that this short-term goal was met within and through these two domains. Participants reported an immediate increased use of literacy practices for schooling purposes, but added to their practices (reading/writing more in school) by including reading and writing for personal pleasure and communication.

The ART domain is one that centers around “Doing one’s art” or creative/artistic activities one is engaged in for purposes of developing, improving, exploring, performing within one’s creative/artistic area(s) (Purcell-Gates, Briseño & Perry, 2011). Texts within this domain included books (novels) and notebooks (lyrics, fiction narratives, personal reflection), whose functions were to assist the students in gaining an understanding of concepts and themselves through the recording of their thoughts and feelings, and as a way to communicate with friends for the purpose of informing one’s own self.

An immediate growth in RLL’s communication (COM) literacy practices emerged from the data. The COM domain of literacy practices is defined by social activity that centers on one’s life in a community. This includes defining one’s self as a member of a community and socialization with community members. Texts that were used within this domain included notebooks (fiction narrative, personal) to learn new facts and information about others and to inform one’s self, informational text, digital, personal letter/note to communicate on-line, to communicate with friends or family in order to convey a personal message, to learn about others, or inform someone of personal messages.

Alvermann (2001) wrote “adolescents often find their own reasons for becoming literate, reasons that go beyond reading to acquire school knowledge or mastery of academic text” (p. 20); however, when adolescents do not see a reason for using literacy beyond school, this
realization may be difficult to come by. Through participation in the 2012 CAL design, participants found reasons to immediately increase their practice of literacy both in and out of school. Because adolescents’ literacy practices are tied to their personal lives and because they choose their literacy activities as tools for learning in school (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001, Moje, 2008), getting information about their immediate or future worlds (Moje, 2008) or to control emotions, to gain resilient characteristics, and to engage in self-expression (Moje, 2008), these findings are significant. However, because this survey is limited in providing evidence of metadiscursivity (only a few participants recorded why they continued to develop their practices of literacies), there is a need to further investigate each participant’s awareness of why s/he uses literacy.

Integration

The Integration domain of Fink’s Taxonomy seeks to connect the course concepts to other domains of students’ everyday lives. The short-term learning goals established for this taxon sought to connect literacy to other disciplines in school and to contexts outside of school in an effort to increase the participants’ literacy practices. Literacy practices in activities outside the 2012 CAL study were documented and measured qualitatively through researcher observations. The findings from these observations answer research question two.

As the principal investigator a daily observation journal of all activities that transpired within the classroom - both in and outside the scope of the CAL design - was kept. The journal was divided into two sections for each day. The first section included observations made during the CAL activity, and the second were observations made after the CAL activity concluded. The way the CAL design was structured, participants were given time to read (or re-read), reflect, and
write daily. Once they had completed the assigned task, participants had time to themselves. During class periods in which extra time was afforded, observations of the participants’ literacy practices were recorded, making note of the texts they used, the functions and purposes of these uses, and any communication that transpired within the classroom regarding these uses. As a result, what were captured were literacy practices in real time.

Researcher observation entries described the participants’ practices of literacy outside the scope of what was required by them in the CAL design. These practices were performed for a variety of purposes and through a variety of media, yet each practice provided evidence on how these participants used literacy to mediate their lives. Through inductive coding (Hatch, 2002), several themes emerged from the data which described literacy practices outside of the scope of the 2012 CAL and their purposes.

**Academic Purposes**

The first of these themes was academic purposes. Within the theme of academic purpose, the researcher observed several participants use of instructional texts for the function of completing other school related tasks (i.e. worksheets). For example, participant SI’s reading of her math book in order to assist her on a worksheet indicated that she recognized the purpose of practicing literacy as a support for learning. This action may speak to SI’s values and beliefs about performing well in school. She was focused, on task, and intent on completing the assignment. It appeared she wanted to do well in school. Furthermore, her response to the question of purpose, why she was completing this activity in school instead of at home, revealed that she participates in activities outside of school and within other social domains. Her participation in a church activity might suggest that she has a strong connection to an organized religion. Her desire to complete the work that was assigned for home in school could also
indicate that she values both activities equally, wanting to devote time to participate in both with full attention. Through SI’s literacy practice, the use of a math book to assist in homework so she can participate in another activity may be evidence of her increased beliefs, values, and attitudes towards both school and church as a result of participating in the 2012 CAL design.

**Social Purposes**

Another theme that emerged was the use of literacy practices as a social tool. The findings from the analysis of the literature on the adolescent learner and the social, emotional influences that may affect learning support the many instances the researcher witnessed literacy being practiced as a social activity. Several students engaged in writing practices on a social media web page, others created written texts on their mobile devices, while others created visuals which they uploaded to social media sites (i.e. Facebook, Instagram). Updating posts, responding to a “friend’s” posts, creating visuals and verbally communicating these to other classmates, demonstrated the use of literacy for social purposes.

Overall, the data revealed an immediate growth in literacy practices for all participants as measured through all literacy practice instruments; however, what cannot be determined from this data is if the 2012 CAL prompted long-term impact of literacy practices. An investigation into the lasting impact of the 2012 CAL design on literacy practices of a few of these participants is a direction for further study. Furthermore, the need to examine literacy practices through metadiscursivity should also be considered.

**Human Dimension and Caring**

The Human Dimension and Caring domains of Fink’s Taxonomy call attention to the learner in the learning process. I have combined these two domains as a result of the in-depth analysis of the literature on the nature and characteristics of the adolescent remedial learner and
the use of a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach to promote personal growth. Teaching and learning activities within the design that focused on these domains were specifically tailored to in an effort to increase the 5 C’s of positive development as defined by Lerner (See Table 17, p. 133). Through a qualitative measurement tool, journaling, I was able to capture the participants’ voices as they self-reported personal growth and answer question three of the research questions.

The short-term learning goals established for the Human Dimension taxon were for students to develop character and confidence, become culturally sensitive in their interactions with others, become responsible citizens in their community; in essence, to increase their self-efficacy. The short-term learning goal established for Caring states that students will want to become a better student and person as well as set goals for themselves. Because of the district imposed stipulation, I was required to use a quantitative measurement for this domain. However, as the literature on PYD reveals, in order to truly describe any growth, this dimension can only be realized through the voices of the adolescent participants themselves; thus, a qualitative measure was also employed.

Positive Youth Development (PYD) growth, as measured by the Positive Youth Development Inventory (2008) (Appendix F) revealed no significant impact on the participants’ Positive Youth Development. Less than one percent of the participants reported growth in any of the five areas of Positive Youth Development (PYD): Competence (p = .15), Character (p = .32), Connection (p = 0.25), Caring (p = .08), and Confidence (p = .65). However, the participants’ qualitative data told a different story, which may indicate a possible limitation on the use of Likert scales to measure positive development, especially given the nature and characteristics of Lerner’s 5 C’s.
Data were collected through the voices of the participants and analyzed through Hatch’s (2002) Typological Analysis procedures. At the beginning and end of their participation in the 2012 CAL, students were asked to reflect and write answers to the following prompts: describe yourself as a person and as a learner, and express what you learned through this activity as a whole. Through these written descriptions, PYD growth as told through the voices of those who participated in the 2012 CAL design was realized. What follows is a brief overview of evidence of immediate positive growth as measured through each of Lerner’s 5 C’s for two randomly selected participants. Because this is only an overview, the examples provided are not factored out according to type; rather, they are presented to you as a student whole. The purpose for not separating each domain is to give readers a glimpse into each participant’s immediate growth across the domains; the degrees to which theses occurred varied with each participant.

**Student SS:** Student SS’s responses to the prompts given at the beginning of the 2012 CAL design support what is presented in the literature about the nature and characteristics of the adolescent remedial learner. When asked to describe themselves, SS described himself as being “awkward,” “weird,” and unsocial – “I sit alone at lunch.” He displayed a lack of confidence in his ability as a student, claiming he was “not smart,” was “dumb,” and had lack of connection to school- “I don’t care too much for school.” This lack of confidence, competence, and connection supports the notion of the low self-efficacy that remedial learners bring with them to remedial classrooms (Mueller, 2001; Stoughton, 2007; Swafford, 2007). Furthermore, it demonstrates a lack of intrinsic motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 1985, 2000), something that is crucial to social and cognitive development (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004).
In the post journal responses, SS self-reported immediate growth in all 5 of Lerner’s C’s. SS began his response by describing how he now connects to his peers. He stated, “I have learned that having friends is a good thing so I would describe myself as being more social now.” Besides connecting with others, SS found confidence in his academic abilities through this design. He self-reported, “I learned I am smarter than I think.” With his new found sense of confidence, SS also came to the realization that he matters in a larger scope - “my voice matters.” The growth in these areas led SS to self-report a growth in his overall self-efficacy. SS wrote, “I am happier, more confident, and I care about more people and things.” For SS, the use of the PYD approach within the 2012 CAL design attributed to SS seeing himself as successful and thriving. He writes, “Through this experience, what I learned about myself was that I need to always be aware of what comes my way. Always stand up for what you believe in and never stop when someone discourages you.”

Student SV: Student SV began the 2012 CAL possessing some Competent, Confidence and Character attributes. SV self-reported that he was “athletic,” “a good friend,” and that “people like me.” Additionally, SV claimed, “I am a Christian” which speaks to his moral compass. The awareness of these characteristics makes SV unique. While demonstrating a sense of positive self-worth, competence in his social actions, and his claims of being a Christian (which represents morality), SV failed to mention any positive characteristics about himself as a learner or a student. Through these responses, the researcher noted a disconnect between school and the other contexts in SV’s world; this is something the literature tells us is indicative of adolescent remedial learners (Mueller, 2001; Stoughton, 2007).

At the end of the 2012 CAL, SV reported immediate positive growth. The first evidence of growth appears on SV’s new list of positive assets. SV still considered himself an athlete, a
good friend, and a Christian, but he now included “smart” to his list. He described himself as a “good learner” and because of this new found strength, he reported a desire to “learn more things and graduate and go to college.” SV continued to add to his Character traits list when he made a claim to “stand up for what I believe in more” and “being Christian more now than I used to be.” To support this latter claim, SV wrote that he learned “to forgive people more.” SV’s self-reported growth changed the way he looked at himself and his world. He found a connection between school and other contexts and created goals for himself, both personally and academically.

Given time and opportunity to reflect on their own growth, these responses speak volumes about how these students grew personally through the initial participation in the CAL curriculum design. Adolescents who have been labeled remedial as a result of low proficiency scores on a state-mandated assessment, “likely have identified themselves as having less ability than others” (Swafford, 2007, p.158). The literature on remedial learners suggests that some students are not motivated to learn because they believe their lack of success in the classroom is because they are simply not smart enough (Mueller, 2001; Staughton, 2007). These notions are affirmed in the journal responses written prior to participation in the 2012 CAL design. Participants described themselves as withdrawn from school, withdrawn from adolescent cultures, awkward, and not intelligent. Most revealed a deficiency in all five of Lerner’s C’s (2005), with only a few participants recognizing any positive assets at all.

Regardless of what the adolescent RLL believes is his or her reason for being placed in a remedial classroom or where they are in relation to Lerner’s Five C’s, Pressley (1998) contends that adolescents must be successful in perceiving themselves as successful. This is a primary goal of the PYD approach in instruction. Through the short-term data presented, one can
interpret this approach with adolescent RLLs as instrumental in helping the participants to acknowledge themselves as thriving, literate, and intelligent human beings. Students grew in all five of Lerner’s (2005) C’s, demonstrating resiliency. For the adolescent RLL this growth is significant in that it demonstrated the goal of a PYD approach in the classroom is possible to reach.

This growth, however, only reflects the immediate impact of the CAL design. In order to determine if the 2012 CAL was a significant learning experience as defined by Fink (2003), an examination of PYD growth needs to extend beyond the Fusion course.

**Learning How to Learn**

Fink’s Learning How to Learn domain calls for students to become self-regulated learners. The process of becoming self-regulated is demonstrated through reflective practice. Self-assessing one’s own performance, attitudes, beliefs, and/or opinions are necessary to meet these criteria. At the conclusion of the 2012 CAL, students reflected on what they learned throughout the design and how this learning had changed (or perhaps not changed) them. Because this domain can only be realized through the voices of those who participated in the 2012 CAL, the data used to measure short-term growth was qualitative in nature. All participants were charged with answering several prompts which asked them to reflect on the characteristics of the Learning How to Learn taxon. Students were asked to describe what they learned about themselves through their participation in the CAL design in an effort to document any potential short-term PYD growth. Within this description they were also prompted to discuss what they learned about themselves as a reader and a writer in an effort to document any potential change concerning literacy proficiency and practice, skills needed to become better learners. These
directions can be seen in Appendix I. What follows are several participants’ responses that demonstrate that the short-term learning goal for this taxon was achieved:

Change

- By doing this I learned that I don’t help my community as much as I should. I could do more.
- I can go from writing to skydiving. I am going to change the world one step at a time. I have a voice for a reason.
- I learned how much I can change my life.

Creating a Plan

- I want to graduate high school and go on to college.
- I want to go to college to be a doctor.
- I want to get good grades in high school so I can graduate and do good things.
- I learned that I can actually make a difference if I tried. And that I actually care enough to try and help my community.

Acquired skills to become a better learner

- I am a much better writer than I thought.
- I am a better reader now.
- I can understand what I read which helps me in school.
- I have learned and thought about things I never thought about before.
- I am a better interpreter of things now.
- I know what to do when I come across things I don’t get.
- I get it!

Discussion of Findings

The 2012 comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) action research study findings offer insights on a group of adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLL) literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and positive youth development (PYD) short-term growth as a result of participation in an innovative comprehensive approach to literacy designed through Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design model. The findings from this study were significant in a number of ways. To begin, the 2012 CAL study was implemented immediately after participants were assessed for literacy through the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). All pre-measurement
findings were real-time measurements of where the students were in terms of current literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and PYD after participation in the districted required literacy instructional design. Up until that point, the teacher/researcher had followed the mandated focus calendar and approaches required of her. Therefore, the results obtained from the post measurements, measured true short-term growth of proficiency, practice and PYD as a direct result of participation in the 2012 CAL design.

While the short-term findings from the data on literacy proficiency revealed a significant growth in all areas measure by the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR), this was only a measurement of literacy events. The literature on literacy tells us that literacy is more than an event – more than a cognitive skill. (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee 1990, 1999, 2001; Kucer, 2009; Kucer & Silva, 2006; Moje, 2002, 2008, 2009, 2010; Purcell-Gates, Briseño & Perry, 2011; Street, 1995, 2001) As such, the growth in literacy practices become more significant because literacy practices are what participants will need to utilize in order to meet today’s task demands. Therefore, the findings’ reporting a growth in literacy practices has long term potential.

Finally, the literature on adolescent remedial learners ascertains that self-efficacy is directly related to academic and social growth. When the participants began the 2012 CAL design, they self-reported low self-efficacy. Again, this was immediately after the district mandated approach to literacy instruction had taken place. Within nine weeks, through the 2012 CAL design, a growth in all of Lerner’s 5 C’s was revealed. The short term PYD growth findings correlated with a growth in literacy proficiency and practice, which affirms the literature on the connection between PYD and achievement.
The power of this comprehensive approach to literacy learning has the potential to change all remedial classrooms; however, in order to determine if this design was a significant learning experience as defined by Fink (2003), I had to also investigate its lasting impact on the participants’ literacy practices and Positive Youth Development (PYD) since these are the metadiscursive concepts that continue to evolve over time and across contexts.

Limitations

The 2012 CAL study had several limitations. To begin, the 2012 CAL was conducted in one remedial classroom and did not provide a comparison to other remedial classrooms either within the same school or district. Furthermore, the 2012 CAL study was conducted by one teacher/researcher, which does not allow for multiple perspectives.

The methodology for the 2012 CAL study was dependent on relationships, as communication was central to gaining an understanding of the phenomena. The quality of the communication that transpired within the 2012 CAL design depended on the trustworthiness of the teacher/researcher. Furthermore, an important factor in the methodology concerns the use of the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading as a measurement tool for literacy proficiency. McKenna and Stahl, 2004 argue that the use of a diagnostic assessment that compares students by grade equivalent, “an estimate of a grade level corresponding to a given student’s raw score” (p. 25), can be considered problematic.

The 2012 CAL design utilized Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model to ensure the activities and assessments within the design addressed all six taxa in Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning. Because the 2012 CAL study was a nine-week study, lasting effects cannot yet be determined. The real test of Fink’s (2003) idea of significant learning is
whether the learning lasts after the Fusion course and becomes an important aspect of students’ lives.
Chapter Four: Study Methodology

Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the methodology I employed to investigate the research question and sub questions. This chapter is organized according to the format for qualitative dissertations. This chapter is divided into six parts. Part One reacquaints the reader with the purpose and the research questions. Part Two describes the research methodology. Part Three discusses the participants, the selection of these participants, and the research setting. Part Four provides the data collection and analysis procedures utilized. Part Five discusses trustworthiness and verisimilitude. Lastly, Part Six discusses my role as the researcher and ethical considerations.

Part I – Purpose and Research Questions

Purpose

The purpose of this study was not to disprove the effects of the current, common remedial literacy instructional practices, but to investigate an alternative comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) design in a remedial classroom. It was intended to describe the potential long-term impact of a CAL design framed to prepare adolescent RLLs for the increased task demands they will encounter beyond the remedial classroom. It was my aim to determine if the 2012 CAL design with this particular demographic of student produced significant learning as defined by Fink (2003). In other words, did the CAL design promote sustained or continued development of literacy practices and positive youth development (PYD) over time? Findings are documented
through the participants’ voices, demonstrating their development and metadiscursivity with literacy in an effort to align and extend current research in adolescent literacy, literacy learning, positive youth development, and significant learning. My intention was to fill the gap that exists in documenting the long-term impact of comprehensive approaches to literacy framed through Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM), if any, for adolescent RLLs through the voices of the RLL participants themselves. To achieve these goals, I situated myself methodologically within a qualitative inquiry approach. Within the qualitative methodology, I employed an intrinsic case study.

**Research Questions**

Data analysis of protocols from the initial 2012 CAL action research study indicated 100% of the 2012 CAL participants demonstrated short-term growth in literacy practices and positive youth development; see Chapter 3 for findings. The purpose of this intrinsic case study was to determine in what ways four purposefully, randomly selected students who participated in the original 2012 CAL project demonstrated lasting impact (as defined by Fink, 2003) in literacy practices and positive youth development. This information will add to the literature on comprehensive approaches to literacy in the remedial classroom, literacy practices, and PYD approaches to learning in the classroom. It will also add to the literature on significant learning and the use of Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning at the secondary level.

The central question driving this inquiry was whether or not the 2012 CAL design was a “significant” learning experience (as defined by Fink). The following subset of questions was explored in order to answer the main question:
In what ways do four adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) who participated in a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design 12 months prior,

1. Employ/sustain literacy practices learned in the program?
2. Describe themselves in terms of the key characteristics of positive youth development (PYD) according to Lerner’s Five C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection Character, and Caring?
3. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy in relation to their literacy development?
4. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy in relation to their personal development?

Part II – Research Methodology

Research Perspective

This research study is guided by a social constructivist paradigm. Social constructivism is built upon the belief that one’s mind develops meaning from the contexts in which they live and that this meaning-making is a process of social negotiation (Creswell, 2003; Jonassen, et al., 2003). Ontologically, social constructivists believe in “a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing... [and in which] social realities are constructed by the participants in... social settings” (Glesne, 1999, p. 5). Epistemologically, social constructivists require that a researcher interact and communicate with participants regarding their perspectives (Creswell, 2003). The most appropriate method of inquiry for this paradigm is a qualitative measure.
Defense of a Qualitative Research Methodology

Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, and Barr (2002) contend the goal of any study that examines the impact of an innovative curriculum design is intended to determine if the design accounted for learning, and suggest that including comprehensive descriptions of the outcomes of the design help researchers understand why certain results occurred. By employing a qualitative research methodology, I was able to describe and interpret at close range a variety of adolescent RLLs’ literacy practices and thriving embedded within their everyday lives. From these descriptions and interpretations, I was able to determine not only if the design produced a significant learning experience as defined by Fink, but also the elements of the 2012 CAL design that accounted for any lasting impact.

Qualitative research investigates a problem or issue that exists in the real world with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2007). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe the essence of qualitative research as follows: “You [The researcher] are not putting together a puzzle whose picture you already know, you are constructing a picture that takes shape as you collect and examine the parts” (p. 7). A primary purpose of qualitative research “is to describe and clarify experience as it is lived and constituted in awareness” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 138). As such, qualitative inquiries afford researchers opportunities to examine “lived experience.” The lived experience in this study was the participation in the 2012 CAL design.

Because qualitative research seeks to understand the world from the perspectives of those living in it, the voices of participants should be prominent (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Yin, 2008). The literature clearly revealed a gap in documentating adolescent RLLs’ voices. It was my intention to fill this gap through this study. Recognizing that social settings are unique, dynamic,
and complex, Hatch (2002) describes the essence of qualitative research as “methods [that] provide means whereby social contexts can be systematically examined as a whole, without breaking them down into isolated, incomplete, and disconnected variables” (p. 9). Because the purpose of this study was to fill the gaps in the literature regarding lasting impact, if any, of an innovative CAL design through the voices of those who experienced it, a qualitative study was an appropriate design.

Rationale for a Case Study

A case study is the study of a bounded system (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2008). Case studies are used to understand the meanings that people make in particular contexts (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Yin, 2008); therefore, this study not only created a detailed account of the participants’ literacy practices and PYD, but it also explored the meaning literacy practices and PYD had for each of the participants and the context in which the literacy practices were being used and the positive growth that occurred. It is through these meanings that I was able to determine if the 2012 CAL design provided a significant learning experience for the participants, as defined by Fink (2003).

This study followed Merriam’s (1998) characterization of case studies as being particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic. This study was particularistic as four participants who participated in a shared phenomenon were purposefully, randomly selected. This case study was descriptive as the study’s findings are presented in a detailed manner, providing rich, thick descriptions of participants’ literacy practices and positive youth development. Lastly, the study is heuristic as it provided an interpretation of the literacy practices and positive growth experienced by the participants through the participants’ voices. This was important in understanding the role of literacy and positive growth in the lives of the participants.
Intrinsic Case Study Method

When a researcher has a vested interest in a case and seeks to better understand the case, Stake (1995) suggests that a researcher employ an intrinsic case study methodology. Intrinsic case studies are characterized as having three distinct attributes: 1) the researcher has interest in case, 2) the data capture the participants’ experiences through their voices, and 3) the case is unique in that it has limited transferability.

As the teacher/researcher of the 2012 CAL action research study, this follow-up study held interest for me. This study’s primary research question required descriptive responses from the 2012 CAL participants in order to determine if significant learning occurred, as defined by Fink (2003). In other words, there was a necessity of capturing the current literacy practices and PYD in the words of the participants themselves. Lastly, the 2012 CAL was a one time, isolated event making it limited in transferability.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) purport that the intrinsic case study methodology “support the researcher’s intent when the goal of the study primarily focuses on understanding a specific individual or situation” (p. 438). The decision to utilize this approach for this study was three-fold. First, it served to provide a rich understanding of the phenomenon, Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning as designed through Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model in a secondary remedial course, while maintaining the integrity of the adolescent remedial literacy learners who participated in the 2012 CAL study. Second, the use of an intrinsic case study allowed for a deeper understanding of the specific components within a phenomenon to be analyzed and described. Finally, through an intrinsic case study, the researcher provided an opportunity to gain insight into the relationship between literacy practices and positive youth development and the 2012 CAL design.
Part III – Participants, Participant Selection, Setting

Participant Selection Process

There were several steps that, as the researcher, I had to perform prior to determining the possible number of participants for this study. The first step was to review the literature on possible methods of sampling, as “sample selection has a profound effect on the ultimate quality of the research” in qualitative research (Coyne, 1997, p. 623), making this step in the research design an integral part of the methodology. Sampling is the process of selecting “a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole” (Marshall, 1996, p. 523). There are many forms of sampling that qualitative inquiry may employ: convenience sampling, judgment sampling, purposive sampling, and theoretical sampling, to name a few (Polkinghorne, 2005; Marshall, 1996; Patton, 1990). In this study, the researcher employed two forms of sampling: purposeful and random.

In any longitudinal research design the principal investigator must account for attrition. Therefore, the next step in the sampling process was to verify which potential participants were still members of the high school in which the 2012 CAL study was conducted. Once determined, the researcher requested and received a printed list of the current eleventh grade English teachers from a staff member in the main office of the study context. Because the researcher was seeking to describe the current literacy practices of the 2012 CAL participants in an effort to determine if they had continued to be developed, were sustained, or diminished since the 2012 CAL, and because the researcher was no longer the participants’ teacher, the researcher solicited participation of all possible participants’ current English language arts (ELA) teachers. The ELA teacher was specifically chosen because it is the English class that maintains a greater focus on literacy and literacy practices. Therefore, the sample size for this study was influenced not only
by the number of possible participants who were still enrolled at the study site, but also by the number of eleventh grade ELA teachers who assented to participate. The context of this study is within a school that offered multiple grade-leveled ELA teachers. There were three ELA teachers who were teachers of potential student participants. However, only two of the three teachers agreed to contribute to this study, resulting in the researcher’s need to conduct a purposeful selection of participants.

Combining all of these components, the next step in the participant selection process was to review the two assenting teachers’ class lists and identify possible participants. Because the principal investigator was also the action researcher of the 2012 CAL study, only students who were enrolled in the course and who were members of an assenting ELA teacher’s class were considered eligible to participate. Both assenting teachers had at least five students who were eligible to become participants in the study. Of these five potential participants, only four consented to participate from one class, reducing the possible sample size to eight.

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) discuss sample sizes in qualitative research in terms of needing to be manageable; otherwise, it is difficult to extract thick, rich data. In deciding on the number of participants, it was important for the researcher to not only follow the inquiry methodology in order to choose the number of participants but decide on the number of participants in which data saturation might occur (Flick, 2009). Because of the nature and characteristics of this study (documenting metadiscursivity of literacy practices and PYD in order to determine significant learning as defined by Fink), and heeding Onwuegbuzie and Leech’s (2007) recommendation of manageability of size, I randomly selected three students from each assenting ELA teacher’s class as potential participants. While this sampling method is rare to qualitative studies, it found a home in this study. Marshall (1996) contends for “a true
random sample to be selected, the characteristics under study of the whole population should be known” (p. 523). Because the findings of the 2012 CAL revealed short-term literacy practice and PYD growth in 100% of the participants, the researcher was aware of the characteristics of the whole population in relation to what was being explored. Each participant of the 2012 CAL within both assenting teachers’ classes was eligible to be a possible participant for this proposed follow-up study, making purposeful random sampling the selection methodology. The researcher purposefully and randomly selected three participants from each assenting teacher’s class.

All six of the purposeful, randomly selected participants were very capable of articulating his or her experience; however, only two from one assenting teacher’s class completed the journal responses. In an effort to provide the most in-depth, thick rich description of the experience and the lasting impact, if any, of the 2012 CAL design, the researcher chose two participants per assented ELA teacher as representation of the lived experience for this study.

Participants

The researcher chose four eleventh grade students who were once members of the 2012 CAL design as representation of the lived experience. What follows is a brief overview of each participant. The names of each participant in this study are pseudonyms. Participants each chose their pseudonym.

Ray

Ray is a 17-year-old, African-American male student in the eleventh grade. Ray is a talented football player with potential for college scholarships, but his deficiency in literacy as measured through the state-mandated assessment was creating an obstacle for any potential offers. Additionally, Ray’s lack if literacy proficiency placed him at risk academically,
something that could possibly affect his graduation status. At the beginning of the 2012 CAL, Ray self-reported a lack of confidence and competence in his academic ability. He used phrases like “I’m not smart” and “I’m not good at school” to describe himself as a student and a learner. Furthermore, the diagnostic assessments of literacy revealed that Ray was academically on a sixth grade level. In addition to a deficiency in literacy, Ray’s practice of literacy outside of school was almost nonexistent. Other than reading the playbook for football, Ray did very little personal reading or writing and admitted he did little reading and writing in school as well. When asked to describe himself as a person though, Ray was able to recognize his strengths and assets as he described himself as “funny,” “handsome,” and “talented at football.”

By the end of participation in the 2012 CAL, Ray experienced a dramatic change. When asked to describe himself as a student and learner, Ray now used phrases like “I am a hard worker,” “I’m smart,” and “I have a lot to say.” Ray also noted that through his participation in the 2012 CAL, he discovered he had the ability to set and reach goals. One of those goals was to continue his civics project beyond the course. Ray’s post diagnostic assessments of literacy revealed a growth of two levels, now placing Ray at a tenth-grade literacy level.

**Tyler**

Tyler is a 17-year-old Caucasian male also in the eleventh grade. Tyler has been a member of JROTC for three years and has aspirations of joining the military after graduation. Tyler’s deficiency in literacy as measured through the state-mandated assessment is creating an obstacle in reaching this goal; one must have a high school diploma to enlist. At the beginning of the 2012 CAL, Tyler self-reported a lack of confidence and competence in his academic ability. He used phrases like “I am not a good reader” and “I’m confident at certain things but not in school and learning” to describe himself as a student and a learner. The pre-diagnostic
assessments of literacy revealed that Tyler was academically on a seventh grade level. This low level may account for why Tyler does very little reading or writing both inside and outside of school. While Tyler self-reported a low self-efficacy as a student and learner, he stated he was “morally guided.”

Upon completion of his participation in the 2012 CAL, Tyler also experienced a dramatic change in literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and positive youth development. Tyler’s post diagnostic assessments of literacy revealed a growth of three levels, placing him in a tenth-grade echelon. Additionally, Tyler’s literacy practices continued both in and out of school, as he self-reported he reads and writes more than he has ever done in school, and “I actually started keeping a journal at home.” Tyler also made a vow to continue to become involved in his community and discovered he has the ability to help his classmates and even signed on to become a group leader in JROTC for the following school year.

**Austin**

Austin is a 17-year-old Caucasian male also in the eleventh grade. Austin, like Ray, is a football player but has no aspirations to play beyond high school. When Austin began the 2012 CAL, he was diagnostically assessed at an eighth grade literacy level. Austin’s description of himself as a student and a learner was indicative of the characteristics of the remedial learner. Austin described himself as “not smart” and believed he had a “disability in learning.” Additionally, Austin was not connected to school, stating “some of my teachers do not like me.” Austin did no reading or writing outside of school and admitted he did little in school. Austin reported he did have a social life: “I have a lot of friends” and has a strong connection with his mother, “I can go to her with anything.”

By the end of his participation in the 2012 CAL, Austin experienced a change. When
asked to describe himself as a student and a learner, he now used phrases like “I’m smart” and “I now try my hardest in school.” As a person, Austin described himself as “funny,” “nice,” “good looking,” and as someone who will “try and make at least one person smile a day.” Austin’s post diagnostics assessments of literacy revealed a two level gain, placing him in the tenth-grade domain.

**Amber**

Amber is a 17-year-old mixed race (African American and Caucasian) eleventh grade girl. Amber plays softball and is a member of the varsity softball team; however, Amber has no goals of playing softball beyond high school. Amber’s diagnostic assessments of literacy placed her at an eighth grade level when she began the 2012 CAL. Like the others, Amber’s academic self-efficacy was low. When asked to describe herself as a student and a learner, Amber used phrases like “I’m not smart” and “I’m not interested in school.” Unlike the others, when asked to describe herself, Amber found nothing positive to say. She used phrases like “I am difficult to get along with,” “I judge people,” “I’m hard headed,” “I don’t like to work with others,” “my only friends are some people on the team,” and “I have a bad attitude.” Additionally, Amber claimed she had no connections to any adults in her life. She stated, “I do not know my father, so I have no connection with him,” and “my mom and I don’t really get along at all.”

Of all the participants, Amber made the most growth as a student, learner, and a person through her participation in the 2012 CAL. Amber’s post diagnostic assessments of literacy now indicated Amber was on an eleventh grade level. Her academic self-efficacy shifted to a positive trajectory as she now used phrases like “I am smart,” “I am a good reader and writer,” “I can graduate high school and maybe even get a scholarship.” In addition to growth as a student and a learner, Amber’s journal responses demonstrated a personal growth in character, connection,
competence, and caring. Amber stated she now had formed a relationship with her mother and “we are getting along better now. I can actually go to her with my problems. My mother and I are more open with each other now.” Amber also stated she expanded her social circle to include new people. She realized “I can make new friends outside of sports” and being able to do this has allowed her to “work with others in class now.” This new found social competence even led to Amber vowing to “try harder to get along with others, even people I do not know.”

Research Setting

The setting for this study was a secondary school located in Southwest Florida. This particular high school educates a student body of approximately 2600 students. There are approximately 300 students in grades nine through twelve, who are currently enrolled in a Fusion class. In addition to the school’s academics, this particular high school is unique in the fact that it has its very own school foundation. This foundation provides monies for classroom equipment, teacher travel, school-wide ventures, and even single classroom projects. With the foundation’s help, the school is able to provide its students with the latest technology and educational experiences most high schools cannot. Students experience higher quality resources and more technological encounters since computers with Internet access are located in almost all classrooms. Students are afforded other educational experiences as well. The foundation provides monies for educational travel experiences, allowing students to experience real-life areas of interest.

Because of state mandates, students who demonstrate below proficiency in literacy as measured through the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) do not have equivalent opportunities to participate in the programs this setting offers. These students are required to take a remedial literacy course in lieu of an elective. Furthermore, according to school policy, the
remedial, at-risk label placed on these students does not allow them the opportunity to register for any honors or advanced classes.

**Part IV – Data Collection and Analysis**

**Overview**

Data refer to the “rough materials researchers collect from the world they are studying; data are the particulars that form the basis of analysis” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 117). Four qualitative methods were utilized to gather data for this study. Data were collected via open-ended journal prompts (PYD), through a self-reported reading/writing survey (literacy practices), interviews with participants (PYD, literacy practices, and elements of the CAL) and current English language arts teacher (literacy practices), and researcher observations (literacy practices and PYD).

The first wave of data were collected in the 2012 CAL study through participant journals, surveys, action researcher observations, and the following statistical measurement tools: Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR) and Positive Youth Development Inventory (PYDI) – quantitative and qualitative measurements. These measurements were discussed in depth in Chapter Three. Since this study was intended to document metadiscursivity—the participants’ awareness of their literacy practices and PYD—in an effort to determine if the 2012 CAL design was a significant learning experience for them as defined by Fink (2003), it is only through the participants’ voices, their current English language arts (ELA) teacher’s interpretations of their literacy practices, and researcher observations this will be realized. Therefore, only qualitative methods for this follow-up study were implemented. By doing so, the researcher is filling gaps in the literature regarding the absent voices of adolescent RLLs, the documentation of potential lasting impact of comprehensive approaches to literacy, the use of a PYD approach in the
remedial classroom, and the effectiveness of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning at the secondary level.

The essence of data analysis is to “transform data into terms that are pertinent to potential readers” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 4). In this study, data analysis was intended to unravel the nature of adolescent RLLs’ current literacy practices both in and out of school as well as their PYD in order to determine if the 2012 CAL design promoted significant learning as defined by Fink (2003). Therefore, data were analyzed through both a typological and inductive process within and then across cases.

There were four sources of data in this study: participant journals, researcher observations, participant reading/writing surveys, and interviews (participants and current English language arts teachers). Triangulation of this data captured a more complete, holistic, and contextual depiction of the experience (Golafshani, 2003) and revealed the dimensions of the 2012 CAL design that promoted significant learning as defined by Fink.

Ethical guidelines were followed to protect the human subjects of the research involved in this study as set forth by the University of South Florida’s Institutional Review Board. Informed consent and assent was obtained for each participant. Assent was also obtained for the teacher interview participants. Informed consent and assent provide potential participants sufficient written information to decide whether or not they were willing to participate (Seidman, 2006).

**Data Collection**

Polkinghorne (2005) posits the purpose of collecting data in qualitative research is to “provide evidence for the experience it is investigating. The evidence is in the form of accounts people have given of the experience” (p. 138). The purpose of this qualitative study was to reveal
the essence of a shared experience by asking, “What is the nature of this phenomenon?” (Hatch, 2002, p. 30). In order to answer this question, data collected were in the form of descriptions or accounts that helped increase an understanding of the experience as lived (Polkinghorne, 2005).

In an effort to fill the gap which exists in documenting long-term comprehensive approaches to literacy designs with remedial learners, the data were collected a year after the 2012 CAL experience. Torgesen, Wagner, and Rashotte (1997) argue assessing reading interventions immediately after they occur does afford researchers the opportunity to examine the intervention’s effectiveness as a foundation; however, a true examination of the effectiveness of reading interventions can only be determined by long-term follow-up. But what is considered long-term? Fink states “a year is a good place to start” in examining the lasting impact of his taxonomy (personal communication with Fink, June, 2013), a beginning time frame supported by reading intervention theorists and researchers. Jennifer Wick Schnakenberg, a leading researcher in adolescent literacy interventions and the Senior Director at the University of Texas at Austin’s Literacy Initiative Project maintains it is impossible to say when the effects of a literacy intervention are at the greatest point and how long they will last (i.e., when they should be measured), but a one year marker for initial measurement allows time for multiple factors of the intervention to ‘even out”’ (personal communication with Schnakenberg, November, 2013).

Though a one year marker as a starting point has been utilized in a number of studies which examine potential long-term effectiveness of literacy intervention designs with elementary students (Blachman, Schatschneider, Fletcher, Francis, Clonan, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz,, 2004; Byrne & Fielding-Barnsley, 1993; Tangel & Blachman, 1995; ) and with adults (Bingman, Ebert, & Smith, 1999; Cronan, Brooks., Kilpatrick, Bigatti, & Tally, 1999), the literature on longitudinal studies of middle and high school literacy intervention programs is scarce. In my search of the
literature, there was only study located. Hollis Scarborough (2006) conducted a study which examined the effects of three remedial instructional programs on the reading abilities, reading-related cognitive skills, and cortical activation patterns of struggling adolescent students. The goal of this study was to determine which intervention approaches were most effective for learners. Protocols included pre-tests, post-tests, and a one year follow up.

Influenced by the number of studies which have employed a one year marker as a starting point—whether with elementary, secondary, or adult—and heeding the advice of theorists and researchers such as Fink and Schnakenberg, a one year marker as a starting point for my investigation of the potential lasting impact of the 2012 CAL was employed.

According to Polkinghorne (2005, p. 141) there are three major sources of qualitative data:

1. Interviews, which produce first-person accounts of the experience;
2. Observations, which record or memo a researcher’s encounters in the presence of those undergoing an experience; and
3. Documents, which are written sources about an experience.

In keeping with this concentration and methods of collection Polkinghorne (2005) proposes, data for this study were gathered through four means: 1) journal responses, 2) reading/writing survey, 3) researcher observation, and 4) interviews of participants and their current English language arts teachers. The following is a description of each data collection instrument and its purpose.

Data Collection Instruments

Journal Responses

In his book Doing Qualitative Research in Educational Settings, Amos Hatch (2002) discusses the use of journals as a data source in educational research and claims that a “strength
of journals as data is that they can provide a direct path into the insights of participants” (p. 141) because they are not processed through a researcher; they come directly from the participant.

Hatch also states that journaling offers a flexibility that other data sources may not. He describes this flexibility as follows:

Participants can make entries at their leisure. Special interviews do not need to be scheduled and organized, observations do not need to be made, and unobtrusive data do not need to be found and gathered. Entries can be written whenever the participant gets the chance and feels comfortable doing so (p. 141).

The purpose of utilizing journal writings as data in this study was to solicit students’ perspectives of their current PYD growth. It mimics the initial data collection source from their participation in the 2012 CAL study. Further, the use of journals allowed for extended time for reflection. Participants were given a week to complete the journal prompts.

In order to determine if PYD was sustained, continued to be developed, or diminished (according to Lerner’s 5 C’s) since participating in the 2012 CAL study, it was necessary to structure personal journal questions for each participant in a fashion similar to that which was initially used. Because the 2012 CAL study was an action research study, prompts were given to students that reflected Lerner’s 5 C’s. Therefore, tailored prompts for each participant allowed them to extend their original self-reflective journal responses. See Appendix K for the list of open-ended prompts that were assigned.

**Reading/Writing Survey**

The instrument utilized to document each participant’s literacy practices and literacy self-efficacy in the 2012 CAL study was a pre- and post- fall Reading/Writing Survey by Janet Allen (2000); see Appendix C. Allen is a recognized leader in the field of adolescent literacy. Her survey has open-ended questions that when answered, allows the researcher to paint a picture of the participant’s literacy practices prior to and immediately following the implementation of the
2012 CAL design. Since one goal of this study was to document literacy practices and PYD one year after participation in the 2012 CAL, having the participants complete a third Reading/Writing Survey enabled the researcher to describe any growth through their voices and perspectives.

**Interviews**

Meaning is “not just the facts but rather the understandings one has that are specific to the individual (what was said) yet transcendent of the specific (what is the relation between what was said, how it was said, what the listener was attempting to ask or hear, what the speaker was attempting to convey or say)” (Dilley, 2004, p. 128). As such, using interviews in qualitative research becomes a “way of finding out what others feel and think about their worlds. Through qualitative interviews you can understand experiences and reconstruct events in which you did not participate” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 1). Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) describe in-depth interviews as a “meaning making partnership between interviewers and their respondents” (p. 128). Interviews, in this study, were conducted with participants and their respective teachers.

**Student Interviews.** The interviews conducted with students were done so through a semi-structured, conversational style interview method. This method requires the researcher to demonstrate “active asking and listening” (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006, p. 119). In-depth, semi-structured conversational interviews provide opportunity for participants to reveal information beyond what set questions can (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Through this participant interview methodology, insight into the literacy practices of the participants, the factors influencing the participants’ use of literacy, and the outcomes resulting from these practices were gained. Interview length ranged between 20 and 30 minutes each. All interviews conducted were audio
recorded and transcribed. In order to facilitate consistency in all participant interviews, the researcher limited the semi-structured questions to those found in Appendix L.

**Teacher Interviews.** To produce thick, rich descriptions of the participants’ current literacy practices, the researcher also interviewed each of the participant’s English language arts (ELA) teacher via e-mail. The researcher specifically chose the ELA teacher because it is the English class that maintains a greater focus on literacy and literacy practices. The purpose in interviewing these teachers was to learn more about the participants’ literacy activities and schooling experiences. Teacher interviews were conducted via e-mail for two purposes: to give them time and to reduce bias. E-mail interviews gave teachers a chance to reflect on each participant’s literacy practices within their classroom. Providing them with open-ended questions and allowing them a week to respond afforded them an opportunity to gather more anecdotal evidence on the participant’s literacy practices that may otherwise not have surfaced in a face-to-face interview. Second, the researcher is also a colleague of the teachers being interviewed. Therefore, in an effort to alleviate researcher bias, as the researcher’s presence may have affected their responses, conducting interviews via this medium was appropriate.

Teachers were sent a list of eight questions. See Appendix M for the list of teacher interview questions. Rubin and Rubin’s (2005) Tree-and-Branch Model (see Figure 8) was used, allowing for multiple main questions on one topic in order to gain each teacher’s perspective on his or her student’s literacy practices and schooling experiences. The one topic was literacy practices. The base of the tree is the topic and the main queries are the branches. The questions were formulated so that the individual branches of the topic could be investigated in approximately the same depth. As part of this method, it is required of the researcher to provide
the interviewee with a definition of the main topic in order to elicit responses that are related to
the topic under study.

![Image of Rubin & Rubin’s (2005) Tree-and-Branch Model]

**Figure 8.** My Visual of Rubin & Rubin’s (2005) Tree-and-Branch Model

**Researcher Observation**

**Field Notes**

Qualitative theorists such as Creswell (2003) and Yin (2008) advocate qualitative researchers’ immersion in participants’ contexts in order for them to feel confident that they are capturing what they claim, thereby making fieldwork an important aspect of this methodology. Classroom observations were fundamental to the examination of the research questions of this study. Through observations of participants in their ELA classroom, the researcher documented participants’ engagement in literacy events, conversations participants had with others, participants’ behavior, and the setting. The researcher paid particular attention to the participants’ literacy practices during classroom instruction, including both school related and
personal uses of literacy. Scribed notes on how the participants used free time in school or class to engage in literacy practices, including, but not limited to, writing notes, writing poetry, reading a book, and so on were recorded. Through observation, the researcher was able to identify specific literacy practices, the factors triggering the participants to engage in these practices, and when and why a literacy practice was employed using Purcell-Gates, Briseño and Perry’s Model of Literacy Practices (2011) discussed below. Each participant was observed two times for a period of 50 minutes each. Following the school’s class schedule, two 50 minutes equate to two class periods.

**Memoing**

Birks, Chapman and Francis (2008) contend that the nature of qualitative research requires the researcher to take a reflexive stance in relation to the context, participants, and data being studied. Therefore, the researcher memoed throughout this study. Memoing provided a mechanism to articulate assumptions and subjective perspectives about literacy, positive youth development, and the adolescent RLL the researcher may have had. Through the use of memoing, the researcher was able to engage with the research to a greater degree. A relationship between the researcher and the data formed, allowing for a “heightened sensitivity to the meanings contained within the data” (Birk, Chapman & Francis, 2008, p. 68).

**Data Collection Process**

Data collection occurred in several phases. Because the interviews were intended to extend journal responses, survey responses, teacher perspectives, and classroom observations, these forms of data were collected and analyzed prior to participant interviews being conducted. Table 14 is a visual delineation of the data collection process. Table 15 provides a visual representation of the data collection for each component of the research questions.
Table 14 Data Collection Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Collection Phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reading/Writing Fall Survey (Allan, 2000)</td>
<td>Was completed by participant first. This survey does not require extended reflection; therefore, the amount of time to complete is minimal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Journal Prompts (Notebooks)</td>
<td>Immediately upon completion of Reading/Writing Survey (Allan, 2000), researcher distributed journal notebook to participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teacher Interview</td>
<td>Teacher interviews were sent upon completion of the participant’s Reading/Writing Survey (Allan, 2000) and journal distribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Classroom Observations</td>
<td>Observations occurred after teacher interviews were sent out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Collection of Journal Notebooks</td>
<td>Journal notebooks were collected one week after distribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Analysis of Data Collected</td>
<td>The data collected so far was analyzed prior to participant interviews, as this information informed the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Participant Interview</td>
<td>Participants were interviewed using semi-structured interview method.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Member Checking</td>
<td>Prior to reporting my findings, I conducted member checks to ensure what I found is truly representative of what the participants meant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15. Visual Representation of How Data Informs Research Question

In what ways do four adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) who participated in a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design 12 months prior,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data to Be Collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Employ/sustain literacy practices learned in the program?</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading/Writing Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describe themselves in terms of the key characteristics of positive youth development (PYD) according to Lerner’s Five C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection Character, and Caring?</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in relation to their literacy development?</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in relation to their personal development?</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Perceive components of the program as significant to their learning, and why?</td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

The essence of data analysis is to “transform data into terms that are pertinent to potential readers” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 4). In this study, data analysis was intended to unravel the nature of adolescent RLLs’ literacy practices, both in and out of school, as well as PYD so that the researcher could create a thick description of the participants’ experience with a CAL design to determine if the design promoted significant learning as defined by Fink (2003). In order to determine this, each taxon was first analyzed within each case and then across cases analysis ensued.

Because of the nature and characteristics of the taxa, data for each taxon was gathered and analyzed through different means. Fundamental Knowledge (FK) required the participant to recall any concepts or topics learned in the 2012 CAL design. Data for this taxon were gathered through participant interview questions and were analyzed through Hatch’s (2002) Inductive Coding Analysis method. Application and Integration (AI) domain called for an investigation into the current literacy practices of the participants. Data were gathered from the Reading/Writing survey, the teacher interviews, and researcher observations, with further exploration during the participant interviews. These data were analyzed both typologically using Purcell-Gates, Briseño & Perry’s Model of Literacy Practices (2011) and inductively using Hatch’s (2002) procedures for each collection instrument. The Human Dimension (HD) and Caring (C) taxa focused on the participants’ positive youth development. Data gathered for these taxa were done so through participant journal responses and student interviews. These data were also analyzed typologically according to Lerner’s 5 C’s, and inductively according to Hatch’s
(2002) protocols. Lastly, the Learning How to Learn (LL) taxon data were gathered through participant interviews and was analyzed through Hatch’s (2002) Inductive Coding Analysis procedure. Below is an overview of each method of data analysis performed in this study.

**Typological Analysis**

Typological analysis of qualitative data is the analysis of data that have predetermined or typological categories already established. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) describe typological analysis as “dividing everything observed into groups or categories on the basis of some canon for disaggregating the whole phenomenon under study” (p. 257). That means that data analysis starts by dividing the overall data set into categories or groups based on predetermined typologies. As aforementioned, there is one typology being considered for this study: significant learning as defined by Fink (2003). However, prior to determining this, the researcher must analyze the data according to the goals set forth in the 2012 CAL study. Since the 2012 CAL design goals – continued literacy practices and PYD - were analyzed typologically, the researcher must repeat this process for this follow-up study. Therefore, a typological analysis of literacy practices as defined by Purcell-Gates, Briseño, and Perry (2011) and PYD as defined by Lerner (2005) occurred first. See Table 24 for Literacy Practice Typology, Table 16 for Lerner’s Positive Youth Development Typology and Figure Nine for Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning Topology.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ART (Doing one’s art)</td>
<td>Social activity for individuals that centers around creative/artistic activities and is engaged in for purposes of developing, improving, exploring, performing within one’s creative/artistic area(s) of focus/interest/talent. (i.e., reading a book for pleasure outside of school, writing songs, managing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIV (Responding to civic rules and regulations)</td>
<td>Social activity that centers around responding to bureaucratic requirements of government (on all levels). ‘Bureaucratic requirements’ reflect: official procedures, red-tape, routines, rules that bind, hierarchical administrative systems. (i.e. reading a parking ticket to decide whether to contest it.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM (Participating in community life)</td>
<td>Social activity that centers around life in community, defined by the participants. This would include organizing, building, maintaining, or defining a community of people, visiting other members of one’s community, relating to other members of one’s community, defining oneself as part of one’s community. “Community” can be at different levels from local to global (i.e. socializing with friends, participating in a community activity like church)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCH (Participating in formal schooling)</td>
<td>Social activity that centers around participation in formal schooling as a student (i.e. Filing in a worksheet, doing HW).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 17.** Lerner’s (2005) Positive Youth Development (PYD) Typology (Lerner, et al., p. 23)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Positive view of one’s social, emotional, academic and cognitive actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>A sense of positive self-worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Positive bond with ecological system (classroom/community) that reflects a bidirectional exchange between the individual and ecological context in which both parties contribute to the relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>A sense of sympathy and empathy for others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hatch (2002) identified nine steps in typological analysis of qualitative data that include both deductive and inductive analysis, with an emphasis on the inductive. They are as follows:

1. Identify typologies to be analyzed.
2. Read the data, marking entries related to your typologies.
3. Read entries by typology, recording the main ideas in entries on a summary sheet.
4. Look for patterns, relationships, themes within typologies.
5. Read data, coding entries according to patterns identified and keeping a record of what entries go with which elements of your patterns.
6. Decide if your patterns are supported by the data, and search the data for non-examples of your patterns.

7. Look for relationships among the patterns identified.

8. Write your patterns as one-sentence generalizations.

9. Select data excerpts that support your generalizations. (Hatch, 2002, p. 153)

Hatch’s (2002) procedural process in typological analysis of the data with each typology was conducted. The researcher began with literacy practices, continued to PYD, and ended with significant learning. The analysis remained focused by continually revisiting the guiding research questions. Codes identifying specific typologies were assigned to the categories/domains, and the strength of these categories/domains were confirmed or negated. Further, multiple case studies required two stages of analysis (Merriam, 1998), within case and across cases. Each individual case was analyzed typologically (within) and inductively followed by a typological and inductive analysis across all cases (cross-case).

While Hatch (2002) advocates efficiency as a strength of typological analysis, this method also has limitations. With predetermined categories, Hatch suggests that some may view this method as one that ignores possible emerging themes that extend beyond the typology which can only be realized through a purely inductive process (2002). He states, “Starting with predetermined typologies takes much less time than ‘discovering’ categories inductively” (p. 161). Some qualitative researchers may see this as a weakness because it is believed that “applying predetermined categories will blind the researcher to other important dimensions in the data” (Hatch, 2002, p. 161). In defense of this notion, Hatch maintains that typological analysis starts with a deductive step does not preclude the researcher’s being aware that other important categories are likely to be in the data or prevent the researcher from searching for them. Some unexpected patterns, relationships, or themes
will jump out of the data as they are read and reread by the researcher. Others will be discovered as searches for disconfirming evidence are completed” (p. 161).

Since typological analysis incorporates both deductive and inductive analysis, the researcher also analyzed the data employing Hatch’s (2002) inductive analysis methodology in order to address this limitation within the study.

**Inductive Analysis**

Hatch (2000) describes inductive data analysis as a search for patterns of meaning within the data. It begins with an examination of particulars within the data and moves to “looking for patterns as having the same status of general explanatory statements” (Potter, 1996, p. 151 as cited in Hatch, 2002, p. 161). Hatch (2002) proposes nine steps in the process of inductive analysis. The researcher followed all nine steps within each case and across all cases for this study. These nine steps are as follows:

1. Read the data and identify frames of analysis.
2. Create domains based on semantic relationships discovered within frames of analysis.
3. Identify salient domains, assign them a code, and put others aside.
4. Reread data, refining salient domains and keeping a record of where relationships are found in the data.
5. Decide if your domains are supported by the data and search data for examples that do not fit with or run counter to the relationships in your domains.
6. Complete an analysis within domains.
7. Search for themes across domains.
8. Create a master outline expressing relationships within and among domains.
9. Select data excerpts to support the elements of your outline.

**Part V - Trustworthiness and Verisimilitude**

To ensure trustworthiness and verisimilitude of any qualitative study it is recommended that certain methods be employed: triangulation, thick rich description, member checking, prolonged engagement in the field, and inter-rater reliability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Miller Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 1986; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2000; Hatch, 2002).

**Triangulation**

Triangulation in qualitative research suggests that data from multiple sources can help realize truth (Merriam, 1998). Means of data collection were triangulated through the use of a variety of data collection methods, including interviews with the participants, interviews with their respective English language arts teacher, personal writings by the participant, the completion of a reading/writing survey by the participants, and researcher observations.

The purpose of this intrinsic case study was to determine in what ways four randomly selected students who participated in the 2012 CAL design study demonstrated long-term or lasting impact in both literacy practices and positive youth development, thus making the CAL design a significant learning experience, according to Fink’s definition. Simply stated, the central question driving this study was whether or not the CAL design was a “significant” learning experience—as defined by Fink. In order to determine this, there were five subset questions which needed to be explored. Table 18 identifies the triangulation for each subset question.

**Table 18.** Triangulation of Data Based on Research Subset Questions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subset Question</th>
<th>Taxon</th>
<th>Measurement Tool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Employ/sustain literacy practices learned in the program?</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>Reading/Writing Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning How to Learn</td>
<td>Teacher Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describe themselves in terms of the key characteristics of positive youth development (PYD) according to Lerner’s Five C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection Character, and Caring?</td>
<td>Human Dimension</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in relation to their literacy development?</td>
<td>Fundamental Knowledge</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Describe the comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in relation to their personal development?</td>
<td>Fundamental Knowledge</td>
<td>Participant Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Dimension</td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Perceive components of the program as significant to their learning, and why?</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Participant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning How to Learn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thick Rich Description**

Creswell and Miller (2000) ascertain thick rich descriptions are imperative to creditability in a qualitative study. According to Denizen (1989), “thick descriptions are deep, dense, detailed accounts. . . . Thin descriptions, by contrast, lack detail, and simply report facts” (p. 83). The purpose of a thick description is to present the reader with a “feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described in a study” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 129). In
order to do this, the researcher must provide as much detail as possible and do so through a constructivist perspective, which is the research perspective this study supports.

**Member Checking**

Since the primary purpose of this study was to describe adolescent RLLs’ literacy practices and PYD to determine if significant learning (as defined by Fink) occurred as a direct result of the 2012 CAL design, the researcher had to be very careful with the issue of “how to present the information that best captures the social setting yet will not compromise or harm any members in the study” (Janesick, 2000, p. 385). Considering this ethical issue of representation, the researcher conducted member checks after the initial data analysis to establish verisimilitude for this study. Member checks allowed the researcher to take data and interpretations back to the participants to ask if the results were accurate renderings of meaning (Merriam, 1998). Member checks are described by Maxwell (1996) as the “single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning” of what participants say and their perspective of what is happening (p. 94), thus making this an integral component of the analysis procedures. Member checks were conducted and all participants informed researcher that data and descriptions were accurate representations of their perceptions and perspectives.

**Prolonged Engagement in the Field**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) extended engagement in the field also increases credibility. In order to recognize important literacy events and subsequent practices in the lives of the participants, the researcher employed persistent observation. Persistent observation is the constant attention to and recognition of the participants’ literacy practices while in the field. Extensive descriptions of the participants, their school, and their literacy practices were scribed
through the perspectives of the participants and observed and documented by their English language arts teacher and the researcher.

**Inter-rater Reliability**

Another means for strengthening validity is through inter-rater reliability (Marques & McCall, 2005). Inter-rater reliability is defined as the “extent to which two or more individuals (coders or raters) agree” (p. 42). Marques and McCall further explain inter-rater reliability as a “solidification tool” in which the inter-raters become “validators of the findings of the qualitative study” (p. 440). Inter-rater reliability was used as a tool to verify and strengthen the findings (Marques & McCall, 2005). A current colleague in the doctoral program at the University of South Florida agreed to participate in this study as a rater. The rater was provided with 100% of the data per question and a copy of the typologies. Data were coded independently and the codings were compared for agreement both typologically and inductively. Having another rater examine the data and confirm the findings creates a greater sense of validity. The inter-rater reliability approach is a "percentage-based agreement in the findings" (Marques & McCall, 2005, p. 439). A high correlation in inter-rater reliability indicates satisfactory reliability.

Positive Youth Development (PYD) data were typologically coded independently. The inter-rater reliability for this data was 98 percent. All inductive data were coded independently as well. The inter-rater reliability for the inductive coding was 100 percent.

**Part VI – Role of the Researcher and Ethical Considerations**

**Role of the Researcher**

According to Marshall and Rossman (2010), the researcher is a key instrument within the study itself because of the potential of influence s/he may have on the study. This influence may occur through the interviewing of the participants in a one-to-one interview process. The direct
contact between the researcher and the participant may potentially affect any response on the part of the participant, especially if the relationship the researcher and the participants formed is still intact. As a teacher/researcher, I was familiar with the concept and process of engaging with others and establishing rapport during interviews and discussions; thus, it is hoped that this professional experience helped me ensure neutrality.

**Teacher as the Researcher**

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher studies the lived experience of people and events in an attempt to understand a phenomena and what that phenomena means (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Polkinghorne, 2005; Yin, 2008). For the past five years of my 15 year teaching career, I have been charged with teaching adolescent remedial literacy learners in a fused literacy and English class in a secondary school (Fusion). Each year, I am given an Instructional Focus Calendar that I am duty-bound to follow. Within this curriculum, it is evident that instructional design has mirrored the current policy definition of literacy – a single cognitive skill. Furthermore, the concentration of this perspective reflects only two elements of literacy – reading and writing – and not the full range required of being able to read, write, respond, view, listen, and reflect critically.

As a Fusion teacher, I am required to use a multitude of informational texts, short stories, and poetry. Additionally, I am expected to teach through a direct/explicit, deficit model approach. I am given a state-mandated assessment workbook and offered additional resources that emulate the state-mandated assessment. I am obligated to use these and follow the calendar, even though it goes against everything I know about adolescents, literacy, learning and the task demands of the 21st century.
My experiences these past five years have influenced my belief that this requisite approach is not adequately preparing my students for the literacy demands of today’s world. Since I began teaching Fusion, I have witnessed ten students drop out of high school, six within the last year. I have witnessed over two dozen students fail an upper level content area course and forced to retake it because of its attachment to their graduation. I have personally known three students who did not graduate with their class as a result of failing a content course and forced to return to high school for an additional semester. All of these students were once members of my Fusion class. In reflecting on these statistics, I began to question whether or not there was a better way to help these students become successful in school and out of school.

In an effort to help my adolescent remedial literacy learners become successful literacy users and thrive through my instructional approaches, I began to reevaluate what I was being asked to do within the remedial courses I was charged with teaching. I sought to understand what I was experiencing in a way that would affect my teaching and their learning. The product of this inquiry led to a teacher-researcher study intended to describe the potential lasting impact of an instructional design which adopted a comprehensive approach to literacy. This design considered the multi-dimensions of literacy and placed the learner at the center. By conducting a qualitative intrinsic case study through a teacher-researcher perspective, an understanding of what I was experiencing could be achieved.

The separation of theory from practice has plagued the teaching profession for many decades (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Teachers as researchers hold the potential to help minimize this gap (Lampert, 2000). Teacher-researcher inquiry is an investigative method which involves the self-study of teaching practices. According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), this type of research allows teachers to study learning from the inside, given their intimate
knowledge of the classroom and their students. Through this methodological perspective, the implementation of Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) intended to create a significant learning experience as defined and measured through Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning for a particular demographic of student was examined.

Ethical Considerations

Researchers are expected to be honest and aware of potential bias throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation process (Richards & Schwartz, 2002). As the researcher of this study, I may have potential bias because I was the teacher that implemented the 2012 CAL design. Therefore, during the course of this study, I ensured that during the process of gathering information and obtaining knowledge, I did not unduly influence the research. I had an awareness of self during this process through memoing. This reflective process was a method for me to elucidate assumptions and/or potential issues relating to personal protocol throughout the study (Thorne et al., 1997).
Chapter Five – Findings and Summary

The purpose of this study was not to disprove the effects of the current, common remedial literacy course design and the practices within that help adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) pass statewide-assessment tests, but to describe the potential long-term impact of an innovative comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) design. This study sought to determine if the 2012 CAL design with a particular demographic of student produced “significant” or lasting learning as defined by Fink (2003). In other words, did the 2012 CAL design promote sustained or continued practices of literacy and positive youth development (PYD) over time with adolescent remedial literacy learners? Given the nature and characteristics of Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning, in order to answer this question, the researcher had to explore each of the six taxa individually, as the lasting learning goals, data collection, and analysis for each varied. Data were first analyzed within each case in an effort to determine sustained, continued, or diminished learning. Findings from this analysis revealed reveal that growth which was experienced in the 2012 was sustained or continued to be developed for all four participants. As such, the 2012 CAL was a significant learning experience for all four participants. Given these results, a cross case analysis was performed in an effort to describe the effectiveness of the 2012 CAL design.

Baxter and Jack (2008) maintain in order for the researcher to meet the purpose of a case study in presenting their findings, “the researcher must ensure that the data are converged in an attempt to understand the overall case, not the various parts of the case, or the contributing factors that influence the case” (p. 555). As such, the findings presented in this chapter are the
results of the cross case analysis protocol. As part of the inductive analysis procedure, coding included the identification of key words and phrases that emerged from the data which were utilized to identify themes within each taxon. These key words and phrases appear in bold within the participants’ statements.

The 2012 CAL design was described by the participants as “interactive,” “helped me learn a lot about myself,” “challenged me to work harder in school and to become a better person,” “made me more focused in my writing,” “helped me be successful in reading and writing,” “allowed me to set and work towards goals,” “I got to learn a lot about myself,” and “it prepared me for activities in and outside of school.” These words are indicative of the positive impact of the design on the participants’ literacy practices and positive youth development. The analysis of the data indicates that students’ engagement in the design resulted in a “significant” learning experience - learning that lasted a year beyond the course. Through the use of an integrated course design that used a young adult (YA) novel as the main text, students were able to practice literacy through a variety of media and activities while simultaneously self-exploring and positively developing. Through their voices, it was determined that these activities have reshaped their learning and their development in a significant way. From students’ perspectives, the 2012 CAL design’s teaching and learning activities allowed them to experience each of Fink’s six taxa in a way that produced lasting learning or “significant” learning. Evidence of the sustained and continued growth within each taxon appears below.

**Fundamental Knowledge**

Fink (2003) refers to knowing as “students ability to understand and remember specific information and ideas” (2003, p. 31). It is this cognitive knowledge that becomes the basis for all other kinds of learning, thus making the concepts and topics addressed fundamental in promoting
any learning that may transpire. In determining lasting impact in Fundamental Knowledge (FK), a student should be able to recall and remember various concepts or ideas presented within the design. Recall of concepts and ideas are imperative because this type of knowledge is foundational for the Application (A) and the Integration (I) learning taxa.

Given the educational objectives of the Fusion course – to help students pass a state-mandated reading and writing assessment – the learning goals established for the Fundamental Knowledge (FK) taxon aligned itself with the reading and writing educational expectations of the course. However, the literature on the situational factors of the Fusion classroom, specifically in regards to the remedial learner, revealed a connection between self-efficacy and learning. As result, this taxon was extended in an effort to address this component of the course’s dynamics.

The short term goals established for this domain required the participants to not only develop an understanding of when and how to employ literacy strategies and skills when comprehending and creating texts (all forms of text), but to also develop an understanding of how reflective practice can lead to positive development. One hundred percent of the participants in the 2012 CAL demonstrated growth and mastery of these short-terms goals as evident through the qualitative and quantitative findings discussed in Chapter Three.

The long term goals established for this taxon were twofold: 1) required the participants to remember and recall the literacy skills/strategies presented within the 2012 CAL design and 2) remember and recall activities which promoted positive youth development (PYD) and why, a year after participation in the 2012 CAL design. Responses from the participant interview questions demonstrate significant learning – as defined by Fink – in this taxon for all four participants. All participants were able to recall both literacy concepts and PYD activities addressed within the 2012 CAL design. Additionally, participants were able to recall activities
that coincided with events in the YA novel used in the design that impacted their positive
development. The following excerpts from participant interviews support this claim.

Recall of Literacy Skills and Strategies

Specific Reading Skills and Strategies. *I use context clues to figure out meanings* of words in a text which helps me understand the central message. . . . *I even go through the text again and plug in the definition* in my head to understand the overall meaning the text is giving. . . . *I re-read the text and stop and think* after every paragraph what they are talking about and *put it together*. . . . *I go back and re-read* if I don’t get something. *It seems to help me a lot*. . . . *I ask a friend if they understand it and if not we just talk it through and work it out*. . . . *If someone asks me what’s it about I can go back and retell them about it.*

Specific Writing Skills and Strategies. *I write down the structure I am going to use and plan*, this helps me. . . . *I write multiple sentences* and chose the best one, to make sure it said what I want it to say. . . . *Sometimes I drag on and don’t really know if I am getting my point across when I write so I ask my parents to read what I wrote to make sure it is clear and says what I want it to say*. . . . *I have a plan and decide what structure I am going to use before I write.*

Recall of Activities that Promoted Positive Youth Development (PYD) and Why

Journaling. *I remember journaling because we got to look at our strengths and weaknesses*. . . . *I definitely remember the journal because it let us write about what we would do if we were in the same situation as Ben and his friends, I learned a lot about me*. . . . *I remember the journals because it gave me a chance to look at myself as a person and discover what I am good at*. . . . *I remember writing in the journal about my relationships with others and what type of friend I am and how that affects me*. . . . *The journals let me write about me*
and that way I got a feel for who I am. . . . Journaling let me talk about personal things and discover who I was as a person, like how I make decisions.

Civics Project. I remember the civics project because it made me realize that I have a voice in my community. . . . The civics project helped me become a part of my community. . . . The civics project helped me see what I can do to help in my community more.

Recall of the Text. I remember he was trying to tell a girl that he liked her and in the end she was there for him. I remember it because I got to think about my own relationships and how I showed people I cared. . . . In the book, the main character found out that he had a terminal disease so he didn’t tell anyone in his family, any friends. What he did was make a playlist up of his favorite songs because he loved to run. He went out for the football team over the fall. He started dating this girl names Suzuki, and they started going out and then at the very end, close to the end, he finally tells her he has a terminal illness and at the end he dies. I remember all this because it made me feel sad and I wondered how I would handle it if someone I knew and loved were dying. . . . I remember the main character used music to escape. I remember this because I also use music to motivate me and to keep me going without giving up. . . . I can’t remember the character’s name but I do remember he never told his family and friends he was going to die right away. I wondered what I would do if I found out I was going to die. It was a good book. It made me think about a lot things about myself and what I am like and what I needed to change.

The integrated course design of the 2012 CAL encouraged students to be more active in and aware of their practices of literacy as well as developing awareness and understanding of the connection between self-efficacy and learning. The teaching and learning activities impacted the
retention and memory recall of concepts and ideas presented within the 2012 CAL design; participants were able to recall these one year after participation.

**Application**

For knowledge to be useful, Fink (2003) purports that knowledge must be developed. The intention behind this development is to move learners forward in their thinking and in their ability to use the knowledge in a way that allows them to become competent users of the concepts and ideas presented within a course (Fink, 2003). In the 2012 CAL design, the implementation of a problem-based learning project (civics project) allowed for participants to apply the fundamental knowledge presented in the course in a manner that promoted the shift from literacy as an event to literacy as a practice while simultaneously promoting PYD through the formation of a community connection – addressing the Connection “C” in Lerner’s 5 C’s.

In an effort to connect literacy and PYD theories to practice, the short-term learning goals established for this domain called for students to apply literacy skills and strategies and to develop a connection with their community. These two goals were met in tandem through the students’ participation in the project. By applying foundational knowledge in literacy to their current lived contexts, students were encouraged to read, write, view, listen, respond, and reflect on concepts, one’s self, and one’s world in a manner that would promote critical thinking – moving them from events to practices. Evidence of short-term mastery of this taxon was presented in Chapter Three. Immediate growth in Lerner’s Connection as a result of this learning activity was also presented in Chapter Three.

The long-term goals established for this taxon concerned sustained or continued application of literacy skills and strategies in school and a sustained or continued connection to their community outside of school. Participant responses collected through the journal and
interview protocols were indicative of sustained and continued growth in the application of the fundamental knowledge concepts and ideas presented in the 2012 CAL design. Three themes emerged from the data that support this claim: impact on cognitive processes, impact on skill development, and impact on community connection. Within community connection, three forms of community were discussed: school, local community (participant neighborhood), and district community (the city in which the participant lived).

**Impact on Cognitive Processes**

The 2012 CAL design activities gave participants the opportunity to learn by observation (vicariously through the main character of the novel) and by doing (the civics project). These activities provided them with opportunities to enrich and produce new conceptual and ideological knowledge. Participants’ statements demonstrate the lasting impact of the activities on their cognitive processes:

**Improved Ways of Thinking.** I learned how to think through my writing and that makes me a better writer today. . . . I plan ahead how I am going to write now...I am able to dissect a text better now, for example, I can see how an author’s opinions can affect the message in things I read or see on T.V. . . . I can see connections between things I read and am now able to see how some information is not reliable. . . . I think, I plan, I predict. . . . My thinking process has changed, I use my thinking abilities now to monitor myself throughout the school year. . . . You taught me things, like how to see the big picture and now I can figure things out.

**Skill Building.** Through this taxon, Fink (2003) purports that any learning that transpires can aid in building skills. The 2012 CAL civics project afforded participants the opportunity to build skills in literacy as indicated by these participants’ statements: In the project, I used the skills you [the researcher] taught us in helping me understand the problem better, now I look at
issues in my community differently. . . . The project we did helped prepare me because now I am able to recognize and focus on the skills I need to work on and I am able to recognize the skills I have that I have that can be useful in working on what I am not good at...I was able to understand what others said about the problem I presented and use that information to educate others, something I still do today. . . . Through researching my topic and reading what others had to say about it I was able to determine how reliable sources are, something that I use when I read articles for my classes now. . . . The project helped me learn how to research and write a research report, which is helping me in the research project I have in History.

Community Connection. Lerner (2005) defines connection as a positive bond with an ecological system (classroom/community) that reflects a bidirectional exchange between an individual and ecological context in which both parties contribute to the relationship. Hall, Yohalem, Tolman, and Wilson (2003) ascertain that the opportunity for students to make connections is limited when risk factors are present. However, The National Research Council (2002) asserts creating and marinating connections across the various contexts where adolescents spend time have been shown to support positive development. The 2012 CAL civics project was intended to assist RLLs in creating and fostering connections with their immediate communities. The following participant statements demonstrate how these activities not only provided them with opportunities to form positive relationships with their communities, but how it promoted a lasting and extended connection:

Continued Civics Project. I have continue to talk to my friends on the harms of drinking and doing drugs . . . I still read a lot on and talk to my fellow Cadets about creating a better justice system for military officials. My Sargent Major and I talk about this issue all the time too. . . . I have joined a student awareness group and have still talked to others my age about
what I learned in the project I did on how students today are drinking and doing drugs more than before. . . . I have volunteered in community clean ups still and I have even sold stuff to make money for my neighborhood clean-up.

Extended Community Connection – School. I take more time to help other people in my classes. . . . I volunteer for things such as school dance and flag details at football games. . . . I try to help others in JROTC and in my classes.

Extended Community Connection – Local. I do more in my community because I just feel like I have to give back. . . . I mentor kids in my neighborhood now. . . . I volunteer for neighborhood clean-ups.

Extended Community Connection – District. Since last year, I worked at a food bank at a church and am also volunteering at Mote Marine. I will be educating people about marine life. . . . I help with JROTC to improve the community. . . . I volunteer for little league color guards.

Engaging students in a problem based learning project increased the opportunity for students to gain lifelong learning skills such as critical thinking and skill building while also providing them an opportunity to form a lasting connection with their respective communities. Through this experience, participants self-reported a sense of significant learning in these taxa as defined by Fink.

Integration

The analysis of the literature on literacy use for adolescents revealed that literacy tasks today have become increasingly more complex and demanding (Alvermann, 2002). Furthermore, it has been proposed that neglecting to consider the magnitude of possessing literacy skills needed in today’s world may lead to difficulties later in life (Costa & Kallick, 2000; Gardner,
1999; Indrisano & Chall, 1995). Given the importance of literacy practices in the lives of adolescents, the short-term goals established for this taxon called for students to integrate literacy in other disciplines in school and in contexts outside of school in an effort to increase their literacy practices – to use literacy to learn about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world. Through an analysis of the students 2012 CAL pre- and post- Reading/Writing Survey responses and the researcher’s observations, findings revealed 100% of students in the 2012 CAL design demonstrated a short-term growth in this taxon as presented in Chapter Three.

The long-term goals established for this taxon sought to promote the sustained or continued uses of literacy as a practice in school and in contexts outside of school in an effort to continue to learn about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world. Collected through participant and teacher interviews, the participant Reading/Writing Survey, and researcher observations, the findings disclosed not only revealed sustained practices of literacy but also continued literacy practices among all four participants since participating in the 2012 CAL design. Themed statements below illustrate the participants’ engagement in knowledge integration a year after participation in the 2012 CAL design. In an effort to contextual these responses, the following identifiers have been added to the end of each response: (p) for participant, (t) for teacher, and ® for researcher observation.

**Reading for Personal Reasons**

**Pleasure. I am reading The Hunger Games at home (p). . . . I actually went to the library and checked out a book, Fifty Shades of Grey. People told me it was good so I wanted to read it. Can’t wait to read the next one (p). . . . He is currently reading a novel about a boy who went to war and returns home. He reads it in class whenever he gets the chance and tells me all about it (t)...I have seen her reading books that I did not assign, and let’s be honest, neither did**
one of her other teachers who don’t teach ELA (t). . . .He always has a book on him, and not one I assigned (t). . . .I pick up magazines sometimes and just read (p).

**Self-Educate.** I have been looking up articles on the military and reading them on-line. It is interesting to see what people have to say about joining and going to war (p)……I have observed him reading college materials like the booklets they send to potential students and letters (r)…I haven’t seen her read about it in class but she has talked to me about different articles on the Illuminati that she says she has read (t). . . . He talks about conspiracy theories and how he watched a documentary on them (r).

**Continued Reading Engagement with School Assigned Texts.** I am currently reading “Escape from Alcatraz” in English. It’s a pretty good book. It’s about a prisoner who escapes from one of the greatest prisons ever built (p). . . . I actually read The Scarlett Letter, it was our independent reading project (p). . . .I have been reading short stories and novels in my classes and actually kinda like them all (p). . . . We have to read a chapter a week and create a presentation on what we learned. I have gotten A’s on all of them so far (t). . . . I read the Gettysburg Address and actually got it! (p).

**Writing for Personal Reasons**

**Community.** I write to a friend because he is in jail. I want to be there for him and that is the only way we can stay close (p). . . . I started writing letters to my friend who moved (p). . . . I wrote a business letter to a company for a place I will be going to in July in Washington, D.C. asking for information about the government program instead of calling them (p). . . . I wrote a letter to a company for sponsorship in a shooting competition I want to go to (p).
Creative/Artistic. I started writing short stories at home when I get bored. It gives me something to do that I like (p). . . . I write love letters to my girlfriend every single month to show her and tell her how I feel and how it’s been progressing month to month together (p).

Continued Engagement with School Assigned Writing Tasks. I write a lot of essay and research projects. I feel confident in producing (p). . . . In my English class we write in our journals every day. It reminds me of what we did with you and I like it (p). . . . I am writing a short story about a Greek god in my History class. Most of my writing now is in History and Government (p). . . . In sign language class we had to sign a song. I wrote down the lyrics to a lot of songs to help me choose which one I should sign and to make sure I was signing the right words. I chose “I Believe I Can Fly” because that is how I feel about myself (p). . . . I write really long short answers to comprehension questions now. My teacher laughs (p).

Human Dimension

Individuals bring with them into a context a social consciousness (social expectations, social behavior), interpersonal skills (e.g. ability to manage problems, relationships), and a self-efficacy (e.g. perception of self as learner). Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walburg (2004) argue that when implemented into the classroom, pedagogy which focuses on both the adolescent and the content promotes learning environments that encourage and support participant engagement, motivation, and commitment to academic learning, a perspective the Fink (2003) adopts in his Taxonomy of Significant Learning. Regardless of what the adolescent RLL believes is his or her reason for being placed in a remedial classroom, Pressley (1998) contends that adolescents must be successful in perceiving themselves as successful if significant learning is to occur. Given the nature and characteristics of the remedial learner, this taxon included activities that promoted positive youth development (PYD) in an effort to encourage plasticity among a class of
adolescent RLLs to help them see themselves as successful in an effort to promote significant or lasting learning.

The short-term goals established for this taxon called for students to develop character, competence, and confidence (Lerner, 2005) and learn something about themselves and others. Immediate growth in these domains (as defined by Lerner), were presented in Chapter Three. The long-term goals for this taxon promoted the sustained or continued personal growth experienced in the 2012 CAL design in all the aforementioned areas. Through the voices of the participants, findings revealed a sustained and continued growth in all three of Lerner’s C’s (confidence, competence and character) addressed within this taxon. A year after the 2012 CAL action research study, participants continue to use positive words when describing themselves, and continue to feel confident and competent in all contexts of their lives. The following, as self-reported by the participant in the journal responses and in the interview, is evidence of this sustained and continued growth:

**Confidence**


**A Sense of Positive Self-worth.** *I’m awesome. . . I am a good person, inside and out. . . I’m a great listener. . . I’m kind. . . I’m generous . . . I’m athletic. . . I’m talented. . . I am hardworking. . . I like the inner me. . . I have a lot to say. . . I’m smart and responsible. . . I like to be different. . . I am drug free and feel better than I ever have before. . . I am outgoing and independent.*

**Competence**

Competence is defined as a student’s positive view of his or her “social, emotional, academic and cognitive actions” (Lerner, 2005, p. 23).
Overall Ability to Achieve. *I can do anything* I set my mind to do. . . . If you give me something, *I can do it.* . . . *I put forth effort in everything* I do.

*Academic.* *I’ve buckled down to get my grades to be exceptional.* Good grades equal happier parents and happier me. . . . *I am a confident reader.* I can understand what I am reading now. . . . *I’m an excellent learner.* . . . *I feel good about school.* . . . *I’ve set a goal to go to college* and I know *I can do it.* . . . *I am good at reading.* . . . *I am a confident writer.* . . . *I am a good student.* I don’t mess around in class anymore. . . . *I have made great strides as a student.* . . . *I am a good learner.*

*Social.* *I have new friends.* . . . *My social circle has increased.* . . . *I have a wide variety of friends* throughout the school. . . . *I have expanded my friend circle* to other people I thought would never like me.

*Emotional.* *I ignore certain situations* by listening to music. . . . *I play sports to manage my problems.* . . . *I am able to manage my time.* . . . When I feel like I am not focused, *I listen to music.* *It helps me.* . . . *I work through difficult decisions.*

*Character*

Character is defined by Lerner (2005) as respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity (p. 23). The learning goals for this taxon afforded students the opportunity to discover something about themselves. The following participant statements collected from their journal responses and interview, indicate their realization that learning about themselves, the human dimension, gave them a self-awareness that lead to continued confidence, competence, and character: *I’m respectful.* . . . *I think before I do now.* *I think* about all the positive things and negative things that could happen. . . . *I’m young but I think about my choices,* the choices I make because they
don’t just affect me... help young kids become independent - I have to give back in some way... I’m honest... I’m nicer to people, I’m nice and friendly to people. . . . You need to realize what you need to do to become successful and work towards it in the right way. . . . I am supportive.

Caring

Cognitive learning is often the primary focus of remedial education and is what state-mandated assessments are intended to measure (Allington, 2011; Damon, 2004; Moje, 2008, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn 2003). This form of learning disregards the human dimension; something Fink (2003) tells us is imperative in learning that is significant – or lasting. The affective domain of learning involves attitudes, motivation, and values of the learner (Smith & Ragan, 1999). Affective learning is defined as “changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciation and adequate adjustment” (Bloom, 1956, p. 7). In other words, affective learning involves valuing the content. Fink (2003) supports the affective domain of learning in this taxon when he asserts “no change, no learning” (Fink, 2003, p. 30). Evidence of learning in this taxon may appear as new feelings, interests, and/or values. Analyzing participants’ journal and interview responses, their statements indicate that they have continued to develop a sense of caring within two domains: self and others.

Caring of Self. I take the time to help myself now. . . . I am a loving person. . . . I am a very caring and sympathetic person.

Caring for Others. I care for my friends. . . . I care for other people. . . . I now try to help anyone that needs it. . . . I take the time to help other people. . . . I try and help people when I can in school. . . . I have helped people - it turned me into a gentleman. . . . I listen to my friends and try to respond to them with the best answers to make them feel good. . . . I care
about the people I work with. . . . My step-father's family treats me like I am their own. I care about them. . . . I am there for those that need me.

Learning How to Learn

Learning in this final taxon occurs when students gain knowledge about the process of learning itself (Fink, 2003) and continue to use this knowledge to become better students or to become self-directed learners. Learning in this taxon can be demonstrated through the use of resources for self-directed learning and/or reflective practices, as well as continued goal setting. The short and long term goals established for this taxon encouraged students to become self-directed learners and to continue reflective practice as a way to learn about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world. Statements from participants’ journals and interview protocols demonstrate lasting learning in this taxon. Three themes emerged as evidence of their awareness of their learning practices and purposes: going beyond to learn, reported change in self, and reflective practices.

Going Beyond to Learn

Using Resources to Extend Learning. When I don’t understand something, I will go to a friend or the teacher and ask for assistance. . . . I use a thesaurus to help me make sound smarter. . . . I use the internet a lot to find information or help me understand things I don’t get in class. . . . I use a lot of resources to help me learn to learn things that interest me. I use the textbook to get more background knowledge to write about topics. I use the Internet. I use other books. I read books about the NRA and the government. . . . I see what others wrote and how they wrote about the subject by looking up articles and papers on the topic.
Change in Self

Set Goals for Future. *I have set goals* now that I work hard to meet - to go to college. . . . *I'm a hard worker because I want to get somewhere in life*. . . *I have set positive goals* for myself. . . *working towards my goal* of becoming a physical therapist or a veterinarian...*I have set goals to get better grades and keep them up because I want to go to college*. . . *I am looking for a second job so I can save enough money to buy my own car.*

Reflective Practices

*I started keeping a journal*. *I record how I started at the beginning of the year and how I end up so I can monitor my progress in school*. *That way I can know what I need to change the next year*. . . *I write poetry* sometimes to get things off my chest. . . *I started writing lyrics* to help me get my feelings out. *Put them into a song.*

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was not to disprove the effects of the current, common remedial literacy course designs and the practices within that help adolescent RLLs pass statewide assessment tests, but to describe the potential long-term impact of an innovative comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design model (ICDM). Through this study I sought to determine if the 2012 CAL design with a particular demographic of student produced “significant” or lasting learning as defined by Fink (2003). In other words, did the 2012 CAL design promote sustained or continued development of literacy practices and PYD over time with adolescent remedial literacy learners? Findings documented through the participants’ voices, demonstrated that the 2012 CAL was a significant learning experience, as defined by Fink (2003). Furthermore, the findings revealed the participants’ metadiscursivity with literacy and personal development in all six taxa.
All four participants were able to recall concepts (literacy skills and strategies) and ideas (text and activities that promoted positive youth development) presented within the design. The application and integration of these concepts and ideas were not only sustained a year after the course was over, they continued to develop over time. The 2012 CAL design activities gave participants the opportunity to learn by observation (vicariously through the main character of the novel) and by participation (doing the civics project). These activities provided them with opportunities to enrich and produce new conceptual and ideological knowledge as was supported by their improved ways of thinking, their on-going skill building, and their increased involvement within their respective communities. Additionally, the findings not only revealed continued practices of literacy but also continued growth in literacy practices among all four participants both in and out of school.

Through the voices of the participants, growth in all five of Lerner’s C’s not only was sustained, but it continued to be developed. Participants continued to use positive words when describing themselves, continued to feel confident and competent in all contexts of their lives, and continued to display character. From these experiences, the participants sense of caring was sustained and to varying degrees, each participant continued to develop new feelings, interests, and/or values. Lastly, all four participants demonstrated evidence of their awareness of their learning practices and purposes; they continued to be self-directed learners.
Chapter Six

Discussion of Findings, Significance of Study, Limitations and Recommendations,

Conclusion

Introduction

Because of the importance of being literate today (Hock & Deshler, 2003; Moore, et al., 2000) and the increasing number of students entering remedial literacy classrooms (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; McCardle & Chharba, 2004), a call has been issued to educators to create contexts for adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) that allow for meaningful learning experiences to occur (Alvermann, 2002; Cambourne, 2001; Fisher & Ivey, 2006; Moje, 2008) and experiences that will be beneficial to them beyond the remedial classroom in all aspects of their lives. One suggestion is for educators to adopt a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) in the remedial classroom (Correnti & Rowan, 2007; McConachie, Hall, Resnick, Ravi, Bill, Bintz, & Taylor, 2006; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Stockhill, Learned, Rainy, Rappa, Nguyen & Moje, 2011; Taylor & Gunter, 2005). There is an abundance of literature regarding current comprehensive approaches to literacy instruction and the short-term impact of these approaches in successfully helping adolescent RLLs pass state-mandated assessment tests (Correnti & Rowan, 2007; McConachie, Hall, Resnick, Ravi, Bill, Bintz, & Taylor, 2006; Rasinski & Padak, 2004), but absent is the presence of comprehensive approaches that document long-term consequences, specifically with adolescent remedial literacy learners. The need for this intrinsic case study through a teacher-researcher perspective was apparent based on the limited research dedicated to the lasting impact of comprehensive approaches to literacy, limited research of the
positive youth development (PYD) approach in the classroom, and the non-existent research on the use of Fink’s Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003) in the secondary classroom. Furthermore, documenting all these elements through the voices of the participants within the research was limited as well.

**Discussion**

The separation of theory from practice has plagued the teaching profession for many decades (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Teachers as researchers hold the potential to help minimize this gap (Lampert, 2000). According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), this type of research allows teachers to study learning from the inside, given their intimate knowledge of the classroom and their students. Through this methodological perspective, the implementation of Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) intended to create a significant learning experience as defined and measured through Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning for a particular demographic of student was examined in my effort to better understand my experiences with the Fusion course.

My inquiry began with an in-depth analysis of the situational factors that comprised the Fusion classroom: context, content, and participant. What stemmed from this analysis was the creation and implementation of a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) design in a secondary remedial literacy classroom. Participants in the 2012 CAL design were able to experience a plethora of activities that promoted literacy practice and positive youth development (PYD) in tandem in an effort to address their well-being and better prepare them for the increased task demands they will face throughout their educational career and beyond. Findings from the 2012 CAL protocols indicated short-term significant learning, in various degrees, across all six taxon for each participant. These findings are significant in a number of
ways. To begin, the 2012 CAL study was implemented immediately after participants were assessed for literacy through the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). All pre-measurement findings were real-time measurements of where the students were in terms of current literacy proficiency, literacy practices, and PYD after participation in the districted required literacy instructional design. Up until that point, the teacher/researcher had followed the mandated focus calendar and approaches required of her. Therefore, the results obtained from the post measurements, measured true short-term growth of proficiency, practice and PYD as a direct result of participation in the 2012 CAL design. However, further investigation was warranted, as the 2012 CAL protocols were unable to determine the lasting impact of this design.

Being able to articulate a significant learning experience, demonstrates a metadiscursivity of the learning process (Fink, 2003). As such, through the follow-up study (this dissertation) I sought to describe this awareness in relationship to the long-term goals established for the design: sustained or continued growth in literacy practices and positive youth development. In order to answer my overarching question - did the 2012 CAL design promote lasting learning – sustained or continued development of literacy practices and PYD over time - with adolescent remedial literacy learners, a series of sub-questions were explored.

**Sub Research Question One**

For knowledge to be useful, Fink (2003) purports that knowledge must be developed. The intention behind this development is to move learners forward in their thinking and in their ability to use the knowledge in a way that allows them to become competent users of the concepts and ideas presented within a course (Fink, 2003). Given the educational purposes of the Fusion course, coupled with the long-term literacy goals established for the 2012 CAL design, the first sub-set question asked in what ways
do four adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) who participated in a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) framed through an integrated course design 12 months prior, employ/sustain literacy practices learned in the program. Data collected through teacher-researcher observations, English teacher’s interview, participant Reading/Writing Survey (Allen, 2000), and through the voices of the participants journal and interview protocols, evidence of sustained or continued development of the participants practices of literacy were realized. These realizations enabled me to describe each participant’s practices of literacy in relation to Fink’s Application, Integration, and Learning How to Learn learning taxa in order to determine if these taxa were a significant learning experience for the participants, according to Fink.

Data collected prior to student participation in the 2012 CAL revealed a perspective of literacy as a primary function of schooling. Participants’ reports of literacy practices supported the notion that RLLs have a disconnect between the purpose and function of literacy within their lives (Moje, 2000). An awareness of literacy as a tool to learn about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world emerged in the data collected at the end of the 2012 CAL. Participants reported a growth in their practices of literacy for schooling purposes, but added to these practices (reading/writing more in school) by including reading and writing for personal pleasure and communication. Data collected one year after participation in this design revealed evidence of sustained or continued development of these literacy practices. Participants not only continued to practice literacy for schooling purposes, they did so with more engagement, confidence, and enthusiasm. Additionally, practices of literacy continued to extend into their personal lives. Participants continued to practice literacy as a way to communicate, self-educate beyond school tasks and contents, manage emotions, and self-explore. These results suggest that as students
discover the connection between purpose and function of literacy in their lives, literacy practices continue to develop over time.

**Sub Research Question Two**

The literature on remedial learners suggests that some students are not motivated to learn because they believe their lack of success in the classroom is because they are simply not smart enough (Mueller, 2001; Staughton, 2007). Furthermore, remedial learners often demonstrate a lack of intrinsic motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 1985, 2000), something that is crucial to social and cognitive development (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004). Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walburg (2004) argue that when implemented into the classroom, pedagogy which focuses on both the adolescent and the content promotes learning environments that encourage and support participant engagement, motivation, and commitment to academic learning, a perspective that Fink (2003) adopts in his taxonomy.

Since Fink’s taxonomy calls attention to the learner in the learning process and the participants were all remedial learners, a positive youth developmental approach was implemented as part of the CAL design. In order to describe the lasting impact of this approach with remedial students, sub-set research question two asked the participants to describe themselves in terms of the key characteristics of positive youth development (PYD) according to Lerner’s Five C’s: Competence, Confidence, Connection Character, and Caring. Data collected through the voices of the participants’ journal responses provide evidence of sustained or continued positive youth development. These realizations enabled me to describe the participants’ positive growth in relation to Fink’s Human Dimensions and Caring learning taxa in order to determine if these taxa promoted a significant learning experience for the participant,
according to Fink.

Initial journal responses (administered prior to the 2012 CAL) affirmed the nature and characteristics of the remedial learner presented in the literature. Participants described themselves as withdrawn from school, withdrawn from adolescent cultures, awkward, and not intelligent. Most revealed a deficiency in all five of Lerner’s C’s (2005), with only a few participants recognizing any positive assets at all. Through the short-term data collected at the end of the 2012 CAL, the PYD approach with adolescent RLLs was instrumental in helping the participants to acknowledge themselves as thriving, literate, and intelligent human beings. Students no longer described themselves using negative terms; rather, they used words like “smart,” “intelligent,” “trustworthy,” and “moral.” Participants now believed in their ability to succeed in and out of school and as a result, goals were set and motivation and engagement in tasks increased. Students grew in all five of Lerner’s (2005) C’s, demonstrating resiliency. But was this development sustained over time?

At the one-year follow-up, participants not only continued to use positive language to describe themselves, they demonstrated this positive self-efficacy through their actions. Participants continued to set goals, continued to be motivated and engaged, and even reached out to help others realize their own potential, while continuing to develop positively themselves. Additionally, within the participants’ descriptions of themselves in relation to Lerner’s 5 C’s, new feelings, interests, and/or values appear, the evidence of continued development.

For the adolescent RLL, the sustained and continued positive growth reported is significant in that it demonstrates the goal of a PYD approach in the classroom is not only possible to reach, but is one that has potential lasting impact. These results suggest that as students discover their assets and begin to see themselves as thriving, intelligent beings then
learning about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world continues to develop over time; a connection between one’s well-being and learning is realized.

**Sub Research Question Three and Four**

Fink (2003) refers to knowing as “students ability to understand and remember specific information and ideas” (2003, p. 31). It is this cognitive knowledge that becomes the basis for all other kinds of learning, thus making the concepts and topics addressed fundamental in promoting any learning that may transpire. In determining lasting impact in Fundamental Knowledge (FK), a student should be able to recall and remember various concepts or ideas presented within the design. Being able to articulate a significant learning experience demonstrates a metadiscursivity of the learning process (Fink, 2003); therefore, recall of concepts and ideas are imperative as this form of knowledge is foundational for the Application and the Integration learning taxa.

Because the 2012 CAL design intended to promote lasting impact on the participants’ practices of literacy and positive youth development, I had to address each topic individually. Therefore, in order to determine the lasting impact of the design on Fundamental Knowledge, participants were asked to describe the CAL in terms of their literacy development and their positive youth development. Capturing these descriptions, I was able to determine if the concepts housed within the 2012 CAL design promoted lasting Fundamental Knowledge learning. Data collected from the participant interview indicated that all participants experienced significant Fundamental Knowledge learning. Participants were not only able to recall specific skills and strategies taught, they were able to describe why they remembered them and how these skills and strategies help them continue to develop their practices of literacy today.

Also captured in the participant interviews was evidence of lasting impact of the positive youth developmental approach as a concept. Participants described how specific activities within
the design created in them an awareness of self and connection to others. Participants not only described these activities in detail, they were able to describe why these activities had lasting impact for them. This metadiscursivity suggests that giving time and opportunity to practice literacy in meaningful, relevant ways and providing time to reflect on their own growth, participants have the potential for continual literacy and positive developmental growth.

The results of my inquiry (this dissertation) suggest that, as students’ literacy practices and positive youth development grows, there is a decrease in the likelihood that these students will remain at-risk for graduation, academically behind their peers, and on a negative developmental trajectory. Additionally, when both content and participant are taken into consideration in an integrated design, then realized growth has the potential for lasting impact and the fostering of continued growth.

While the 2012 CAL design proved to be effective in creating a significant learning experience – learning that was lasting – for four adolescent remedial literacy learners, one must consider several influencing factors on these findings. To begin, the number of participants for the follow-up study (this dissertation) was limited, as the potential participants were determined by the number of assenting 11th grade teachers. Since only two teachers assented, the participant pool was reduced to a possible ten students. Furthermore, only three from each assenting teacher’s class consented to participate. While all six were capable of articulating their experiences with the 2012 CAL design and its influences on their sustained and continued practices of literacy and positive youth development, only two participants from one class answered all the journal questions, thus further limiting the number of participants of the follow-up. While all four participants demonstrated sustained and continued development in their
practices of literacy and positive youth development, a sample as small as this may not enough to
determine the true lasting impact of the 2012 CAL design.

The time between the end of the 2012 CAL design and the follow-up study is a concern. There could be experiences and influences outside of the CAL that may have contributed to these findings.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the teacher/participant relationship was an important component of the 2012 CAL design. Without a trusting relationship, participants may not have been willing to divulge personal information about themselves. While this relationship is important, it could also have influenced the responses provided by the participants in their journals and interview, as they may have answered questions and prompts according to what they believed I wanted to hear.

Significance of the Study

Conducting inquiry through a teacher/researcher model does not solely focus on theory or practice in isolation, rather it stems from the interception between the two (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993) in an effort to improve teaching and learning. Therefore, the teacher as a researcher methodology has the potential to challenge the direction of education (Diniz-Pereira, 2002; Girod et al., 2002), making this inquiry significant. As cited in Rudduck (1988), Lawrence Stenhouse maintains “It is teachers who, in the end, will change the world of the school by understanding it” (p. 41).

Findings from this inquiry illustrate that implementing Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model (ICDM) in a remedial literacy classroom to promote significant learning, as measured through Fink’s (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning, can greatly impact the lasting learning in literacy that adolescent RLLs need to navigate today’s literacy task demands.
and also moves these RLLs from a negative trajectory to a positive one in their development. The 2012 CAL design activities have added new learning dimensions for this demographic of student as it provided them with new ways of learning by critically thinking, reading, writing, responding, viewing, listening, and reflecting. Participants developed an understanding of the value of literacy and learning in their lives, which was evident in their increased expectations of self and motivation to succeed beyond high school.

With the amplified attention on literacy instruction in order to prepare students for state-mandated assessments (Alvermann, et al., 2000; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Moje & O’Brien, 2001), a disconnect between literacy theory and literacy instruction has formed. In an effort to reconnect these two entities of purpose and practice to help adolescent RLLs become successful beyond the remedial classroom, this study has significance.

Secondary literacy educators who are expected to meet the demands of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) - all American children to be reading at the “proficient” level by 2014 - should find interest in this study (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). If educators believe that literacy is multidimensional and the task demands of today’s society require levels of literacy beyond the cognitive, the term proficient is flawed when measured by one test. If students are going to reach the goals set forth in NCLB and successfully traverse the increased literacy task demands of the 21st century, greater improvement in literacy curriculum and instruction is necessary at the high school level. This study has value for teachers and administrators in secondary schools by providing data showing lasting impact of a CAL design with adolescent remedial literacy learners. Since the data revealed that “significant” learning occurred as defined by Fink, these results might help catapult the restructuring of how literacy is viewed and approached in secondary literacy remedial classrooms. Educators can use the results of this study to expand,
modify, or create similar programs in their respective districts.

Because this study attempted to align and extend current research in adolescent development and literacy learning, the results will add to the body of research on adolescent literacy, adolescent literacy instruction, positive youth development, and “significant” learning experiences – either individually or in tandem. Connecting education and psychology can have a profound impact on the academic and personal lives of this demographic of adolescents.

Finally, this study’s significance extends beyond the classroom and into policy. The current literacy framework and curriculum imposed by the state may be impacted by the findings, thus resulting in possible changes in curriculum, which then extends into the preparation of teachers at the college level. Findings from this inquiry could advance the pedagogical content knowledge base for teaching secondary remedial literacy learners.

Limitations

This study was carried out realizing several limitations. To begin, the study evaluated the potential lasting impact of a comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) instructional design with adolescent remedial literacy learners (RLLs) at a particular school; generalizing to groups outside the study group may not be warranted.

Because this study utilized findings from a previous study and was longitudinal in nature, there was a loss of participants. Furthermore, only two of the three possible English teachers assented to participate and allow the researcher in their classrooms for observations. From the pool of potential participants, only four consented to participant and only two from one class completed the journal responses, affecting the sample size.

This study is a follow-up occurring 12 months after students’ participation in a CAL instructional design. Because of the time frame between the end of the CAL instructional design
and the follow-up, there could be experiences and influences outside of the CAL that may have contributed to the findings.

The fact that the researcher in this inquiry also acted as the instructor for the 2012 CAL could be problematic. Relationship building played a pivotal role in 201 CAL design. Without an established, trusting relationship, this design may not yield the same results if replicated. Furthermore, the relationships formed with the participants could risk compromising the validity of specific research claims, given these claims were based on student self-reported responses to teacher-researcher posed questions.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

This study examined the lasting impact of one comprehensive approach to literacy (CAL) design on the literacy practices and positive youth development (PYD) of a particular demographic of student – the adolescent remedial literacy learners. The results of this study suggest and identify additional areas for future research.

While this study produced qualitative results linking participation in the CAL design with lasting learning and PYD outcomes, the study did not quantitatively measure this growth. Rather than being limited to a qualitative approach, future research should also include quantitative studies. Variables for quantitative examination could include grades and state-assessment scores. Given the immediate impact of the 2012 CAL design on literacy proficiency, literacy practices and positive youth development of the adolescent remedial literacy learner (RLL) participants, one wonders how might these RLLs fare on state assessments if this design had been implemented prior to them taking the exam. If growth in that magnitude could be achieved within nine weeks and be sustained or continue to be developed a year following participation in the design, the impact this design could have if implemented throughout an entire school year
could be profound. Furthermore, an examination into the implementation of this design in other secondary content areas may be warranted. If the goal of education is produce citizens who are able to meet the task demands of our society (O’Rourke, 2005) and these demands are becoming increasingly more complex (Alvermann, 2002) what might the impact of this design be on learners who are considered proficient? Would they also experience academic and personal growth as a result of participating in a design such as the one examined in this study?

Race, gender, or socio-economic status was not examined in this study as independent variables. However, three of the purposefully, randomly selected participants were African American and three were male. While all four participants experienced sustained or continued growth in all six of Fink’s taxa, each was experienced to different degrees. Given these characteristics, further research in each variable is warranted.

Within the integrated course design, a young adult (YA) novel was used as the main text. This study did not examine the YA novel as an independent variable. The male participants demonstrated an in-depth recall of specific details from the novel, while the one female recalled only themes presented within. Recalling and remembering specific character names, being able to describe the characters in an intimate way, and recalling specific events and how these events impacted the thinking and perspectives on topics presented within the novel with the male participants is worthy of exploration. While Fink (2003) ascertains it is the integration of six specific taxa that produces significant learning, I am left wondering if the choice of text could also be a key component in producing significant learning. Examination into the use of texts with male protagonists and its possible correlation to producing significant learning in RLL males is one direction for further research.
This study’s findings stemmed from an analysis of data which was gathered one year after participation in the CAL design. While Fink, supported by research (Bingman, Ebert, & Smith, 1999; Blachman, Schatschneider, Fletcher, Francis, Clonan, Shaywitz, & Shaywitz, 2004; Byrne & Fielding-Barnsley, 1993; Cronan, Brooks, Kilpatrick, Bigatti, & Tally, 1999; Tangel & Blachman, 1995), states that one year is a good place to begin in determining significant learning (personal communication with Fink, June, 2013), an extension of the study is needed to further examine student outcomes over an prolonged period of time to thoroughly measure the impact of this design at the secondary level.

If we are to begin to conceptualize what belongs within an effective literacy program that has the potential to make a difference in the trajectory of adolescent RLLs, Staughton (2007) suggests we take into account the lack of connection between literacy and their lives, their limited knowledge of the purposes of literacy, their low self-efficacy as a result of their perceptions of being inadequate learners, and their inability to apply appropriate strategies to literacy tasks. In other words, Staughton (2007) recommends we address both the cognitive and affective domains of learning. The literature on the adolescent RLL, coupled with the results of this study, suggests that implementing a PYD approach to instruction satisfies Staughton’s (2007) recommendation (Bumbarger & Greenberg, 2002; Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005; Pittman, Irby, Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2002). Furthermore, adopting a multidimensional perspective to literacy requires the inclusion of the human dimension. Findings from this study revealed that Fink’s (2003) Integrated Course Design Model benefited the RLL participants in not only their literacy practices but also their positive development. An examination into the design’s effectiveness within other remedial content courses at the secondary level is another direction of future
While the use of *Deadline* as the primary text impacted the participants of this study, one questions whether or not the use of this same young adult novel would yield the same results with another group of remedial students. Furthermore, what effects would occur using a different young adult novel. Replicating this study using different young adult novels is warranted.

**Conclusion**

A major conclusion of this study is that remedial literacy educators, administrators, and policy makers who impact the current remedial curriculum designs in secondary schools can no longer assume that students who enter the secondary remedial classroom with a deficiency in literacy do not have the potential for academic success and personal growth. As such, the remedial course design in secondary schools must change in order to address the increasing task demands of our society, the expectations of education, and the needs of the adolescent learner. From this change stems the need to not only reassess the current remedial curriculum, but to reassess the ways in which we prepare future educators to teach this demographic of student. A recommendation for all stakeholders would be to examine the immediate and lasting effects of the implementation of this design within multiple remedial secondary contexts and contents.
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Appendix A:

Safe Environment Survey

A survey that I distributed to the participants to determine if our classroom was safe and that the participants trusted me to keep them safe.

Do you feel physically safe in our classroom environment? Why or why not?

Do you feel emotionally safe in our classroom environment? Why or why not? (if not, please suggest what can be done in order to make it a safe environment)

Do you understand how conflicts will be resolved and disrespectful behavior will be handled within our classroom environment? How?

Do you trust your teacher to handle discussions in a respectful and safe manner? Why or why not?

Do you feel comfortable sharing your thoughts and opinions in groups (both large and small) within our classroom environment? Why or why not?

Do you feel you will be respected by your peers and your teacher within our classroom environment? Why or why not?
Appendix B.

Metacomprension Strategy Index (MSI)

APPENDIX

Metacomprension strategy index

Directions: Think about what kinds of things you can do to help you understand a story better before, during, and after you read it. Read each of the lists of four statements and decide which one of them would help you the most. There are no right answers. It is just what you think would help the most. Circle the letter of the statement you choose.

1. In each set of four, choose the one statement which tells a good thing to do to help you understand a story better before you read it.
   A. See how many pages are in the story.
   B. Look up all of the big words in the dictionary.
   C. Make some guesses about what I think will happen in the story.
   D. Think about what has happened so far in the story.

2. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Look at the pictures to see what the story is about.
   B. Decide how long it will take me to read the story.
   C. Sound out the words I don’t know.
   D. Check to see if the story is making sense.

3. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Ask someone to read the story to me.
   B. Read the title to see what the story is about.
   C. Check to see if most of the words have long or short vowels in them.
   D. Check to see if the pictures are in order and make sense.

4. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Check to see if there are no pages are missing.
   B. Make a list of the words I’m not sure about.
   C. Use the title and pictures to help me make guesses about what will happen in the story.
   D. Read the last sentence so I will know how the story ends.

5. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Decide on why I am going to read the story.
   B. Use the difficult words to help me make guesses about what will happen in the story.
   C. Reread some parts to see if I can figure out what is happening if things aren’t making sense.
   D. Ask for help with the difficult words.

6. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Retell all of the main points that have happened so far.
   B. Ask myself questions that I would like to have answered in the story.
   C. Think about the meanings of the words which have more than one meaning.
   D. Look through the story to find all of the words with three or more syllables.

7. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Check to see if I have read this story before.
   B. Use my questions and guesses as a reason for reading the story.
   C. Make sure I can pronounce all of the words before I start.
   D. Think of a better title for the story.

8. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Think of what I already know about the things I see in the pictures.
   B. See how many pages are in the story.
   C. Choose the best part of the story to read again.
   D. Read the story aloud to someone.

9. Before I begin reading, it’s a good idea to:
   A. Practice reading the story aloud.
   B. Retell all of the main points to make sure I can remember the story.
   C. Think of what the people in the story might be like.
   D. Decide if I have enough time to read the story.

*Underlined responses indicate metacomprension strategy awareness.
10. Before I begin reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Check to see if I am understanding the story so far.
   B. Check to see if the words have more than one meaning.
   C. Think about where the story might be taking place.
   D. List all of the important details.

11. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Read the story very slowly so that I will not miss any important parts.
   B. Read the title to see what the story is about.
   C. Check to see if the pictures have anything missing.
   D. Check to see if the story is making sense by seeing if I can tell what's happened so far.

12. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Stop to retell the main points to see if I am understanding what has happened so far.
   B. Read the story quickly so that I can find out what happened.
   C. Read only the beginning and the end of the story to find out what it is about.
   D. Skip the parts that are too difficult for me.

13. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Look all of the big words up in the dictionary.
   B. Put the book away and find another one if things aren't making sense.
   C. Keep thinking about the title and the pictures to help me decide what is going to happen next.
   D. Keep track of how many pages I have left to read.

14. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Keep track of how long it is taking me to read the story.

15. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Have someone read the story aloud to me.
   B. Keep track of how many pages I have read.
   C. List the story's main character.
   D. Check to see if my guesses are right or wrong.

16. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Check to see if the characters are real.
   B. Make a lot of guesses about what is going to happen next.
   C. Not look at the pictures because they might confuse me.
   D. Read the story aloud to someone.

17. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Try to answer the questions I asked myself.
   B. Try not to confuse what I already know with what I'm reading about.
   C. Read the story silently.
   D. Check to see if I am saying the new vocabulary words correctly.

18. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Try to see if my guesses are going to be right or wrong.
   B. Reread to be sure I haven't missed any of the words.
   C. Decide on why I am reading the story.
   D. List what happened first, second, third, and so on.

19. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. See if I can recognize the new vocabulary words.
   B. Be careful not to skip any parts of the story.
   C. Check to see how many of the words I already know.
   D. Keep thinking of what I already know about the things and ideas in the story to help me decide what is going to happen.
20. While I'm reading, it's a good idea to:
   A. Reread some parts or read ahead to see if I can figure out what is happening if things aren't making sense.
   B. Take my time reading so that I can be sure I understand what is happening.
   C. Change the ending so that it makes sense.
   D. Check to see if there are enough pictures to help make the story ideas clear.

III. In each set of four, choose the one statement which tells a good thing to do to help you understand a story better after you have read it.

21. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:
   A. Count how many pages I read with no mistakes.
   B. Check to see if there were enough pictures to go with the story to make it interesting.
   C. Check to see if I met my purpose for reading the story.
   D. Underline the causes and effects.

22. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:
   A. Underline the main idea.
   B. Retell the main points of the whole story so that I can check to see if I understood it.
   C. Read the story again to be sure I said all of the words right.
   D. Practice reading the story aloud.

23. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:
   A. Read the title and look over the story to see what it is about.
   B. Check to see if I skipped any of the vocabulary words.
   C. Think about what made me make good or bad predictions.
   D. Make a guess about what will happen next in the story.

24. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:
   A. Look up all of the big words in the dictionary.
   B. Read the best parts aloud.
   C. Have someone read the story aloud to me.
   D. Think about how the story was like things I already knew about before I started reading.

25. After I've read a story it's a good idea to:
   A. Think about how I would have acted if I were the main character in the story.
   B. Practice reading the story silently for practice of good reading.
   C. Look over the story title and pictures to see what will happen.
   D. Make a list of the things I understood the most.

*Underlined responses indicate metacomprehension strategy awareness.
Appendix C:

Fall Survey, Reading/Writing by Janet. Allen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Has anyone ever talked with you individually about the following:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. your writing</td>
<td>no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. a book you've read</td>
<td>no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. your journal</td>
<td>no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. your goals/future plans</td>
<td>no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. your classes</td>
<td>no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. you as a person</td>
<td>no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are your favorite classes in school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What are your least favorite classes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What do you think are the most important qualities for a teacher to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What books have you read in the past few years?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What is your favorite book?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes this book special?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a favorite author? If so, what makes this person a good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>author?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What have you disliked about previous reading/English classes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What could have made the class better?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What have you enjoyed about previous English classes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How important do you consider reading to be in your life?</td>
<td>not very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremely important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How important do you consider writing to be in your life?</td>
<td>not very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremely important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How would you rate yourself as a reader?</td>
<td>below average average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How would you rate yourself as a writer?</td>
<td>below average average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Do you consider yourself (a) a better reader than writer (b) a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>better writer than reader (c) equally good in both reading and writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Who do you know that is a good reader?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. What do you think has made this person a good reader?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. What does this person do that makes you think he/she is a good reader?

17. Which of these remarks comes closest to the way you feel about reading?
   a: “I hate reading.”
   b: “Reading is something you do if someone makes you, but I don’t enjoy it.”
   c: “Reading is OK. Sometimes I pick things up to read.”
   d: “I like to read but have a hard time with it.”
   e: “I really enjoy reading and often read when I have free time.”

18. Please check all that you like to read.
   — plays
   — young adult novels
   — bestsellers
   — nonfiction
   — fiction
   — poetry
   — newspapers
   — magazines
   — westerns
   — romances
   — historical fiction
   — biographies

19. Which of the following have you written in the past six months?
   a: a letter to a friend
   b: a business letter
   c: a request for something
   d: a personal journal or diary
   e: an academic journal
   f: a poem
   g: a short story
   h: an essay
   i: lyrics for a song

20. What do you think I could do to help you become a better reader?

21. What could you do to become a better reader?

22. What could I do to help you become a better writer?

23. What could you do to become a better writer?

24. What is your favorite movie and what did you particularly like about this movie?

25. What magazines do you like to read?

26. What are your favorite television shows?

Classroom Activities—Please check those that you enjoy.
   — working in a small group
   — working alone
   — completing worksheets, workbooks
   — class discussions
   — writing
   — publishing your writing (classroom magazine, etc.)
Appendix D:

Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (DAR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Recognition Level 8</th>
<th>Word Recognition Level 11/12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>legislative</td>
<td>deterioration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abandoned</td>
<td>indigence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tranquil</td>
<td>inherently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perception</td>
<td>incurable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compromise</td>
<td>ostentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>judicial</td>
<td>indubitably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synchronize</td>
<td>authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anatomy</td>
<td>monotheism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inevitable</td>
<td>unconsciousable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monotonous</td>
<td>anarchism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL SCORE Word Recognition Level 8: [Score] (Mastery = 7 of 10 correct)
Nonmastery: Go to Oral Reading Level 7 (Response Record—Pages 27, 32).

TOTAL SCORE Word Recognition Level 11/12: [Score] (Mastery = 7 of 10 correct)
Nonmastery: Go to Oral Reading Level 9/10 (Response Record—Pages 27, 33).

Mastery: Go to Oral Reading Level 11/12 (Response Record—Pages 27, 33).
Jazz

We don’t know where or when it started—the fusion of African and European elements that made possible the uniquely American music called jazz. We don’t even know where that strange four-letter word itself really came from—its etymology is as obscure as the origins of the music. We do know that the music with the odd name, bred in the most humble circumstances, has become the first truly global art alongside the other form intrinsic to the twentieth century, the motion picture.

The message of jazz, direct and immediate, speaks to the heart, across cultural, linguistic, and political barriers.

TOTAL ERRORS in Level 9/10: ___________
(Error count for mastery = 5 or fewer)

Optional Scoring
1. Reading time: ________ seconds
2. Fluency rating:
   Reading was smooth, at an appropriate rate, with good phrasing.
   □ Yes
   □ No
3. Error Analysis:
   Mispronunciations or substitutions ________
   Omissions ________
   Words supplied ________
   Insertions ________

TOTAL ERRORS in Level 11/12: ___________
(Error count for mastery = 3 or fewer)

Optional Scoring
1. Reading time: ________ seconds
2. Fluency rating:
   Reading was smooth, at an appropriate rate, with good phrasing.
   □ Yes
   □ No
3. Error Analysis:
   Mispronunciations or substitutions ________
   Omissions ________
   Words supplied ________
   Insertions ________
The Great Depression

During the 1928 presidential campaign, Herbert Hoover had spoken of a bright future. In glowing words he had said, “We in America are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land.” At the time most Americans had agreed. Throughout the nation people had sung a popular tune: “How the Money Rolls In!”

Then, suddenly, in 1929 the United States found itself in the grip of the worst economic depression in its history—the Great Depression. Factories slowed down or closed entirely. Stores went out of business. Banks shut their doors. Farmers lost everything and joined the countless others looking for work.

1. Which word describes the mood of most Americans in 1928?
   A. calm
   B. afraid
   C. depressed
   D. joyous

2. What was the Great Depression?
   A. a year of psychological depression
   B. a triumph over poverty
   C. the fall of the U.S. economy
   D. a day of mass unemployment

3. Which of the following describes Hoover’s economic forecast for 1929?
   A. mistaken
   B. cautious
   C. partially correct
   D. a wise prediction

4. What was “How the Money Rolls In!”?
   A. a common melody
   B. a campaign slogan
   C. a political speech
   D. a popular musical play

Score the questions for Silent Reading Comprehension Level 8. TOTAL CORRECT: __________
(Mastery = 3 of 4 correct)

Write the student’s oral response as close to verbatim as possible on the lines provided. See additional instructions on page 36.

Optional: Score the oral response. Check description that most closely applies.

- Good Response
  Shows understanding of information from the passage

- Fair Response
  Shows limited understanding of information from the passage

- Poor Response
  Shows lack of understanding or misunderstanding of information from the passage
Word Meaning Level 9/10

 controvery
 coordinate
 ponder
 ingenious

 TOTAL SCORE Word Meaning Level 9/10: __________
 (Mastery = 3 of 4 correct)

 Word Meaning Level 11/12

 compatible
 vulnerable
 procrastinate
 rationalize

 TOTAL SCORE Word Meaning Level 11/12: __________
 (Mastery = 3 of 4 correct)

 These are sample correct responses only. They are not means to represent all the possible correct responses.

 Level 9/10

 controversy: an argument or disagreement
 coordinate: have a step-by-step plan; control or organize; a number used to plot a point on a graph
 ponder: hesitate; wonder; think about
 ingenious: really clever; brilliant

 Level 11/12

 compatible: something that goes well with something else; getting along easily
 vulnerable: easily led or convinced; hurt easily
 procrastinate: put off; waste time by delaying something
 rationalize: discuss explanations; interpret; remove radicals in mathematics
Summary Table: Chance (SZ) – 15 year old 10th grader – White Male

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>MASTERY LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word Recognition</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Level 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Meaning</td>
<td>Level 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary and Examples of Student’s Strengths and Weakness:

Chance (a pseudonym) is performing below grade level on all sections. Spelling seems to be Chance’s strength. I noticed as he was spelling, he sounded out the word phonetically. I applauded him for using that strategy.

Chance’s primary weakness is silent reading comprehension. As he was taking this section, I noted that he continually changed his answers. You could see the frustration building the further he progressed. Because this is the format the FCAT will take, it is imperative that I work on this with Chance. I will need to ensure that Chance is following along as I read aloud. Pausing periodically to model and practice comprehension strategies will benefit Chance. The questions I will use to prompt discussions will be similar to the FCAT, which will help Chance practice with question structures. Additionally, providing him supplemental readings that reflect the text I will be reading aloud might be helpful for him to practice the skills independently.

Oral reading and word meaning are also weak. It is my intention to address meaning in context as we read the text. Doing so, should help Chance in this area of weakness. I will make a point to periodically conference with him and ask him to read aloud to me to monitor this area of weakness. We can do this after he has completed his daily journal.
Appendix E:

FCAT Rubric for Writing

FCAT and FCAT 2.0 Writing Rubric — Grade 10

Score Points in Rubric
The rubric further interprets the four major areas of consideration into levels of achievement.

6 Points  The writing is focused and purposeful, and it reflects insight into the writing situation. The organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas. Effective use of transitional devices contributes to a sense of completeness. The development of the support is substantial, specific, relevant, and concrete. The writer shows commitment to and involvement with the subject and may use creative writing strategies. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language with freshness of expression. Sentence structure is varied, and few, if any, convention errors occur in mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

5 Points  The writing is focused on the topic, and its organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas. Effective use of transitional devices contributes to a sense of completeness. The support is developed through ample use of specific details and examples. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language, and there is variation in sentence structure. The response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

4 Points  The writing is focused on the topic and includes few, if any, loosely related ideas. An organizational pattern is apparent, and it is strengthened by the use of transitional devices. The support is consistently developed, but it may lack specificity. Word choice is adequate, and variation in sentence structure is demonstrated. The response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

3 Points  The writing is focused but may contain ideas that are loosely connected to the topic. An organizational pattern is demonstrated, but the response may lack a logical progression of ideas. Development of support may be uneven. Word choice is adequate, and some variation in sentence structure is demonstrated. The response generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

2 Points  The writing addresses the topic but may lose focus by including extraneous or loosely related ideas. The organizational pattern usually includes a beginning, middle, and ending, but these elements may be brief. The development of the support may be erratic and nonspecific, and ideas may be repeated. Word choice may be limited, predictable, or vague. Errors may occur in the basic conventions of sentence structure, mechanics, usage, and punctuation, but commonly used words are usually spelled correctly.

1 Point  The writing addresses the topic but may lose focus by including extraneous or loosely related ideas. The response may have an organizational pattern, but it may lack a sense of completeness or closure. There is little, if any, development of the supporting ideas, and the support may consist of generalizations or fragmentary lists. Limited or inappropriate word choice may obscure meaning. Frequent and blatant errors may occur in the basic conventions of sentence structure, mechanics, usage, and punctuation, and commonly used words may be misspelled.
## Appendix F:

**Positive Youth Development Inventory (PYDI)**

### The Positive Youth Development Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence Subscale (14 items)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a good student</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take part in activities at my school</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to learn about new things</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a creative person</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make good decisions</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make friends easily</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable in social situations</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can handle problems that come up in my life</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can manage my emotions</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can handle being disappointed</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of other people’s needs in social situations</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have goals for my life</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what I want to do for a career</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am interested in learning about careers I could have</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Subscale (11 items)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important for me to do the right thing</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to do the right thing, even when I know that no one will know if I do or not.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things that matter to me...</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think it is important for me to be a role model for others.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I do the wrong thing, it doesn’t matter unless someone finds out.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t always tell the truth if I can avoid getting in trouble.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for me to do my best.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that others can count on me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I promise to do something I can be counted on to do it.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I am able to behave appropriately in most settings.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I am able to stand up to peer pressure when I feel something is not right to do</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I have people in my life whom I look up to and admire</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Connection Subscale (9 items)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have a wide circle of friends.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I think it is important to be involved with other people.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My friends care about me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I feel connected to my teachers.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Having friends is important to me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I feel connected to others in my community.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I have adults in my life who are interested in me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I feel connected to my parents</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My family eats dinner together most days of the week</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Caring Subscale (8 items)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>When there is a need I offer assistance whenever I can.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>It is easy for me to consider the feelings of others.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I care about how my decisions affect other people.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I try to encourage others when they are not as good at something as me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Other people’s feelings matter to me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I can be counted on to help if someone needs me.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I care about the feelings of my friends.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>When one of my friends is hurting, I hurt too.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contribution Subscale (7 items)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I take an active role in my community.</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 I am someone who gives to benefit others. O O O O O
3 I like to work with others to solve problems. O O O O O
4 I have things I can offer to others. O O O O O
5 I believe I can make a difference in the world. O O O O O
6 I care about contributing to make the world a better place for everyone. O O O O O
7 It is important for me to try and make a difference in the world. O O O O O

Confidence Subscale (9 items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things I like about me...</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 I feel good about my scholastic ability</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 I feel I am a good athlete</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 I am satisfied with how I look</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 I feel accepted by my friends</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 In general, I think I am a worthy person</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 I know how to behave well in different settings</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 I can figure out right from wrong</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 I have close friendships</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 I can do things that make a difference</td>
<td>O O O O O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix G:

Video Viewing Guide

**VIDEO GUIDE**

A Generic Guide for Video Viewing

**VOCABULARY FOR VIDEO ANALYSIS**

- cinematographer: the person responsible for the operation of cameras; the cinematographer helps coordinate lights, color, camera movements, and the composition (how people and objects are arranged) of a scene.
- director: the person who, along with the producer, approves the screenplay, costumes, and set designs, as well as picks actors and sets up the production schedule; the director's most important function is to guide the actual shooting, deciding how scenes should be shot and filmed.
- producer: the person who picks a story, arranges for finances, sets the budget, recruits a director, and supervises the total production; in many cases, the producer also has a say in script content, cast selection, costume and set design, and ad campaigns.
- screenwriter or scriptwriter: the writer who creates or adapts a work for a movie.

**PRE-VIEWING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What problem might a screenwriter have in adapting this work to a movie format?
2. If the original story is set in the past, should the screenwriter attempt to update it or leave it in its original time and place? Explain your choice.
3. Will the producer need a large budget for costumes and special effects for this story to be effectively told on film? Why or why not?
4. Which scene(s) do you think will be the most challenging for the director? For the cinematographer? Why?
5. What aspects of this story might dictate whether black-and-white film should be used or color?
6. Does the author provide sufficient information about the time and place of the original story? Or must the screenwriter invent or infer these facts? Explain.

**FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Setting**

1. What do the costumes reveal about the characters? In your opinion, do these costumes add to or detract from the movie? Explain.
2. What details help establish the time and place?
3. Does the choice of color complement the mood which the author of the work attempted to create? After viewing the film, which do you think would be more effective: black-and-white or color film? Explain.
4. Did you prefer imagining the scenes as you read the work or viewing the settings in the film? Why?
5. How did the director of the film cue you when a time change had occurred? Was this method effective? Explain.

**Character**

1. Were the characters in this video more believable and real for you than the characters in the book? Why or why not? Did they change as the story progressed, or did they remain static? Was this true to the original story? Explain your answer.
2. Could you tell what the actors were thinking and feeling? If so, how? If not, what improvements could you suggest to the actors or filmmakers?
3. What qualities did the protagonist(s) possess? In which scenes were these qualities most evident?
4. How did you react to the antagonists? What aspects of the movie caused you to react that way?

*Please note that not all the information, questions, or suggested activities in this guide may be appropriate for every film.*
5. Which minor character was most important to the movie plot? Why? Was this character less or more important in the book? Explain.

6. Which character differed most dramatically from the way you imagined him or her in the original work? Why do you think that character was changed in the movie version? Do you like or dislike the change? Explain.

**Plot**

1. Which events were most effective in the video version of the story? Which events were most effective in the printed version of the story? How do you account for any differences?

2. Was the sequence of events any different in the movie and printed versions? Do you think the filmmakers’ decisions about sequencing were wise? Why or why not?

3. What events did the movie alter or omit? Why might these changes have been made?

4. What was the climax of the movie? How did the director, cinematographer, and actors contribute in making this the high point of the film? How well did the filmmakers handle other challenging scenes?

5. How did the writer and director change the speed (or the pacing) at which the plot of the original work unfolded? Did these changes improve or harm the plot? Explain.

**Theme**

1. How effectively did the makers of this film employ the author’s symbols to convey theme? Were any symbols introduced? Explain.

2. What messages did you get from the video version? Do you think those are the messages the author of the original work intended? Explain.

3. What other titles can you think of that would capture the theme of the movie? Do you prefer any of those titles to the movie title? To the book title, if it is different from the film title? Why or why not?

4. What scenes in the movie summed up the theme most effectively? How did the lighting, setting, camera shots, and acting contribute to the impact of the theme in those scenes?
Appendix H:

Cover of *Deadline*

We viewed the cover of the book in depth, exploring the use of color, the type and size of the font, and the visual on the front cover in order to make predictions.
Appendix I:

Power Point for Each Chapter Reading
Class 1

• Complete the following prompts in your journal:
  Describe the qualities of a good teacher.

  How would people describe me?

  How do I describe myself?

  Create a list of strengths. How can you use these strengths to help you in areas of weakness?

Class 2 & 3

Chapter 1

Comprehension
  How does the author develop Ben?
  How is Ben not like the average senior?
  What is Ben’s attitude toward dying?
  What does this say about his character?

Connection
  How would you handle news like Ben’s and why?

  What do you think people fear about death? Why is death difficult to talk about? Should it be?

Create a list of 5 things you want to learn before you graduate high school.
Class 4

Chapter 2
Comprehension
• Describe Ben’s dad. Give specific details from the novel. What is the relationship between Ben’s dad and Ben and Cody?

Connection
• Describe your relationship with your dad(s).

Class 5 & 6

Chapter 3
Comprehension
Examine the relationship between Marla and Ben. How would you describe this relationship? What evidence from the texts support your description?

Connection
• Think about the people you go to to talk about your life. Tell me who they are and why you go to these particular people.
• GOALS – Setting Goals (Brief class discussion on goals, setting goals, recognizing your strengths and using these strengths as a resource to overcome obstacles.)
• Set a Positive Goal – How will that goal change your life? What obstacles do you for see having? How can you overcome these obstacles? What /who can you turn to for resources in helping you reach your goal?
Class 7

Chapter 4

Comprehension
How has Ben changed since chapter 1? Use evidence from the text to support your position.

Compare Coach to Ben. What are at least two similarities between the two?

Connection
Pick one person in your life you have a positive relationship with and describe it.

Class 8

Chapter 5

Comprehension
• We are introduced to 3 new characters...who are they? Describe them. How does the author develop them?
• What can we infer about Sooner and his father?
• Why does Ben try to boost his “celestial resume”?

Connection
Chose a character that the author introduces you to in this chapter that you can connect to. Explain why you could connect to that character.

The author has Ben going from cross country to football. In high school adolescents can be stereotyped from the groups they belong to. What types of groups do you belong to? What does your membership within these groups say about you?
Class 9

Chapter 6
Comprehension
Why does the author have Dallas act the way she does after her and Ben become intimate?

How do Ben and Marla “connect”?

What is Ben thinking by the lake at the end of the chapter?

Connection
Who do you share your secrets with and why?

Class 10 & 11

Chapter 7
Comprehension
Rudy lets his secret slip to Ben. Drawing on what you know about religion and priests/reverends/pastors/rabbis make a prediction about why Rudy is no longer a priest.

Pick one event and retell. Explain why you chose that event? What reactions do you have to this particular event and why?

Connection
In this chapter Sooner appears with a broken collarbone. While the author does not state exactly what caused this injury, we can infer by what we know about Sooner and his relationship with his father. What would you do if you had a friend like Sooner and thought that one of his parents was abusing him/her? Would you tell? Why or why not? What resources could you suggest Sooner use to address his situation?
Chapter 8
Comprehension
What trick does Cody pull at the end of the game? How was it successful?

Connection
Think of a time you set and reached a goal. What made it a successful endeavor?

Chapter 9
Comprehension
The theme of secrecy has appeared several times in the novel so far. What is Dallas’s secret? What does this mean for Ben’s secret?

Connection
If you were Ben, what would you do about these secrets? What would you do if someone told you a secret like Dallas’? What resources could Dallas utilize to help her with her situation?
Class 14 & 15

Chapter 10
Comprehension

• The theme of connections comes up again at breakfast the morning after the Homecoming Dance. How does this theme appear with Ben’s father?
• What does Ben propose for his Civics Project? Why does he do this?
• What happens with Marla? Explain the metaphor with the oxygen mask.

Connection
Discuss a time when you had to put your oxygen mask on before you could help the person next to you?

Class 16-20

A CIVICS PROJECT

Ben is required to create and conduct a civics project for class. His charge is to locate an injustice in his community, create a plan of action to right this wrong, and implement that plan. Today you will be charged with same project.

Directions:
Locate an injustice in your community. Community can be classroom, school, home or the State of Florida. Describe this injustice and your experience with it. What does the research say about this injustice? What can you do to educate people about this injustice? Create a plan of action for righting this wrong and implement it. Create a web page which will be published as a resource.
Class 21

Chapter 11

Comprehension

How does Hey-soos put things in perspective for Ben? How does he make him feel better about his decision to “change”?

What does Ben say his “change” in behavior is attributed to when speaking with his father?

Connection

How do you manage your emotions? How do your emotions affect your behavior?

Class 22

Chapter 12

Comprehension

What point was made during the book burning?

What does Ben plan to do at the end of the season? Why?

Connection

Sylvia Longley expresses her opinion that burning books should be okay since it’s okay to burn the American flag. What do you think about burning, or banning, books? What do you think about burning the American flag?
Class 23

Chapter 13

Comprehension
What is another “truth” we learn about Dallas?
How did Ben lie to Dallas?

Connection
Do you think it is important to tell the truth? Why or why not?
How do you feel when you learn someone has lied to you?

Class 24 & 25

Chapter 14
Comprehension
Describe Ben’s civics project. Why does the teacher not want Ben to perform it?

Connection
What is your opinion of Mr. Lambeer? Should he be allowed to teach? Why or Why not?
Think about the teachers you have. What makes them effective or not effective in the classroom?
Revisit your initial writing prompt at the beginning of this activity regarding the qualities of a good teacher. Re-write this essay to reflect your opinion about what makes a good teacher today.
Chapter 15
Comprehension
Why does Rudy push Ben away? Why did Rudy join the priesthood? What “secret” does Rudy have? How does this explain his alcohol abuse? Why do you think he told Ben his secret? How does Ben react?

Make a prediction about the future relationship between Ben and Rudy.

Connection
If you were Ben, how would you react to Rudy’s secret and why?
Do you feel bad for Rudy? Why or why not? What resources can Ben recommend for Rudy to help him with his secret?

Chapter 16
Comprehension
Describe how Ben feels about his new therapist. Use evidence from the text to support your perspective.

Ben tells us “if you haven’t allowed yourself the right to fail, you haven’t lived.” Explain what he means.

Connection
How can we learn from failing? Think about a time when you failed at something. What did you fail at? How did that make you feel? What did you learn from that experience?
Class 28

Chapter 17
Comprehension

Why does Ben go back to see Rudy? How does this conflict with his relationship with Dallas?

Connection
Hey-Soos says “experience is the only teacher”? What do you think he means? Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Explain.

Class 29

Chapter 19
Comprehension

How did Dallas respond to Ben’s news? Do you agree with her response?

What progress has Ben made on his project? How is the community reacting? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Connection
Revisit your civics project. What obstacles do you think you will encounter trying to implement it? What can you do to overcome these obstacles?
**Class 30**

Chapter 20
Comprehension

How is Cody’s reaction to Ben’s secret different than Dallas’s?

What tragedy occurs in this chapter? What advice was given

Connection
Think about a difficult decision you had to make in your life. What was it? How did you handle it? What resources did you use to make that decision? What did you learn about yourself through that experience?

**Class 31**

Chapter 21
Comprehension

Who has a deeper reaction to Ben’s news, his mother or father? Use details from the text to support your opinion.

Connection
How do you handle bad news? What resources do you utilize to help you cope with negative issues in your life? How can you be a resource for others?
Class 32

Chapter 22

Comprehension

Describe the argument between Lambeer and Ben. How is it resolved? Use many details from the novel.

Connection

How do you resolve arguments you have with others? What recommendations can you give someone for resolving arguments?

Class 33

Chapter 23

Comprehension

What was symbolic about the tragedy that occurred at the beginning of this chapter?

Connection

Create a symbol that represents you.
Class 34

Chapter 24
Comprehension
The author does not come out and tell us that Ben’s condition is worsening. What are some signs that the author gives us to infer this?

Why does Ben go to Mr. Cowan’s home? What does Ben tell Mr. Cowans and why?

Connection
Running helps Ben calm down when he’s overwhelmed. What helps you?

Class 35

Epilogue
Comprehension
What are Ben’s words to the graduating class?

Predict what the future looks like for Dallas and Cody.

Connection
What were your reactions to Ben’s graduation speech and why?
Final Reflections – Class 36

- What has Ben learned throughout this whole experience?
- What have you learned from Ben?
- Re-read your civics project idea. What have you learned through the creation of this activity about yourself and your membership within your community?
- Re-read your journal entries. What have you learned about yourself through this activity?
- What have you learned about yourself as a reader as a result of this activity?
- What have you learned about yourself as a writer as a result of this activity?

Final Writing Prompt – Class 37

Answer the following in essay format:
- Describe the qualities of a good parent.
Final Project – Creating a Play List
Directions:
1 song for each significant event.

2-3 paragraphs about how that song connects to that event. Be as specific as you can be and use details from the story to support your connection.

Paragraph 1 – Should describe in detail the event/experience. Use details directly from the book.

Paragraph 2.3 – Should include: a transition to the connection between the experience and the song. 1-2 lyrics from the song to support your connection. A closing thought that wraps it all up.

Events

Play List Events We Agreed Upon

1) News from Doc Wagner (reactions)
2) Dallas Suzuki
3) Marla (Therapist)
4) Dreams (Hey Soos)
5) Rudy
6) Mr. Lambeer (standing up for what you believe in)
7) Connections
8) Football
9) Secrets
10) Dying
Open discussion about the text and the activity.

Post PYDI and DAR
Appendix J:
Problem Based Learning Project (Civics Project)

In *Deadline*, Ben is charged with completing a civics project (Problem Based Learning Project) for one of his classes. He chose to address the racial injustice in his community. Think about your community and the injustices you have witnessed. Your community could be this classroom, your school, your neighborhood, or even the State of Florida. What is the injustice? How can you help alleviate this injustice? What obstacles do you think you will encounter in working through this plan?

You are charged with working alongside Ben, as he researches and addresses the injustice he has identified. Below is the overview of what you will completing.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Projects may involve one student or a PBL Team that is faced with the challenge of completing the following tasks:
- solving a problem or bringing about awareness of the problem,
- developing and carrying out a seminar, and
- creating a product or service.

What are the steps for success?

For this project, students will spend time investigating (through extensive research, utilizing a multitude of sources) a problem that is happening in their community – much like that of Ben’s. In doing so, you will make a commitment to do the following:
- Attain as much knowledge as possible about the problem.
- Comprehend the problem on a deep level.
- Apply this new-found knowledge and understanding in the analysis of the problem.
- Synthesize findings and come up with solutions to the problem.
- Evaluate the possibilities/probabilities for solving the problem.

While researching your issue, what did students ask themselves?

- Why is this happening?
- Why is this allowed to continue happening?
- How can I raise awareness about this problem?
- How can I stop this problem?
- What obstacles do I face as I try to “right this wrong”?
- What’s next for me in relation to continuing my advocacy?
Appendix K:

PYD Journal Prompts

Directions: In this journal you will find ten writing prompts. I have allotted ten pages between each prompt for your response and marked each new prompt with a tab. If you need additional space there is a section at the back of the journal available for you to continue any response on. It is marked with a tab titled “free pages”. Please answer the prompts to the best of your ability. You will have one week to complete these prompts. The journal will be due to me no later than ___________.

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. How would you describe yourself as a student?
3. Describe your social circle (your groups of friends).
4. How would you describe yourself as a friend?
5. In your journal you set a goal of _______________. Have you reached this goal? Are you still working to reach this goal? (if yes, how?) Have you set any new goals? (As a student and personal) If so, what?
6. Describe your relationship with _______ (whomever the student first wrote about) today.
7. In your journal, you chose to do a civics project on _______________, an injustice you recognized within your community. What have you done over the past 10-11 months in regards to this injustice?
8. In what ways have you become involved in your community over the past 10-11 months and why? Your community can be your school community or the community in which you live.
9. In your journal you wrote about a difficult decision you made (insert the decision) and how you made this decision. What do you do today to work through difficult decisions? What do you do today to work through difficult situations?
10. In your journal you discussed risky activities that you participate in. For example, _______________. Do you still participate in these today? Why or why not?
Appendix L:

Student Interview Questions

1. What are your grades like in school this year?
2. How do you feel about school?
3. What types of texts are you reading in school this year?
4. How confident are you in comprehending these texts? Why? How do you know?
5. When you have difficulty with text in school, what resources do you use to help you learn the material? Why do you choose these resources?
6. What types of writing are you doing in school this year?
7. How confident are you in producing written text? Why? How do you know?
8. When you have difficulty with writing in school, what resources do you use to help you produce written text? Why do you choose these resources?
10. What type of writing do you do outside of school? Why? If not writing, why not?
11. How would describe yourself as a learner this year?
12. Recall what you learned in Ms. Taylor’s 4th quarter activity (reading of Deadline and the activities that accompanied that reading). Did that book and those activities help prepare you for your school experiences this year? If yes, how?
13. Did those activities help prepare you for experiences outside of school? If yes, how?
14. Is there anything particular you remember about the activities? If yes, what specifically? Why do you suppose that you remember them?
Appendix M:
Teacher Interview Questions

Keeping in mind how Moje (2008) defines literacy practices—what one does with literacy in order to learn about concepts, one’s self, and one’s world—please answer the following questions as thoroughly as you can about __________________.

1. What can you tell me about the reading and writing assignments you have had (student’s name) complete in class?

2. What would you say are (student’s name)’s strengths and weaknesses as a student?

3. What types of outside (non-school related) reading have you observed (student’s name) doing?

4. Does (student’s name) discuss in class any ideas that you think are related to outside reading? If so, what?

5. Does (student’s name) ever discuss with you any reading s/he does outside of class? If so, what?

6. Does (student’s name) ever discuss with you any writing s/he does outside of class? If so, what?

7. How would you describe (student’s name)’s participation in whole class activities? Small group activities?

8. What other practices of literacy have you observed with (student’s name) in your classroom?
Appendix N:

2012 CAL IRB Approval Letter and Addendum Approval

February 16, 2012

Paula Taylor-Greathouse
Secondary Education

RE: Expedited Approval for Initial Review
IRB#: Pro00006813
Title: Transformative Transactions: The Voices of Adolescents Responding to Literature

Dear Paula Taylor-Greathouse:

On 2/16/2012, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and APPROVED the above referenced protocol. Please note that your approval for this study will expire on 2-16-13.

Approved Items:
Protocol Document(s):

Study Protocol - Greathouse.doc 1/24/2012 7:56 PM 0.01
Study involves children and falls under 45 CFR 46.404: Research not involving more than minimal risk.

Consent/Assent Documents:

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Please note, the informed consent/assent documents are valid during the period indicated by the official, IRB-Approval stamp located on the form, which can be found under the Attachment Tab. Valid consent must be documented on a copy of the most recently IRB-approved consent form.

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45CFR46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. The research proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review category:

(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval by an amendment.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

John Schinka, PhD, Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board

Cc: Various Menzel, CCRP
    USF IRB Professional Staff
Activity Details (Continuing Review Completed) Indicates that a Continuing Report was closed for this item. This is automatically added by the Continuing Report sub process.

Author: John Schinka (James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital)
Logged For (Study): Literacy Practices and Positive Youth Development
Activity Date: 2/1/2013 8:42 AM EST

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